

## Prize Your Pots & Pans

Being a chef, I tend to be very critical of the tools I use. I only want the best tool for the job. The best does not always mean the most expensive tool. Sometimes the most expensive tools will give you some extra bells and whistles but the function is just the same as a less expensive tool. For most chefs, if you were going to ask which tool is the one most important, the answer would most likely be a knife. A chef's knife is an extension of the hand and it needs to feel solid and balanced. Most importantly, the knife must be sharp. Yes, knives are "real cool" and I get a thrill from my culinary "toys" much the same as my five year old son reveres his Star Wars action figures!

Though not as nearly as cool as my knives, the next most important tools I use are my pots and pans. I hate to admit it, but I tend to border on fanatical when it comes to choosing my pans. Why do I hate to admit it? Because, I need to be able to adapt to whatever pans I have at my disposal during any culinary event. Example; Thanksgiving 2003, at my mother-in-

law's, using her 30-year-old set of pots and pans. But in a perfect world, I would have a good pan for every culinary occasion, making the job very easy.

So, what is the perfect pan? Cooking jobs do require different kinds of pans so there is no one perfect pan but there are a few important qualities that your pan should have. I will share specifications that I look for in my perfect pan. First of all, the thickness is a major factor. When I was young, the pans in my parent's house were about the thickness of tin foil. Everything would burn so easily, no big surprise. And once, we melted a pan to liquid metal all over the stovetop! The thicker your pan is, the better the heat will be distributed throughout the surface area of the pan. You will have fewer hot spots, therefore less burnt foods. Some pans are designed with a very thick base, but the sides are not as thick. Beware! This will cause burning too, and the food will stick to the sides causing difficult scrubbing and clean-up. You need to have thickness throughout the whole pan. Another important factor in looking for a pan, is finding a type of metal that is a good conductor of heat. I prefer stainless steel, aluminum, copper, or cast iron. You need your heat to distribute evenly and consistently.

Thickness and metal type are my two determining factors in choosing a pan. You may have secondary factors in choosing your pans such as: clean ability, design of handles, and aesthetics.

Recently, I was asked to preview a set of cookware that is endorsed by KFI radio talk show host, Bill Handel, of course I was skeptical when any celebrity endorses something, but to my surprise the cookware, Platinum Cookware was not a joke. The pots and pans were impressive. The pans met my specifications of thickness and conductivity and they have good secondary factors also. They are beautiful to look at and have some fun extra functions. The lids serve as trivets when you flip them over so your beautiful pan becomes your serving dish also.

Unlike conventional cookware, Platinum Cookware is not available at your local retailer. The company uses a direct sales method where sales representatives come to you. In the convenience of your home you get to preview the cookware and also see it in action. The features of the Platinum Cookware are abundant and impressive, most of all you'll be impressed at how easy making a nutritious and tasteful meal can be. Bring back the joy of cooking give Platinum Cookware a try!

