

ANNA

MAKE EVERYDAY SPECIAL

*“Whatever you can do, or
dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power and
magic in it.”*



EVERYTHING-ANNA.COM

Sunday breakfast: an all-morning affair with ultra-thin and dainty crepes all sugary and crispy



springroll stuffed with crab, halibut and shrimp

Deciding to publish my own magazine has been a life changing experience for me. Once I learned how to make a decision and commit to it, all the pieces came together, things appeared as if out of nowhere to help calm my fears and bring clarity; each carried a message I desperately needed to direct my energy and make my dream a reality.

I am so grateful to everyone who believed in me when all I had was a concept – one that would inspire people to make everyday special and bring my love of food and entertaining to life with extraordinary photography, exceptional design and luxurious paper; a magazine simple enough to be timeless and beautiful enough to have as a coffee table book.

I grew up surrounded by people who took the time to make food beautiful and special and much of this magazine is derived from the traditions of my family. Anna is my mother and I chose to name it after her because as much as I have searched for my own way, life has a way of taking you back to what you know. My father was a talented craftsman and my mother a frugal homemaker; together they ensured when it came to food we always had the best. They kept beautiful gardens that produced varieties of fruits and vegetables to be harvested and preserved.



Con't next page...

My mother made homemade breads and handmade pastas. My father would buy an entire beef or pork and together with family, spend an entire day preparing and carving the meat into roasts, steaks, chops and ribs. I was always happy to tend the bacon that had to be cooked in a large tub like pot and stirred with a wooden oar. After hours of slow cooking this bacon would turn perfectly crisp and golden; I still remember the smoky tantalizing aroma. At the end of the day, rows and rows of neatly wrapped brown paper packages would be waiting to be divided among family and friends. Long before organic became fashionable, I was privileged to enjoy this way of life.

As a child I dreamed of traveling to great places, like New York City. I always thought there was something more waiting to fulfill a longing and bring a deeper meaning. When I got to New York it was all I had allowed myself to imagine, the energy, the people, the food, my crispy creme donut on 33rd and Broadway, the mile high corned beef sandwich and fries at the Carnegie Deli, 5th Avenue, Times Square, Kate Spade and Bill Clinton on 51st Street. I could go on and on.

The most extraordinary thing to happen in New York was wandering back to my room at the end of the day and realizing

that in spite of its greatness what I really love the most is what I already have and that has made all the difference in my life. If you make a bit of effort New York can be anywhere.

I am so excited about this magazine, although it has taken every ounce of my energy, it brings together all the things that I love; in my kitchen is where I truly find my voice. "Making everyday special" is about realizing that life is precious and we do need to take the time to cut toast in the shape of hearts, invite neighbours for dinner, remember good manners and light candles at dinnertime. Food creates traditions and memories that bind us together as family, as friends, as community. It helps us share with one another, connect to each other and bring meaning to our lives.

Thank you for reading this very first issue of ANNA Magazine — made up of recipes that have special meaning for me; that over the years, have connected me to the people I love. I hope it will inspire you to look within yourself and find simple everyday things to make your life more special.

Enjoy!

A handwritten signature in a cursive script that reads "Mari".



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What I Have Learned

The Power of Decision

As important as it is to use food to make days special, it is equally important to take some time everyday to be still and to think. Most days I'll awake before anyone else; make a great coffee and settle into a comfortable spot. Everything is peaceful and calm. Whether I have something inspirational to read or I just sit in the quiet with my thoughts, this precious time brings clarity and balance; it allows me to move forward.

Many times in my life the exact words I needed to express an idea, a feeling, an experience even, have appeared in some form and dramatically changed the way I look at life. Words feed my soul, and this ritual has become my way. When I was first thinking of this magazine, my friend Pamela dropped an Oprah Magazine article in my mailbox. Quite simply that article is the reason this magazine exists today. I'm happy to share it with you; I hope it inspires you do what is right for you.

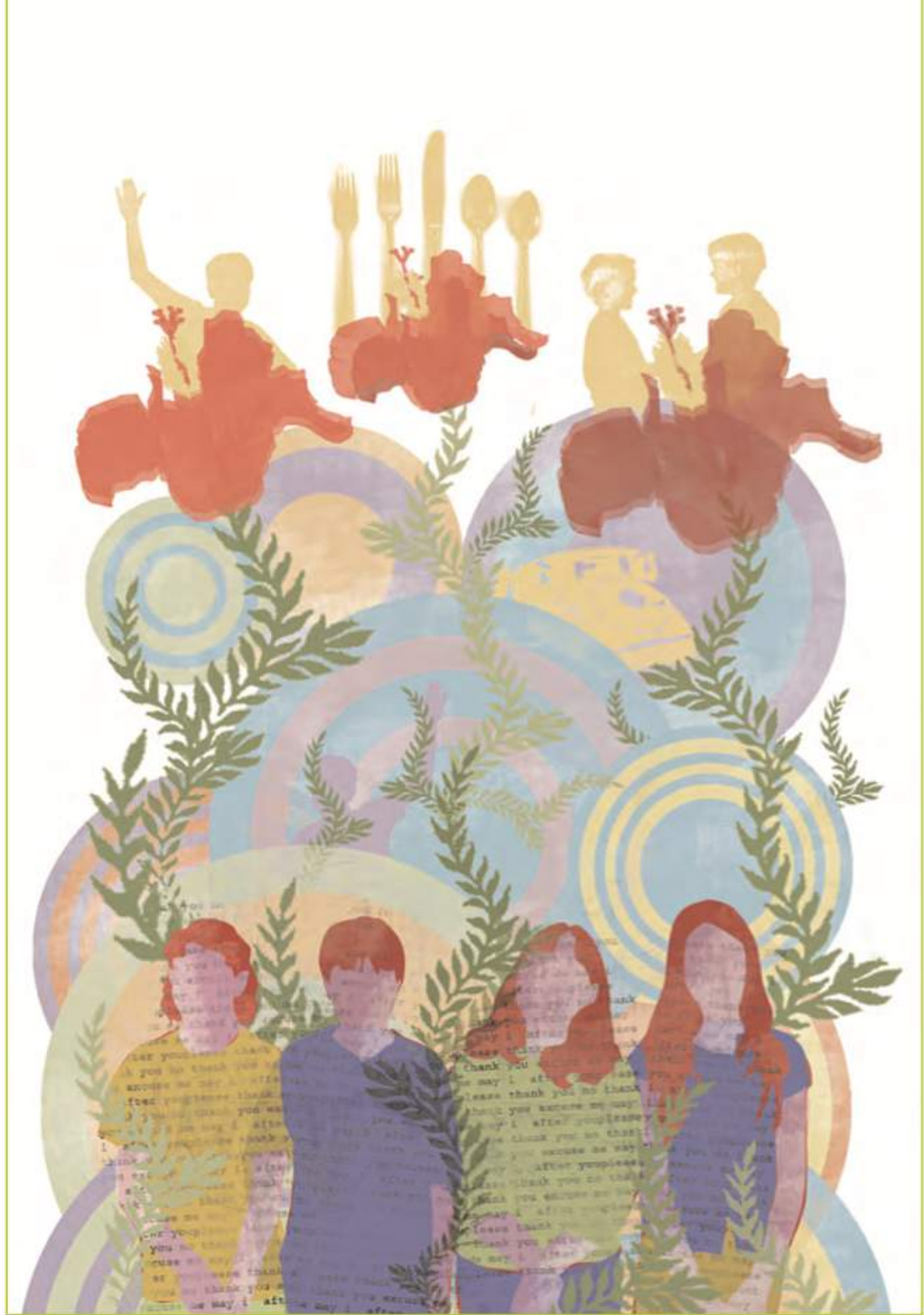
The article was about a passage that occurs in mountaineer William Hutchinson Murray's *The Scottish Expedition*. It was what I already knew but couldn't express. In a moment of quiet confidence, the decision was made, I was committed, and I have not looked back. I learned that if you take the time, in the quiet, to really listen to the words in your heart, those words will appear to you in a way only your soul understands. I have also learned there is an absolute truth in the words of this passage.

"Until one is committed there is hesitancy, the chance to draw back, always ineffectiveness. Concerning all acts of initiative (and creation), there is one elementary truth, the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans: that the moment one definitely commits oneself, the Providence moves, too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. A whole stream of events issues from the decision, raising in one's favour all manner of unforeseen incidents and meetings and material assistance, which no man could have dreamt would have come his way. I have learned a deep respect for one of Goethe's couplets: "Whatever you can do, or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power, and magic in it."



porcini mushroom delights

Manners & Etiquette



Mantra for Modern Etiquette

Everyone, in every situation, should get exactly the same respect and consideration, every time. This is the mantra for modern etiquette.

No matter what day it is, and for no reason in particular, there are always fresh flowers on the table at my friend Rose's house. Piping hot stove-perked coffee is always served in beautiful old china cups and even store-bought cookies are served on a fancy plate. "Don't fuss Rose," I always say. "It's no trouble" is her constant reply. The truth is, she does fuss, and quite honestly, I've grown accustomed to it and would be disappointed if she didn't. When Rose goes to the trouble to choose a china cup, to pair it with a charming old linen napkin, or to buy cream – just because she knows I prefer it to milk in my coffee, it makes me feel special. The fact is I'm not special. Anyone and everyone who comes to Rose's home gets this royal treatment. We're not special; Rose is special.

These days anyone who "bothers", who takes a few minutes and goes to any trouble, is special. That we're all busy and tired and stressed has become an excuse to be uncivilized, lazy even. Standing and picking at the food in the pots on the stove; grabbing a bite as we rush out the door; eating out of the container the food comes in; for many of us putting the potato chips in a bowl is too much "bother" these days. There is no question that making an effort takes time. It is absolutely true that sometimes people won't even notice when you do the little extras.

But sometimes they will, and they'll feel special. They will remember the gesture and come to appreciate it, maybe even come to expect it. Would that be so bad? What's more, exhibiting good manners and giving a little extra of yourself will make you feel good, too. Consistently choosing to exhibit good manners says a lot about your personal standard. I realize now, for example, that Rose bothers to put out the fancy plates, just like she bothers to dress nicely and to keep a neat house because it is her way of respecting herself. In the process, she earns the respect of others and she succeeds in making the everyday special, something she has done for 80+ years. Experts suggest it takes only six weeks to make a behaviour a habit. Why not choose one small thing; maybe it's never serving food in the package it came in, maybe it's always eating at the table (even pizza), maybe it's making a point of turning the telephone and television off from 6:00 – 7:00pm every evening... it doesn't matter what you choose, it just matters that you do it. Choose one small, everyday thing and make it special. We hope you'll join us in each edition of ANNA Magazine as we share etiquette techniques and traditions for treating everyone, with exactly the same respect and consideration, in every situation, everyday.

Make Everyday Special

A Sunday Morning Family Affair

My mother used to make amazing little crepe-like pancakes and we used to hang around the kitchen while she made them so we could eat them hot – right out of the pan. She would sprinkle them with sugar and serve them folded into triangles. I would always unfold mine and roll them into perfect little scrolls. I loved their soft delicate texture and can still remember their yummy aroma. They were perfectly golden, buttery, sugary and crunchy. I could never have only a few and I can almost taste them just thinking about them.

Making everyday special can be as simple as turning a Sunday breakfast into an all morning affair with a recipe that will have your family in and out of the kitchen, testing, and taking part in cooking something they won't soon forget.

Try our luxe rendering of my mother's pancakes with this easy recipe for ultra-thin, delicate, crispy crepes caramelized with cinnamon and sugar. Pair them with good strong coffee and steamed milk served in your favourite little cups; don't forget to invite a few friends to share in the fun.

Caramelized crepes

2 cups all-purpose flour
2 tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons salt
3 cups milk
5 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup fine sugar
3 1/2 ounces butter, melted

Combine flour and sugar in a large bowl. Combine milk, eggs, and vanilla in a separate bowl, and then slowly whisk into flour mixture until smooth. Cover and let stand for 20 minutes.

Heat a small, lightly greased crepe pan over medium heat. Pour 1/8 cup of mixture into the pan; gently tip pan to spread out mixture. Cook for 2 minutes each side or until golden. Repeat with remaining mixture.

In small bowl, combine cinnamon and sugar. Brush each crepe with butter and cinnamon mixture, return to the pan and cook for 1 to 2 minutes each side or until caramelized and crispy. Serves 6.



Caramelized crepes

Create Your Own Traditions

Bake a Cake Every Sunday

When I was a young it was customary among many of our friends and neighbours to bake something special for a Sunday afternoon lunch. I remember my friend Frieda's mother would bake the same torte every weekend and on Saturday nights we would sneak a peek as it cooled on the counter. I can still remember how beautiful it looked; a flan cake with rippled, velvety edges baked to golden perfection. A shiny strawberry glaze and scoops of fresh whipped cream on top.

My daughter Isabella and I have adopted this tradition in our own home and bake a different cake every Sunday, (well most Sundays). It's fun looking for the perfect recipe and then deciding who we should invite for a try. When our guests arrive, everyone gets involved, taking their turn at spreading on the thick icing anxiously awaiting the first bite.

Here, we share 4 of our favourites. Starting with Isabella's favourite, the chocolate cookie torte. Every birthday the same request, we just change it up each year; instead of cocoa we add food colouring to the filling, or frost it with buttercream and add fresh flowers. For her last birthday, we layered the cookies into the shape of an elegant lady's hat and covered it with pink buttercream. What a nice surprise for the party guests when we cut into the cake and revealed the many layers. It really became the centre of attention.

The Chocolate cookie torte is made with crepe style chocolate cookies, ground walnuts, and whipped cream. It is buttery, sugary, salty, walnuts, chocolaty, decadent, and delicious. Patience is required, but it's sooooo worth it!

Chocolate cookie torte

Makes 10 9-inch cookie layers

1 cup butter plus 3 tablespoons, softened
2 cups white sugar
2 eggs
1/2 cup cocoa
1 teaspoon vanilla
2 3/4 cups flour, sifted
1 1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup walnuts, ground

Filling

2 cups whipping cream, chilled
1 teaspoon vanilla
1/4 cup icing sugar, sifted
3 tablespoons cocoa, sifted
Dash of salt

Preheat oven to 375°. Place butter and sugar into bowl of electric mixer; mix on medium-high until light and fluffy. Reduce speed and with mixer running, add eggs, one at a time, then add cocoa and vanilla. Sift flour and salt into another bowl and gradually add to butter mixture, beat on low for one minute. Fold in walnuts.

To make cookie layers, scoop dough using cup-sized measuring cup and form into balls. Cut 20 sheets wax paper into approximately 12x12-inch squares. Place each dough ball between two sheets and roll into 9-inch round layers (use 9-inch pan bottom as guide for size). Continue with all layers, then transfer one by one onto parchment-lined cookie sheet and bake 6-8 minutes each. Remove from oven, transfer to cooling rack and cool completely.

For filling, place all ingredients into bowl of electric mixer and beat until slightly thickened, about 3 minutes. Assemble torte by layering with 1/2 cup filling for each layer. Place in refrigerator overnight (very important). Serve chilled. Serves 20.



Chocolate cookie torte

Here ends my quest for the ultimate coffee cake with a surprising ingredient — roasted cardamom pods. Don't be intimidated, roasting the pods requires only 10 minutes but the exotic fragrance that wafts through your home makes it well worth your time. Lavish amounts of buttery brown sugar streusel cascades throughout and brings a perfect balance of streusel and cake to every bite.

Cardamom streusel coffee cake

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cardamom
3/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup salted butter, softened
1 1/4 cups sugar
3 large eggs
1 1/4 cups sour cream
1 teaspoon vanilla
Vegetable-oil cooking spray for pan

Streusel

18 whole cardamom pods
2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup packed light-brown sugar
3/4 teaspoon salt
1 cup salted butter, room temperature

Preheat oven to 350°F.

First, make ground cardamom by baking cardamom pods on parchment-lined baking sheet about 10 minutes. Cool. Finely grind in spice grinder and pass through mesh sieve, set aside.

For streusel, whisk flour, brown sugar, cardamom and salt in medium bowl. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs, set aside.

For cake, spray 10-inch round angel food cake pan with cooking spray; set aside. Place butter and sugar into bowl of electric mixer and mix on medium-high speed until light and fluffy. Mix in eggs, one at a time. In another bowl, sift flour, baking powder, baking soda, cardamom, cinnamon, and salt. Add flour mixture to batter in batches, alternating with sour cream. Add vanilla and beat well.

Spoon half the batter into baking pan. Top with 2 cups streusel. Top with remaining batter, then squeeze remaining streusel into large and small clumps and sprinkle on top of batter. Bake until golden brown and cake tester inserted into centre comes out clean, 60 to 75 minutes. Let cool. Remove cake from pan carefully and transfer onto wire rack to cool completely. Serves up to 12.

Cardamom streusel coffee cake



Cardamom streusel coffee cake

lemon ginger cake

For me, this cake represents the ultimate pairing of simplicity and style. Luxurious white swirls of creamy, velvety frosting transform this dessert into an elegant affair. It's lusciously spiced centre mellow over time and is even better eaten the day after it is made. Beautiful enough for a wedding, easy enough for everyday.

Lemon ginger cake with lemon cream cheese frosting

2 cups sugar
3/4 cup salted butter, room temperature
4 large eggs
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 cups cake flour
1 tablespoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 1/4 cups buttermilk

Frosting

1 1/3 cup cream cheese, room temperature
1 cup salted butter, room temperature
3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
3 teaspoons grated lemon peel
1 1/4 teaspoons vanilla extract
4 3/4 cups icing sugar, sifted

For frosting, using electric mixer, beat cream cheese, butter, lemon juice, 2 teaspoons lemon peel, and vanilla in large bowl until smooth. Add sifted powdered sugar a little at a time, and beat until frosting is smooth.

For cake, preheat oven to 350°F. Butter two 9-inch cake pans. Line bottoms with parchment paper. Place butter and sugar into cleaned bowl of electric mixer and mix on medium-high speed until light and fluffy. Reduce speed to medium. Mix in eggs, one at a time. Add lemon juice, lemon peel, and vanilla.

In another bowl, sift flour, ginger, cinnamon, baking powder, baking soda; add to butter mixture, alternating with buttermilk in 3 additions each, beginning with dry ingredients and beating with each addition. Divide batter equally between prepared pans. Bake about 45 minutes or until golden brown and tester inserted into centre comes out clean. Transfer to cooling rack. Cool 10 minutes. Using small, sharp knife, cut around sides of pans to loosen cakes and turn onto racks to cool completely. Remove parchment paper. Trim outsides of cakes if you wish.

To assemble, place one cake layer on cake stand and spread 1 cup frosting over top. Place remaining cake layer on top. Using icing spatula, spread remaining frosting over sides and top in decorative swirls. Cover and refrigerate. Allow cake to stand at room temperature 30 for minutes before serving. Serves up to 12.



Lemon ginger cake with lemon cream cheese frosting

To compare, we would say “New York style” and for anyone who has ever eaten cheesecake in New York, it needs no further introduction. Beautiful, rich, tart and sweet. This will become your go-to cheesecake. An invitation from my friend Pamela, whether for lunch, dinner or coffee is always special. It was she who first introduced me to beautiful dinners, prime rib and great wine...And baking a cheesecake for a new friend. Many years ago, I was that friend and I still remember its vivid colour and exquisite taste—made with a compote of partridgeberries send from Newfoundland by her mother. (partridgeberries can be substituted for cranberries)

Partridge berry cheesecake

16 ounces cream cheese, room temperature
3 eggs, separated
1/2 cup sugar
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1/2 teaspoon salt
2/3 cup 35% whipping cream
2/3 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/4 cup sugar

Crust

1/2 cup butter, melted
1 1/2 cups graham wafer crumbs
1/4 cup sugar

Cranberry compote

2 cups cranberries
1 cup water
1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/4 cup water

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 9-inch spring form pan with cooking spray.

For crust, in glass bowl, melt butter in microwave, add crumbs and sugar; mix by hand until moist and crumbly. Press against bottom and sides of spring form pan. Bake 10 to 12 minutes. Set aside and Cool.

For compote, in small pot over medium heat, simmer berries in water until tender, about 10 minutes. Add sugar and simmer another 5 minutes. Mix cornstarch with enough water to form paste; add to berry mixture and continue stirring until thickened and smooth.

For cheesecake, reduce oven to 325°F. Place cream cheese and 1/2 cup sugar in bowl of electric mixer and mix on medium-high speed until light and fluffy. Reduce speed to medium. Add egg yolks, 1 at a time. Beat well. Add cream, vanilla, lemon zest, and juice.

In separate bowl, sift flour and salt; add to cream cheese mixture and beat until free of lumps. In separate bowl, beat egg whites to soft-peak stage. Add 1/4 cup sugar and continue beating until whites are stiff but not dry. Fold egg whites into cream cheese mixture. Pour batter into prepared crust and bake for 40 to 60 minutes, or until set. The mixture will jiggle slightly when removed from the oven but will set as it cools. Cool to room temperature, pour compote over top and chill for 3 to 4 hours before serving. Serves up to 12.

*Partridgeberry
cheesecake*



Partridgeberry cheesecake

Everyday Easy Food

Why is the idea of baking bread, like pastry considered to be a complicated and time consuming task when it's really quite simple? Modern day bread machines have certainly made it easy, but even if by hand, making bread is simple.

I too thought bread making was intimidating and complicated, and then I tried it. The reactions were flattering and well worth the time. A lovely recipe for olive bread given to me by my friend Tracy Bile, who in a seemingly effortless way takes the time to make everything extraordinary! Olive Bread, uncomplicated and surprisingly simple to make; served with olive oil and a well-aged balsamic vinegar complements a great meal, but is sinfully wonderful all by itself.

Olive bread

1 package active dry yeast
3 cups warm water
4 to 5 cups bread flour
3 cups regular flour
1 cup Kalamata olives, pitted, chopped
1 tablespoon oregano
1 tablespoon rosemary
1 tablespoon thyme
1 1/2 tablespoons salt
1/4 cup warm water

Warm a mixing bowl by running hot water through it. Place 1/4 cup warm water and yeast into bowl and let stand for 10 minutes. Add 3 cups tepid water. Add flour, herbs, and salt. Knead by hand on floured board for 5 minutes, then add olives and knead again to incorporate. Tuck the dough to form smooth ball. Place dough in large oiled bowl. Cover with plastic wrap. Let rise in warm place for 2 to 3 hours, until doubled in size.

Preheat oven to 450°F. Turn dough onto board and cut into 3 parts. Roll each into tight little ball. Tuck ball under and under until tight. Place each ball onto parchment-lined baking sheet, dusted with corn meal. Cover with plastic wrap and let rise until doubled in size again. Cut slits onto tops and bake for 20 to 30 minutes. Open oven door during baking and mist with water at 5 and 10 minute intervals to create steam as bread bakes. Remove and cool. Serve with extra-virgin olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

Beautiful bread



People often think that when it comes to appetizers, many is better. I think a special one or two is not only fashionable but more memorable.

Ina Garten writes in her cookbook, Barefoot in Paris, that while in France she visited a museum once lived in by Louis Vuitton, that is now filled with suitcases dating back to the mid-nineteenth century. With cocktails they served only simple cheese straws piled high on beautiful platters. When I was in New York recently, I visited the Louis Vuitton store on 5th Avenue; the simplicity of his style is consistent in every single piece; so simple but so grand. A concept one can incorporate into everyday.

Appetizers are really meant to stimulate your appetite, not spoil it, so keeping things simple and serving only one is sensible. I have compiled a group of tantalizing starters, some as easy as rolling out puff pastry for cheese straws while others are more complex and require roasting spices for a satay sauce - all are equally easy to make.

Appetizers





Cheese straws with thyme and Gruyere

Cheese straws

Elevate your party to a level of grandeur with simple puff pastry served the Louis Vuitton way. They take only minutes to make but bring rave reviews from grown ups and teeny guests alike.

Cheese straws with thyme and Gruyere

2 sheets (1 box) frozen puff pastry, defrosted overnight in refrigerator
1 egg
1/2 cup Gruyere cheese, grated
1 teaspoon thyme, finely chopped
1 teaspoon coarse salt

Preheat oven to 375°F. Roll out each sheet of puff pastry on lightly floured surface until pastry approximately 10 x 12 inches. Beat egg with 1 tablespoon water, and brush surface of pastry. Sprinkle evenly with Gruyere cheese, thyme, and salt; with rolling pin, lightly press toppings into pastry. Cut each sheet into 12 strips; twist each strip and lay on parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake 12 minutes, until golden and puffed; turn over and bake another minute. Cool and serve. Serves 4-6.

Pear with goat cheese and prosciutto

A back lane dinner invitation and a promise to bring something nice brought me to a neighbourhood grocery store looking for ideas. “I’m looking for an appetizer that will make a great first impression,” I said. “Figs, goat cheese, basil, prosciutto, balsamic vinegar, brown sugar” was the reply. My neighbours never forgot the figs. Here, with figs out of season, we switched them up with pears.

Pear with goat cheese and prosciutto

1 3/4 ounces goat cheese
2 ripe pears, quartered
8 fresh basil leaves, coarsely chopped
8 slices prosciutto
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon brown sugar

Combine goat cheese with chopped basil, place approximately 2 tablespoons on each piece of pear, and wrap with a slice of prosciutto. Place under a broiler or on an outdoor grill for 2 to 3 minutes each side or until prosciutto is golden. Combine balsamic vinegar with brown sugar and drizzle over wrapped pears. Serve immediately. Serves 4.



Pear with goat cheese and prosciutto

Chicken Drumettes with sweet soy

Some years ago, my neighbours brought these tasty drumettes to a Christmas brunch and they were irresistible! I have since made them many times; the savoury sweet balance of soy sauce, vinegar and sugar transforms simple into spectacular!

Chicken drumettes with sweet soy glaze

2 pounds chicken drumettes
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups flour or cornstarch

Soy glaze

1 tablespoon soy sauce
1 tablespoon water
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup vinegar
1 teaspoon salt

For glaze, mix together all ingredients in bowl. Set aside.

Preheat oven to 375°F. Pat chicken dry with paper towel. Place eggs and flour into 2 separate shallow bowls. Dip chicken piece by piece into egg mixture, then into flour. Heat cooking oil over medium heat and cook each piece until golden brown, about 2 minutes each side. Pour prepared glaze over drumettes, and place in shallow baking dish and bake for 25 minutes. Serves 4-6.



Chicken drumettes with sweet soy glaze

Seafood spring roll

Halibut, shrimp and crab combined with lemongrass, ginger and cilantro served with an Asian inspired dip that delivers a stunning twist on taste. This delicious starter transforms any dinner party into a classic event and like all things classic, long remembered.

Spring roll stuffed with crabmeat, halibut and shrimp

3/4 pound fresh crabmeat
1/2 pound fresh halibut, chopped
1/4 pound shrimp, peeled, chopped
2 teaspoons cornstarch
1/4 cup panko
3 egg whites
1/2 tablespoon ginger, finely minced
1/2 tablespoon lemongrass, finely minced
1/2 teaspoon black pepper
2 teaspoons fish sauce
1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
6 tablespoons red onion, minced
1/4 cup green onion, sliced
1/4 cup cilantro leaves, lightly chopped
1/4 cup Thai basil leaves, lightly chopped
1 package (25 sheets) spring roll wrappers
2 egg whites, lightly beaten
Cooking oil for frying

Dipping sauce

1 tablespoon ginger, chopped
1 tablespoon garlic, chopped
1/4 cup light soy sauce
1/4 cup rice wine vinegar or sherry (sherry adds a deep, beautiful flavour)
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon sesame oil

For dipping sauce, in small bowl mix all ingredients and set aside.

For springrolls, in small bowl, lightly break up crab meat and set aside. In another bowl, place halibut and shrimp with all remaining ingredients and mix by hand carefully, in one direction. Fold in crabmeat, carefully.

To assemble, place spring-roll wrapper onto clean surface, and top with 3 tablespoons crabmeat horizontally, about 1 inch from the bottom. With pastry brush, eggwash outer edges of wrapper and roll up tightly, leaving the ends flat. Repeat with all wrappers.

In large skillet, heat cooking oil over medium-high heat and fry spring rolls a few at a time about 1 1/2 minutes each side, or until golden brown. Remove and drain on paper towel. Cut each spring roll on the bias into thirds. Serve immediately with dipping sauce. Serves 4-6.



Spring roll stuffed with crabmeat, halibut and shrimp

For a truly authentic, Asian flavour experience take the time for this very elaborate recipe. Seven ingredients in the marinade and eleven in the dipping sauce may seem intimidating, but if you read through the recipe, and break it down, it's far from complicated. I love to shop at Asian markets, however conventional grocery stores now carry an extensive Asian selection, so shopping for these ingredients is not difficult. A rendition from the cookbook *Big Bowl*, this is simply the best satay and peanut sauce I have ever had.

Indonesian chicken satay with peanut sauce

2 pounds boneless chicken breast
32 12-inch bamboo skewers

Marinade

4 teaspoons coriander seeds
4 teaspoons cumin seeds
4 garlic cloves, finely minced
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup fish sauce
3/4 cup tamarind sauce
1/4 cup peanut oil

Peanut dipping sauce

1/2 cup peanut oil
1/2 cup raw peanuts
2 fresh Serrano or Fresno peppers, seeded, minced
2 tablespoons ginger, minced
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/3 cup rich unsweetened coconut milk
1 teaspoon dark soya sauce
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1 teaspoon sugar
1 tablespoon lime juice
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 cup cilantro, chopped

For skewers, cut chicken into 1-ounce strips (across the grain) and thread each onto a skewer.

In small skillet over medium high heat, toast spices until fragrant, then grind to coarse powder in spice grinder. In medium bowl, combine spices with garlic, brown sugar, fish sauce, tamarind sauce, and peanut oil. In glass baking dish, dredge skewered chicken with marinade and chill 1 hour, turning from time to time.

Preheat grill to medium-high heat, and grill satays about 1 minute per side; do not overcook. Remove from heat and serve with peanut sauce. Serves 4-6.

Chicken satay



Indonesian chicken satay with peanut sauce

Tortilla chips with guacamole

When you really just need to get away from everything that is petty and unimportant and indulge in something wonderful, there are simple things like gin and tonic. As my friend Yutta, knows best, nothing makes me happier – served with lime and paired with these fantastic homemade tortilla chips and guacamole, it really is the best way to end the day!

Tortilla chips with guacamole

4 large whole-wheat flour tortillas
Coarse salt
Vegetable oil for frying

Guacamole

2 avocados, pitted, peeled
2 Roma tomatoes, chopped
1/2 small white onion, chopped
1/2 cup cilantro, chopped
Juice of 1 lime
1/2 teaspoon coarse salt

For guacamole, place all ingredients into bowl and mix to combine.

For tortillas, using pizza cutter, cut each tortilla into 8 pie-shaped wedges and fry in hot oil until golden brown, approximately 30 seconds on each side. Transfer to paper towel and sprinkle with salt. Serve at once.
Serves 4.



Tortilla chips with guacamole

Our rendition of an old family favourite that ordinarily called for sour cream and canned mushrooms is done here with porcini mushrooms, whipping cream, Marsala wine and a fancy tart cutter. Perfect for any affair.

Porcini mushroom delights

1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms
1 cup boiling water
2 tablespoon butter
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1/3 cup shallots, finely chopped
1 tablespoon thyme, chopped
1 pound mushrooms, trimmed, chopped
2 tablespoons Marsala
1/2 cup whipping cream
Coarse salt & cracked black pepper

Pastry

8 oz cream cheese
1/2 cup butter
1 1/2 cups flour

Preheat oven to 375°F. Place dry porcini in medium bowl. Add 1 cup boiling water; soak until soft, about 10 minutes. Drain well. Strain liquid through a fine sieve; reserve 3 tablespoons liquid. Finely chop porcini; set aside.

For filling, melt butter and olive oil in heavy skillet over medium heat. Add shallots, porcini, and thyme. Cook until shallots are translucent, 2 minutes. Add mushrooms and stir occasionally until mushrooms release their liquid and the pan dries out, about 5 minutes. Add reserved mushroom liquid and Marsala. Cook 1 minute to evaporate liquid. Add heavy cream, and let sauce reduce and thicken slightly, 2 to 3 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Cool.

For pastry, roll dough to 1/4-inch thick, 5-inch width. Pipe a row of filling lengthwise onto dough and fold dough over filling. With a pastry cutter or tart form, cut into shapes. Brush with egg whites and bake until light golden brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Makes 24.

Porcini mushroom delights

Porcini mushroom delights



Dinner

With a little extra effort, everyday ordinary can be extraordinary. Why wait until Friday night to make something special. With the right ingredients on hand, making dinner special every night of the week will become simple.

In this section we feature some of our favourite dinner recipes, which at first may seem complicated but with a little preparation ahead of time, take only minutes to make. With some practice, you will also soon recognize a few common elements that when combined make up some fantastic flavours. Those who dine at your table will be pleasantly surprised and wowed every time.

A special dinner paired with candles, fresh flowers, and good manners every day... is a simple and beautiful way to live.



When my parents emigrated from Mexico many years ago, they brought with them some of the Mexican cuisine they had grown accustomed to. As I was growing up, what seemed to be conventional cooking, I now realize was really adopted by their Mexican influence. When I created this recipe, beautiful thoughts came to my mind, of a time in Mexico when my dad took us to his favourite restaurant. Here, I was first introduced to *Milanese* — a tenderized, breaded, pan-fried beef cutlet.

As I was researching the origin of this recipe I came across Cotoletta di Vitello alla Milanese, which in Italian simply means *veal cutlets Milan style*. A popular main course at the highly-acclaimed Bice in Milan. Something I always thought of as ordinary suddenly became extraordinary. This recipe is uncomplicated, simple and delicious.

Veal cutlets Milan-style

4 thinly sliced veal or beef, pounded
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon kosher salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 eggs, beaten
1 1/4 cups bread crumbs
1/2 cup Parmesan, grated
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
Salad greens for 6

Vinaigrette

1/4 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
1/2 cup extra-virgin olive oil
1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

For vinaigrette, in small jar, shake ingredients until emulsified, set aside.

For veal cutlets, combine flour, salt, and pepper on large plate. On second plate, combine eggs with 1 tablespoon of water. On third, combine bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese. Coat veal on both sides with flour mixture, dip into egg mixture, and dredge in bread-crumbs mixture, pressing lightly. In heavy skillet over medium heat, combine butter and olive oil and cook cutlets for 2 to 3 minutes each side, until cooked through.

Toss salad greens with lemon vinaigrette. Serve cutlet with salad and extra shavings Parmesan cheese. Serves 4.

Veal cutlets Milan style



Veal cutlets Milan-style

I was first introduced to Thai food a few years ago, when I worked for a local food magazine, and later with my friend Marty whose forte is throwing great dinner parties with a menu that usually becomes the talk of the town. My first invite was a lesson in Thai cooking where I was introduced to ingredients that transformed his kitchen into a fragrant heaven.

The magic of Thai, I learned, is found in a few simple ingredients — curry paste, coconut milk, ginger, sherry, fish sauce, lime juice, and cilantro which have become part of my weekly shopping list. Although most curries are best simmered over a longer period of time, I found this quick and easy recipe that fuses these ingredients together beautifully, which in our home, has become a “much” requested everyday dinner. The real beauty of it – it takes only about 20 minutes to prepare!

Thai-style chicken curry

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
1 can coconut milk
2 tablespoons red Thai curry paste
3 tablespoons green onions, chopped
1 1/2 tablespoons ginger, grated
1 1/2 tablespoons rice wine or dry sherry
1 tablespoon fish sauce
1 teaspoon lime juice
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 teaspoons sugar
Handful fresh cilantro, chopped

Cut chicken into 1-inch cubes. In wok, combine coconut milk, curry paste, spring onions, ginger, rice wine or sherry, fish sauce or soy sauce, lime juice, salt, pepper, and sugar.

Bring to simmering point. Add chicken. Immediately cover the wok tightly, remove it from the heat, and let stand, covered, for 15 minutes to allow the chicken to steep in the hot curry sauce. Turn onto warm platter, garnish with cilantro sprigs, and serve with rice.
Serves 4.

Thai chicken curry



Thai-style chicken curry

New York steak adorned with peppercorns and a spectacular mushroom sauce served with creamy mashed potatoes makes this fare a perfect “man-meal” and with only 15 minutes prep time, any night is the right night!

Peppercorn New York steak with mushroom sauce

4 New York steaks
2 tablespoons crushed mixed peppercorns
2 teaspoons sea salt

Mushroom sauce

1 1/2 teaspoons sea salt
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 shallots, finely chopped
1 cup mixed mushrooms, chopped
3 to 4 thyme sprigs, chopped
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
1/3 cup red wine
1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon tomato paste
1/2 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1/2 cup beef stock

In small bowl, mix peppercorns with 2 teaspoons sea salt. Brush steaks with olive oil, and coat evenly with peppercorn mixture. Set aside.

In heavy skillet over medium-high heat, place butter and half the olive oil, add shallots and stir for 1 minute, until softened. Add mushrooms and cook for 1 to 2 minutes, until soft. Reduce heat to low, stir in thyme and flour, and cook for a further minute. Add wine, Worcestershire sauce, tomato paste, Dijon mustard, and stock. Stir for 1 to 2 minutes, until slightly thickened. Keep warm.

Preheat grill to medium-high heat. Grill steaks 4-6 minutes each side for medium rare; let rest for 20 minutes. Reheat mushroom sauce and pour over steak. Serve immediately.
Serves 4.

*Peppercorn New York
steak*



Peppercorn New York steak with mushroom sauce

This recipe is so appreciated with my family and friends I have been asked for the recipe many times over, so it just seemed fitting to introduce it here. The flavours are unforgettable – chicken, honey, lemon, combine beautifully to create a distinct taste perfectly balanced with the smoky, salty richness of crisped bacon. Yum!

Lemon honey chicken with bacon and parsnip mash

4 chicken breast fillets, skin on
2 tablespoons butter
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
Pest of 2 lemons
Juice of 1 lemon
1 1/2 tablespoons honey
2/3 cup chicken stock
1 bay leaf
1 tablespoon flour
4 parsnips, peeled, chopped
4 medium potatoes
Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
1/4 cup milk
8 strips of grilled bacon, to serve
Chopped flat-leaf parsley, to garnish

Season chicken with salt and pepper. Cover and chill for 30 minutes. Melt half the butter and the olive oil in large skillet over medium heat. Add chicken and lemon rind. Fry chicken for 3 minutes each side until well browned; remove and set aside.

To the pan add chicken stock, juice, honey and bay leaf. Soften half remaining butter and mix with flour. Slowly add to pan. Stir until slightly thickened. Return chicken to pan. Simmer 8 to 10 minutes until cooked.

Meanwhile, cook parsnips and potatoes together in boiling salted water for 8 to 10 minutes until tender; drain and mash with remaining butter, nutmeg and milk until smooth. Season to taste, then serve topped with chicken and bacon. Drizzle with sauce and sprinkle with parsley. Serves 4.

Lemon honey chicken



Lemon honey chicken with bacon and parsnip mash

A quick drizzle of olive oil and 10 minutes of cooking time makes salmon perfect for everyday. Served here with roasted baby potatoes and fresh garden asparagus. It's almost too easy.

Salmon with roasted potatoes and asparagus

4 6-oz salmon fillets, skinless
Drizzle extra-virgin olive oil
Coarse salt and cracked black pepper
16 asparagus spears, peeled halfway
12 red baby potatoes
1 tablespoon chopped rosemary
Splash of lemon juice

Pat fish dry with paper towel, drizzle with olive oil, season with salt and pepper. Sear salmon over medium high heat for 3 minutes, then reduce heat to medium and cook another 2 minutes; flip and cook another 5 to 6 minutes. Salmon should be pink inside. Remove from heat and set aside.

Meanwhile, prepare potatoes by tossing with olive oil and rosemary, sprinkle with coarse salt and bake at 400 for 20 to 30 minutes or until tender.

Peel asparagus spears with potato peeler, drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, bake at 450° for 3 to 5 minutes.

Assemble salmon, potatoes and asparagus on dinner plates, squeeze lemon on top and serve. Serves 4.

Salmon with asparagus

Friends Over

A Perfect Playdate

Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. As a young girl I had to memorize this. As an adult, I realize it's one of the most important things I learned. If you want to be treated with love and respect; treat others with love and respect. It's a simple concept. One that is particularly true with children.

I take the time to write little love notes for my daughter's lunchbox, or drop in at her school unannounced, and I always look for ways to make her friends feel special. I created this recipe for homemade potato chips and on a day when she had friends over for a playdate, I served them with ketchup. I watched and listened while these little friends dipped and double dipped, giggled, munched, and had the cutest, most interesting conversation over this simple bowl of homemade potato chips. Something so simple made special. I remember the times, when I was young, when an adult did something or said something that made me feel special, maybe it was as simple as remembering my name... I never forgot it.

Homemade potato chips

2 pounds large Yukon gold potatoes
Vegetable oil for frying
Coarse salt or special sea salt

Slice potatoes 1/16-inch thick on a mandolin.
Soak slices in cold water, drain, then soak one more time, to eliminate some of the starch.
Drain and pat dry with paper towel.

In heavy skillet, heat 2 inches oil over medium-high. Toss handful of potatoes into oil and fry until golden brown, about 3 minutes, tossing to cook evenly. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towel. Quickly repeat with remaining potatoes. Sprinkle generously with sea salt and serve immediately with your favourite dip. Serves 4.



Homemade potato chips

“If you bungle raising your children, I don’t think whatever else
you do well matters very much.”
— Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis

