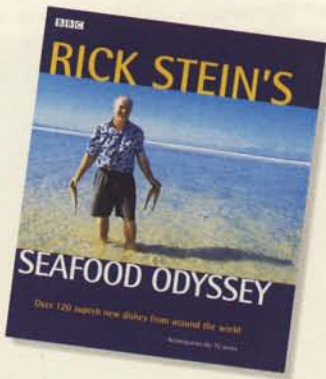


FOOD update

BY JANET SMITH



● You've seen the show, now buy the book. Rick Stein's *Seafood Odyssey* (BBC Books, £18.99) contains 150 fish recipes inspired by Stein's travels around the world ●

GOURMET GOSSIP

- Celebrate Valentine's Day with a heart-shaped, chocolate-filled doughnut from Safeway for just 39p, or visit the new chocolate website at www.chocolatystore.com and order a box of divine Carlo Melchior Swiss truffles. And for a romantic Valentine's cocktail, try a Ja' Moro – designed exclusively for us by award-winning bartenders Jamie Terrell and Andres Masso of the Atlantic Bar and Grill in London. Shake with ice 1fl oz vodka, raspberry liqueur, orange juice and apple juice. Strain into a champagne flute, then slowly top up with champagne, pouring it over the back of a teaspoon to get two distinctive layers. Decorate with raspberries.
- Try making dough balls à la Pizza Express at home. They make a change from garlic bread and my kids love them. We've been making our own from bread mix (whizz in the food processor, leave to rise, then shape into balls and bake. Serve with lashings of garlic butter). You can also buy them ready-made in Waitrose. They're not quite as good as the real thing (the garlic butter is in the middle and they're not as squishy) but they make a good standby when time is short.
- If you like the richness of Camembert you'll love Unpasteurized Brie de Nangis (Bumblebee 0171-284 1314 or ask in good cheese shops). Another one to try is Manchego served with membrillo (membrillo is Spanish for quince jam). I spotted a lovely box of membrillo in my local Sainsbury's Special Selection.



Serve really good Brie and oat biscuits instead of dessert

5 ways to simplify entertaining

- Try cheese instead of dessert and offer good chocolates or panforte cake.
- Toss cooked spaghetti with double cream and season with nutmeg. Serve topped with blanched sugar snap peas, green beans, petits pois and strips of smoked salmon. Add plenty of finely grated parmesan and black pepper.
- Serve a garlicky Pommès Dauphinoise (potato gratin made with cream and cheese) with a crisp, green salad, thick slices of ham and a good tomato chutney.
- Make Monte Bianco by whizzing 2 x 240g cans peeled chestnuts with 175g (6oz) icing sugar and a splash of water. Serve with whipped brandy-flavoured cream.
- Make pain perdu (or eggy bread) for pudding. Dip slices of bread, brioche or panettone in egg and milk. Fry in butter, sprinkle with sugar and serve with cream and a fruit salad flavoured with seeds from a vanilla pod.

● The most happening saltmills are being filled with organic Seaweed Table Condiment from Seagreens. It's got a salty flavour, plus minerals and vitamins and a quarter of the sodium of "low salts". Available from health food outlets and supermarkets ●

