

VELOCITY

AUGUST 2008 • ISSUE 9

FUTURE FIT

Have you
future-proofed
your business?





A
TASTE
FOR TINS

I was in my local corner café the other day, ambling up and down the aisles, feeling rather hungry but not knowing what I really wanted.

Suddenly I noticed from the corner of my eye a glistening row of multi-coloured tins that instantly transported me back to my childhood. Pickled fish, spaghetti with meatballs, sardines in brine, tuna in vegetable oil, smoked mussels and Vienna sausages.

My mouth started watering. This was it - I was going to eat retro. But which tin to pick? Which of these delicacies of yesteryear – so scorned and derided in this era of organic foods and free-range mania – were to grace my table that night?

And then I remembered an old recipe book in the back of my grocery cupboard. I have no idea how *Let's Cook with Tinned Foods* by Anneli Louw (Naval Hill Publishers, 1974) inveigled its way into my recipe collection, but there it was, next to the extra virgin olive oil and the balsamic vinegar from Padua, inviting readers to "Save Time and Money - Tickle your Taste Buds".

Luckily I live close to the café, so I rushed home, opened the book and started paging through it. Portuguese Sardines on Toast promised to be the highlight of every breakfast. Oh really? I wonder if Ms Louw ever opened a tin of Portuguese sardines herself? In our house the rolling mechanism that was supposed to open the tin invariably broke and my dad had to pry it open with his pocket knife. What eventually emerged from the tin was a mush that was palatable to only one member of the family, namely Herbie the cat. To add insult to injury, my dad wasn't a man who was very

fond of spending time in the kitchen (it would be safe to assume that he and Modern Meterosexual Man are two different species entirely). So when these wretched tins straight from the Ministry of (Bad) Design forced his hand, so to speak, he would sulk and moan and spoil not only breakfast, but lunch and dinner too.

I paged on. For starters, Ms Louw assured us that her Tinned Asparagus and Pea Soup would satisfy "even the most discerning palate." A cursory glance at the ingredients made me wonder: apart from the already mentioned tinned asparagus and peas, she also saw fit to stir in a can of evaporated milk.


Moving swiftly along, Macaroni with Tinned Tuna and Onions promised a filling, delicious meal "for the hungriest of families." Not being that ravenous myself, I decided to skip this culinary treat too.

The pages became a blur. I paged past recipes that included every tinned food you could imagine: from yummy three-bean salads to chewy mealie fritters; from a gelatinous salmon mousse to sweet and sour meatballs to an asparagus quiche and a soufflé made with tinned prawns.

Yet nothing really grabbed me. Nothing jumped from the page and jubilantly announced, "I will satisfy your craving." So far, *Let's Cook with Tinned Foods* was a huge disappointment and bound to drive me to the nearest take-away instead.

But then I turned over another page and heaved a sigh of relief,





for I had found it: the *pièce de resistance*. The crowning glory of Anneli Louw's culinary genius. As I started reading, the cretestone walls of my loft apartment dissolved and I was standing in my mother's kitchen in the early seventies, experiencing that special thrill when the tin opener cut through the last piece of metal to let free the first, intoxicating whiff of... bullybeef.

Anneli Louw's recipe was a dead ringer for my mother's Savoury Tart. So without further ado, I'll share this delicious secret with you:

Take ten slices of stale white bread, six cups of milk and six spoons of butter and bring to boil in a saucepan. Add one tin of bullybeef, one tin of Vienna sausages cut into slices, one kilogram of cheese, one onion, one red pepper, one pack of bacon cut into pieces, three eggs and parsley to taste. Mix them all up and bake for 45 minutes at 180° Celcius.

I closed the book and rushed back to the café to acquire the ingredients. That night the enticing aroma of Anneli Louw's Savoury Tart with Bully-beef and Vienna Sausages settled over the neighbourhood. And in my mind's eye I could see the patrons of the trendy restaurants down the road look up from their Quiche Lorraine with Organic Salad, smell the air and, just for a moment, feel a wistful nostalgia for a time when the finest foods could be found on the shelves of the corner café.

-Willie Fritz

