

for the love of FOOD & WINE

Between her weekly radio show, her column for the *Miami Herald* and myriad other cooking-related activities, **Carole Kotkin** (right) runs with some of the most influential figures of the wine and food worlds. She sat down with *Grape* to talk culinary heroes, winter favorites and what's on the wine and food horizon for 2014.

A LEARNING PROCESS

I studied in the U.S. and France, but I'm still learning every day and on every trip. I've had lots of disasters over the years, but my secret is to just rename the finished product. For example, cakes that don't rise: brownies.

CULINARY HEROES

My biggest influence and inspiration was Julia Child. I saw her speak in Miami early in my career, got to host her years later, started a chapter of the Institute of American Food & Wine at her request—we know no one says no to Julia Child!—and I'm making her chocolate cake right now.

A SENSE OF PLACE

Just like wine, food culture is influenced by *terroir*, or unique source. For example, there's no such thing as *Italian* cooking. There is instead Tuscan, Calabrian, Puglian and many more. This dates back to the years when each region was independent, before Italy was unified.

THE SUNSHINE STATE

Florida is surrounded on three sides by water, so we have wonderful seafood. South Florida is hot, so we prefer lighter food. There's also a strong South and Central American influence, so Cuban



cuisine and Venezuelan and Columbian fare, for example, all incorporate themselves into our general diets.

ALL-AMERICAN DISH

My definition of the quintessential American dish is fried chicken, biscuits with honey, hush puppies and apple pie.

WINE IN FOOD

I don't believe in a cooking wine, but instead cook with a wine I'd like to drink. Think about the flavor profile of the food: a light-bodied wine with a light, flaky dish, a fuller-bodied red wine in a hearty dish.

MUST-HAVE TOOL

My chef's knife—though I love zesters.

KITCHEN TIPS

Organize, and don't be afraid to use your creativity (though I don't recommend making something for the first time for company).

WINTER WINE

During winter, I like a nice short rib dish with a Cabernet Sauvignon (which you can cook with as well). I also love lamb in the winter, which goes great with a red Zinfandel.

FAVORITE QUICK WINTER DISH?

Pasta Arrabbiata (recipe, right).



PASTA ARRABBIATA

START TO FINISH: 30 MINUTES

- 2 teaspoons Kosher salt for water
- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon red pepper flakes
- 1 (28-ounce) can whole peeled tomatoes in juice, cut up
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry white wine
- 1 pound penne
- Kosher salt to taste
- 10 to 12 basil leaves
- Grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

ONE Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add 2 teaspoons salt.

TWO Meanwhile add oil, garlic and pepper flakes to large skillet and heat over medium high. Cook about 1 minute or until garlic is just beginning to brown. Add tomatoes with juice and wine. Simmer over medium heat for 8 to 10 minutes or until slightly thickened, stirring occasionally.

THREE Cook pasta in the salted boiling water 2 minutes less than package directions for al dente. Drain; add pasta to skillet.

FOUR Cook and stir about 2 minutes more or stirring until pasta is tender. Serve immediately; sprinkle with additional salt and garnish with basil and cheese.

Makes 6 servings

Nutrition Facts per serving: 372 cal., 6 g total fat (1 g sat. fat), 1 mg chol., 458 mg sodium, 64 g carb., 5 g fiber, 6 g sugar, 12 g protein.