



eat & drink



BEACH READING

"I wanted it to be a book to sit down with, pour a glass of wine, read recipes and stories and daydream about the Shore," says Deborah Smith, near her Point Pleasant Beach home.

a teen, Smith worked at Jack's Music Shoppe (which is still going strong), and used to sing in amateur theatrical productions.

Smith was raised by her mother after her parents' early divorce. "My mom was not much of a cook," she says. "She didn't enjoy it. Her favorite book was [Peg Bracken's 1960] *The I Hate to Cook Cookbook*. I have a copy because it's so nostalgic for me. I got interested in food around college age and started experimenting with recipes and cooking for friends, because I felt a lack there."

The mother of two teenage boys "who play football and are big eaters, but not foodies," Smith, 50, loves to cook. "My younger one would complain I make too much gourmet stuff," she says, "which would crack me up, because I used to complain we ate too much fast food when I was little."

How did she whittle down the many hundreds of Shore eateries to a select 50?

"First," she says, "I narrowed it to towns that actually touched the ocean. Then I had to have iconic places, like the Knife and Fork Inn, the Lobster House in Cape May and the Inlet Café in Atlantic Highlands."

"I also wanted interesting new places, like Porta in Asbury Park and the Diving Horse in Avalon. And I wanted places that were super casual, like the Chicken or the Egg in Beach Haven and Bubba's Dogs in Sea Isle City."

"People think it's easy to get restaurants to participate," she adds. "It's not so easy. Some never got back to me. One said their chef would never allow their recipes to be published. I suggested they create a unique recipe for the book. They didn't go for it. Some maybe thought it was a ladies' auxiliary publication or something. But to be fair, they're getting hit up all the time for all kinds of things." 🍷

• COOKBOOKS

50 RECIPES, 50 SHORE EATERIES

Deborah Smith of JerseyBites.com captures the cuisines of her beloved seaside, where she grew up and still lives. *By Eric Levin*

ABOUT A YEAR AGO, Deborah Smith received a call from a book publisher wondering if she'd be interested in creating a cookbook of 50 recipes from 50 Shore restaurants. "They knew me from JerseyBites.com"—the widely read food blog Smith launched in 2007—"but they didn't know I live a half mile from the ocean," Smith relates, "and didn't know I grew up on the Shore and love everything about the Shore. It was a perfect fit. I said, 'I can do this. Absolutely.'"

And so she has. With lively graphics, a stain-resistant hard-cover and 165 color photos by the talented Princeton-area photographer Thomas Robert Clarke, *The Jersey Shore Cook-*

book: Fresh Summer Flavors From the Boardwalk and Beyond (Quirk Books, \$22.95) is available at Shore gift shops, Costco, Amazon and, on June 8, QVC.

"I almost fell off my chair when they said Costco," Smith admits. "I had no expectation of that."

The 50 recipes cover all meal-times and meal parts, from eggs Oscar (from the Buttered Biscuit, Bradley Beach) to lobster thermidor (Knife and Fork Inn, Atlantic City) to blueberry cobbler (Tallula's, Asbury Park). Geographically, the 50 eateries range from Keyport on Raritan Bay (the Broadway Diner's Jersey Guy breakfast club sandwich) to Cape May Point on the Dela-

ware Bay (Red Store's lobster ceviche with tostones).

In all, 29 towns are represented. Cape May has the most restaurants (five); Asbury Park and Atlantic City finish second, with four each.

Smith's Shore heritage goes back to her mother's father, John Beverly Anderson, who around 1960 created the Tradewinds Beach Club in Sea Bright, "which was a trailer and a sign on the street," Smith says. "He later sold it to someone who built it up to what it is today." Her grandfather, known as Bev, also owned a record store on Broad Street in Red Bank called Anderson's. Smith's mother, Lonnie, worked there as a teenager. Lonnie's younger brother, Smith's Uncle Jack, later won Bev's blessing to open a record, sheet music and musical instrument store across the street from Anderson's. As

