

Let's "Cook Up" a Family Cookbook!

Would you like to create a new tradition by contributing to a global family cookbook? Such a cookbook could be a tremendous way of sharing local family traditions to bring the family together while also celebrating its diversity. You may not be able to remember your great-grandmother's name. You might not know a thing about her or her ancestors. But, if you cook using an "old family recipe", you might be using her recipe, her mother's recipe or her grandmother's recipe. There is every possibility that some old recipes are family memories that far transcend memories of individual ancestors.

Because recipes can be examples of very old traditions, it is hoped the extended family contributes some of its favorites. Adapting local fare to family's tastes also results in recipes. As a small, but old, mobile and global family, it is anticipated that the variety of recipes that we use and have adapted for our tastes is quite wide, especially when the family is known to exist, or to have existed in the past, in Europe and the Middle East, North and South America and the Caribbean. There may even be unlocated branches of the family in Australia &/or S. Africa. Thus, there is every reason to believe that the family's recipes will exhibit an exciting range and blend of traditions and styles.

When considering a recipe to contribute, keep these ideas in mind:

- The product from the recipe must be exceptional, the best you've ever had...no-one needs another cookbook with mediocre recipes...another boring tuna or green bean cassarole!
- Consider recipes that are often reserved for specific holidays
- Offer recipes for regional foods that have been adapted to be Kosher, or kosher-style
- Regional recipes that have been adapted and accepted as family traditions
- Recipes that are specifically handed down as an old family tradition
- Recipes that give instructions for foods that are, now, usually purchased pre-made (ie: recipes for preserving foods, such as pickles or sauerkraut; recipes for curing meats, such as salami's, corned beef or pastrami; jams or jellies; etc.)
- Recipes that men enjoy cooking, and recipes that children can help with, that are delicious

Be sure to include as much of the following information about the recipe as possible:

- Name of the recipe
- Name of the person contributing the recipe
- Whose recipe is it (if different from the submitter)

- The number of people the recipe serves
- Ease of preparation; Time for preparation; Time for cooking
- Special ingredients or equipment needed for preparation

- Ingredients and quantities needed, in the order in which they appear in the directions (Be sure to use standard British or Metric measures)
- Cooking directions
- Special tips/advice, for example: Can it be prepared in advance? Can it stand before being eaten or must it be consumed immediately? Can it be frozen before or after cooking?
- Regional notes about the recipe or style of cooking it invokes
- Recipe origins and any anecdotes that will add to the aura of the recipe and make it special
- Photos of the pre-cooked ingredients, the final product and even the person that is, or was, known in the family for cooking this particular dish

If you have a relative or two who never writes down recipes, but prepares a family favorite, do us all a favor: Watch, or help, them prepare it and translate the oral tradition into writing. Be sure to convert "pinches" to more accurate measures and record appropriate temperatures, times and cooking steps and techniques. This is a great way to involve children with their senior relatives and teach them about times past...and they could be preserving something, for posterity, that would otherwise be lost.