

Concerts in the Park(ing) Lot

The idea for "Concerts in the Park (ing Lot!)" was born from rather selfish beginnings. Andrew and Beverlee Coulter of Marathon, Ontario simply wanted more live music in their world. They contacted some local musicians they knew of to determine if there might be an interest in doing some outdoor shows.

In no time at all, this summer music series began to take shape. Since there wasn't a suitable centrally located place in town, it was decided to have it in the parking lot in front of their business - the local Pizza Hut.

The summer of 2006 saw a variety of local artists and genres take the stage. Bagpipes, gospel and plenty in between were heard. The event was free although a 'hat' was passed during the show. The artists were given the option of keeping the money or donating it to the charity of their choice. A number of charities - locally and beyond - benefited from this series. When the Coulters began to plan a lengthier series for 2007 and weren't able to find enough local talent to fill eleven weeks, they looked to the highway. As Marathon is pretty much the half way point between both Thunder Bay/Sault Ste. Marie and Winnipeg/Toronto on the Trans Canada, they thought there were likely a few musicians who might appreciate a night's stay with supper or breakfast and the opportunity to perform in a casual venue in front of an appreciative small-town audience. The artists are also well-promoted with a radio interview, airplay for a couple of their tunes, a write-up in the local newspaper and more. Some of the series' 'away' musicians this year include:

The Carruthers Brothers Band, Mark Dunn, Rich Aucoin, Chuck Baker, Ian Tambllyn, Lindsay Jane, Brock Zeman and Dan Walsh. The Coulters agree that the Acoustic Roof site was a catalyst to their series' growth and success. "Our initial contacts were made with artists who were listed on the site. We followed the link to their professional websites and, if it looked like Marathon might fit into their tour schedule, we would contact them." The benefit of the site worked both ways. "Soon after listing our 'venue', we were contacted by a number of artists as well. We were so pleased to have learned about this site (CBC radio). I'm really not sure where our series might have been without this wonderful connecting space." The Coulters are talking about a few changes for next year (including a website) and continued 'fine-tuning' to some extent. With an eager audience and interested artists, the simple concept that is the "Concerts in the Park (ing Lot!)" summer music series seems to be working in our community and hopefully will continue for many (y)ears to come.

My dear aunt, Gertie MacKenzie, keeps this saying tacked to her kitchen cupboard door.

"If it is to be, it is up to me"

Author unknown

With these wise words clearly in mind, I wrote **"Do it Yourself"** a guide for artists who want to share their music... Look for this article on the acousticroof home page. -Paula Fredericks

Recipes Under the Roof

Twists Again!

By Paula Fredericks

More comfort food...for the audience to share. I started making these cheese twists for our second house concert. (I'll confess, sometimes I am still mixing the dough quietly in the kitchen but I can still see the show) while the music unfolds in the living room. Our concert stalwarts have come to expect these, so I guess



I'll be making them for the foreseeable future. There's something about the smell of these wafting from the oven that has people sneaking into the kitchen to help themselves before they are officially served!

Ingredients:

(I am a bit of a "seat of the pants" baker, so I did a bit of guesswork and made these as close as possible to my typical house concert cheese twists. The photo is of the result.) This recipe is for a normal family (about two dozen twists. For a house concert, I would quadruple this recipe.) This is reasonably health-conscious.

- 1 C. sifted all-purpose flour
- scant 1/4 tsp salt 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/4 C. grated old cheddar (low fat is fine)
- 1/4 cup skim milk (or whatever you like)
- 1/8 cup olive or canola oil
- 2 Tablespoons grated parmesan cheese

No worries about calories or fat? you can use whole milk and regular cheddar, and even melted butter instead of oil. You could also add a little extra cheese. Just blend the dry ingredients, the grated cheese and 1 tablespoon of parmesan in a bowl and make a little well in the middle. Pour in the milk and the oil. Use a fork to combine until the flour is mixed in, but don't over mix this. It should form sort of a "ball" in the bowl, or at least be together in a lump. It may seem a little sticky, so let it sit for 10 minutes or so. Then shake a little flour on your counter, along with the other tablespoon of parmesan. Roll out the dough in to a rectangle (hey, use any shape you want!) and flip it over to get some cheese on both sides. With a small sharp knife cut the 1/4 inch thick (or so) dough into 3/4 inch strips. "Twist" each strip onto a cookie sheet (lightly oiled); bake until light brown in a 375 F oven. (I kinda forget how long that takes, so watch them.) Once baked, remove them from pan at once, or they'll stick. Then, from experience, I suggest you hide these in a safe place until mealtime.