

# A culinary legend dies

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We sadly lost another soul to brain cancer recently. Just five days after Sen. Ted Kennedy passed away from brain cancer, Sheila Lukins, 66, succumbed to the disease on Sunday.

You may remember Lukins as the food editor for *Parade*, where she wrote a monthly column with recipes and insight. After Julia Childs left the position in 1986, Lukins took over and brought her innovative style of cooking, reinterpreting old classics, such as beef stroganoff and chicken pot pie, and adding new creations, like [Chicken Marbella](#), a wonderful medley of chicken, garlic, prunes, olives, and capers.

During college, I remember visiting The Silver Palate store in New York City where I first became enamored with Lukins' cooking and where I purchase my first "The Silver Palate Cookbook." I was raised on Julia Childs and Pei Mei, so Lukins' recipes were considered an adventure for me. Adding blueberry vinegar or mango chutney to a dish? I couldn't even find those items in Dallas in the 80s!

Lukins and her business partner, Julee Russo, resolved that quickly by developing a line of sauces and condiments that eventually arrived in local grocery stores. Two items I was never without were their Caesar salad dressing and their raspberry vinegar.

In 1989, Russo and Lukins published another cookbook called "The New Basics Cookbook," and besides Julia Childs and Pei Mei, this is *the* cookbook I consistently turn to for help and inspiration. It is filled with just about everything you need to know about cooking as well as crammed with hundreds of awesome recipes and tips. Also note, the book (as well as the other Silver Palate cookbooks) has wonderful illustrations, which were done by Lukins who was an artist as well.

I know there are many accomplishments and awards that Lukins achieved in her life that I have not mentioned here so for more on Lukins, [here is her obituary](#) from *Parade*. Lukins changed the way millions cook and her presence on the culinary scene will be missed. I think I'll pull out my worn cookbook tonight and make a dish or two in her honor.

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