

Even turkey soup says a lot

Favourite broths and bouillions speak to people's personalities and pastimes

By Denny Boyd

I spent Christmas night carefully simmering the gnawed bones of a noble turkey.

I can't remember when I haven't spent Christmas night making a cauldron of turkey soup.

I'm pretty good at it.

But this year there were some distracting doubts floating to the simmering surface.

Why am I doing this?

What does the soup say about me?

It isn't that I have lost my soup skills.

What was nagging at me was a breath-takingly stupid story about soup I had read in one of the eastern papers.

It said, I swear by my stock pot, that you can read a person's personality by the soup they like to eat.

A University of Illinois researcher with time on his hands and not much on his mind, interviewed 32 diner waitresses and

1,003 random citizens on soup preferences.

Voilà! Here are his findings.

People who like chicken noodle tend to be pet-loving churchgoers who listen to talk shows.

Tomato soup? Literate adventurers.

Vegetable? Home-bodies. Magazine-subscribers.

(Nothing said about people who like to play

with the little alphabets.)

And your minestrone lovers don't like pets, are physically fit calorie-counters.

I hate this.

It's going to make me think twice as I hit my favorite North Shore soup spots.

I can't go too long without dipping into a big bowl of pho, maybe the world's best soup, from Vina in West Vancouver.

It's Vietnamese; it's pronounced "fuh," as in fuddle.

A delicate beef broth, flavoured with coriander, mint, lime juice, garlic and fish sauce is brought to a boil and poured over sliced onions; fat, slippery noodles, and thin slices of raw beef which is cooked by the heat of the broth.

You slurp it up with a spoon and chopsticks

and then take your shirt to the cleaners.

I recently had a litre of bracing lobster bisque made by Robert Waggott, the pleasant Park Royal fish monger.

He told me he got the dark maroon colour and deep rich flavour by roasting the lobster shells for the stock.

Onion soup, hot and cheesy? Chesa on Marine, Cucina Bravo.

The always-busy Neighborhood Noodles House on Lonsdale has a menu page and a half of Far East soups, most of which will keep you flu-safe.

Any self-respecting sushi bar will start you out with a bowl of that irresistible miso, which you inhale directly from the bowl, one-handed, without a spoon.

For soup entertainment, you can't beat the

Stock Pot at Lonsdale Quay, which is Seinfield's Soup Nazi without the rudeness.

You can take home a variety of soups, gravies and stocks for your freezer or have the staff dip the day's specials from those gleaming stainless steel pots that are big enough to cook a small boy.

Paradoxically, my all-time favourite soup comes out of a can, Habitant Pea Soup in the yellow cans.

Been eating it since I was about 15, still love it, especially dipping buttered bread into it.

Speaking of dipping, another irritating researcher has been measuring gravy.

The Brit meddler from University of Bristol has been listing the ability of various side dishes to absorb gravy.

He says Yorkshire pudding can suck up 90 per cent of its own dry weight in gravy but beef itself absorbs no gravy, it just runs off.

Alarmingly, he claims that 150,000 gallons of gravy are left on the plate uneaten every week.

Glad you dropped around today? ☉



feel the need
to rant or rave?

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