

The House that Sioux Z Wow Built

Story & Photos by Jim Bruum



Sioux Z Wow creators Terry and Sioux Elledge at their North Napa Home

Some of the best inventions in history were accidents. Penicillin, X-rays and vulcanized rubber come to mind. Sometimes the inventors were looking for what they stumbled upon, but often they were pursuing something completely different and their discovery completely changed their lives.

Napans Sioux and Terry Elledge had just such a life-changing discovery. Ten years ago they were having a dinner party at their home in Laguna Niguel in Southern California. They were planning to serve chicken but wanted to do something different, something to make it fun. "I cook fun," said Sioux.

They went to the pantry and began throwing together ingredients to make a marinade that would liven up their chicken dinner. Later, when they served their guests, there was an almost spontaneous reaction: "Sioux Z, wow! What is this amazing sauce?"

They spent several days experimenting and perfecting their creation, the question being, could they recreate the magic?

They found a small manufacturer who took their formula and made 100 gallons of sauce, the minimum the manufacturer would produce. They set up a shop at a local produce stand and to their surprise and delight sold out quickly, and realized they were on to something special.

Understand, this was not a couple with a background in marketing or food. Terry had spend many years in training and development in corporate America, and Sioux, (no she's not Native American, "She's outrageous, precocious and Irish," said Terry) had been a therapist for 22 years in Newport Beach.

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But they shared a love for food and cooking. “My passion is cooking and entertaining,” said Sioux. “Cooking was *my* therapy. Cooking has a beginning, a middle and an end. In therapy there’s no end to anything.” Their new creation gave them an opportunity to integrate their love of cooking and dining into a living.

Soon after selling out their first batch of Sioux Z Wow marinade, they began taking their act on the road and found enthusiastic retailers all over Southern California who were glad to add Sioux Z Wow to their shelves. “The trick is getting them to try it,” said Sioux. “Retailers receive hundreds of new products a year. It’s hard to get yours noticed.

her finger in and tasted it. “Send me ten cases,” were the next words out of her mouth.

With that and other encouragement, they moved to the Napa Valley a few years ago, to build their business.

But what *is* it about Sioux Z Wow marinade that is so incredible? There are lots of sauces and marinades out there. Terry says the secret starts with the chilies they use. Their unique blend of ingredients creates a sauce that changes its nature depending on the food it accompanies. On vegetables Sioux Z Wow will taste spicy and lively, on meats and poultry, it is sweeter and softer. It can be used on everything in the meal, and taste different on each food. You can marinate meat

of all new food products don’t survive their first year, Sioux Z Wow marinade has beaten the odds by a wide margin. This August they celebrated their tenth anniversary of the first batch.

So what’s in the future for Terry and Sioux and their magic marinade? They are enjoying their success and want to expand their business as long as they can handle it together, according to Terry. Currently they distribute throughout California and several other western states.

“We don’t set goals,” said Terry. “We set intentions and we work toward fulfilling those. We gave up corporate America and we want to live the rest of our lives moving up and on.” Will they add more products to their business? Sioux laughingly said, “I have one great, gifted child, and I have tied my tubes. Our focus is clear.”

I strongly recommend you pick up a bottle or two of Sioux Z Wow and give it a try. Want recipe ideas? Sioux prints her phone number right on the bottle. You can call her for ideas and advice. If you are a gourmet cook, you’ll find it enhances your favorite recipes. If you can’t cook worth a darn (like me) it will make your friends think you can. It’s that good.

But to revisit the question asked earlier, what *is* it about Sioux Z Wow marinade that makes it so amazing? Though the ingredients are printed on the bottle, they’re not specific enough to give away its secrets. Perhaps most telling is the message at the top of the label: Made with Love and Joy!

Let’s just leave it at that.

In the Napa Valley you can pick up a bottle of Sioux Z Wow for yourself at Browns Valley Market, Vallergas, Omega 3 Seafood, Sunshine Market, Dean & DeLuca or CalMart. Sioux Z Wow can be reached at 707-224-4556.

It’s a sauce, a marinade, a seasoner, a dip, a dressing, glaze and a base. Some have said that it has replaced just about everything in their pantry.

We know if they try Sioux Z Wow, they’ll buy it.”

Sioux and Terry had come to Napa Valley often, to relax after demos and shows in the Bay Area. “Every time we came to Napa Valley we felt like cats purring,” said Terry. “We felt at home and wanted to promote Sioux Z Wow in Northern California, where the foodies live.”

During one trip they stopped at Sunshine Market in St. Helena. Terry asked about placing Sioux Z Wow in their store and the meat cutter said, “Leave two bottles, one for me to try and one for Gena (the manager).” Later Sioux called Gena to see how she liked it. During the call, Gena said, “Wait, I have your bottle right in front of me.” She opened it, stuck

and poultry or paint it on corn-on-the-cob as your barbeque it, you can use it in salad dressings, you can pour it over cream cheese and garnish it with shrimp or crab. Add it to burgers, meatloaf, soups, sautés or stir-frys.

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According to Sioux, a food chemist once tried Sioux Z Wow and said, “You have accidentally done what many businesses have tried to do for many years, created a perfectly-balanced marinade.”

In a world where, according to Terry and Sioux, ninety-six percent