

The Dish on Food Blogs

We reveal our top picks for finding new recipes, trend reports and other useful tidbits. *By Joy Manning*

Your mother relied on a dog-eared edition of *Joy of Cooking* and a weekly TV session with Julia Child to keep on top of food trends and discover new recipes. Thankfully, there are more options out there for today's neighborhood gourmet. Web sites dedicated to food and cooking abound; and with a little surfing, browsing and bookmarking, modern culinary enthusiasts can find resources and inspiration—everything from prized recipes and message boards to videos on using classic or nouveau ingredients. Here's STYLE's short list of the most essential sites.

ChocolateAndZucchini.com

Who: Clotilde Dusoulier

What: Straight from the heart of France comes a food blog inspired by California cuisine. The site's creator, now a cookbook author as well, spent two post-college years working as a software engineer in the San Francisco Bay Area, where she fell in love with the region's fresh and distinctive cuisine. Reader message boards and an optional monthly newsletter help separate C&Z from the rest of the blog roll, and her crossover to traditional publishing lends an added measure of credibility.

Search and cook: *Pissaladière* (French pizza)

LeitesCulinaria.com

Who: David Leite

What: This site employs a staff of expert writers and chefs to populate its pages. The writings section includes features like *The Best 20 Food Books of 2006* and *Tales of a Supertaster*. An interview section features conversations with food stars like Food Network's Paula Deen and the *New York Time's* Amanda Hesser. The recipe collection offers some of the most assiduously tested recipes on the Web.

Search and cook: Stilton Pinwheels with Walnuts and Honey

TeaAndCookies.blogspot.com

Who: Published anonymously

What: This San Francisco-based blog offers a hodgepodge of culinary commentary and recipes. The site's mission is to cover "the intersection between food and life," and it regularly reminds readers just how closely these two are intertwined.

Search and cook: Macaroni and Cheese

SimplyRecipes.com

Who: Elise Bauer

What: With more than a million visitors to the site each month, Simply Recipes enjoys a massive and loyal fan base whose myriad comments on each recipe are a vital part of the site's appeal. With just a few hundred recipes, it's an unlikely giant in the online food world where mega sites like Epicurious.com archive tens of thousands of recipes. The good news for readers is that Bauer's recipes are reliably delicious as well as expertly written. Her conversational style and family-focused anecdotes make readers feel drawn right into a neighbor's country kitchen.

Search and cook: Zucchini Fritters

SmittenKitchen.com



Who: Deb Perelman **What:** Smitten Kitchen is dedicated to recipes culled from all kinds of sources. Since the author is a former vegetarian, most of her recipes use little meat or none at all. What makes this site great is Perelman's thoughtful, entertaining and well-written commentary on the recipes she presents as well as the glorious food photography that accompanies each blog entry.

Search and cook: Barbecued Balsamic Pears

SeriousEats.com

Who: Ed Levine

What: This one-stop shop for the food obsessed features national restaurant news and reviews, recipes, cookbook giveaways and message boards for members. The site also collects links to videos and food writings from around the Web. One visit can literally provide hours of entertainment, education and a healthy sampling of the day's top food news. The video section of the site has an eclectic mix of pure entertainment, (like a video about making a lobster roll that features a story, jokes and soundtrack) and dry educational spots on topics like how to correctly poach an egg.

Search and cook: Greek Lemon Soup