



*As the holiday season approached, she showed TV viewers how to build a shrimp Christmas tree from styrofoam cones, greens, and lots of shrimp.*

excellent professional reputation has been the extension of her expertise from fish to fowl; she has been invited by the Alabama poultry industry to serve as a judge in the annual poultry cook-off.

Mrs. Fontaine has a genuine liking for good food. She enjoys cooking, not only during the working day, but also at home, as a hobby. Her enthusiasm for seafood is based partly on her love of variety.

"There are so many things you can do with it—so many *easy* ways to prepare it—to lend variety to menus—things like using it in salads, or serving it with different kinds of sauces—and the beauty of fish is that it is a tender protein, which means it can be cooked quickly. And that is very important, especially for women who work and have to come home and cook for their families."

Mrs. Fontaine has good reason to appreciate the value of seafood in the life of a career woman-mother-homemaker, since she falls into that category herself. She cheerfully admits that it takes more than apparently unlimited energy and love of variety to combine a hectic career as a traveling home economist with a career as a homemaker for a husband and three children.

"I can do it only because I've got a real good thing going for me," she says in her soft, southern accent.

The "real good thing" is an understanding and cooperative husband who works as manager of a motel and restaurant in Pascagoula. The family formerly lived in an

apartment in the motel, and has just recently moved into a newly built home nearby. The arrangement has much the same advantages as a built-in-baby-sitter for the three children, Douglass, 11; Rebecca, 7; and Patrick, 4.

Mrs. Fontaine's husband Douglass is close at hand even when he is at work, so that the possibility of illness or other childhood crises is not a source of constant anxiety during her absences.

"It also means I can go off to Atlanta or Mobile without having to worry about whether there is enough milk or hamburger in the refrigerator, because if there isn't enough food on hand, they can always eat in the motel dining room."

Fortunately, she has help with the housework and the children, so that she can enjoy the companionship of her family during her hours at home.

Although a native of Memphis, Tennessee, Mrs. Fontaine has spent most of her life in Mississippi, and has lived in Pascagoula about 20 years. She is a graduate of Mississippi State College for Women at Columbus, and has done some graduate work at the University of Alabama.

During the past six years, Mrs. Fontaine has trained some 25 home economists, involved in state or federal programs, in the use and preparation of seafood.

Her "students" usually come to the Pascagoula laboratory for six weeks. Each is provided with a selection of about 20 recipes, and is taught "everything possible about

each recipe." This involves learning not only what to use and how to put it together, but as much as possible about the species of fish or shellfish being used. The teaching process is not confined to laboratory and lecture room, but includes getting out and visiting as much of the industry as possible to learn how seafoods are processed.

"Much of our work is with processed seafood," Mrs. Fontaine observed. "People prefer to buy already-processed seafoods—crabmeat that is already picked, or deveined shrimp, for example."

This preference is related to the increasing number of homemaker-career women. A full-time homemaker frequently has more time than money; the full-time career woman often has less time than money, and prefers to pay more for the convenience foods that demand less of her valuable time and energy.

Before the student returns to her home state, she must give two demonstrations—one an extension-type demonstration, and the other a television presentation.

A well-developed sense of humor is a must in a job that demands constant public contact and the ability to adjust immediately to the unforeseen. Mrs. Fontaine's ability to find the unexpected amusing rather than disastrous has been particularly valuable in her work with trainees. Almost anything can happen—including explosions.

The Case of the Exploding Pizza developed when an understandably nervous student embarked on her television-style demonstration, grimly determined to impress her instructor by constructing an absolutely beautiful shrimp pizza, the shrimp pizza being one of Mrs. Fontaine's own test kitchen inventions.

All went well until the student picked up a can of tomato paste, and failed to notice that the can was swollen. Under normal circumstances, even the most amateur of cooks regards a swollen can as a four-alarm signal of spoilage. But these were not normal circumstances.

The unsuspecting student attacked the tomato paste with her trusty can opener—and the can exploded.

"Tomato paste spewed all over. It was dripping from the ceiling. Her new white uniform was just ruined. It was all over her face, and in her hair.

"Right at first, it wasn't very funny." But, Mrs. Fontaine added philosophically, "there was really nothing we could do about it except laugh, and so we did."

As for the demonstration, "I think we got it done the next day. And it was a simply magnificent shrimp pizza."

But it is the unfinished pizza that has been truly memorable; there are still stains on the test kitchen ceiling, a mute reminder of the wisdom of leaving swollen cans unopened.

When an NMFS fishery home economist is requested to give a demonstration, the agency usually provides the fishery products required. The person or group making the request is responsible for all other ingredients—bread crumbs, flour, condiments,