

THURSDAY, MAY 1, 2008

## For The Love of Words and Fear of The Typo

A dedicated reader e-mailed me and questioned the quantity of olive oil listed in my recipe for "Flank Steak Thinly Sliced over Arugula with Garlic and Lemon Oil" that appears on page 41 of my new cookbook *Grill Every Day* (Chronicle Books, May 2008). I dashed to the kitchen, opened the book, and looked at the recipe. Indeed, to my dismay, the ingredient list has the quantity of olive oil listed as 2 1/4 cups. The right amount of lemon-infused olive oil is 1/4 cup.

Where did the "2" come from? I went back to the final edited manuscript on my computer and there is no "2," only the right amount, which is 1/4 cup. I looked back at the color proofs and there is the damn number 2!

In my compulsive way, I went through every recipe in the book, looking at the ingredient list and comparing it to my edited manuscript. Fortunately, I didn't find any other errors.

This is an author's nightmare. From turned-in manuscript through the editing process, and throughout the design process, text is changed, clarified, and enhanced (with author approval, of course) and the text is manipulated to fit the design of the book. Then, in the proofing process, there are copy editors, managing editors, and the author scanning the book again to look for errors. It is always at this stage that final questions are asked and inconsistencies are discovered. For instance, pecans toasted in a 400 degree oven in one recipe might suggest an 8 minute baking time for best results. In another recipe, walnuts might need 10 minutes to toast to golden brown. The author would be queried as to whether this is correct or a typo because the baking times are different.

These are tedious, necessary steps. When the author hits the "Send" button to approve the corrections, there is always a moment of hesitation. Did she see everything? Did she check every headnote, ingredient list, measurement. The hope, of course, is yes. But, honestly, no matter how many eyes look upon a book, there will be something, big or small, that is missed.

In this instance, thankfully, I explain in the last step of the directions to drizzle one tablespoon of the lemon-infused oil over each portion of flank steak. The careful reader and cook, hopefully, will realize that there are 4 servings suggested, which means four tablespoons (1/4 cup) of lemon oil are needed, not 2 1/4 cups!!!

Whew, I knew I had to write and let you all know! It's a fabulous recipe and I suspect a popular one in the book.

The irony of the story is that I received the e-mail from this reader yesterday, and I was planning to make this very recipe for dinner last night. I had shopped in the morning

and the flank steak was in the refrigerator along with fresh arugula. I wonder if I would have read the recipe carefully enough to catch the error. Afterall, I know the recipe well-  
-I wrote it!!

My thanks to this dedicated reader and cook to let me know.

POSTED BY DIANE MORGAN COOKS AT 5:39 PM 0 COMMENTS 

LABELS: [DIANE MORGAN](#), [GRILL EVERY DAY](#), [GRILLED FLANK STEAK](#), [WEEKNIGHT GRILLING](#)