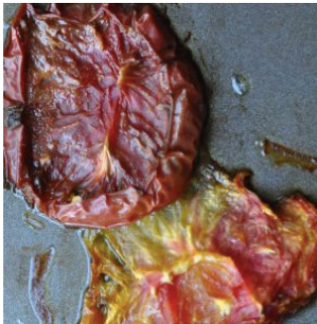




the insufficient kitchen



Welcome to the Insufficient Kitchen!
Two electrical outlets, no dishwasher, one
damaged yet dauntless cook.

Diane



All

Appetizers

Asian Cuisines

beans

Beef and Pork

Book Review

Breads

Cakes

Candy and Confections

Chicken and Poultry

cookies

Desserts

Drinks

Eggs

English Food

Fish

French Food

Fruit

Italian Food

Lamb

Mediterranean Food

Mexican Cuisine

Middle Eastern Food

Miscellaneous Items

Noodles

Pantry Items

Eating European Tomatoes with The Tomato Sisters

DECEMBER 13, 2019

Disclaimer: I've recently partnered with The Greatest Tomatoes from Europe, working to publicize their canned tomato products. I am not being paid for my participation, aside from some wonderful canned tomato products from Europe—and some Italian pasta. Any views posted are strictly my own.

It's 8:41 am. I am eating lukewarm Kung Pao Beef. Is this breakfast? Early lunch? I'm not really sure.

I am exhausted. My husband has been unwell. There's been a lot of lifting. A great deal of laundry. And not much sleep.

The clothes dryer died. So did the van lift. My husband claims the bathroom lift is acting up, but I haven't seen this myself.

Christmas? I haven't bought gifts, baked cookies, or acquired a tree. I'd just as soon cancel the whole damned holiday.



Amid this grim scenario, Marlana Spieler invited me to join the Tomato Sisters. Along with Marlana, Carolyn Phillips, and Kathleen Hill, I will sing the praises of European tomatoes*.

*an unpaid gig, save some lovely Italian pasta and a few cans of European tomatoes.

**No actual singing will occur.



Pasta
Preserved Foods >
Rice
Salads
Sauces
Soups
Vegetables



Never miss a recipe

Last Friday your hostess found herself in the studios of KSVY radio, where tomato sister Kathleen Hill has a weekly show. She had invited her sisters in tomato to sit in.

Or so I thought: we had actually been invited to *speak*.

Now, Marlena has authored over seventy cookbooks, most recently *A Taste Of Naples*. Carolyn has written *The Dim Sum Field Guide* and *All Under Heaven*. Her memoir, *The Jade Labyrinth*, will be published in 2020.

I, on the other hand, have fewer accomplishments to my name. It took a few moments (Okay, ten minutes) but I managed to dredge up my photographic career at [Shutterstock](#)...this blog... the calendar now available at [Lulu.com](#)...How I began cooking to feed my skinny husband, who is no longer skinny. I managed all this on the air in complete, coherent sentences, though I missed Marlena's frantic mouthings: "**Instagram!**"

Damn!!

We then repaired to Kathleen's beautiful home, where we cooked up a storm.

Kathleen's home houses the Kathleen Hill Culinary Collection, which she graciously allowed me to photograph. A few photos are below. An entire wall holds vintage cookbooks, culinary knickknacks, and photographs.



THE KATHLEEN HILL CULINARY COLLECTION

The remaining wall space, floor to ceiling, is hung with kitchen implements.





THE KATHLEEN HILL CULINARY COLLECTION

Under Marlena's instruction, we set to work making spaghetti with meatballs and pasta e fagioli.



My kitchen is small and lacking in amenities: electrical outlets, counter space, a dishwasher. This means I seldom cook with others—much less cookbook authors. I fetched bowls and opened jars and took pictures. But most of all, I watched.

I watched Carolyn dice an onion in seconds flat.



I watched Marlena assemble an entire meal without consulting a single recipe.





I watched Kathleen smile calmly as three people—one a complete stranger with a camera—invaded her beautiful kitchen.



I realized, among other things, that my knife skills need work, that I rarely cook with friends, and that ground turkey is not the enemy. Also that canned tomatoes from Europe are excellent, mitigating my heartbreak over being unable to can my own last summer, when my back was out.



John ate the leftovers.





Which were dispatched in seconds.



Filed under: Canned, Italian Food, Mediterranean Food, Miscellaneous Items, Pasta, Reality

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Braised Short Ribs

1 comment • 4 years ago

Bret Negro — What a beautiful post. I recently made Wolfert's short ribs in cepe-prune sauce, and your description of her

test post

1 comment • 2 years ago

Diane Leach — Can I write a comment?

Strawberry Brownie Bars

2 comments • 4 years ago

Diane Leach — So glad it worked out for you! Thanks for commenting!

Notes on Canning Tomatoes

1 comment • 4 years ago

Rachel Cunliffe — Lovely. I recently read Animal, Vegetable, Miracle - beautiful and inspiring. We have 120 (!) tomato plants in

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Tomato Conserve

AUGUST 15, 2016

Why tomato conserve and not paste? Excellent question. This comes from The Art Of Simple Food II, where Alice Waters



explains it is conserve because the result is more jammy than paste-like—at least, I think that’s what she means by “The tomatoes are concentrated into a paste that is more like...”

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Braised Short Ribs

JANUARY 5, 2016

Braised Short Ribs belong to the important family of stews, braises, and daubes, those heartily earthy dishes of winter. In this discussion, the term “stew” is synonymous with “braise,” signifying a dish requiring long, slow cooking, usually a low oven. My passion for braising began in grad school, while reading Laurie...

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Pasta with chickpeas and spinach

OCTOBER 18, 2018

Pasta with chickpeas and spinach came about because I could barely walk. Not the most felicitous of culinary circumstances, but there you are. One never knows where a good dish will come from. Your hostess has a bursitic knee, long treated with cortisone shots. Last week the doctor decided further...

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