

FINGER LICKING GOOD: BRANKA KRINGAS

I was never very enthusiastic about cooking. I could cook very simple meals that my family liked. One of my grandchildren's favourite dishes was Baba's chicken (granny's chicken). When they stayed with me, I would ask them what they wanted for dinner, and they would say 'Baba's chicken!' in unison. Making family happy is all I wanted.

Since I became blind, cooking is out of the question. Occasionally I cook with the help of a carer. When the meal is ready all the compliments go to the carer.

When it came to salads, I was always enthusiastic, I can use my creativity and imagination. From beetroot, feta cheese, walnuts and garlic – to simple green beans and very finely sliced onions. I could experiment and make all sorts of salads. Sometimes just for fun I would add finely chopped olives, grapes, ginger or chilli. So now that is the only way I can make meals.

When it comes to eating the food I make, I have a challenge. I can't remember the last time I used a knife and fork successfully. I cut the food into small pieces before I eat, and with the fork I chase the pieces on my plate. When that becomes too much, I just scoop the food with a spoon. My family brings me lots of food. My son brings me all his favourite food which I happen to like. Chicken pie, bourek, (Serbian cheese and spinach pie) and barbecue chicken and chips. I like barbecue chicken not only because it is finger licking good, but because it is accepted to eat it with your fingers. Now I will tell you a secret, when I am alone and the curtains are down, I eat any food with my fingers. The fingertips feel the kind of food with each piece, and I can eat it in the order I like. And of course, I lick my fingers when I finish.