

Song texts to the album

The Best Cuisine: Music of Carlos Simon

recorded by Chiarina Chamber Players and Carl DuPont in

January 2024, released August 2025

chiarina.org/simonalbum

THE BEST
Cuisine

MUSIC OF
CARLOS SIMON

CARL
DUPONT

CHIARINA
CHAMBER
PLAYERS



A z i c a

Page 2 - The Best Cuisine (I & II)

Page 3 - The Best Cuisine (III)

Page 4 - The Best Cuisine (IV)

Page 5 - The Best Cuisine (V)

Page 6 - Nightfall, Dead Fires

Page 7 - Prayer, Caro mio ben

The Best Cuisine

Carl DuPont

i. Grace

Dear Lord, we thank you for this food that we are about to receive.
Please bless the hands that planted, plucked, and prepared it.

We ask that you allow it to nourish our bodies and our souls
Lest we forget those starving, stranded, and struggling,
Who desperately want to be made whole.

We ask all this in your holy name,
And in every name, you are the same.

Amen.

Amen.

Amen.

ii. Salmon with Kale

Preheat your oven,
And rim your baking sheet.
Toss kale and cabbage
With oil, don't be discreet.

Season your salmon,
Nestle it in greens,
Bake for ten minutes,
It's time to get obscene.

Whisk zest of *limón*
And juice and dill and mustard.
Add the remaining quarter cup
Of oil. Do you feel the heat?

Remove the salmon from the heat,
And have your guest approach their seat
Now drizzle dressing as they eat,
What a fabulous treat!



iii. Mac and Cheeze

One pound of macaroni;
Two Yukon potatoes;
or spuds of any kind.

One large carrot peeled and diced;
or not. Baby, take your time.
Two-thirds a cup of onion;

Please don't forget the SALT.
Don't forget!

Canola, grapeseed, peanut oil,
whatever's slick suffices.

Two garlic cloves, dry mustard and pepper,
a dash of everything you've got
But don't forget the SALT.

Now boil it and bend it, toss it and blend it.
Spread it and smooth it, stretch it send it
Into your oven that's hot and ready,

Sprinkle it with those crunchy crumbs,
Laissez les bons temps rouler ma chérie.
Just don't forget the SALT.
You'll thank me later, as will your gums.
Go ahead and sprinkle that little salt on it.

Just sprinkle it.
Just don't forget the SALT.





iv. Roux

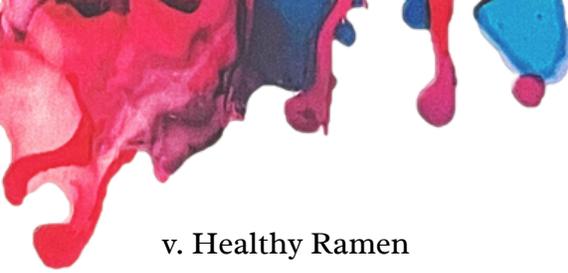
Heat, stir, pour, sizzle,
Turn, dash, sprinkle, drizzle,
Scrape, scoop, snip, dry,
Sauté, simmer, scatter, fry.

Mix, mash, mince, move,
Grind, grate, grease, groove,
Dice, slice, slit, throw,
Cut, melt, garnish, Go!

Peak, ogle, drool, dribble,
Lick, taste, savor, nibble,
Suck, slurp, slurp, chew, chow,
Swallow, gulp, pat, WOW!

Burp, smile, laugh, love,
Sip, swish, swirl, glove,
Wipe, wash, rinse, spray,
Stack, close, sit, stay.





v. Healthy Ramen

You can make your ramen healthily,
If you really dare to try.
But it takes a bit of patience, courage
and you better be hungry too

You can make your ramen healthily,
If you really dare to try.
But it takes a bit of patience, courage
and you better be hungry too

Leeks, scallions, and bok choy.
Sauté each aromatic herb
Stir in the onion and the cloves
Of garlic you keep handy.

Then sprinkle it with curry,
A whole lot of curry
A whole lot of curry

Add anything that's green.
(Any weed will do nicely)
If you know what I mean.

Add just a little more curry,
Then just add a little more,
Then let that curry pour!

Now bring your broth to a boil,
Sink your ramen to the bottom.
Add some garlic, salt and vinegar
Sprinkle that top with oil.
And serve it. Serve. And serve it! Now, you've got'em!

Serve that ramen!
That healthy ramen!
Ramen, ramen, ramen!

That healthy ramen!



Nightfall

Courtney Ware Lett

Nightfall is a dream deferred.

Powder blue skies fade to blackblue.
Charcoal clouds roll over that beaming light
and blot it out,
replacing it with artificial yellow and orange sparkles
that diminish and die in the distance.

Tree shadows cover green grass and cracked concrete.
Lush branches are now spare twigs.
The wind is still; the air, shiver-cool.
Everything is black—eyes opened or closed.

Hope is dusk,
and optimism cold as midnight.

The sun sets on daydreams,
and the moon triggers nightmares.



Dead Fires

Jessie Redmon Fauset

If this is peace, this dead and leaden thing,
Then better far the hateful fret, the sting.
Better the wound forever seeking balm
Than this gray calm!

Is this pain's surcease? Better far the ache,
The long-drawn dreary day, the night's white wake,
Better the choking sigh, the sobbing breath
Than passion's death!



Prayer

Langston Hughes

Gather up

In the arms of your pity
The sick, the depraved,
The desperate, the tired,
All the scum
Of our weary city

Gather up

In the arms of your pity.
Gather up
In the arms of your love—
Those who expect
No love from above.

Caro mio ben

Author unknown

Caro mio ben,
credimi almen,
senza di te
languisce il cor.

Il tuo fedel
sospira ognor.
Cessa, crudel,
tanto rigor.

*My dear love,
believe me at least,
without you
the heart languishes.*

*Your faithful one
always sighs for you.
Cease, cruel one,
being so harsh.*

English translation by Carl DuPont © 2025

