

**A few weeks ago, I passed a rather odd anniversary.** It got lost in the general busyness of life and thoughts of Mother's Day. I'm sorry to say that there was no cake or champagne. This is just wrong, especially since there were actually two anniversaries. Although I am not positive of the exact date, the first is simple. I moved to Switzerland on May 10 but it could have been the 8<sup>th</sup> or maybe the 9<sup>th</sup>. It was definitely a weekday because the traffic to Logan Airport was awful. The second is the slightly odd one. I have been back in the US for sixteen and a half years. It may seem a funny time to celebrate but this anniversary means that I have been back as long as I was away.

**I write often of my time as an expatriate.** It started with an internship. After the eight week project, I somehow or other forgot to come home. My repatriation date is easy to remember. It was one day before the 2000 election. Yes, I returned to the recount in Florida and the hanging chad debacle. If that wasn't enough, for only the fourth time in history and the first time in more than a century, the president did not win the popular majority. So, in case you are wondering, yes, I did scratch my head and think, "What the heck have I come back to!?"

**Now, why in the world would I think this odd anniversary is significant?** Well, I can no longer say that I have spent most of my adult life living abroad. My time in Switzerland was and forever will be a remarkable experience, one that shaped me to the core. Not only did I live in Geneva but for many of those years, I managed a business that stretched from the tip of Africa to the Sea of Japan. An amazing time, it was the early days of post-apartheid as well as the post-perestroika and glasnost era.

**My sales team was a great melting pot** bubbling with more than a dozen nationalities, a raft of different languages and a whole host of religious traditions. Some young, some not so young, we were smart and strong men and women from vastly different circumstances with vastly different windows of opportunity. It was a great job. Not just because there were lots of wins (salespeople love wins!) but because it was a team of champions.

**Diversity is a wonderful thing.** There may be strength in numbers but we are even stronger when those numbers bring a vast and rich variety of experience. Sure, there is a certain comfort in sameness. Why else would we gravitate to mac and cheese or meatloaf and mashed potatoes when we're feeling low? These are the foods of our childhood and as familiar as a comfortable, old shoe.

**This group from Eastern Europe, the Middle East and Africa** were not comfortable old shoes. In fact, they were quite the opposite. Together, we embraced change and made things happen. We did our best to exchange ideas and tear down obstacles. We thought strategically and then executed well. We didn't worry about flawless. Sometimes we stumbled, sometimes we bumbled but we always made good things happen. Together, a group of talented individuals built a winning team. We measured our success in customer delight, revenue, profits, growth and employee satisfaction. Oh, and by the way, I can assure you that this spectacular team never got tired of winning.

**As much as I love my life today,** I sometimes miss that other half of my adult life. I don't miss the constant travel or even for the excitement of closing a deal. I miss those remarkable individuals who came together and became a team. But not to worry, the adventures continue! Last November, I celebrated another anniversary. By some strange coincidence, it was overshadowed by another election. Anyway, ten years ago last November, I began a newspaper column that continues to this day.

Thank you for reading and bon appétit!



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## Grilled Lamb with Fresh Mint

*Lamb is popular in and around Geneva as well as throughout the Mediterranean and Middle East. It is great for a celebration of family and friends. Enjoy!*

Serves 8

4-5 cloves garlic  
1/2 red onion, roughly chopped  
3-4 tablespoons fresh chopped mint  
2 tablespoons fresh chopped parsley  
1 tablespoons fresh chopped oregano  
1 tablespoon fresh thyme leaves  
Juice and zest of 1 lemon  
2-3 tablespoons Dijon mustard  
1 tablespoon honey  
Dash or to taste Harissa  
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper  
About 2 cups dry red wine  
3-4 pounds trimmed, boned and butterflied lamb  
1 bay leaf



Put the garlic, onion, fresh chopped herbs, lemon juice and zest, mustard, honey and harissa in the bowl of a food processor or blender, season with salt and pepper and pulse to combine. Add about 1/2 cup wine and process until smooth. Add the remaining wine and process until well combined.

Put the lamb in a large, heavy-duty, plastic, re-sealable bag. Add the marinade and bay leaf and seal the bag, pressing out excess air. Marinate the lamb in the refrigerator, turning every few hours, for at least 6 hours. Overnight is better.

Preheat a charcoal or gas grill to medium high.

Remove the lamb from the marinade and place it on the grill. Turning it once or twice, grill until a thermometer inserted in the thickest part of the meat registers at 120 for rare and 130 degrees for medium, 20 to 30 minutes.

Transfer the lamb to a cutting board and let it rest for 10-15 minutes. Slice the lamb and serve.