

## GET TO KNOW...



### CAT CORA An Iron Chef With a Heart for Combating Hunger

By Juliann Schaeffer

As one of the newest members—and the first female—inducted into the Culinary Hall of Fame, it's no secret Cat Cora knows her way around a kitchen. First employing her cooking prowess in 2005 to best the brightest of culinary stars as the first—and only—female Iron Chef on Food Network's *Iron Chef America* (for which she may be most recognized), now the celebrity chef is utilizing social media technology to bring those top-rate cooking skills to the masses with a new iPad app. Called Cat Cora's Kitchen, the app not only gives users delicious recipes but also assists users in organizing their time via a scheduler that includes step-by-step instructions and estimated completion times for each dish.

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“We designed the app to serve as a tool for at-home chefs to plan and execute stress-free meals for their family and friends,” Cora says. “The meal planner is detailed with step-by-step instructions to make cooking meals easier for everyone. The less time you spend stressing over a meal, the more time you can spend actually enjoying it!”

In addition to penning popular cookbooks, conceptualizing fresh and exciting concepts for restaurants, and heading a line of specialty foods and cookware, Cora also finds time for philanthropy, fighting both hunger and obesity through her nonprofit organization, Chefs for Humanity.

But the most motivating of her endeavors? No question, it's her four boys: “My kids inspire and motivate me every single day.”

**Today's Dietitian (TD):** Iron Chef, TV host, contributing editor for *O, The Oprah Magazine*: What's next?

**Cora:** I just opened a new Cat Cora's Kitchen restaurant at the Salt Lake City Airport and hope to open more across the country soon. I'm also putting the final touches on a shoe line, which will be available [sometime in 2013].

**TD:** In 2005, you founded Chefs for Humanity. What is this organization, and what sparked the idea for its inception?

**Cora:** Hunger kills more people each year than AIDS, tuberculosis, and malaria combined. Chefs for Humanity is a nonprofit organization I founded to galvanize chefs, the culinary community, and other concerned individuals to support hunger relief and improve nutrition for children and families here in the United States as well as in places in the world where hunger and malnutrition pose even more dire threats to public health.

I was inspired to start Chefs for Humanity after witnessing how chefs and people who love to cook also love to help, and learning how valuable skills like cooking for large crowds and safe food handling can be in times of disaster such as during Hurricane Katrina, where I, along with other chefs, helped the American Red Cross set up temporary kitchens to feed displaced victims.

Recognizing that chronic hunger and malnutrition is an ongoing disaster for so many people, Chefs for Humanity is committed to mobilizing those with needed skills and passion to help every day as well as in times of crisis.

**TD: How does Chefs for Humanity work to prevent hunger and reduce obesity—two causes close to the hearts of many dietitians—and what’s your proudest accomplishment of the organization thus far?**

**Cora:** Chefs for Humanity works to prevent hunger and malnutrition, which includes obesity, by raising support and awareness and developing programs to address these issues. There are many accomplishments we’re proud of but, most recently, we’re working to establish a Global School Gardens initiative to help educate children about good nutrition while connecting them to the culinary community and engaging local chefs, restaurants, and others to ensure that healthful eating and affordable access to good food is a communitywide effort.

**TD: Is there one product in your specialty food line that you couldn’t live without in your own kitchen?**

**Cora:** I cook with my award-winning Cat Cora’s Kitchen BY GAEA organic olive oil almost daily. It’s the first-ever bottled olive oil to be completely carbon neutral.

**TD: What’s your favorite family recipe and why?**

**Cora:** I love my mom’s Greek Cinnamon Chicken recipe (see below). It was my absolute favorite growing up; my mom would make it on special occasions like holidays, birthdays, and anniversaries. I carry on that tradition today, and my kids love it! Eating it always brings back fond memories.

— Juliann Schaeffer is a freelance writer and editor based in Allentown, Pennsylvania, and a frequent contributor to *Today’s Dietitian*.

## Greek Cinnamon Stewed Chicken (Koto Kapama)

Serves 4

### Ingredients

- 1 chicken (2½ to 3 lbs), cut into eight pieces
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 5 peeled garlic cloves, minced
- 2 T extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 peeled, coarsely chopped medium yellow onions
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 cup water
- 1 cup chicken stock
- One 6-oz can tomato paste
- 1 T fresh oregano, chopped
- ½ cup grated Mizithra cheese

### Instructions

1. Pat the chicken dry with paper towels. A wet chicken will cause the oil to splatter while the chicken is sautéing. Mix the cinnamon, salt, and pepper in a small bowl. Rub the chicken pieces on all sides with the seasoning.

2. Mince three of the garlic cloves. Heat the olive oil in a large nonreactive deep skillet over high heat. A 12-inch skillet with sides about 2½ to 3 inches high will allow you to brown all the chicken at once. If you don’t have a skillet large enough, brown them in two batches using one-half of the

oil for each batch. What’s important is that the chicken isn’t overcrowded, which would cause the pieces to steam rather than brown.

3. Add the chicken to the oil and brown for about 4 to 5 minutes on each side. Turn the pieces using a metal spatula, as they have a tendency to stick to the pan. Remove the pieces when they’re well browned on all sides.

4. Lower the heat to medium-high and add the onions and minced garlic. Cook for about 3 minutes, stirring constantly, until the onions have softened and are a rich golden brown. Add the wine and scrape the bottom of the pan with a spatula or spoon to deglaze the pan, loosening any particles stuck on the bottom.

5. When the wine has evaporated, add the water, chicken stock, tomato paste, fresh oregano, and remaining two garlic cloves. Return the chicken to the pan. The liquid should cover about ¾ of the chicken pieces. Cover the pot and simmer over low heat for about an hour or until the chicken is tender and thoroughly cooked. If the sauce becomes too thick, it can be thinned with a little more water. Season the finished sauce with kosher salt and pepper to taste.

6. Serve the chicken topped with the sauce and sprinkle with Mizithra cheese.

### Nutrient Analysis per serving

Calories: 560; Total fat: 18 g; Sat fat: 6 g; Trans fat: 0 g; Cholesterol: 174 mg; Sodium: 1,113 mg; Total carbohydrate: 19 g; Dietary fiber: 3 g; Sugars: 9 g; Protein: 74 g