

Simple Cooking Web Site Redesign Proposal

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Original Website: <http://www.outlawcook.com>

The Simple Cooking web site speaks to a wide audience of cooking enthusiasts. The users are varied in age and experience yet come to this web site for good old-fashioned cooking sense. The everyday recipes are developed from food one may find in the pantry, or use leftovers in the fridge, or just look like an interesting recipe. Basically, the recipes are simple and homemade. The writer, John Thorpe, has a unique writing style in the way he presents a recipe blog. His words are genuine as he covers many details for each recipe. The recipes are backed up by close-up photographs which provide a visual guide for the user to completing the recipe.

The unfortunate problem facing this web site is the navigation, the hard to read font choices and the template design cutting off the text. The following pages present changes to enhance the Simple Cooking web site. The redesign continues the feel and style of the food writers famous newsletter, the unique recipes, and food blogs. All recipes are based on natural, home cooked food from a variety of ethnic groups.

The home page is redesigned to be a standard 800 x 600 pixel base. Most pages will keep this size page; however some pages will be longer to keep a recipe in one section. The user will be able to scroll down using their browser instead of internal scroll bars. This was a main comment from the user survey.

The colors chosen are based on the original green used in the newsletter banner graphic. This green color was put through a color simulator program to determine color combinations for use in this web site. The tetrad color scheme posed the best solution. The warm browns, reds and teal blue emulated ingredients often used in cooking or colors in an old-fashioned kitchen. This color scheme was then changed slightly to be used as web safe colors because many users may still have older computer systems. The font Bookman Old Style in the banner is used for the navigation bar, banner and the quote in the redesign. Tahoma was chosen for the main body copy for its readability and convenience for both MAC and PC users. To continue a personal touch, the handwritten font Desyrel is used for headlines as a



The navigation and banner style was addressed first. This design was reworked several times based on classmates responses, the instructors comments, and the user test.

The main idea is to continue the newsletter banner with the same feel, colors, and graphic used in the original web site. The simple one color graphic of a child in old clothing sipping from a cup was transformed in the dark green color and positioned to sit on a wooden spoon. The wooden spoon image was chosen due to its natural make-up and image. The blue teal color is added in the banner graphic cup and hat. The same Bookman Oldstyle typeface is used and changed in style and color. To create a warm and inviting look in the banner, it is changed to a gradient of browns to reds overlapped with a wooden cutting board graphic. The dark red color in the tetrad color scheme is added to enhance and warm the feel of the navigation bar.

This navigation is moved from being all over the home page and grouped to one area at the top of all the pages. This navigation bar leads the user to Home, Contact Us, About Us, Recipes, Books, Subscribe/Back Issues and Friendly Links. Contact Us will contain an address and e-mail area that the user can directly contact the web site creators without having to go to another software program. The About Us section will have a few pages stating the scaled down history of the writer, why he writes the food blogs, his many kitchens, and provide a link to the audio Radio Broadcast. The original PDF only contains a few pages that does not flow well. The Recipes will have a drop down section with links to all four food sections. Navigation words will change to 50% gray when hovered over and show the drop down links be-

low it. The drop down box will be 50% transparent red and the link text white. Books will have reviews and all books for sale along with a small visual image of the book cover along with the price. The user will be able to click on a check box next to the book to place an order. The Subscribe/Back Issues section will be combined so the user can be given a deal and options. The subscription price will be variable depending on how many back issues the user wants to order up front. This area will also have a check box next to the option for ordering. Both sections will link to a new secure ordering page. The "Without" section will be called Friendly Links. This area will provide links to other recipes web sites and books in review.

To provide a quick visual link to the four recipe sections, stacked recipe card graphics with shadows are placed in the middle and to the right. Recipe card style outlines are used to contain the recipe blogs into categories to make the navigation of the user easier than the original site. The colors are taken from the photograph and tetrad color scheme. In the original newsletters also contained black and white old styled line illustrations. This style of graphics is used as visual keys to the main navigation headlines: a coffee cup for breakfast, a clock for midnight snacks, a cast-iron frying pan for previous recipes and a hand writing on a sheet of paper for the Cook's Diary. The handwritten font Desyrel is used in the headline to enhance a comfortable personal feel to the recipe tab navigation.

The main navigation on the home page is the Cook's Diary. This is located as the front recipe card. A large photograph is used to catch the visual attention of the user. Red text "more" and a pen tip can be clicked on to bring the user to a new page with the rest of the recipe blog. The new page will display the rest of the recipe blog in

a larger recipe card. Depending on the recipe, more photographs may be added to the pages. The background color is changed from a simple beige to a warm pumpkin orange/gold color. The edges are made to look like ripped paper. The avacado green colored side bars will be white to provide air to the page.

Other visual elements are added to the home page to create interest in the writer of this web site. A knocked out photograph of the writer and his wife is placed behind the recipe cards to add a personal touch and prompt the user to read the about us. The quote was moved down below a photograph. This photograph reflects the homemade feel to the web site.

In a search for food photographs that could work for this site, a free photograph had all the colors and basic ingredients that matched the tone of the web site design. The bowls, milk bottle and canisters portray and old-fashioned mix of ingredients and cooking tools. The elements included a wooden rolling pin, eggs, milk, spices, sugar, strawberries, and flour – simple, basic ingredients. The greens, reds and browns virtually matched the tetrad color scheme. The over all feel is just simple and homemade. This is the perfect photograph for the home page. Even though this photograph is free and others may use it –the cost out ways the consequences of usage.

The blue teal color is not a natural food color and is used sparingly. The same color is lightened and used as the link color in the footer section to bring the user back to the top for further navigation. Blue is a natural color that users conceive as a link.

Simple Cooking Fonts Guideline

Banner:

Bookman Oldstyle Regular 52 pt. "Simple Cooking"
Color: White Text on Wooden Style Gradient Banner

Simple Cooking

Banner Text links (Banner Navigation):

Bookman Oldstyle Bold 12 pt.
Color: White Text on Wooden Style Dark Red Box

History/Contact

Quote:

Bookman Old Style 14/17
Color: White Text on Warm Orange/Gold
Parchment Background

...if there is any

Quote Writer:

Bookman Old Style 12/15
Color: Black Text on Same Background
–Amy Benfer,

Recipe Card Headlines (Navigation):

Desyrel 20 pt.
Color: Dark Red Text on Buff Background

Cook's Diary

Recipe Blogs Headline:

Tahoma Bold 20/24
Color: Dark Green Text on Buff Background

Clam, Pork, and Tofu Hotpot

Recipe Blogs Date and Body Copy:

Tahoma Regular 13/16 Flush Left
Color: Dark Green headlines and Black
for Body Copy on Buff Background

This dish leaped out at me as I

Date Tahoma Regular 12/18 Flush Left
Thursday, March 19, 2009

MORE:

Tahoma Regular 9/11 All Caps Flush Left
The graphic character: Zapf Dingbat
11/11

Color: Red Text on White

[MORE](#) ↗

Captions:

Tahoma Regular 8/10 Flush Left
Color: Black Text

Person's Name

Footer:

Tahoma Regular 8 pt. Centered
Color: Blue Teal Text

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Simple Cooking Color Guideline

Tetrad Color Scheme

Converted to
Web Safe Colors



Green

006600 Green to Web Safe Green 0e4322
R 14 G 67 B 34

Red

800000 Red to Web Safe Red 500000
R 80 G 0 B 0

Dark Blue Teal

Web Safe Dark Blue Teal 004d4d
R 0 G 77 B 77

Light Blue Teal

Web Safe Light Blue Teal 006363
R 0 G 99 B 99

Dark Brown

803400 Brown to Web Safe Brown 532607
R 83 G 38 B 07

Buff

8982eb to Web Safe Light Brown
R 255 G 255 B 231 to R FF G FF B E7

Warm Orange/Gold Background

eab86a to Web Safe Orange/Gold
R 234 G 184 B 106 to R EA G B8 B 6A

Black

000000 Web Safe Black
R 00 G 00 B 00

Simple Cooking

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...if there is any contemporary food writer more viscally connected with how food is actually prepared, more intellectually stimulating, or more pleasurable to read, I have yet to encounter his or her work.

*~Amy Benfer,
Barnes & Noble Review
11/27/07*



Breakfast Notes



Midnight Snacks



Previous Recipes



Cook's Diary



Clam, Pork, and Tofu Hotpot

Thursday, March 19, 2009

This dish leaped out at me as I was leafing through Taekyunk Chung and Debra Samuel's "The Korean Kitchen" (Tuttle, 2008), a cookbook with several seductive

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Cook's Diary
Previous Recipes
Midnight Snacks
Breakfast Notes



Breakfast Notes



Midnight Snacks



Previous Recipes



Cook's Diary



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Cook's Diary

Clam, Pork, and Tofu Hotpot

Thursday, March 19, 2009
Continued



seductive dishes that seemed both possible and worth the effort. (Others that caught my eye include an egg-custard beef soup, chicken with raw Chinese cabbage, and pan-fried cod with broccoli rabe.)

In essence, the dish is a casserole combining pork, clams, and scallions in a flavorful meat broth, enhanced with a chili sauce made with ginger, garlic, soy sauce, a touch of oyster sauce, a squeeze of lemon, and, of course, a heaping amount of red chili pepper. At the last moment lumps of silken tofu are floated on top, and the finished dish is topped with a poached egg.

I gravitated to this recipe for two particular reasons: it uses both

pork and clams as its flavor base, and it calls for silken tofu, the only kind of tofu that I really enjoy eating. The other plus was a short ingredient list, although the recipes often call for already prepared pastes and sauces that, in my kitchen, are never already prepared.

Also, as is usual for me, although I know next to nothing about Korean cooking, I immediately started quarreling with the recipe. It calls for two cups of beef stock (or water), and yet it is made with pork and clams. I

decided to make a fresh pork broth by poaching some baby spareribs with a few scallions, chunks of ginger, dried shiitake mushrooms, and dried red chile peppers, seasoning it, of course, with salt.

Porkstock

I let this simmer at a carefully monitored 175 degrees (the stem of the thermometer is just visible in the lower right of the photo) for three hours, then fished out the pork, cut the meat from the rib bones, and returned these to the broth, straining them and the rest of the detritus when it was time to make the dish. (The shiitake would be sliced up and incorporated when I stir-fried the vegetables.)

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