

Blog Column for February 4, 2009

### Bringing the Steakhouse Home

What is love? What is devotion? What is passion? There is a funny juxtaposition for me to ponder as Valentine's Day approaches and the tension of the Super Bowl ends. How could these two even be related? Perhaps knowing that I grew up in Pittsburgh would explain the latter.

The passion and devotion connect me to my father who would have turned 91 this past Saturday. Oh how he would have loved this Super Bowl—a spectacular game with a nail-biting ending. (I hope there are big-screen TV's in heaven!) I even packed another football rule into my non-sport's brain. My stomach knotted during the last 23 seconds when I thought the Steelers might lose. I watched as the refs evaluated the final catch and determined it was a completion because the Steelers' player had full control of the ball when both feet touched the ground inbounds even though he was out-of-bounds. Whew!

Love and food were integrated as I was growing up—expressions of devotion, compassion, and caring. Whether it was food for the big game, food for a holiday, or food to comfort someone sick, there was a bustle in the kitchen and an attention to detail. I've continued that thread—loving nothing more than making my children's favorite foods when they come home for the holidays, or preparing a special candlelit dinner for my husband when the house is quiet once again.

This Valentine's Day, I wonder if the luxuries of the restaurant table can't be replicated at home—creating an intimate table for two with candles, flowers, a good bottle of wine, and foods lovingly prepared. An economical decision, but a splurge nonetheless. Perhaps for the beef lover, two fabulous steaks from the butcher shop. Bringing the steakhouse home might mean creamed spinach and a baked potato with melted butter, a dollop of sour cream, and a scattering of chives. For me, chocolate should follow—something dark, deep and rich. It's all a temptation, an expression of love, an act of caring.

Share in the cooking; leave the dishes!

Diane