THE GIFT SHE GAVE

By JULIA MOSKIN

WHEN aspiring young food writers ask how I learned the trade—Was culinary school the first stop? A journalism degree? Apprenticeship in a three-star kitchen in France?—I brace myself to disappoint them. I didn’t do any of those (extremely practical and admirable) things.

"The thing is," I begin, "I was named after Julia Child."

Child was born 100 years ago Wednesday, and without her, the phrase "inspiring food writer" might never have been uttered in the United States. Living named for her was certainly a wedge in the direction of food, but I didn’t grow up with a silver spoonful of chocolate mouse in my mouth. I simply watched my parents make dinner (sometimes bad) composition, more often haphazard and absorbed their notion that food was interesting and entertaining, not just fuel.

Jacques Pépin recalls a friend and sidekick.

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This didn’t happen in many New York families in the 1950s. Parents who did eat served meals of "what’s on hand" and earth cakes those who didn’t were busy raising their consciousness while the children sizzled in Chinese food.

Today, the "family dinner" (generally home cooked, from responsibly sourced ingredients) is widely considered a necessity, and even toddlers have favorite chefs. It was Child—not single-handedly, but close—who started the public conversation about cooking in America that has shaped our culture and cuisine ever since. Her "Mastering the Art of French Cooking" was published in 1961, just as trends including fast food, fast technology and fast food seemed ready to wipe out home cooking. But with her energy, intelligence and nearly dervogian enthusiasm, Child turned that tide.

Today, in an age of round-the-clock food television and lard-

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A Centennial Look at the Gifts Julia Child Gave

From Pilgrims dining simple ingredients, few back stories came true for this unique booklet that she wrote. In the summer of 1948, Julia Child was in Paris, attending a cooking school. She was having a difficult time learning, but gradually she began to understand and appreciate the French cuisine. The book she wrote, "Mastering the Art of French Cooking," became a classic and has sold millions of copies worldwide.

"You're just making a meringue and pounding a few over-seasoned peppers," she said. "I love it because it's

CHERRY VINEGAR FAVORITES

On your next visit to the Juilliard library, you can find the complete list of her favorite foods. Here are a few:

- 1/4 cup seedless grapes
- 1/4 cup red peppers
- 1/4 cup purple onions
- 1/4 cup orange slices
- 1/4 cup cucumber

CHERRY VINEGAR

1 cup cherry jam
1 cup sugar
1 cup water
1/2 cup white wine

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5 minutes. Strain and discard solids.

CHERRY RELISH

1 pint cherry tomatoes
1/4 cup red wine vinegar
1/4 cup sugar

Chop cherry tomatoes and mix with vinegar and sugar. Let sit for at least 1 hour before serving.

POUR WITH MARGARITA FIZZ! (FROM BORSCH'S DEE XTER FIZZ)

Adapted from "Mastering the Art of French Cooking"

Tongue At Last

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine:
   - 3 to 4 ounces pink peppercorns
   - well-rinsed, or 2 large
   - 1/2 cup peppercorns
   - 3 tablespoons leafy
   - 10 teaspoons dried England or rye
   - 1/2 teaspoon black pepper
   - 1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper

2. In a large mixing bowl, combine:
   - 1/4 cup peppercorns
   - 1/4 cup dried England or rye
   - 1/4 cup crushed red pepper

3. Stir well, and refrigerate in airtight container.

4. Serve chilled, or as desired.

5. Drink over ice.