

**Client:** Erma Bombeck Writing Competition

**Project:** Humour column

**Objective:** Winning the writing competition

## WRITING COMPETITION WINNERS



**2003  
Erma Bombeck Writing  
Competition**

**2nd Place - Humor Category**

**Janice Leuschen**  
Lively, Ontario, Canada

**"Welcome to the Real Cooking  
Show"**

I'm going to give up watching cooking shows on television, because, let's face it, I can't recreate those culinary masterpieces in my kitchen. It's a bit like trying to make pottery with an old turntable and a bag of dirt, no matter how hard you try, somehow it just doesn't come out the same.

To begin with, all the ingredients for the TV chefs' culinary creations come already chopped, diced, minced, chopped and shredded and lined up in glass bowls along the counter. Apparently, these chefs don't go to the grocery store to discover that the main ingredient is sold out, because the supplier didn't send the full shipment due to some computer error, and we have no idea when more stock might arrive, but we can offer you a raincheck? They don't get home from the store with some pseudo substitute ingredient to find that someone put the salt box back in the cupboard empty and the only salt in the house is in the salt shaker, which must be pried open with a knife. TV chefs don't have to bandage the massive wound caused by a slip in the prying process. Somehow, all the necessary ingredients are beamed into their kitchens.

TV chefs don't use a fork to beat one egg, because the only whisk they own is too big to beat just one egg. They have 20, maybe even 100, whisks in different sizes. They have more knives, bowls, spatulas, blenders, food processors, ovens, deep fryers, barbeques and parchment paper than most small countries. My culinary apparati, on the other hand, fits into one cupboard and a glass vase that sits on the counter. So when the recipe says to pop the parsley into the food processor, I have to chop really fast with my one knife.

But the one thing that TV chefs don't have in their kitchens is a telephone. I've never seen them reach the final and most crucial part of the procedure that requires great concentration and a steady hand, when the phone rings and it's mom. They never have to wedge the phone receiver between their shoulder and their ear, reassure Mom that everyone is fine and that they've been really busy lately, but they have been thinking about her and, at the same time, open the oven door with their foot, place the delicate creation in the oven, without burning the good hand.

There is one thing I don't understand about TV chefs. Why do they go to all the trouble of making a culinary masterpiece, when the finished product is sitting right under the counter ready to be served?