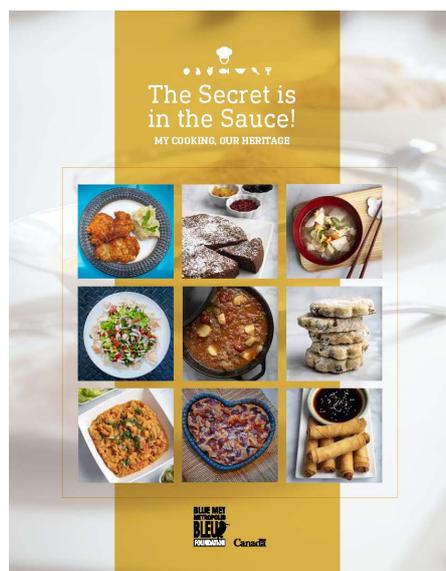


PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE PUBLICATION

**BLUE METROPOLIS BREAKS BREAD WITH HISTORY**  
**Beautiful new cookbook shares cultures and histories**



***The Secret is in the Sauce!***  
**Text by Monique Polak, Photography by  
Monique Dykstra**

My cooking, our heritage—original family recipes from  
20 countries

**Win a copy starting June 14, 2021**

**Montreal, June, 2021** – Move over pandemic sourdough... As part of this year's [social programming](#), **Blue Metropolis Literary Foundation** is excited to present their latest and tastiest creation, the glossy, hardcover cookbook, ***The Secret is in the Sauce!*** Interviewed by author **Monique Polak**, family chefs offer recipes and memories from Armenia to Wales, including Mi'kmaq and Haisla First Nations communities, with added text by Tara Sky. Dedicated photographer **Monique Dykstra** recreated many of the recipes when entering peoples' homes was no longer an option. Starting on **June 14** the deeply personal, limited-edition cookbooks will be distributed free of charge to at least 100 lucky winners who share a picture or story from their own family's culinary history, details below.

For Polak, recipes are stories, especially delicious recipes passed down from one generation to the next. "Like most good recipes, ***The Secret is in the Sauce!*** project got better over time as it simmered and new ingredients were added. Working on the cookbook was a blast," said Polak. "Along the way, I didn't just learn new recipes, I learned about other cultures. The project allowed me to 'travel' to far-away lands during the pandemic."

The book is a gastronomic voyage through 21 cultures. Countries of origin are Iran, Hungary, India, Czech Republic, Armenia, Lebanon, The Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Trinidad, Japan, Wales, Syria, Philippines, Tunisia, El Salvador, France, USA, China and First Nations Mi'kmaq and Haisla communities. Enticing and evocative recipe names include *zerezhk polo ba morgh* from Iran, *boerenkool* from The Netherlands, rum-soaked Caribbean black cake from Trinidad, *pice ar y maen* from Wales, *lahme bel sahn* from Syria, and the Mi'kmaq three sisters casserole. The timeliness of the cookbook launch is palpable. Losing seniors and not being able to visit and enjoy extended family meals is at the forefront of everyone's mind. For project coordinator **Frédéric Gaudin-Laurin**, cooking is the mortar that binds people, frees conversation and eases the exchange of knowledge. "Until we can all get together again for a great meal, ***The Secret is in the Sauce!*** lets us relive some of those precious moments.

The book introduces senior family members who offer their unique stories—sometimes funny, sometimes touching—along with family recipes that outdo one another for their originality,” he said. Society is undergoing a lamentable loss of cultural heritage. Here, contributors talk about their lives and holidays, and explain how traditional know-how and culture is imparted.

***The Secret is in the Sauce!*** allows Quebecers of all origins and languages’ love of food and innate *joie de vivre* to give recognition to Anglophones among first-generation immigrants and First Nations communities. The book also delivers an uplifting view of aging. With an increasing number of elderly people affected by Alzheimer’s disease and other cognitive difficulties, collective memory is at the point of disappearing, even more so among Quebec’s English-speaking seniors, who are fewer in number, less visible and often more isolated. T

Gratefully sponsored by Canadian Heritage’s Official Languages Program, to win a copy of ***The Secret is in the Sauce!***, starting June 14 people are asked to submit a picture or story from their family’s culinary history, and either post it on [Blue Metropolis’ Instagram](#) or comment on their [Facebook](#) page using the hashtag **#mycookingourheritage**. Contributors of the best recipes will receive the gorgeous book.

**To view the book online including recipes, stories and photos:**

[bluemetropolis.org/educational-project/secret-sauce/](http://bluemetropolis.org/educational-project/secret-sauce/)

A video discussion, [‘Mentors, Elders, Traditions; Chefs and Influences’](#) was inspired by the book; with Indigenous chef and cookbook author Shane Chartrand, cookbook author and long-time restaurant reviewer Lesley Chesterman, and Jonathan Cheung, storeowner of Appetite for Books, sharing their own cooking traditions - and some useful cooking tips.

**Monique Polak** is the author of 26 books for young people. Her spring 2019 titles are *I Am a Feminist: Claiming the F-Word in Turbulent Times*, and *Princess Angelica, Part-Time Lion Trainer*. Polak is a two-time winner of the Quebec Writers’ Federation Prize for Children’s and Young Adult Literature. She has been teaching at Marianopolis College for 32 years. She is also a freelance journalist whose stories have appeared in the *Montreal Gazette* and in Postmedia publications across the country. Polak is a columnist on ICI-Radio Canada’s *Plus on est de fous, plus on lit!*

**Monique Dykstra** is professional photographer from Montreal, and the author of two photography books. She opened Studio Iris Photography in 1994, a busy Montreal studio that specializes in wedding photography, family portraits, corporate events, business portraits, and private photography classes and workshops.

### **Blue Metropolis Foundation**

Blue Metropolis Foundation is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1997 that brings together people from different cultures to share the pleasures of reading and writing and encourage creativity and intercultural understanding. The Foundation produces an annual literary festival of international calibre and offers, year-round, a wide range of activities as part of the TD-Blue Metropolis Children’s Festival as well as educational and social programs in the classroom, in libraries and online. These programs use reading and writing as therapeutic tools, to encourage academic perseverance and fight against poverty and social isolation.

Review copy of *The Secret is in the Sauce!* available on request (hard cover or pdf)

**If you would like to interview any of *The Secret is in the Sauce!* participants -**

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MERCI AUX PARTENAIRES MAJEURS DE LA FONDATION METROPOLIS BLEU QUI SOUTIENNENT LE FESTIVAL 2021  
ET NOS PROGRAMMES ÉDUCATIFS ET SOCIAUX 2020-2021  
THANKS TO BLUE METROPOLIS FOUNDATION'S MAJOR PARTNERS WHO SUPPORT THE 2021 FESTIVAL  
AND OUR 2020-2021 EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL PROGRAMS

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