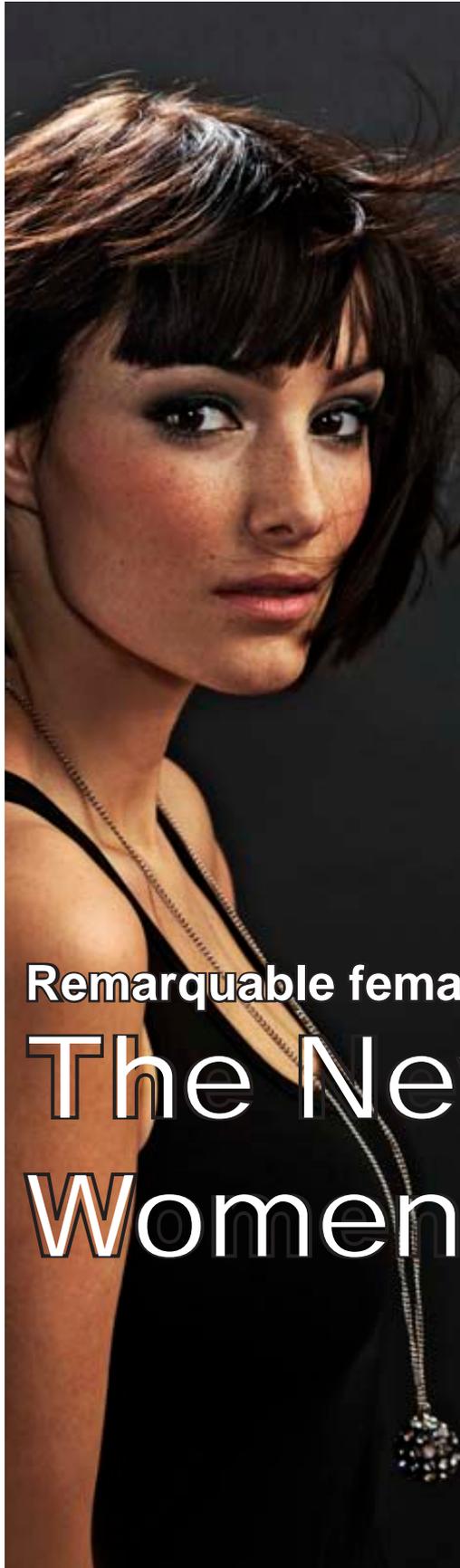




GOURMAND MAGAZINE

The International Cookbook Revue

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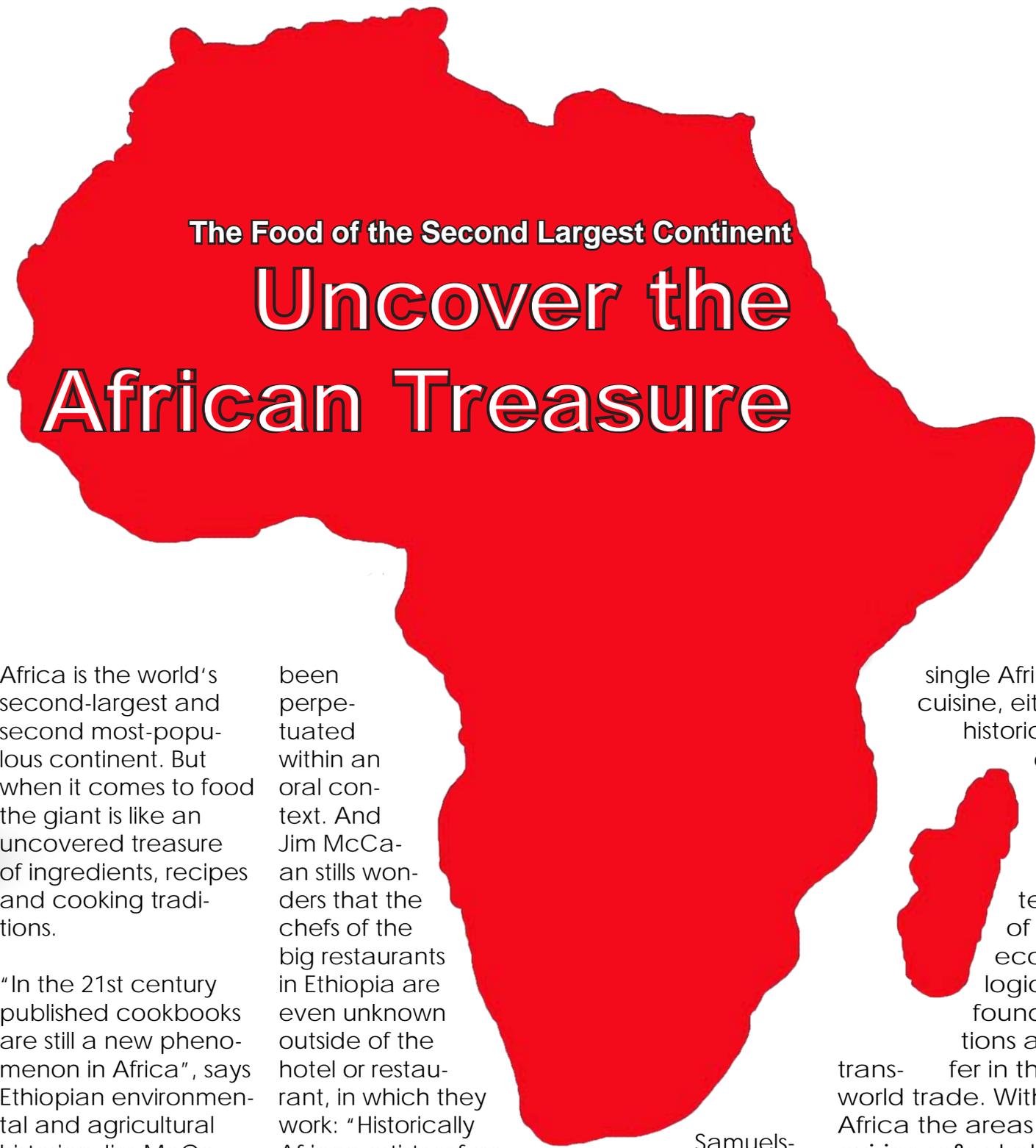


Remarquable female cookbook authors

The New Women Power

PLUS:

Paris Cookbook Fair 2012
Meet the Best Chinese Chefs
Africa: Discover a Culinary Giant



The Food of the Second Largest Continent

Uncover the African Treasure

Africa is the world's second-largest and second most-populous continent. But when it comes to food the giant is like an uncovered treasure of ingredients, recipes and cooking traditions.

"In the 21st century published cookbooks are still a new phenomenon in Africa", says Ethiopian environmental and agricultural historian Jim McCaan. The author of the Gourmand award-winning book "Stirring the Pot" is one of the biggest experts when it comes to the agricultural and cooking history of the Africa. The cooks have historically been women and knowledge has

been perpetuated within an oral context. And Jim McCaan stills wonders that the chefs of the big restaurants in Ethiopia are even unknown outside of the hotel or restaurant, in which they work: "Historically African artists refuse authorship of their creations, and cooking is no different. Claims by individuals to artistry is a new manifestation."

In fact there is one Ethiopian chef who really has made it to the top: Marcus

Samuelsson. But he grew up in Sweden and is now New York-based chef. "His books are inspired by African ingredients, but they do not reflect historical reality", says Jim McCaan.

In fact, there is not a

single African cuisine, either historically or in

terms of the ecological foundations and transfer in the world trade. Within Africa the areas of cuisine reflect physical geography, language groups and the historical movement of ideas about taste, texture and cooking techniques.

Continue on the next page.

Examples would be the Senegalese passion for rice, versus the use of pounded yam fufu in Ghana, grated cassava (gari) in Nigeria, maize porridge in Eastern and Southern Africa and fermented teff injera in Ethiopia. Those are the staples on which sauces show locality of flavours. In South Africa and coastal areas of Mozambique, Angola, and coastal East Africa sauces can be curries from Indian Ocean contacts, use of peanut butter peanuts come originally from the New World but then from French influence in West Africa, and, of course, the extensive use of capsicum peppers from the Caribbean and Latin America in the Atlantic trade early on.

But there is one African food export that people like nearly all

around the globe: coffee. "Coffee even stretches back into Africa further and more deeply than what is conventionally known", says Majka Burhardt from Ethiopia, who wrote the book "Coffee Story Ethiopia". "Coffee is established in oral tradition far back as the tenth century B.C." Today Ethiopia is known as the genetic home to coffee Arabica and thus the root of 70 percent of the world's coffee supply. Maja Burhardt: "This means that coffee you drink from Panama, Sumatra and Hawaii originally came from Ethiopia. Many of these connections are not known to the consumers, but the tentacles of origin stretch back strongly to Ethiopia."

In her book "Coffee Story Ethiopia" Maja Burhardt tells the ma-



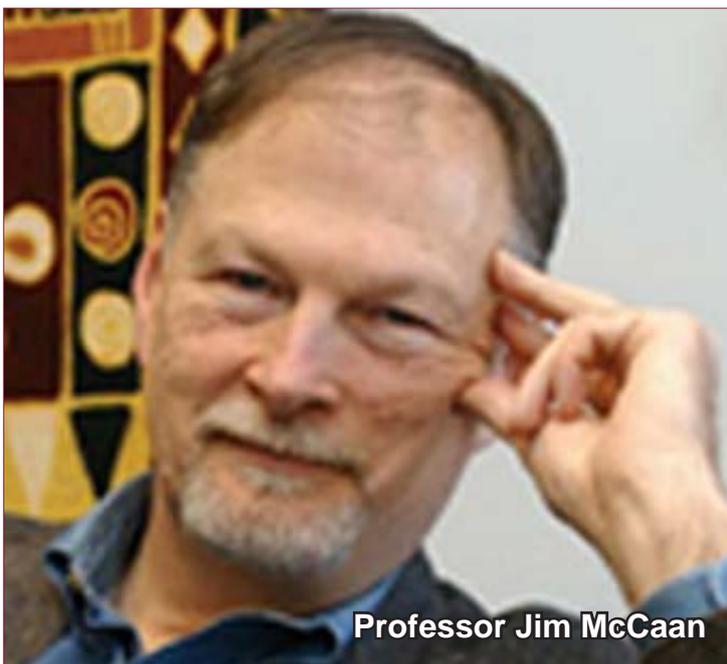
Majka Burhardt

gnificent story of the coffee that conquered the world. And even her books raises interest in other parts of the world. At the moment her publisher Ninety Plus Press is in talks with Asian and European companies. Maja Burhardt: "I think the hunger for information about Africa is growing and creates a special niches for African cookbooks."

We are in an exciting time where the desire for international tastes and the stories behind those tastes are appreciated. I think the trick is to create a book that goes beyond the food and into the culture to have greater relevance." But although the international interest for African cookbooks is rising, the publishing inside the continent is still a challenge. "Cookbooks on Afri-

can food are primarily produced for an international audience and marketed in America and Europe", says Jim McCaan.

But both authors appreciate this raising international interest and think especially that the Gourmand World Cookbook Award for the "Best African Cookbook" plays an important role in this discovery of African food traditions. Jim McCaan: "The award highlights the beauty and nuance of world food traditions. And Africa deserves special recognition for its contributions to other world cuisines and for the various aesthetic traditions of flavors, techniques and biodiversity. The Gourmand World Cookbook Awards have a great potential role in uncovering this treasure."



Professor Jim McCaan