Love People.
Cook them tasty food.

Penzeys Spices
At Penzeys we think the world of cooks, and we think there should be a lot more cooks in the world. Through our customers we have come to see cooking as so much more than great food. Cooking is an act of kindness, an act of caring that sets so much good in motion. The cooks in this booklet are great examples of how the spirit of cooking really does have the power to transform lives.

This Love People gift box is great for cooks at every stage. Our spices will wow the most experienced of cooks and lure first timers into the kitchen to give them a try. Everything we’ve learned about spices over the decades and about all the goodness cooking brings to life has been lovingly tucked inside this bright, happy box.

Bill Penzey
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Amy Peterson never envisioned starting a cross-continent charity, but good ideas are often borne of humble intentions.

“The idea for it came during my drive home from work several years back. NPR was on the radio and they were talking about the terrible effect AIDS has had on Uganda. An 80-year old woman was mentioned. Mary had buried over a dozen of her kids and was now raising 10 little grandchildren at the age of 80,” Amy tells us. “I am a grandma myself and the thought of her doing this without any help—they don't have Social Security—my heart broke for her. I wanted to help.”

In Uganda, many grandmothers (and grandfathers) are becoming parents to young kids once again. AIDS has claimed their own children and left behind young orphans. These women and men are raising their grandchildren with all of the love and devotion they gave their children, but without as many resources.

Amy founded Grandmothers Beyond Borders (GBB) as an all-volunteer organization operating in Milwaukee that raises funds for grassroots community programs. The micro-lending programs help the grandmothers feed their grandchildren.

“I've seen the devastating effects of the AIDS epidemic in Uganda firsthand,” says Amy. “We try to offer a window into the grandmothers’ lives and highlight their courage and resilience.”

With some help from friends and other contacts, a call went out for volunteers to help get the organization off the ground.

“After an initial volunteer meeting, we sat down to figure out how we could help. We didn't know much about this whole process, but it weighed on our hearts. When my daughter and I visited Uganda, we came to realize there were thousands of ‘Marys.’ I remember seeing a little house with 14 graves behind it,” Amy says.

GBB initially partnered with the Catholic archdiocese near the Ugandan capital of Kampala. Over time, they have become independent and now work directly with the grandmothers themselves to develop their own community programs.

“The things we help fund contribute directly to improving the quality of life for these wonderful grandmas and their grandkids,” Amy explains.

She says it really is about empowering women. Seeing these grandmas start their own businesses and teach their granddaughters how to sew or cook or plant vegetables is humanity-affirming. The food they cultivate and the recipes they pass down to their grandchildren keeps the cycle of cooking with love going. They have so much to offer the world and have become pillars in their own communities.

“Every year we meet with the leaders of the programs, the grandmothers, and ask how their lives have changed. One that really sticks out is when they talk about the community gardens they have started. Women from nearby villages walk for miles to these gardens and make friends across tribes and religion.

“Catholic and Muslim becoming friends…” Amy says with a sigh. “The region has seen so much war

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Peterson Danish Puff

Simply delicious.

Pastry:
1  Cup sifted flour
½  Cup (1 stick) butter
2  Tb. water

Filling:
½  Cup (1 stick) butter
1  Cup water
1  tsp. PURE ALMOND EXTRACT
1  tsp. PURE VANILLA EXTRACT
1  Cup sifted flour
3  eggs

Preheat oven to 350°. For the pastry, cut the butter into the flour. Sprinkle with water and mix with a fork. Round the dough into a ball. Divide in half and pat each into a long strip (12x3) on an ungreased baking sheet. Chilling for a few minutes helps keep the dough together when you pat it out.

For the filling, melt butter and water and bring to a rolling boil over medium heat. Add the EXTRACTS and remove from heat. Immediately stir in the flour, stirring/whisking vigorously until smooth and thick. When smooth and thick, add the eggs one at a time, beating on low with a hand mixer after each until smooth. Divide the mixture in half and spread evenly over each strip of pastry on the baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 50-60 minutes. The filling will be puffy and golden, but fall a bit while it cools, especially in the center. Let cool a bit and frost each strip with your favorite butter cream or cream cheese frosting.

Prep. time: 40 minutes
Baking time: 50-60 minutes
Serves: 22-24

Nutritional Information: Servings 24; Serving Size 1 slice (pastry only, no frosting) (36g); Calories 150; Calories from fat 80; Total fat 9g; Cholesterol 50mg; Sodium 80mg; Carbohydrate 13g; Dietary Fiber 0g; Sugars 0g; Protein 3g.
A Ugandan grandmother, now raising her grandchildren by herself.
My Uncle Tom’s Shish Kabob Marinade

Amy Peterson of Grandmothers Beyond Borders shares the story behind this great marinade: “My grandmother had three sons, including my dad. When her two older sons and their children came home to visit, we often set up croquet in my grandmother’s backyard. Over the years when I was growing up, we went to visit my Uncle Tom in Ann Arbor, Michigan. He would set up the croquet set in his really beautiful yard, adjacent to an urban forest, and we would play and have a cookout. This recipe was one that the men of the family adopted and used during our family visits. After enjoying a game of croquet and eating the shish kabob, my dad and his brothers always sat in lawn chairs, smoking cigars and catching up.”

In a medium bowl, combine all of the ingredients. Mix well. Pour into a 9x13 pan or a large zip-top bag. Add 2 lbs. or so of your favorite chunks of meat/poultry/seafood and stir to coat. Cover and marinate all day or overnight in the refrigerator (if using shrimp, marinate for a few hours), stirring/turning occasionally. Remove the meat from the marinade, discard the marinade, thread on skewers with your favorite vegetables. Grill over medium-high to high heat, a few minutes per side for beef/lamb, a bit longer for chicken/seafood, until browned and veggies are tender.

Prep. time: 5 minutes for the marinade, 20 minutes for skewer threading
Marinating time: a few hours to overnight
Serves: 10

Nutritional Information for marinade only: Servings 10; Serving Size 2 TB. (41g); Calories 110; Calories from fat 40; Total fat 4.5g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 320mg; Carbohydrate 17g; Dietary Fiber 0g; Sugars 15g; Protein 1g.
Dianne and Cooper bring joy to both patients and staff at St. Joseph.

“Although Cooper was a natural, he still needed certification to become a therapy dog,” says Diane. “After four weeks of training we were certified through Pets Helping People.

“During class, Coop was the class clown, always wanting to greet everyone and play.

“It took lots of practice on both our parts. I had to learn to lighten up and relax a bit. He had to learn to focus on me.

“I am considered Coop’s handler. We are a certified/insured team. He never leaves my side when we are volunteering. Cooper will watch me for cues so he knows what to do and when. I use my hand signals or whisper and he takes it from there. Our bond has deepened since we started volunteering.”

Cooper and Dianne visit St. Joseph’s hospital in Milwaukee most Wednesday evenings. Patients know when these special visitors are coming and those interested will ask them to stop in to say hello.

“Cooper is the connection between me and the patient. I introduce ‘us’ to the patient, tell them a bit about Coop and ask if they’ve ever had a dog or a pet.

“Many patients have dogs at home they miss while they’re away. Others tell me of dogs and other pets in their lives. We provide a break in their evening—to hopefully take their mind off of their illness, if only for a short time.”

Dianne currently works as an executive assistant at the Wheaton Franciscan-Midwest Spine and Orthopedic Hospital and Heart Hospital in Wauwatosa. She supports the administrative director of the hospital in addition to all leadership who work at or visit the hospital.

She first became familiar with hospital settings as a candy striper at St. Joseph in the ’60s. “I actually wore a red and white pinafore,” Dianne smiles. “I have had several positions at St. Joseph throughout my career. It’s where my parents received their care and where my children and grandchildren were born.

“There was no question where I wanted to volunteer. I wanted to give something back to the hospital that has always been there for me and my family.

“I can’t say enough about the caring, compassionate, hard-working staff in all the departments—from plant operations to nursing to pharmacy, environmental...”
Parmesan Chicken

This easy recipe is destined to be a family favorite.

- 6 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- 1 Cup dried bread crumbs
- 1⁄2 Cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp. GARLIC SALT or SANDWICH SPRINKLE
- 1⁄2 Cup (1 stick) melted butter

Preheat oven to 350°. In a wide, shallow bowl, combine the bread crumbs, cheese and GARLIC SALT or SANDWICH SPRINKLE. Pour the butter into a second wide, shallow bowl. Dip the chicken pieces in the butter and then in the crumb mixture. Arrange the chicken in a greased shallow baking dish. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes to 1 hour depending on the thickness of the chicken.

Prep. time: 10 minutes
Cooking time: 45-60 minutes
Serves: 6

Nutritional Information: Servings 6; Serving Size 1 chicken breast (130g); Calories 380; Calories from fat 190; Total fat 21g; Cholesterol 120mg; Sodium 590mg; Carbohydrate 13g; Dietary Fiber <1g; Sugars 1g; Protein 32g.

Company Potatoes

As the name suggests, this is a great dish for when company calls. You can get it all ready and in the oven before your guests arrive.

- 1 Cup sour cream
- 1 10-oz. can cream of chicken soup (or ¾ Cup hot chicken stock mixed with 4 oz. cream cheese cut into cubes)
- ½ Cup milk
- 1 tsp. salt
- ⅛ tsp. PENZEYS PEPPER
- ¼ tsp. PENZEYS CURRY POWDER, optional
- 6 Cups potatoes, sliced and cooked (about 10 medium potatoes)
- ½ Cup bread crumbs
- 1 Cup shredded cheddar cheese

In a large bowl, combine the sour cream, cream of chicken soup (or chicken stock and cream cheese), milk, salt, PEPPER and CURRY POWDER, if using. Stir until smooth. Gently mix in the potatoes. Place in a greased 2-quart casserole dish. Combine the bread crumbs and cheese and sprinkle on top. Bake at 350° for 1 hour depending on the thickness of the chicken.

Prep. time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 1 hour
Serves: 8

Nutritional Information: Servings 8; Serving Size 1 cup (364g); Calories 370; Calories from fat 110; Total fat 12g; Cholesterol 30mg; Sodium 720mg; Carbohydrate 56g; Dietary Fiber 6g; Sugars 4g; Protein 11g.

For more information on Golden Retriever Rescue of Wisconsin and Pets Helping People, you may visit their websites at www.grrow.org and www.petshelpingpeople.org
Heather Richards

Heather Richards of Iowa Falls, Iowa, knows firsthand the challenges that go along with being a single parent.

“I always say single parents never have enough money, time or energy. I think those are the three things, every day, I struggle with.”

Heather, a 1st-grade teacher, has been a single parent to Jordan (23) and Austin (18) for the past 17 years. Things haven’t always been easy, but she is pretty proud of her boys.

“My kids are both on honor roll and dean’s list, and Austin was homecoming king—just tons of things.” Jordan recently graduated from college and is now a teacher, following in the footsteps of his mom and grandpa.

And, Heather adds, “Both my boys are really good cooks. They’re not so good at fixing cars or building birdhouses, but man, they can cook!”

Heather is quick to point out that although she is a single mom, she certainly hasn’t raised her boys on her own.

“I have such a great support system with my family and especially my parents.

“They have really stepped in and taken on more than a grandparent role. They’ve never questioned or said no.

“I really think that support is a huge factor in a single-parent home, whether it’s the grandparents or a friend or cousins—somebody. But I think it’s the support system that really makes the difference.”

Heather describes the relationship between Jordan and Austin and their grandparents as “amazing—awesome.

“They know that they can go to them for anything. They know that they can go to their house anytime, they can call them anytime if they need anything, all they have to do is ask.”

Heather is grateful that her parents, who live just three doors down, are willing and able to pitch in, especially on those evenings when work keeps her late.

“If they know I’m going to be at a meeting or something, my mom will plan a big meal for the kids which is fun for her, too. She makes a big deal about having the boys over and they just have a ton of food—she knows their favorites.

“The boys like anything she makes—barbecued ribs, chicken and noodles. And, she makes awesome chocolate chip cookies, because … don’t all grandmothers?” asks Heather with a laugh.

What’s the one thing Heather says is most important to do for her kids every day?

“I never seem to have enough time or energy, but as a single parent it’s a big deal for me to cook and have good meals for my kids.

“I believe that so much more goes on around the kitchen table than just eating, so much conversation, so much problem solving, current events, keeping up with the world.”

She says that time spent around the dinner table together is invaluable.

“We take our time when we eat, because we have all that talking and all that laughing and all that fun and catching up. Which is why I think it’s important that we try to eat together. You don’t get those conversations in the drive-through.

“I have lots of good memories with food,” says Heather. “My mom always had homemade snacks for us when we got home from school whether it was cookies or cinnamon rolls. We always had a full meal at dinner time. The table was always set by us kids and we all sat down together. Eating and cooking were such a big part of growing up in my family.

“To this day when my mom invites us to dinner, it’s still that whole four-course meal and dessert. She still hasn’t lost that love of cooking good stuff for her family, and she’s such a good cook.”

Heather learned to cook from her mom, who she describes as “amazing.”
Heather couldn’t be more proud of her boys, Jordan (left) and Austin (right). She’s thrilled that they’ve both become great cooks!

Heather recalls a recent family gathering at her house, when she did all the cooking.

“I had worked so hard to make something nice and my mom said to everyone at dinner, ‘The one thing Heather is so much better at than me is cooking.’ I thought, that’s so not true, but thanks for thinking that and encouraging me. It was such a special moment for me.”

Heather reflects on the past two decades.

“It makes me so proud to know that all the tough times, all the sacrifices have really been worth something.

“So many people come up to me and tell me how awesome my boys are, and how nice they are, and how smart and amazing they are, and that makes a single parent feel so good, because you are so worried as a single person that you’re never going to be enough. It’s not the same as if you had two people doing that job, so that’s such a huge compliment.”

Lasagna Soup

*It tastes like lasagna, but takes half the time.*

| 1   | lb. ground beef             |
| ½   | Cup diced yellow onion (1 medium onion) |
| 1   | green or red bell pepper, seeded and diced |
| 4   | garlic cloves, pressed or minced (1 tsp. PENZEYS MINCED GARLIC) |
| 3   | Cups chicken broth (3 Cups water with 2 tsp. CHICKEN SOUP BASE) |
| 1   | 14.5-oz. can diced tomatoes |
| 1   | 15-oz. can tomato sauce |
| 1   | tsp. FROZEN PIZZA SEASONING, ITALIAN HERB MIX, TUSCAN SUNSET, or PASTA SPRINKLE |
| 1   | tsp. salt (Heather uses KOSHER-STYLE FLAKE SALT) |
| ¼   | tsp. PENZEYS PEPPER |
| 1   | tsp. SANDWICH SPRINKLE (or ½ tsp. GRANULATED OR ROASTED GARLIC) |
| ¼   | tsp. CRUSHED RED PEPPER FLAKES |
| 1   | tsp. CALIFORNIA BASIL |
| 1   | Cup small noodles (we used small shells) |
| ¾   | Cup grated Parmesan cheese |
| 1½  | Cups shredded mozzarella cheese |

In a stockpot, brown the ground beef with the onion, green pepper and garlic, stirring regularly, for about 10 minutes. Drain. Add the chicken broth, tomatoes, tomato sauce, SEASONING OF CHOICE, salt, PEPPER, SANDWICH SPRINKLE, CRUSHED RED PEPPER and BASIL. Stir. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Boil for 2 minutes and then reduce the heat to a simmer. Cover and cook for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the noodles and cook until tender, about 15 minutes. When ready to serve, stir in the Parmesan cheese. Ladle into bowls and sprinkle with mozzarella cheese.

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes
**Cooking time:** 60 minutes
**Serves:** 8

**Nutritional Information:** Servings 8; Serving Size 1 cup (323g); Calories 240; Calories from fat 80; Total fat 9g; Cholesterol 50mg; Sodium 1180mg; Carbohydrate 18g; Dietary Fiber 2g; Sugars 5g; Protein 22g.
Spicy Sausage Pasta
An easy, one-skillet meal that will delight the whole family.

- 1 TB. olive oil
- 1 lb. smoked sausage, sliced (we used kielbasa, smoked polish sausage)
- 1 1/2 Cups diced onion (2 medium)
- 2 garlic cloves, minced (or 1/2 tsp. PENZEYS MINCED GARLIC)
- 2 Cups chicken broth (or 2 Cups water mixed with 1 tsp. CHICKEN SOUP BASE)
- 1 10-oz. can mild Ro-Tel (diced tomatoes with green chilies)
- 1/2 Cup heavy cream
- 8 oz. uncooked penne pasta
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. PENZEYS PEPPER
- 1 Cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 1/3 Cup thinly sliced green onions (1 bunch, ends removed)

In an oven-safe skillet, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat until very hot. Add the sausage and onions and cook until lightly browned, about 4 minutes, stirring regularly. Add the garlic and cook about 30 seconds. Add the broth, Ro-Tel, cream, pasta, salt and PEPPER. Stir. Bring to a boil, cover and reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer until the pasta is tender and most liquid is absorbed, about 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in half of the cheese. Top with the remaining cheese and sprinkle with the green onions. Place under the broiler for a few minutes until the cheese is melted, browned and bubbly.

**Prep. time:** 15 minutes  
**Cooking time:** 25 minutes  
**Serves:** 6-8

**Nutritional Information:** Servings 7; Serving Size 1 generous cup (282g); Calories 440; Calories from fat 230; Total fat 26g; Cholesterol 85mg; Sodium 1270mg; Carbohydrate 33g; Dietary Fiber 1g; Sugars 4g; Protein 19g.
Don got his love of baking from his mom. He tells us, “Mom had gifted hands when it came to baking. It was the love coming from her fingertips that made everything she made so wonderful.”

Don O’Neill grew up in the tiny seaside village of Ballyheigue in Ireland. “My home was a bed and breakfast perched on a cliff top overlooking a magnificent bay.

“Home-cooked food was a very big part in a lot of Irish homes but at our house especially.

“The idea of sitting down to a meal and serving the guests in our house, catering to people’s well-being, was a unique way for me to see the importance of a meal and its significance to someone’s overall comfort,” says Don.

“They were being taken care of, not only from the comfort of the room they were sleeping in but the fact that bread was baked for them by Mom and breakfast was cooked by my dad, and served by my sister—there was a lot of love and care that went into the whole process.”

Don says one of his earliest memories is of his mom with a giant green Tupperware bowl in which she would mix several loaves of brown bread every day.

“I can remember hearing her ring hitting off the edge of the plastic bowl as she scraped and sifted the flour through her fingers and rubbed the butter into the flour before pouring in the buttermilk.

“Mom was a happy baker so ultimately the radio was on and she would be whistling or humming as she baked. There was so much love sifted through that flour every day.”

Don credits those memories, from as early as age 4, with his desire to become a chef—along with a few lessons from his Aunt Breda.

“Auntie Breda would come from America to visit us in Ireland every summer. She would come with all of her American ingredients—things we’d never seen or tasted before. I’d pull my chair up to the kitchen counter, stand up on the chair and watch her.

“In my opinion she would make the most amazing meals using jars of mayonnaise and mixing them with cans of creamed soup—spreading it over chicken and spreading cheese over the top and putting it in the oven,” Don recalls with a laugh.

“I saw ingredients being transformed,” he says. “The way random things went into a bowl, got mixed together and magically became something else—that was just the most exotic, fantastic cuisine I had ever seen in my life—so unlike anything we ever had in Ireland because our cooking was very simple.”

Whether it was his mom’s breads and pies from scratch, or his Auntie Breda’s creations, Don says, “It was the love that they both put into it and the love I felt coming from it that made it such an important thing for me.”

After high school Don attended art school with the intention of studying fashion design. But the desire to cook and bake was still strong. While commuting to and from art school, he met a young woman who was studying to be a chef. Don recalls her describing the wonderful things she was learning each week.

“I was mesmerized as she told us about all the exotic dishes she was learning to prepare. Meanwhile, I had spent an uninspiring week using found pieces of garbage to make an art project.”

So, Don went home and told his parents he wanted to become a chef. He attended a culinary arts college and was trained as a French chef.

“I was doing really well and was fortunate to represent Ireland in the culinary Olympics in 1985.”

Despite all that, Don says “my cooking books all had sketches of dresses in the margins.”

Then, within a few weeks of graduating college, Don won first prize in a contest—tuition to a fashion design college in Dublin,
Don and his partner Pascal have been together 22 years, and are planning to be married next year in Ireland.

A stunning view of Ballyheigue Bay from the balcony of O’Neill’s Bed and Breakfast. It’s the home where Don grew up, and his family still runs the bed and breakfast today. Don says, “I still marvel and have my breath taken away by the beauty of Ireland.”

and at the same time was accepted to join the kitchen of a five-star restaurant.

He had a decision to make.

“I packed away my knives and went back to fashion.”

Launching a highly successful career in the world of fashion in New York City, designing dresses for Taylor Swift, Oprah and Carrie Underwood—to name a few—Don never lost that special connection to his family and his home in Ireland.

“When you move to America one of the things you do is try to recreate the tastes of home so you don’t feel so far away. I could make Mom’s brown bread but it never was as fluffy as hers.

“Mom had gifted hands when it came to baking. I would go back to Ireland and we would stand side by side with bowls and I would do everything exactly as she did and you could still tell who baked which loaf. It was the same with her apple pie.

“I would tell her that she must be putting something else into it—I think it was the love that was coming through her fingertips which made it so wonderful and impossible to reproduce.”

When Don traveled back to Ireland for a visit, his mom prepared weeks in advance.

“Pies were made and frozen and the freezer would be stocked with all of my favorites. When I got there, we would spend the days eating everything she had prepared. When Mom passed away, all of that stopped.”

There are still lots of gatherings around the big dining room table when Don goes back home. Now, he and brother Patrick are the ones who do the cooking.

“I try to recreate everything Mom made, which becomes a marathon day or two in the kitchen making the pies and salted caramel squares—everything she would make, I try to recreate it so she can still be a part of it.

“I love our family gatherings in Ireland and the joy that sharing good food brings with it. The food is prepared with love, and it gets wolfed down as loud conversation and laughter ring out around the table.”

Don and his partner Pascal travel to Ireland a couple of times a year, and are hoping to make one of the next trips extra special.

“We’ve been together 22 years and we got engaged two years ago. We are hoping to get married next year in Ireland.”

Don says the fact that Ireland voted yes to the marriage equality referendum was a huge relief.

“It was a very emotional day. It shows that people have changed tremendously, that they are embracing and seeing their family members and friends as equals and deserving of the same rights. We are moving in the right direction. Love definitely won that day.”
Salted Caramel Squares

Here at Penzeys we enthusiastically gobbled these up after the photo shoot.

Base:
- 1 Cup self-rising flour
- ½ Cup brown sugar
- 1 Cup shredded coconut
- ½ Cup (1 stick) butter, melted
- ¼ tsp. PENZEYS CINNAMON (optional)
- pinch salt

Caramel:
- 1 14-oz. can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 TB. Lyle’s golden syrup (available by the sweeteners)
- 1 TB. butter
- ½ tsp. PURE VANILLA EXTRACT

Chocolate:
- 16 oz. dark chocolate
- 1 tsp. butter
- 1-2 tsp. COARSE SEA SALT

Preheat oven to 360°. In a large bowl, combine the flour, brown sugar, coconut, butter, CINNAMON (if using) and salt. Mix well on low. Press onto an ungreased rectangular baking sheet (about 10x14; a 9x13 pan would also work), about ⅛-inch thick. Bake at 360° for 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool a bit.

For the caramel, combine the milk, golden syrup and butter in a small heavy saucepan. Heat over medium, stirring constantly, until big bubbles form and the mix is thickened and a light caramel color, about 8-10 minutes. Stir in the VANILLA—adding it at the beginning will make it much harder to tell when the milk turns a caramel color. Pour and gently spread over the base. Return to the oven for 10 minutes. Let cool.

For the chocolate, melt the chocolate and butter using a double boiler or in a glass bowl placed over a pot of boiling water. Stir until melted. Pour and spread the chocolate over the cooled caramel. Sprinkle with the SEA SALT. Refrigerate until the chocolate has set, about 2 hours. Cut and serve or refrigerate the cut pieces in a cookie tin.

Prep. time: 30 minutes  
Baking time: 20 minutes  
Serves: 24

Nutritional Information: Servings 24; Serving Size 1 square (63g); Calories 280; Calories from fat 130; Total fat 14g; Cholesterol 20mg; Sodium 270mg; Carbohydrate 35g; Dietary Fiber 0g; Sugars 30g; Protein 4g.
“Always leave a situation better than you found it.”
That’s a guiding principle called “the campsite rule” that Janice Sequeira learned from her mother and father.
“Whatever I really do for the Earth is care for my community and its elders. I am always aware that my behaviors, whether it is being polite to a surly grocery store clerk or holding the door open for the person behind me, send an unconscious signal that someone cares about them and they have value.”
Janice is a nurse practitioner at the Hampton, Virginia, Veterans Administration Medical Center, where she does disability examinations for soldiers returning from combat.
“Veterans are some of the most humble and grateful people I’ve ever worked with. I find it very rewarding to take something that needs to be, quote, ‘fixed’ and accomplish it,” she says.
“Their military training does not make them fit with the civilian life they’re going to enter. It’s almost universal that they’re having a little problem with adjustment,” she says.
“We see a lot of combat-related PTSD veterans who also have physical injuries. They’re probably the most difficult. There’s so much fear of giving in to the emotion that resulted from these horrific experiences, that they’re holding themselves in tightly.” The light she shines onto that experience isn’t always welcome at first.
“They’re easily frustrated and irritable. That makes it hard to get through that wall, which is a defense mechanism, to get to that person hovering down there, shivering.”
Janice’s examinations reveal “invisible injuries,” which one of her stories of Vietnam-era veterans illustrates.
“They passed a field of corn. It was meant to feed the cows later. And the soldiers were so hungry that they stripped the field. They boiled the corn green, which made it barely edible anyway, but the soldiers hadn’t had fresh food in almost two months.”
One soldier, who had grown up on a farm, understood the impact of this action on the farmer’s livelihood, and it haunted him years later.
“That’s someone’s life. Giving the farmer money would only partially recompense, and it certainly wouldn’t make up for the fact that the corn was gone,” Janice says.
“These guys wouldn’t have done that in the States. They didn’t because they were almost forced into it.”
Janice’s most powerful tool is also the one that leaves her vulnerable. “I’m a very empathetic person. That is to say, I’m able to feel what other people are feeling. And when you take in a lot of damaged people it’s very hard on the individual who has that level of empathy.”
“Imagine feeling what that person is feeling, sitting in that chair, day after day. Sometimes I get so caught up in listening to their story that my feelings get tangled up, and have to be untangled back.”
Without prompting, this is what she says next: “And that’s where my cooking comes in.”
Janice runs what she calls her own “food ministry.” It’s not big, or even official, but in her words, “It’s certainly a hit.”
Every weekend, she cooks.
Three Generation Pound Cake

Janice writes, “This recipe originated in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia where my grandmother taught me to make it in the 1960s. I taught my daughter, Shawnee, who won first place in the county fair during the 1970s. She then used it in her cake business in Savannah, Georgia in the mid 2000s. For many years, each Saturday morning, this was the first thing that Grandma, and later I, put into the oven. It served the preacher for dinner, the ladies for coffee and the family for supper every day. And it was one of the first things that sold at the local church ice cream social for many years!”

Preheat oven to 325°. Cream together the butter, shortening and sugar for at least 8-10 minutes or until very white and fluffy. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder and MACE and set aside. Add the eggs, one at a time, to the creamed mixture and beat each one until the yellow completely disappears. This will look curdled, but don't worry, it will come back together with the other ingredients. Starting with the flour mixture, alternate the milk and flour, using the lowest setting on your mixer. Beat only until the flour is absorbed. According to Janice, “Overbeating at this point will cause the cake to rise unevenly and be tough.” The batter should be satiny in appearance.

Place the batter in a well-greased and floured large Bundt pan, angel food cake pan or 3 9-inch layer cake pans. Bake the Bundt or angel cake pans for about 1 hour, 15 minutes. The layer pans will take about 30 minutes. Test with a skewer or cake tester for doneness. Depending on the oven, the cake may take additional time. The tester should have 1-2 crumbs sticking to it when the cake is removed from the oven. Cool in the pan for 10 minutes and then remove from the pan and place on a cooling rack.

When the cake is cool, prepare the glaze by mixing the lemon juice and powdered sugar until smooth. Drizzle over the cake, letting the glaze run down the sides.

Prep. time: 20 minutes
Baking time: 30 minutes for layer cakes, 1 hour 15 minutes for Bundt or angel food
Serves: 20

Nutritional Information: Servings 18-20; Serving Size 1 slice (121g); Calories 470; Calories from fat 230; Total fat 26g; Cholesterol 120mg; Sodium 210mg; Carbohydrate 56g; Dietary Fiber <1g; Sugars 40g; Protein 4g.
Jennifer Sombutmai remembers the moment when, right before their wedding day, nothing seemed to be going right.

“I stood in the kitchen one day and just started crying,” she says.

She will never, ever forget what happened next.

“My husband’s Auntie Lumnow, who had come from Thailand, wrapped her arms around me and said in her best English, ‘I love you, Jennifer.’

“It was the first moment I knew that everything was going to be OK, and I truly felt loved. What she said after that, I couldn’t tell you because it was in Thai, but it must have been nice, because it made my mother-in-law cry.”

What her new auntie did next was just as nice.

“Auntie Lumnow decided I needed comfort food that night—kai pa lo—and that’s what she made me. My husband tells me Thai mothers often make that for their little children. It’s sweet, savory and the most comforting dish I’ve ever had.”

Kai Pa Lo

Jennifer writes, “This stew is traditionally made with leftover fried pork, but I find that dark meat chicken works just as well.” This is the dish that Jennifer’s new Auntie Lumnow (pictured right) made for her.

1  TB. canola oil
1  medium yellow onion, diced
4   garlic cloves, minced (or 1 tsp. PENZEYS MINCED GARLIC)
2   TB. soy or tamari sauce (we used reduced sodium)
1   tsp. GRANULATED GARLIC POWDER or PENZEYS ROASTED GARLIC
1⁄2 tsp. GROUND WHITE PEPPER
4   chicken leg quarters
1-2  TB. CHICKEN SOUP BASE
4-6  Cups water
1-2  TB. brown sugar
4   soft-boiled eggs (boiled for 6 minutes), peeled
1-2  TB. CHINESE FIVE SPICE

Heat the oil in a medium soup pot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. In a small bowl, combine the soy or tamari sauce with the GARLIC POWDER and WHITE PEPPER. Rub the chicken pieces with the mixture. Push the onion/garlic mix to the side of the pot and place the chicken, skin side down, in the bottom of the pot. Let brown for about 4 minutes. Turn the chicken. Add the SOUP BASE and cover with water. Bring to a boil and then reduce to a simmer for 45 minutes. Remove the chicken from the soup and allow to cool for a few minutes. Add the brown sugar, peeled eggs and FIVE SPICE to the soup, keeping the heat on low. Use two forks or your fingers to pull the meat from the chicken, discarding the skin and bones. Place the meat back in the pot and allow to simmer for 10 minutes. Serve with steamed jasmine rice and garnish with sliced green onions if desired.

Prep. time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 1 ½ hours or so
Serves: 4

Nutritional Information: Servings 4; Serving Size 1 bowl of stew with one egg (348g); Calories 610; Calories from fat 250; Total fat 28g; Cholesterol 425mg; Sodium 1740mg; Carbohydrate 17g; Dietary Fiber <1g; Sugars 8g; Protein 68g.
These days, Jennifer makes her own version of kai pa lo for her husband Chut.

The two met through an online dating service. Chut was planning to move to Jacksonville, Florida, to start his residency as a neurologist. She was then a middle school English teacher, also involved with a program to help at-risk teenage girls.

“He was funny and really very kind, and he seemed to be very put together and concerned about other human beings,” she says.

“We met in June 2006, and we got engaged by November,” Jennifer says.

When they got married is a little more complicated.

They wanted to marry, but did not want to disappoint his parents, who expected him to finish his residency before marrying.

“So we had our elopement—a ceremony at the courthouse in Jacksonville—and kept it very quiet,” she explains.

Her mother, Arlene Swindell, accidentally spilled the beans after Jennifer’s stepfather was hospitalized with a severe virus that led to strokes and a heart attack.

“My mother grabbed my mother-in-law’s hand and said, ‘Thank you so much for giving me a wonderful son-in-law,’ ” Jennifer says, telling the story.

Her stepfather recovered. So did Chut’s parents, who officially welcomed Jennifer as their daughter-in-law.

The families celebrated two weddings on the same day in 2009—a morning Thai service, followed by a traditional American service in the afternoon and a reception in the evening. Chut grew up in California and Florida, but still has close family in Thailand.

“I wanted our wedding to be about our families coming together and not all the fancy stuff,” says Jennifer.

Since a recent move to Concord, North Carolina, Jennifer is trying life as a homemaker and thinking about how she might want to work in education again.

“I miss my work with at-risk girls. I’d definitely do that again. It was probably the defining experience in my career,” she says.

“You have to value yourself for more than just because a guy might like you. They can learn to like themselves first. If you can reach a teenage girl, you can change the way she looks at her future, how she can have a career, support a family, have a healthy romance. It’s a way to truly battle poverty.”

The program also tapped into the girls’ interests in different cultures.

“We’d learn about that and then we’d have a cooking day,” Jennifer says.

Her own cooking has become a way to take care of the people she loves.

“I want to show the people I love how I feel every day. I want to make sure that everyone I love is sure how I feel. My husband loves the way I cook, and that’s very encouraging.”

She discovered Penzeys by accident in 2002, while working at a florist job in college.

“Somebody ordered flowers for the store in Jacksonville and wrote, ‘Congratulations on the new spice store,’ ” Jennifer says. “I got curious and ended up delivering the flowers myself. . . . It was the smell and the way everything was organized, and that everyone was so nice. It made you understand that this was something special.”

Now she knows where to find the spices to make kai pa lo and other favorites, both American and Thai.

“Even though we’re separated by thousands of miles, I still think about Auntie Lumnoow every day,” Jennifer says, “but especially when I smell kai pa lo simmering in my kitchen.”

Jennifer and Chut celebrated two wedding ceremonies on the same day—a traditional Thai service and then an American one.
Turkey Bolognese

Jennifer writes, “I love traditional Bolognese, but for a little variety, I like to use ground turkey.”

1 TB. olive oil
1 large onion, finely diced
6 cloves garlic, crushed
1 large carrot, peeled and finely grated
2 celery ribs, finely diced
1 Cup red wine
1 lb. baby portabella mushrooms, cleaned and quartered
2 14-oz. cans diced tomatoes or 2 lbs. fresh tomatoes diced and seeded
2 lbs. ground turkey
3 TB. Worcestershire sauce
1½ TB. CHICAGO STEAK SEASONING
1½ tsp. SANDWICH SPRINKLE (or ½ tsp. GRANULATED GARLIC or PENZEYS ROASTED GARLIC)

Heat the oil in a medium stockpot or Dutch oven over medium heat. Add the onion and cook until soft. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, about 2 minutes. Add the carrot and celery and cook until tender, about 7-10 minutes. Add the wine, mushrooms and tomatoes. Bring to a simmer, cover and continue cooking. In a frying pan, cook the turkey, sprinkling it with CHICAGO STEAK SEASONING and SANDWICH SPRINKLE, GRANULATED or ROASTED GARLIC, breaking it up into small pieces. Drain well (if there is anything to drain). Add the Worcestershire sauce and stir. Add the meat to the sauce and simmer for another 30 minutes. Serve with your favorite pasta and freshly grated Parmesan cheese.

Prep. time: 20 minutes
Cooking time: 1 hour
Serves: 10

Nutritional Information: Servings 10; Serving Size 1 cup (310g); Calories 240; Calories from fat 90; Total fat 10g; Cholesterol 80mg; Sodium 600mg; Carbohydrate 11g; Dietary Fiber 3g; Sugars 5g; Protein 20g.
Gluten-Free Chocolate Chip Oatmeal Raisin Cookies

Be sure to check that your oats are gluten-free when you make these tasty treats from Cassie.

1/2 Cup butter, softened
1 Cup peanut butter
3/4 Cup sugar
3/4 Cup brown sugar, packed
2 eggs
1 tsp. PURE VANILLA EXTRACT
1 1/2 tsp. PENZEYS CINNAMON
1 1/4 tsp. baking soda
3 Cups gluten-free rolled oats
6 oz. dark chocolate chips
1/2 Cup golden or regular raisins
1/2 Cup walnuts, optional

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, combine the butter, peanut butter and sugars. Beat until creamy. Add the eggs, VANILLA, CINNAMON and baking soda and mix well. Stir in the oats, chocolate chips, raisins and walnuts (if using). Drop by the teaspoon onto lightly greased cookie sheets about 2 inches apart. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until browned to your liking, from brown around the edges to fully brown. Let cool one minute on the sheet before removing. Gluten-free cookies tend to split when removing them from the pan, so be careful. Quickly pushing them back together works, and they are a bit easier to work with when they are cooked a bit more on the brown side.

Prep. time: 15 minutes
Baking time: 10-12 minutes
Yield: about 4 dozen

Nutritional Information: Servings 24; Serving Size 2 cookies (50g); Calories 210; Calories from fat 100; Total fat 11g; Cholesterol 25mg; Sodium 140mg; Carbohydrate 27g; Dietary Fiber 2g; Sugars 13g; Protein 5g.
Garlic and Red Pepper Hummus

One of the best snacks around.

1 15-oz. can chickpeas, drained and rinsed
1⁄2 Cup roasted red bell peppers (2 peppers)*
1 clove garlic (or ¼ tsp. PENZEYS MINCED GARLIC)
1⁄4-1⁄2 Cup olive oil
2 TB. fresh lemon juice (juice of ½ lemon)
1 tsp. GROUND CUMIN
1⁄2 tsp. TURKISH OREGANO
1⁄4-1 tsp. KOSHER-STYLE FLAKE SALT, to taste
1⁄2 tsp. HUNGARIAN-STYLE SWEET PAPRIKA or SMOKED SPANISH PAPRIKA

In a food processor or blender, combine the chickpeas, bell peppers, garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, CUMIN, OREGANO and SALT. Mix until smooth and creamy. If it is too thick, add a bit of water or oil to reach your desired consistency. Scrape into a bowl and drizzle with an extra bit of olive oil and a sprinkle of PAPRIKA. Serve with vegetables or pita chips.

*To roast red peppers place them right on the burner of your stove on medium high, turning three times so all four sides blacken. This usually takes 10 minutes or so. Place in a bowl tightly covered with plastic wrap to steam for 10 minutes, then rinse off the skins and chop.

Prep. time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: none
Serves: 6

Nutritional Information: Servings 6; Serving Size ¼ cup (64g); Calories 90; Calories from fat 50; Total fat 6g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 125mg; Carbohydrate 9g; Dietary Fiber 2g; Sugars 1g; Protein 2g.
Wynter did not have this training early in her life.

“I have learned by working with Wynter that groundhogs are fascinating little creatures. We as keepers are responsible for providing food, water, shelter, enrichment and any needed medical care. We also monitor her behavior, making note of anything abnormal.

“We give Wynter fun and challenging enrichment tools, which are entertaining for both her and the keepers who care for her. These tools help stimulate natural behaviors and keep her physically and mentally active, which is an important part of caring for zoo animals,” Cassie tells us.

“We have been working with her on target training and stationing. We have trained Wynter to touch her nose to a tennis ball which is attached to a stick. When she touches her nose to the ball, the behavior is positively reinforced with a treat or piece of food from her diet of fruits and vegetables. We have found this training to be helpful, especially if she is being sassy.

“It keeps us safe when entering her enclosure and allows us to interact with her in a positive manner. Target training is an effective tool when training animals to enter a crate, hop on a scale and even to receive medical attention if necessary.

“Wynter is very good at ‘stationing,’ or staying in one given location, which decreases the chances of her sneaking out the door while we have it open. She is a pretty quick learner. She’s mastered these goals—I’m so pleased with her progress. This training has also helped to reduce some of her aggressive behavior.

“In the wild groundhogs hibernate, so during the colder months Wynter generally stays indoors and spends most of her day sleeping in her burrow which she builds from phone books, newspapers, straw, sticks and hay. Watching her strategically build her burrow is one of my favorite things to see.”

Wynter sees her shadow—it looks like another six weeks of winter! At right is a groundhog’s poem presented to the zoo by a local school group.

Wynter is gearing up for her annual Groundhog Day appearance. Being the resident groundhog, she helps Alex Waier, the farm curator, make his prediction about the coming of spring.

Cassie tells us, “Each Groundhog Day the farm keepers bring Wynter to an outdoor enclosure for all to see. According to tradition, if Wynter sees her shadow, there will be six more weeks of winter. If she does not see her shadow, there will be an early spring.”

As Cassie continues to gain experience with a variety of zoo animals, she hopes to one day work throughout the zoo with the many animals living there. There is so much to discover!

Now, here’s to Wynter and an early spring!
Love People. Cook them tasty food.

Penzeys Spices