



Afterword

"Everything is a pretext for a good dinner."

Jean Anouilh

We gather our lives around food. Whether we eat in a fine restaurant with business partners, or share an intimate meal with a lover, or enjoy a casual dinner with our families, food binds our lives together. Food for most of us is not a focus but an occasion. A glorious but subtle occasion that brings beauty to our lives. Sharing food with one another is an occasion for intimacy. Can you imagine a world where food would be mere necessity — something we do to sustain ourselves as utilitarian requirement rather than a sensuous opportunity?

There are those artisans who could not imagine such a world. Not only do they believe in the wonderment of food but they carry its preparation and presentation to new heights and exquisite dimensions. Whether you have read, or as most of us commonly do, perused through this cookbook in a patchwork fashion, you have discovered something unequalled by other cookbooks. You see Bud and Karen Royer on every page. One cannot read and use this cookbook without considering the personality and uniqueness of the Royers. The works we produce say a great deal about us, and this cookbook says much about the Royers.

You have seen an exuberant lust for life. If you have ever read their quarterly paper from the Cafe then you are familiar with this famous "Budism": L.I.T.S. which stands for "Life Is Too Short"! This cookbook is another testament to their passionate belief in life and many of its pleasures.

You have also noted an artistic flare unrivaled by anyone. Few of us are courageous enough to live our passions freely. Fewer still live our passions artistically. The Royers have presented their passions beautifully.

Most importantly though, you have seen and maybe by now prepared some of the recipes in this book. It all comes down to this doesn't it? Is the food

functional or magnificent? Do the recipes in this book merely satisfy hunger or do they transport us to another dimension of reality? I have eaten in the Royers' Round Top Cafe, and I know without a doubt that anything Bud and Karen create ushers us into the warm glow of friendship, the uniting of family and the beautiful artistry of life. Their creations come close to satisfying that intangible hunger all of us as humans share: the hunger for pleasure and the joy pleasure brings.

To eat together is to give to one another, to serve and be served. How many times have we turned to a cookbook to fix a fine meal to be bountiful with our friends or families? To fix a wonderful meal is to be extravagant with the ones we love. To eat together is to share with one another is a common setting of happiness.

But I must go one step further. I have the privilege of knowing the Royers personally. As I have said, I have eaten in their Cafe, and I have been in their home. I have had extensive conversations with Bud and Karen. Our conversations together have been full of laughter and tears, hope and disappointments, failures and successes. But every time we have been together, they have quietly, covertly called me to something more. They have called me to enjoy and to enjoy without reservation.

Food for the Royers has been and continues to be the occasion for laughter, conversation, comfort, tears and love — generous love. And this is the most remarkable thing about them — they are generous lovers. So many artists are stingy with their gifts and talents. Not so with the Royers. In the long run a stingy artist produces stingy creations. A generous artist somehow understands that generosity bears love and love bears great joy. This wondrous cookbook is one more generosity in the Royer's repertoire. May it be an occasion for you to be generous and joyful in turn.

Don Hudson (see side bar on page 145)