

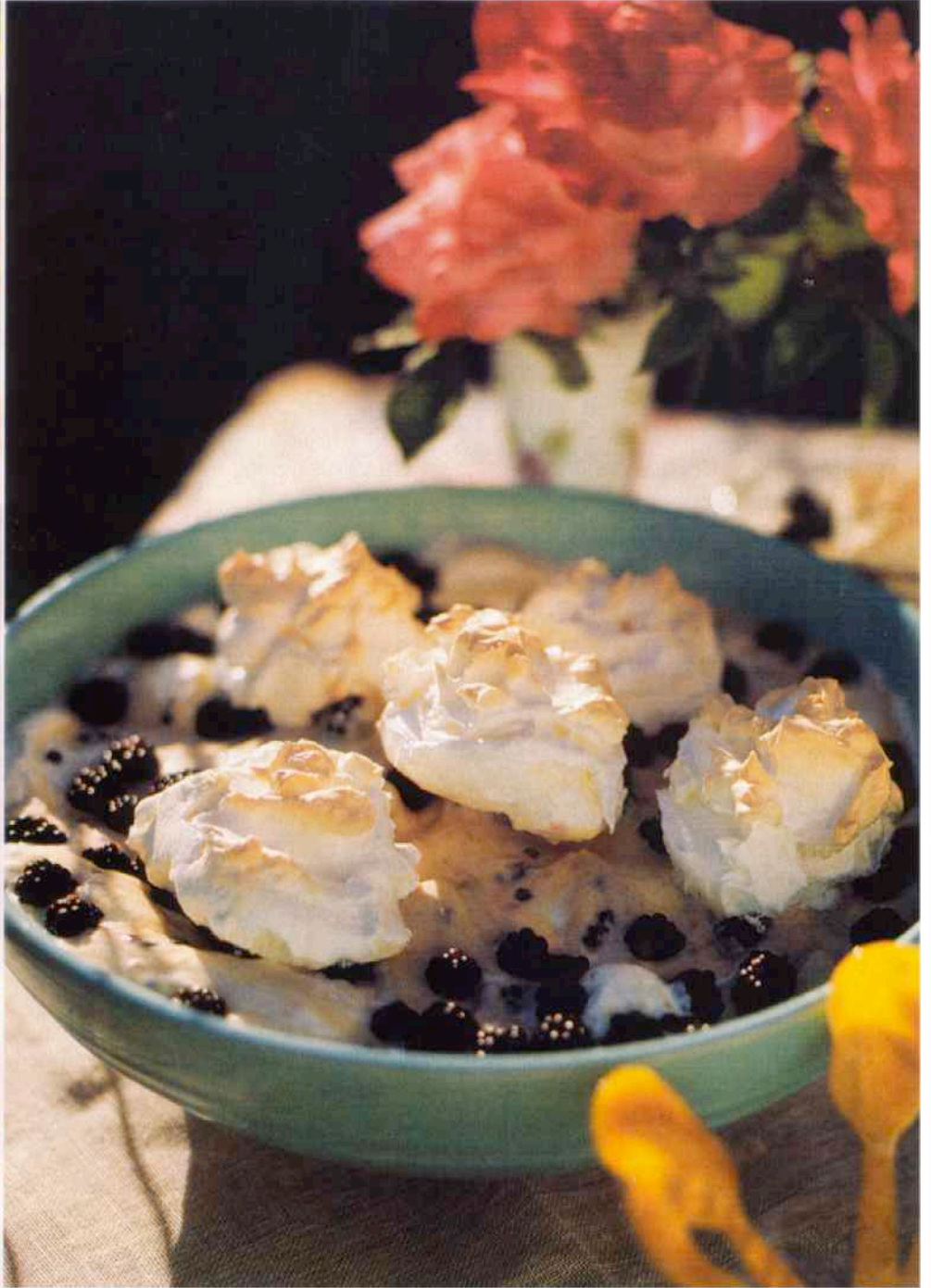
Rescued and revitalized by ex-New Yorkers, the sunny Jintown Store in Alexander Valley enters its second century. OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: Bright yellow paint and a 1930 Buick make a jaunty statement; owners Carrie Brown and John Werner and pals at their behind-the-store home; tête-à-tête seating outdoors; inside, voodoo bottles and pick-up sticks beckon all ages; blackberries adrift on floating island; country supper on the hops-covered patio; a shaded place to pause; beating the heat with local greens and garden tomatoes.

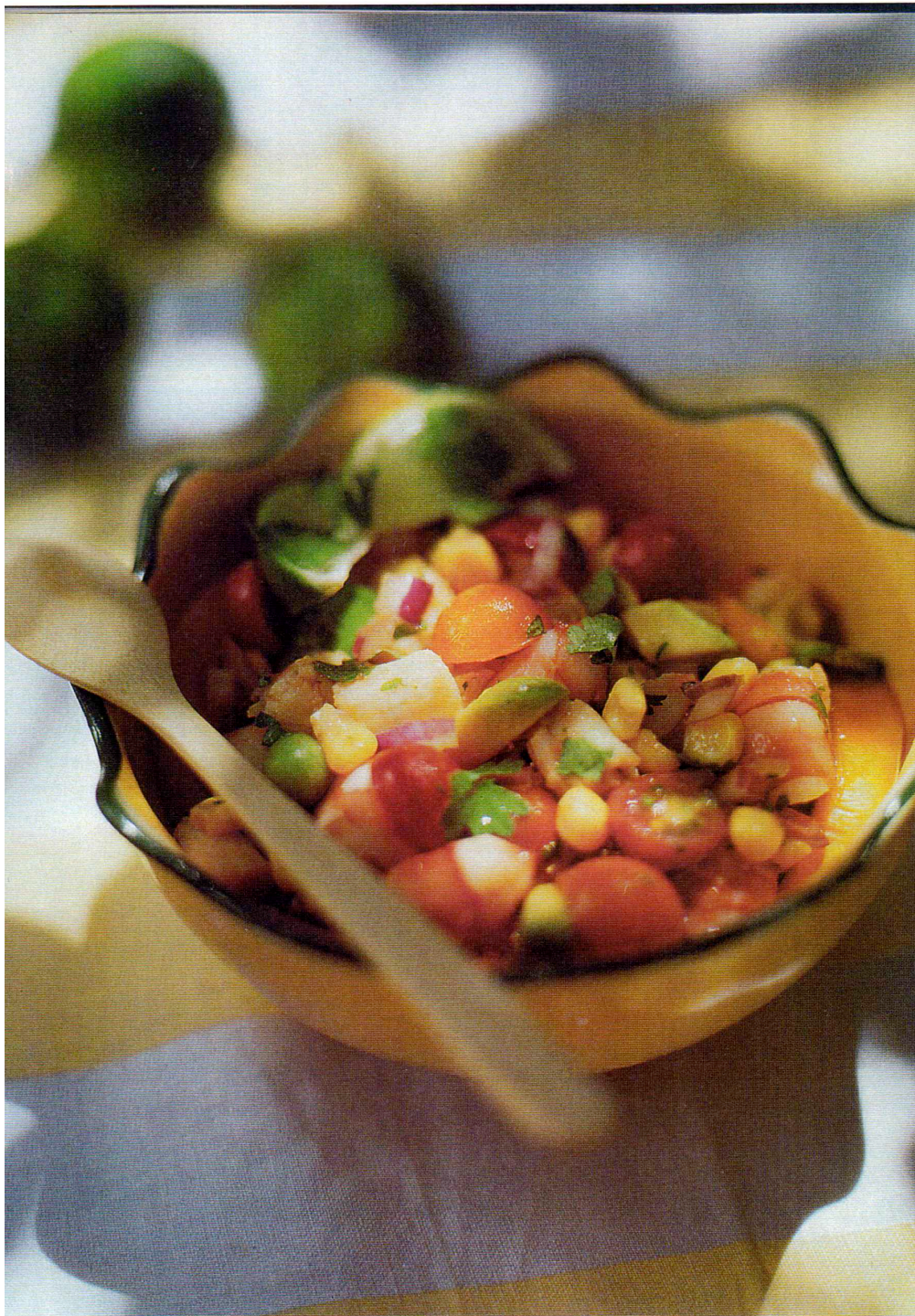
A twist on a classic (LEFT): duckburger with red pepper mayo, homemade pickles, and corn salad.

GOOD FOOD

# Summer stock

*The tomatoes are ripe. The grill is hot. The lemonade's ready. In a Northern California wine valley, locals descend on a country store that recaptures the flavor of summers past*





From Jimtown's country kitchen comes food that salutes the season and pleases the eye (OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT): Trompe l'oeil espresso is really jelly, served with chocolate-covered beans; the owners' garden behind the store provides edible flowers, herbs, and vegetables for the kitchen; for sale: a rainbow of pickled peppers; vintage cloths and flatware from the store's ever-changing stock; dark chocolate shortcake with garden strawberries; soaring sunflower; melon seed pasta with roasted vegetables; a refreshing summer shandy: part beer, part fresh lemonade in hand-painted pilsner glasses.

A perky salad (LEFT) teams up shrimp and scallops with avocado, corn, and homegrown tomatoes.

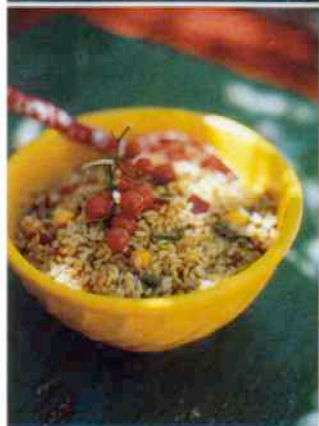
Recipes follow.

For more details, see Reader Information

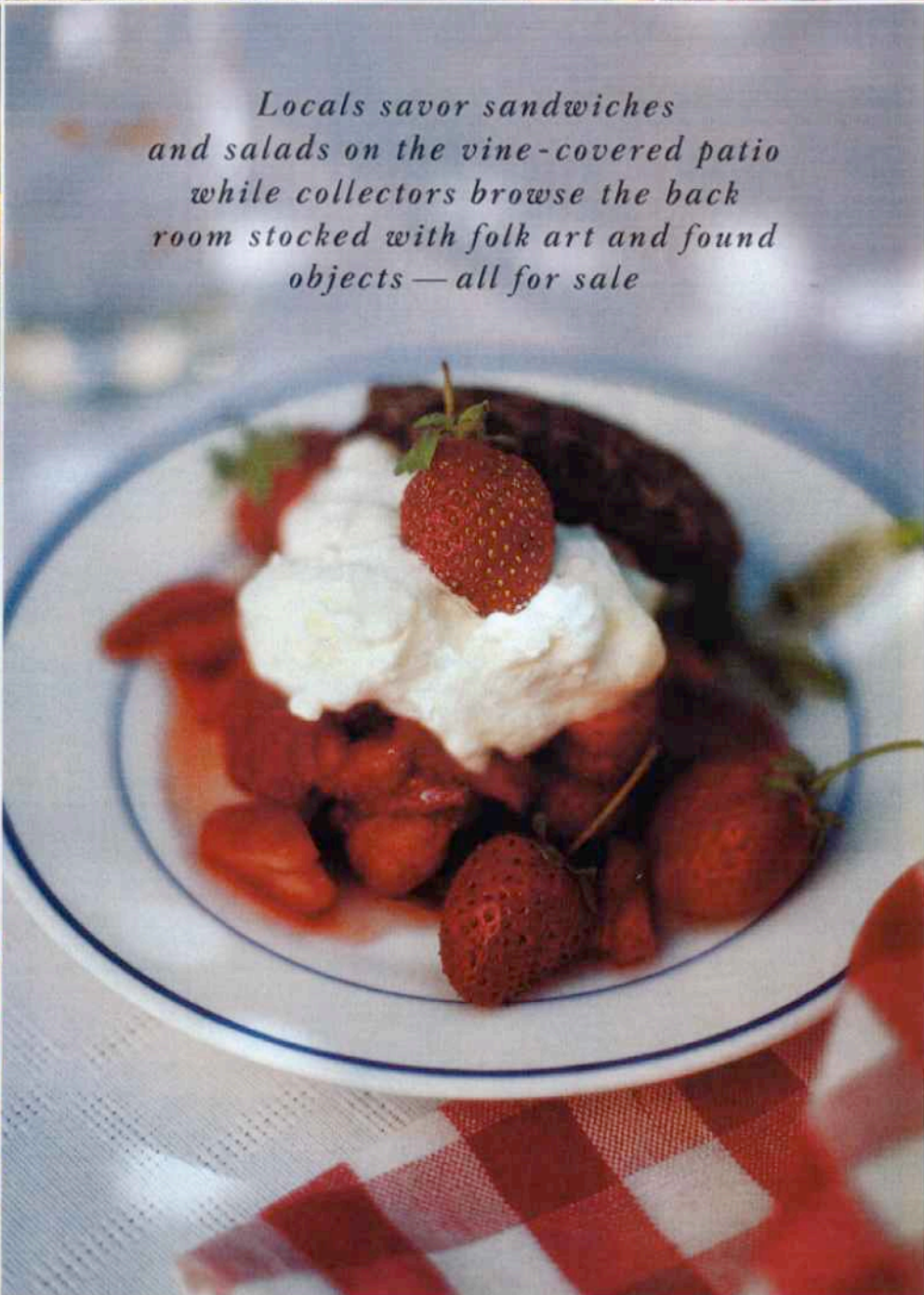
BY JANET FLETCHER  
 PHOTOGRAPHY BY VICTORIA PEARSON  
 PRODUCED BY JODY THOMPSON-KENNEDY

**Summer announces itself** at the Jimtown Store in a burst of bold color: golden tomatoes, inky berries, scarlet peppers. Nearby farms provide nonstop bounty for the store's country kitchen, where proprietors Carrie Brown and John Werner oversee a menu of sun-kissed dishes that hail the harvest. The 101-year-old general store in the Alexander Valley

near Healdsburg, California, lures neighbors for meals under a vine-covered arbor—for juicy duckburgers with homemade cucumber pickles; vivid salads strewn with cherry tomatoes; shortcake smothered with strawberries and soft-whipped cream. It's unfussy food that reflects the region, say the proprietors. Brown, a fine artist and interior designer, and Werner, a food manufacturer, gamely took over the decrepit store three years ago. Today, their born-again emporium supplies youngsters with licorice ropes and peddles pickled peppers faster than the kitchen can make them.



*Locals savor sandwiches  
and salads on the vine-covered patio  
while collectors browse the back  
room stocked with folk art and found  
objects — all for sale*



**PETALUMA DUCKBURGERS**

- 1 4-pound fresh duck or two 8-ounce duck breasts
- ½ pound fresh turkey meat, ground
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Cayenne pepper to taste
- Butter or rendered duck fat
- 6 good-quality buns, split
- Red pepper mayonnaise, see recipe below
- Lettuce
- Sliced red onions
- Sliced tomatoes
- Sliced pickles
- Sweet corn salad, see recipe below

Have a butcher skin, bone, and grind the duck meat. Reserve the duck fat. The meats can also be ground in a Kitchen Aid mixer with a meat-grinding attachment.

In a bowl, mix together ground meats, salt, cumin, pepper, and cayenne. Refrigerate mixture for at least 2 hours.

In a heavy skillet over medium-high heat, melt butter or duck fat until hot and sauté a small meat patty for about 2 minutes on each side. Taste patty and adjust seasoning of remaining meat mixture. Form mixture into 6 patties and repeat process until burgers are cooked to desired doneness.

Spread the buns with butter or duck fat. Place buns in a skillet over high heat and toast them, split-side down. Place patties on buns and serve with red pepper mayonnaise, lettuce, onions, tomatoes, pickles, and sweet corn salad. Serves 6.

**RED PEPPER MAYONNAISE**

- 1 egg plus 1 yolk, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 cup corn oil
- 3 red bell peppers, roasted, peeled, and seeded, about 1 cup

In a food processor fitted with a steel blade, add eggs, mustard, lemon juice, salt, and pepper and process for 2 seconds. With the motor running, slowly add the oil drop by drop, and then gradually increase the amount as mixture thickens. Add peppers and blend until mixture is smooth. Taste for seasoning. Refrigerate until ready to serve. Makes about 2 cups.

**SWEET CORN, RED PEPPER, AND JACK CHEESE SALAD WITH SHERRY VINAIGRETTE**

- ½ cup sherry vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ½ teaspoon salt

- ¾ cup extra-virgin olive oil, or to taste
  - Freshly ground black pepper to taste
  - 3 cups fresh sweet corn kernels
  - 1 red bell pepper, sliced, seeded, and diced into ¼-inch pieces
  - 1 yellow bell pepper, sliced, seeded, and diced into ¼-inch pieces
  - 1 pound Sonoma Jack cheese or provolone, cut into ¼-inch dice
  - ½ cup finely chopped cilantro
  - 4 whole young scallions, thinly sliced
- Whisk together vinegar, mustard, salt, olive oil, and pepper in a large bowl. Add corn, peppers, cheese, cilantro, and scallions and gently toss. Cover bowl and let ingredients stand for at least 1 hour. Toss before serving. Serves 5 to 6.

**MELONSEED PASTA (SEME DI MELONE) SALAD WITH ROASTED VEGETABLES**

*For roasted vegetables:*

- 2 cups roasted vegetables, combined from any of the following:
  - Whole baby carrots
  - Small baby eggplants, stemmed and diced
  - Green and wax beans, stemmed and diced
  - Red and yellow bell peppers, sliced, seeded, and diced
  - Mushrooms, diced
  - Asparagus, diced
  - Olive oil
  - Kosher salt
- ¼ cup finely chopped Italian parsley

*For pasta:*

- 1 pound dried melonseed pasta or orzo
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- ½ teaspoon salt

*For vinaigrette:*

- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

**Juice and grated rind of 1 lemon**

Prepare vegetables: Line several cookie sheets with parchment paper and set aside. In separate bowls, toss individual vegetables in olive oil to coat and sprinkle liberally with salt. Vegetables cook at different times; roast separately, spread out on prepared sheets in a preheated 475°F oven until done. Turn vegetables once during cooking. Vegetables should be slightly soft, yet firm enough to hold their shape. Remove pans from oven, cool and set aside.

Prepare pasta according to package directions, drain, place in a large bowl and toss with olive oil and salt. Set aside.

Prepare vinaigrette: In a small bowl whisk together vinegar, olive oil, salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Set aside.

To serve: Toss pasta with vinaigrette and roasted vegetables and serve at room temperature. Serves 6.

**JIMTOWN SEAFOOD COCKTAIL**

*For scallops:*

- ¾ pound bay scallops, rinsed in cold water
- 1 lemon, quartered
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 peppercorns

*For shrimp:*

- 8 tablespoons olive oil
- ¾ pound large fresh shrimp, peeled, deveined, and halved

*For vegetables and sauce:*

- 1 cup fresh sweet corn kernels
- 2 cups small yellow and red cherry tomatoes

- 1 avocado, cut into chunks

- 2 cups fresh tomato juice

- Juice of 2 limes

- 1 jalapeño pepper, finely chopped
- 2 tablespoons cilantro, finely chopped
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

- Lime wedges

Prepare scallops: In a pan of boiling water, add scallops, lemon quarters, bay leaf, and peppercorns. Turn off the heat and cover pan for 1 minute. Drain scallops (they should be opaque) and set aside.

Prepare shrimp: In a pan over high heat, heat oil until hot and cook shrimp until just pink, about 2 minutes. Remove shrimp from pan and set aside.

To serve: Combine scallops, shrimp, corn, tomatoes, avocado, tomato juice, lime juice, jalapeño pepper, cilantro, salt, and pepper. Lightly toss mixture and chill. The consistency should be like a soup. When ready to serve, garnish with lime wedges. Serves 4.

**CHOCOLATE SHORTCAKES**

- 4½ cups flour
- 1¼ cups plus 2 tablespoons sugar
- 1 scant cup Dutch-processed cocoa, sieved
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons baking soda
- 1½ teaspoons salt
- 12 tablespoons sweet butter, chilled
- ¾ cup bittersweet chocolate, preferably Ghirardelli, roughly chopped
- 1½ cups buttermilk
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 tablespoons heavy cream
- Whole and sliced strawberries
- Whipped cream

In a food processor combine flour, 1¼ cups sugar, cocoa, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. Add butter and process until dough >