

## Incredible Edibles

(posted 11-24-10)

I was scheduled to teach an instructors workshop for the USDF back in the mid-'80s in northern Minnesota, a beautiful area. The venue was on the upper shore of Lake Superior well away from civilization. Rather than put me in a ramshackle motel that usually sat dormant outside of ski-mobile season, I was to be put up in a sumptuous lakeside A-frame cottage, the vacation home of a Cities accountant. As I was dropped off the night before the workshop, my driver told me, "You'll have everything you need here. The refrigerator and the liquor cabinet are stocked. The TV remote is on the table, and if the bear tries to get onto the porch, there's a gun by the nightstand!"

In Sarasota I used to do clinics at a farm where the dressage arena was just one four-board fence away from the pond. In the evenings after work when my hostess schooled her horse, a large alligator would routinely float nearby, only his eyes above the surface, watching her (critically, one supposes) as she trained.

And back in my hunter-jumper days, we used to go showing at the old Rocky Hill state fairgrounds in Rhode Island where the riding ring backed up on the carnival midway. The horses managed to acclimate themselves to the Ferris wheel, but the year the jumpers had to come around the corner to an oxer just over the rail from a barred trailer of (honest-to-goodness) lions, many of the equine participants claimed foul!

In this last episode no horses were at risk.

Once the U.S. Combined Training Association—or was it the USDF Region(?)—decided to raise some money by putting out a cookbook of favorite recipes gathered from prominent judges and trainers. Unwisely, they solicited a contribution from the Woodses.

Susan wrote out a nice recipe for marinade: some olive oil, red wine, garlic cloves, and a few other herbs but prefaced our submission with advice on how to pick up suitable, fresh roadkill on which to use it.

Strangely, her efforts did not reach print—a pity because that sort of information can be useful in a post-apocalyptic dressage age. And it fits right in with the conversation I overheard in the security line at the airport a few weeks ago. A pair of vultures were traveling together and, reading that the airlines had suspended food service on flights of less than four hours, had each stopped and picked up a few pieces of roadkill to munch on during their journey. The TSA agent was quite adamant, however, that they had to leave half of it behind. "I'm sorry, gentlemen," I heard him say, "the rule is only one carrion per person."