

[Send to printer](#) [Close window](#)

# Cowgirl Chef At National Cowgirl Museum

Author Ellise Pierce will be in her home state to promote 'Texas Cooking with a French Accent.'

BY DANA JOSEPH



PHOTOGRAPHY: (PORTRAIT) XAVIER LHOSPICE, (FOOD AND BOOK IMAGES) STEVE LEGATO

Rising culinary star Ellise Pierce, aka the Cowgirl Chef, is heating things up far beyond her home state of Texas. Her debut cookbook, ***Cowgirl Chef: Texas Cooking with a French Accent***, is already in its third printing and selling out at every book signing, cooking class, and appearance where she ties her apron on.

A longtime columnist for *Cowboys & Indians*, Pierce followed her Parisian boyfriend to the City of Light but found true love in the kitchen. Blending classic French and sassy Tex-Mex, she started a catering company and taught cooking classes in Paris, all the while blogging about her experiences and posting her recipes. Eventually Pierce put together a charming cookbook to rave reviews from home chefs and gourmet luminaries such as David Lebovitz, Clotilde Dusoulier, and Dorie Greenspan. *France Magazine* called it "Delightful and delicious," and the *Dallas Morning News* declared it "Irresistible ... Cooks will totally get the way her mind arrives at quirky, clever combinations. You wind up with a continuum of dishes stretching from Texas to Paris, tucked around a lively and engaging narrative."

From madeleines (with cornmeal) to Texas Killer cookies (with cayenne and cheddar) to My Big Fat French Salad (pictured; recipe below), the Cowgirl Chef's recipes reveal how a bad case of food homesickness can lead a boot- and chile-loving gal to culinary inspiration.

Says Greenspan: "Ellise cooks like a cowgirl (albeit a French cowgirl with a perfectly tied silk scarf around her neck) and writes like your best friend. Whether you're in France or America, you'd be hard-pressed to find a better companion in the kitchen."



We couldn't agree more.

Here's a winning recipe from the *Cowgirl Chef: Texas Cooking with a French Accent* (Running Press). Find more at [www.cowgirlchef.com](http://www.cowgirlchef.com). (Recipe © Ellise Pierce. Used by permission.)



### 'Cowgirl Chef' Lunch and Book Signing

Noon to 1:30 p.m. Aug. 21 at the National Cowgirl Museum and Hall of Fame, 1720 Gendy St., Fort Worth, Texas. Admission is \$25; parking included. [Click here](#) or call 817.509.8960 for more info.

• Find some of Ellise Pierce's past C&I columns and recipes [here](#).

**My Big Fat French Salad**  
Makes 2 dinner-size salads

---

**INGREDIENTS:**

1/2 pound of red-skinned potatoes, cut into 2-inch pieces  
olive oil  
sea salt and pepper  
8 slices of bacon  
6 slices from a baguette, toasted  
about 6 tablespoons of fresh goat cheese  
1 head of romaine lettuce, rinsed, dried, and sliced into 2-inch strips  
a handful of cherry tomatoes, halved  
fresh herbs, such as chives, thyme, basil, parsley  
Champagne-Honey Vinaigrette (recipe on separate card)



## My Big Fat French Salad (continued)

1. Preheat your oven to 400°F. Put the potatoes on a parchment-lined cookie sheet, add some olive oil, salt, and pepper, and toss this all together. Give the pan a shake so the potatoes aren't crowded, and slide them into the oven. They'll take about 30 to 45 minutes total, but after 15 or 20 minutes, the halfway mark, pull them out of the oven, and flip them over so both sides are evenly cooked.
2. Fry up the bacon. Once it's cooked and crispy, let it drain on paper towels. Don't forget to pour off the bacon grease into an old jam jar, and then keep it in the fridge; it'll make your cornbread fabulous.
3. Toast the baguette pieces, then put a heaping tablespoon of fresh goat cheese on each piece of toast and slide back into the oven for just a minute or two so the cheese can warm up.
4. To assemble your salads, divide the lettuce between two bowls, crumble the bacon over, add the warm potatoes, and arrange the cherry tomatoes and baguette pieces around the sides. Use your kitchen scissors to snip your fresh herbs on top, serve, and pass around the vinaigrette.

## Champagne-Honey Vinaigrette

Makes about 1 cup

- 1 shallot, finely chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of champagne vinegar
- 1 tablespoon of lemon juice + the zest of 1 lemon
- 2 teaspoons of Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon of honey
- sea salt and pepper
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of grapeseed oil

Combine everything but your oil along with a pinch of salt and pepper in a jam jar, and give it a shake so everything combines. Let this rest for 10 minutes or so.

Add the grapeseed oil, and taste for seasonings.

**Cowgirl Tip:** When making vinaigrettes, let your own taste be your best guide. Add about half of the oil, shake it up, and add a bit more until you strike the right balance of oil and vinegar. I like my dressings slightly more vinegary, so I use less oil; you might like more oil.