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Savoring the Spice of Life with Author Susan Orlean

Event benefits intercultural education program for Boston's inner-city youth

February 19, 2008. *New York Times* best-selling author Susan Orlean returns to Boston to host *Savoring the Spice of Life*, a fundraising event to benefit Hostelling International-USA's Cultural Kitchen Program. The after-school program draws on the rich diversity of cultures in Boston-area communities to use cooking as a means of fostering intercultural understanding and exchange among youth. The event will also honor Ms. Orlean's unique ability to use writing to bring the world and its diverse cultures to readers.

"We are very excited to have such an accomplished writer and traveler as part of our celebration," says Deborah Ruhe, Executive Director of Hostelling International – Eastern New England Council [ENEC]. "Through her life and work, Ms. Orlean embodies our mission of cultural awareness and self-discovery through travel."

Susan Orlean is a staff writer for the *New Yorker* and author of *My Kind of Place: Travel Stories from a Woman Who's Been Everywhere* and *The Orchid Thief*.

Cultural Kitchen participants research their cultural background, share recipes from their native cultures and lead their classmates in preparing a meal. The program increases students' openness and comfort in multi-cultural communities by sparking dialogue and providing students with an opportunity to understand their own cultural origins and traditions. Serving students ages 10 to 16, Cultural Kitchen reflects the rich diversity within the greater community.

"Cultural Kitchen helps young people learn to communicate and work cooperatively in groups, and take on a leadership role in the classroom," says Ruhe. "Students come away with an awareness of the various cultures present in their schools and the joy of sharing a good meal."

Savoring the Spice of Life will feature cocktails and hors d'oeuvres created by Mary-Catherine Deibel and Deborah Hughes, a silent auction and a reading by the author. **Wainwright Bank, Whole Foods Market, Harvard Book Store and Agar Supply, Inc.** are sponsoring the event.

For event information, call 617-718-7990 ext. 12, or register at www.usahostels.org/event.php.

What: Savoring the Spice of Life: An Evening with Author Susan Orlean

When: Monday, March 31, 2008; 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

Where: Upstairs on the Square, 91 Winthrop Street, Harvard Square, Cambridge

Tickets: \$60 per person

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