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## **A cook's tour of useful Internet sites**

### **Newsday**

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By Erica Marcus

The Internet is a rich source of culinary information. Here are 10 sites that I consult regularly:

##### **1. Hormel Food Glossary**

[www.hormel.com/kitchen/glossary.asp](http://www.hormel.com/kitchen/glossary.asp)

Hormel, one of the country's leading producers of meat and meat products (Spam, for example), features an improbably sophisticated food glossary on its Web site. Here's a little taste of what you'll find just in food terms that begin with "ar": Arame, Arauco Olive, Arbequina Olive, Arbol Chile Pepper, Arborio Rice, Ardennes Ham, Ardi Gasna Cheese, Arepas, Argan Oil.

##### **2. The Cook's Thesaurus**

[www.foodsubs.com](http://www.foodsubs.com)

The great strength of this extensive food dictionary is that everything is illustrated with color photographs. You can actually see the difference between Bhutanese red rice and Himalyan red rice. The site also goes to great pains to note and expound upon equivalent terms: "Popcorn rice = American basmati = della rice. ... This rice is a cross between basmati and American long-grain. Common brands include Texmati, Delta Rose, and Cajun Country Popcorn Rice. Substitutes: basmati rice (nuttier) OR long-grain rice (blandier)."

##### **3. Joy of Baking**

[www.joyofbaking.com](http://www.joyofbaking.com)

Quite often, an Internet search for some baking term leads me to Stephanie Jaworski's homey, informative site. Along with good recipes is a wealth of information on substitutions and conversions as well as clear explanations of technique.

##### **4. Food Measurement**

Conversion Calculator

[www.ez-calculators.com](http://www.ez-calculators.com)

[/measurement-conversion](http://www.ez-calculators.com/measurement-conversion)

[-calculator.htm](http://www.ez-calculators.com/measurement-conversion-calculator.htm)

EZ Calculators is a site devoted to calculating conversions, whether for foreign currencies or Roman numerals. The Food Measurement Conversion Calculator converts both within the American and metric systems (how many teaspoons in a cup; how many grams in a kilogram) and between them (fluid ounces to milliliters; ounces to kilograms).

##### **5. The Code of Federal**

Regulations (CFR)

[www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html](http://www.gpoaccess.gov/cfr/index.html)

Published by the Federal Register, the code lists all regulations of the executive departments and agencies of the federal government. Its 50 "titles" cover everything from the Panama Canal to Wildlife and Fisheries. I refer regularly to Title 21, which pertains to food and drugs. Using the Code of Federal Regulation's search tool, you can access all the Food and Drug

Administration's standards of identity, i.e. how the government defines every food. What is fat-free half-and-half? The code knows.

## 6. USDA National

Nutrient Database

[www.nal.usda.gov/fnic](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic)

[/foodcomp/search](http://www.nal.usda.gov/fnic/foodcomp/search)

The Department of Agriculture maintains this complete and easy-to-use tool for finding out the nutritional content of virtually every food. You have the option of searching for information by unit, weight or volume (i.e., 1 chicken drumstick, 29 grams of chicken drumstick, 1/2 cup of dark meat chicken) and the database includes both whole, processed and even brand-name foods.

## 7. Chowhound

[www.chowhound.com](http://www.chowhound.com)

Chowhound is a leading Web destination for discussing eating and cooking. A "home cooking" message board is a lively forum for cooks from all over the country. The geographical message boards I use most frequently are those dedicated to Manhattan, the outer boroughs and the tri-state board, where Long Island is discussed.

## 8. Cooking for engineers

[www.cookingforengineers.com](http://www.cookingforengineers.com)

"Have an analytical mind? Like to cook? This is the site to read!" That's the motto of this Web site, the brainchild of computer engineer Michael Chu. He brings a clear, scientific mind to articles such as "Common Materials of Cookware," "Microwave Safe Containers," and "Smoke Points of Various Fats."

## 9. The chef and restaurant

database

[www.chefdb.com](http://www.chefdb.com)

ChefDb.com is dedicated to "documenting the careers of chefs and restaurateurs from restaurants around the world." Modeled on imdb.com, the Internet movie database, ChefDb allows you to search "places" to see who has worked in a given restaurant, or "people" to see the career path of a given chef or restaurateur. For example, we learn from the entry on New York's Bouley restaurant, that from 1993 to 1996, Cyril Renaud was chef de cuisine. Click on Renaud to discover that he is now chef-owner of Fleur de Sel. The site is still a work in progress, but it's already a valuable resource.

## 10. OpenTable

[www.opentable.com](http://www.opentable.com)

Is there any better application for Internet technology than making restaurant reservations? OpenTable lists hundreds of restaurants in New York, and 22 on Long Island. You can search by restaurant and see when a table might be available, or you can tell your computer that there are five of you who want to dine in Midtown at 8 p.m. next Thursday and Open Table will tell you who can accommodate you. The reservation is made instantly online.