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KIRSTEN LUCE FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

A Confidante in the Kitchen

Laurie Colwin used simple, unfussy food to bring people together. Decades later, many have followed.

By JEFF GORDINIER

Emily Gould stood in an Upper West Side kitchen on a Saturday evening and gazed into a crumb-encrusted pan full of creamed spinach. “It kind of suffered on the subway a little bit,” she said.

It was a moment that might have appeared in an essay by the food writer Lau-

rie Colwin, whose recipes were on the menu that night. Ms. Gould is a writer whose first novel will come out this summer, and the apartment belongs to her friend Sadie Stein, a contributing editor for The Paris Review. Both hang out with a young, literary, food-obsessed crowd, and they had met up with two friends to eat baked mustard chicken and that creamed spinach, debating and paying tribute to a writer whose work overflows with stove-centered gatherings just like this one.

Ms. Colwin was an author, self-described

“refined slob” and passionate, idiosyncratic home cook who died in 1992, when the members of this salon were still in grade school. During her life, she gained a reputation first and foremost as a novelist and a composer of delicately calibrated short stories. But in the years since her death, at the age of 48, her following has only grown, and her highly personal food writing, collected in the books “Home Cooking” and “More Home Cooking,” has attracted a new, cultishly devoted generation of read-

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Rosa Jurjevics with a photo of her mother, Laurie Colwin, the novelist and food writer around whom a cultlike following has arisen. Ms. Jurjevics was 8 when her mother, then 48, died in 1992.

Where Salami Meets Coltrane

A D.J. tours Italy, seeking the food and culinary traditions he fears are being lost.

By RACHEL DONADIO

MINORI, ITALY — Daniele De Michele, a bearded and boisterous D.J. and performance artist who is one of Italy’s most inventive food activists, is on a yearlong journey to explore and document the country’s working-class and peasant culinary traditions.

Mr. De Michele, who is 40 and goes by the nom d’art D.J. Donpasta, is concerned that some of Italy’s age-old ways could be lost to processed foods, European Union regulations and the show-offy culture of television cooking competitions. And so he is going from town to town, coaxing recipes and handed-down food lore out of the people he meets.

On a recent brisk March afternoon, he came to this fishing town on the Amalfi Coast and stood amid rows of homemade pork sausages, some covered in hot pepper flakes, that were strung from the low ceiling of a work space. “What do you put in — do you put in the ear?” he asked An-

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Maria Teresa Bonito prepares pasta in Minori, Italy, a stop on the culinary tour of Daniele De Michele, a D.J. known as Donpasta who wants Italy to preserve its age-old food traditions.



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