

Tips On Baking And Getting Really Big 80's Hair: My Interview with Andrea Charroin

My high school friend, Andrea Charroin, has made the leap into the cyber-writer world and has her own column: Here.

About Andrea: She had the coveted job in high school of working at Camel Records in Huntington Beach, she had a bitchen' handmade "Sixty Eight Gun" jacket, she walked down the aisle at her wedding to the tune of "Girl U Want by Devo," and she named her boys Dexter and Felix (possibly the best name combos ever).

She is a dear old friend and here is my "interview" with her:

SB: What kind of background do you have in baking?

AC: I attended a pastry program in San Francisco and then did my stints in kitchens all over the city. I worked in some fancy-smanchy restaurants and a mom and pop bakery. I got married, had a baby and left SF for glamorous Redding, CA. I had my own bakery in Redding, it was in need of a great local place, and I was going to fill that niche. I had quite the little spot, but closed my doors in November 2006.

SB: How did your sister get her hair so big in high school?

(Here is her sister, Kristy, or Krispy, in 1986.)

AC: Do you think NOW is the time to out Krispy? Well, the secret needs to get out. The '80's are back after all. I remember a lot of experimenting with egg-whites and sugar (ooh! a meringue!) and excessive amounts of aerosol mousse. What I remember working most

effectively was shaving cream and aqua-net hair spray. We affectionately called aqua-net AQUA-GLUE. I do believe that the blue can was more difficult to find and was of course more desired. I wonder if we need to buy back some emission credits from Al Gore with all the damage we did!

SB: What is this thing you keep referring to called “dough?”

AC: This “dough” is a sourdough starter. I wrote about making your own starter in my column. Once you have that you can make your own bread at home without store bought yeast. It is fun to do— sort of a long haul, though. Baking your own bread is easy as...well, PIE. Nothing wrong with using yeast from a store, some people just like to do everything from scratch. Bake some bread today: You will have a lot of fun and the house will smell amazing.

SB: Do you still have your “Sixty Eight Guns” jacket?

AC: No, I sold it on E-bay to fund my bakery. No, just kidding. I do not know what happened to the jacket. It’s in the great “Goodwill” pile in the sky.

SB: Can you give us a simple recipe?

Andrea’s Muffins

I make this easy recipe so often it is silly. I usually make muffins or if I am having friends over for dinner I will make it into a cake. I use whatever fruit is starting to look like it needs to be moved to our compost bin (you have one of those, right?) Sometimes I toss in nuts or dried fruit, just depends on what is around at the time. I like recipes like that. Just a good foundation to something you can create and call your own.

1 cup unsalted butter (2 sticks)

2 cups sugar

4 eggs

2 cups All Purpose flour (I have done 1/2 wheat and this turns out great)

2 teaspoons baking powder

1 Tablespoon vanilla

Fruit like bananas, pears, berries or dried fruits such as cranberries or apricots. Nuts are a great addition as well.

350 degrees

Butter your pan or if making muffins, use papers if you like.

In a large bowl cream the butter and the sugar until fluffy.

Add eggs, one at a time, making sure each one is incorporated into the butter before adding the next egg. Add the dry ingredients and the vanilla. Mix until incorporated. At this point add any fruit, nuts or dried fruit. Pour into pan(s).

Sprinkle with sugar before baking.

For muffins should take about 15-20 minutes.

For cake 35- 45 minutes.