



After years of working and training in professional restaurants, Moulton decided to create the New York Women's Culinary Alliance — an “old girls’ network” designed to help women in the food business — in 1982. In 2002, Sara received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the James Beard Foundation, one of the culinary world’s highest honors.

there's something about sara

FOOD NETWORK'S SARA MOULTON
DISHES ON HER EUROPEAN INFLUENCES

by **suzy feine**

"I've always loved to eat and cook," Sara Moulton says first and foremost of her road to success. But these two critical ingredients were mixed with real talent and a dash of lucky breaks to bring Moulton to the point she's at in her career.

It all began in 1974 when Moulton graduated from the University of Michigan and contemplated her life's direction. "I floundered around after college, not knowing what to do, so I attended the Culinary Institute of America for two years," says Moulton. She quickly realized her life's direction was indeed in cooking when she graduated with high honors in 1977.

After graduation, Moulton accepted various restaurant and catering positions to fine-tune her cooking skills when an opportunity opened up to work behind the scenes on public television's *Julia Child & More Company*. She accepted and soon made an acquaintance that would change her professional life. "I worked with Julia Child for three months and one day asked her what I should do next," says Moulton. "Julia told me, 'you need

more training, go to France! All great chefs go to France.'" Shortly thereafter, Child's long-time friend, master chef Maurice Cazalis, visited the set. Child asked him to take Moulton back to France to study classical cuisine and Cazalis agreed.

Celebrity in the Making

Upon returning to the United States, Moulton became chef tournant at New York's La Tulipe restaurant. She also worked as an instructor at Peter Kump's New York Cooking School from 1983 to 1985, and in 1984 she became a food editor for *Gourmet* magazine.

Through it all, Julia Child remained her mentor. "My connection with Julia Child has been invaluable to my career," says Moulton. Child assisted Moulton in obtaining another behind-the-scenes job, this time on ABC-TV's *Good Morning America* show. This stint quickly led to an on-air role as the morning show's food correspondent.

Also during this time, the producers of Food Network approached Moulton with a proposal. "They asked me to do a pilot for the show *How to Boil Water*," >

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Celebrity Homes

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she says. 'I was awful! I was convinced they'd never call me back, but they did.' Moulton hosted Food Network's *Chef Du Jour*, which later led to her own show, *Cooking Live*.

Live audiences, impromptu phone calls and off-the-cuff responses from Moulton led to the success of *Cooking Live*. Six years and 1,200 shows later, *Cooking Live* ended production, only to be replaced the very next day with Moulton's current show, *Sara's Secrets*.

Career Highs

Now, Moulton spends her days as chef of the executive dining room at *Gourmet* magazine, as host on Food Network's *Sara's Secrets* and food editor on *Good Morning America*. To top it off, she wrote a new book, *Sara Moulton Cooks at Home*, published in the fall of 2002.

"My cookbook turned into a sort of autobiography, but it wasn't originally intended that way," says Moulton. "As I gathered my recipes and family

recipes, I began thinking of the family times spent preparing each recipe. I felt I needed to include photos of the family members that contributed to those memories." Moulton's cookbook has been met with such success that a second is in the works.

A Day in the Life

Moulton has juggled three jobs for the past several years. Add to that the role of author and most people wonder how she does it all. Credit is given to both her professional and personal support systems. "I work with a wonderful team of five creative individuals on *Sara's Secrets* who brainstorm ideas and help me with everything," says Moulton. "At home I have a wonderful, supportive husband and a great housekeeper who both help me out a lot.

"Luckily, I don't do all three jobs at once," Moulton continues. "I work at *Good Morning America* about once every three to four weeks. I work at *Gourmet* magazine every day, Monday through Friday. And we tape *Sara's*

Secrets two-and-a-half weeks at a time, two shows per day, then have an off-season for a few months."

Sara's Favorites

Believe it or not, Moulton loves to cook in her spare time. "I'm a home-body. I spend most of the week away from home working so when the weekend comes around, I just want to stay home with my kids and husband and do some cooking." In her personal kitchen is a handful of "can't live without" kitchen tools. "I love all tools but my favorites are a good knife, good pots and pans, tongs, a microplane, my salad spinner and a fish spatula," she says.

At home, Moulton loves to cook comfort foods for herself and her family. "My real favorites are eggs, cheese, roast duck and foie gras," she says. "But all foods are comfort foods when someone else cooks for me." 🍴

About the Author: *Suzy Feine is an enthusiastic amateur chef, who gets many of her recipes from old European cookbooks.*