



INTRODUCTION

Elle grew up in a food-gifting household. Her family has been pot-lucking for as long as she can remember. Even though she was young, Elle fully understood that ‘bringing a dish’ to someone’s home was vitally important and deeply traditional. So much intentionality went into the planning and preparation of the dishes, and even more so into how they would be presented. These were her first memories of giving food as a gift.

When she was approached with the idea of conceptualizing this book, I hadn’t potlucked in a few years, so the thought of returning to the essence of giving food out of love excited me! What was even more outstanding was that, in addition to my professional food-styling skills, I’d have the opportunity to bring my personal creativity and crafting skills to the table, and maybe even push those skills to the next level.

What she enjoyed most about co-creating this book, was discovering the ways that gifting food could be made personal, enjoyable, and most important, approachable for everyone.

Also, working on this book reminded her that the occasion for giving food as a gift is. . .always. The joy of giving lies in the way it makes people feel.

Wasatch County Cooking Class, December 2025

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Pancake Mix

Yield: 12 cups (enough for 6 dozen pancakes)

INGREDIENTS

- 10 ½ cups (52 ½ ounces) all-purpose flour
- 1 ⅓ cups (9 ounces) sugar
- 5 teaspoons table salt
- 6 Tablespoons baking powder
- 1 Tablespoon baking soda

DIRECTIONS

1. Whisk 1 ½ cups milk, 2 large eggs, and ¼ cup vegetable oil in a large bowl, then stir in 2 cups mix (the batter should look lumpy). Let sit for 10 minutes.
2. Spray a 12-inch nonstick skillet with vegetable oil spray, then heat over medium heat until hot, about 1 minute.
3. For each pancake, spread ¼ cup batter into a small round in the skillet and cook until surface bubbles begin to pop, 2 to 3 minutes. Flip the pancakes and cook until golden, 1 to 2 minutes.

Makes 12 pancakes.

How I Gift This:

Packaging: I like to divide the whisked mix evenly into six airtight containers. One 2-cup container is enough for one batch of pancakes, so even if you give more than one container to your recipient, you can let them know that each one is just the right amount for breakfast.

Storage: The pancake mix can be stored at room temperature for about 2 months.

Make it a Trio: Gift with a cast-iron skillet or griddle and a ¼ cup scoop for the batter.

Make it a Basket: Add maple syrup, chocolate chips, dried or fresh fruit, juice, shredded coconut, good butter, and a wooden spoon.

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Cheesy Garlic Popcorn Seasoning

Makes: ¼ cup (enough for 14 cups popped corn)

INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tablespoons cheese powder or nutritional yeast
- 2 teaspoons garlic powder
- 1 ½ teaspoons dried parsley
- 1 teaspoon dried basil
- ½ teaspoon table salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Seasoned Popcorn: Heat 3 Tablespoons vegetable oil and 3 popcorn kernels in a large saucepan over medium heat until the kernels pop.
2. Off the heat, add ⅓ cup popcorn kernels, cover, and let sit for 30 seconds.
3. Return the pan to medium-high heat and cook with the lid slightly ajar until the popping slows to about 2 seconds between pops.
4. Pour into a large bowl and toss with 2 Tablespoons melted unsalted butter. Add ¼ cup popcorn seasoning in two additions, tossing after each addition to coat.

Makes 14 cups.

Variations:

Spiced Chocolate Popcorn Seasoning - Grind 1 Tablespoon unsweetened cocoa powder, 1 Tablespoon powdered sugar, 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon, ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper, and ¼ teaspoon table salt in spice grinder to fine powder.

Dill Pickle Popcorn Seasoning - Grind 1 Tablespoon ground coriander, 2 teaspoons dried dill weed, 1 ½ teaspoons white vinegar powder, 1 teaspoon garlic powder, 1 teaspoon onion powder, ¾ teaspoon table salt, and ½ teaspoon dry mustard in spice grinder to fine powder.

How I Gift This:

Packaging: Store in a shaker-type jar for easy sprinkling or a latch-top glass jar.

Storage: These seasoning blends can be stored at room temperature for about 1 month.

Big Batch It: This recipe is easily scaled up.

Make it a Duo: Pair one seasoning with a bag of artisan popcorn kernels.

Make it a Trio: Give all three seasoning blends, of course! Or gift a handmade three-way container of popped and seasoned corn, like the tins you see at the holidays along with the scoop.

Make it a Basket: Combine all three blends with popcorn kernels, a silicone microwave popper or air popper, and serving bags or bowls.

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Millionaire's Shortbread

Yield: 40 bars Total Time: 1 ½ hours, plus 2 hours cooling

INGREDIENTS

Crust:

- 2 ½ cups (12 ½ ounces) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (3 ½ ounces) granulated sugar
- ¾ teaspoon table salt
- 16 Tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

Filling:

- 1 (14 ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup packed (7 ounces) brown sugar
- ½ cup heavy cream
- ½ cup corn syrup
- 8 Tablespoons unsalted butter
- ½ teaspoon table salt

Chocolate:

- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate (6 ounces chopped fine, 2 ounces grated)

DIRECTIONS

Crust:

1. Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Make foil sling for 13 x 9 inch baking pan by folding 2 long sheets of aluminum foil; first sheet should be 13 inches wide and second sheet should be 9 inches wide. Lay sheets of foil in pan perpendicular to each other, with extra foil hanging over edges of pan. Push foil into corners and up sides of pan, smoothing foil flush to pan.

2. Combine flour, sugar and salt in medium bowl. Add melted butter and stir with rubber spatula until flour is evenly moistened. Crumble dough evenly over bottom of prepared pan. Using your fingertips and palm of your hand, press and smooth dough into even thickness. Using fork, pierce dough at 1 inch intervals.

3. Bake until light golden brown and firm to touch, 25 to 30 minutes. Transfer pan to wire rack. Using sturdy metal spatula, press on entire surface of warm crust to compress (this will make finished bars easier to cut). Let crust cool until it is just warm, at least 20 minutes.

For the filling:

4. Stir all ingredients together in large, heavy-bottomed saucepan. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until mixture registers between 236 and 239 degrees (temperature will fluctuate), 16 to 20 minutes.

5. Pour filling over crust and spread to even thickness (mixture will be very hot). Let cool completely, about 1 ½ hours.

For the Chocolate:

6. Microwave finely chopped chocolate in bowl at 50 percent power, stirring often, until about two-thirds melted, 1 to 2 minutes. (Melted chocolate should not be much warmer than body temperature; check by holding bowl in palm of your hand). Add grated chocolate and stir until smooth, returning to microwave for no more than 5 seconds at a time to finish melting if necessary. Spread evenly over filling. Refrigerate shortbread until chocolate is just set, about 10 minutes.

7. Using foil overhang, remove shortbread from pan. Using serrated knife and gentle sawing motion, cut shortbread in half crosswise to create two 6 ½ by 9-inch rectangles. Cut each rectangle in half to make four 3 ¼ by 9-inch strips. Cut each strip crosswise into 10 equal pieces.

How I Gift This:

Packaging: For a special mini gift presentation, tie little stacks of cookies with parchment and twine. Or layer the bars in a tin between pieces of parchment paper.

Storage: The shortbread can be stored at room temperature for about 1 week.

Make it a Duo: Pair these luxe Scottish cookies with a bottle of Scotch.

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No-Knead Rustic Loaf

Yield: 1 loaf

INGREDIENTS

- 2 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups (15 $\frac{1}{8}$ ounces) bread flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons table salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon instant or rapid-rise yeast
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup + 2 Tablespoons (11 ounces) water, room temp
- 1 Tablespoon white vinegar

How I Gift This:

Packaging: Wrap this loaf in a tea towel or parchment paper and tie with ribbon or twine.

Storage: The bread can be stored at room temperature for about 3 days.

Make it a Duo: Pair with any of the following: Chocolate Hazelnut Spread, Basil Pesto, Strawberry Jam, Olives, Soup or Stew.

Make it a Trio: Pair the bread with a serrated knife and wooden cutting board. Or for a traditional housewarming gift, give the bread with a bottle of wine and a container of salt.

Make it a Basket: I like to give it bundled with smoked salmon, cream cheese, capers, and a bouquet of dill. It can be a great breakfast bread that I like to combine with butter and an assortment of jams.

DIRECTIONS

1. Whisk flour, salt, and yeast together in large bowl. Using rubber spatula, fold water and vinegar into flour mixture, scraping up dry flour from bottom of bowl and pressing dough until cohesive and shaggy and all flour is incorporated.
2. Cover bowl tightly with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for at least 8 hours or up to 18 hours.
3. Using greased bowl scraper or your wet fingertips, fold dough over itself by lifting and folding edge of dough toward middle and pressing to seal. Turn bowl 90 degrees and fold dough again; repeat turning bowl and folding dough 6 more times (for a total of 8 folds). Flip dough seam side down in bowl, cover with plastic, and let rest for 15 minutes.
4. Lay 18 by 12-inch sheet of parchment paper on counter and spray lightly with vegetable oil spray. Transfer dough seam side up onto lightly floured counter and pat into rough 9-inch circle using your lightly floured hands. Using bowl scraper or your floured fingertips, lift and fold edge of dough toward center, pressing to seal. Repeat 5 more times (for a total of 6 folds), evenly spacing folds around circumference of dough.
5. Press down on dough to seal, then use bench scraper to gently flip dough seam side down.
6. Using both hands, cup side of dough farthest away from you and pull dough toward you, keeping pinky fingers and side of palm in contact with counter and applying slight pressure to dough as it drags to create tension. (If dough slides across surface of counter without rolling, remove excess flour. If dough sticks to counter or hands, lightly sprinkle counter or hands with flour). Rotate dough ball 90 degrees, reposition dough ball at top of counter and repeat pulling dough until taut round ball forms, at least 4 more times. Using your floured hands or bench scraper, transfer dough seam side down to center of prepared parchment.
7. Cover dough with inverted large bowl. Let rise until dough has doubled in size and springs back minimally when poked gently with your finger, 1 to 2 hours.
8. Thirty minutes before baking, adjust oven rack to middle position, place Dutch oven with its lid on rack, and heat oven to 475 degrees. Using sharp knife or single-edge razor blade, make one 6-inch long, $\frac{1}{2}$ inch deep slash with a swift, fluid motion along top of loaf. Carefully remove hot pot from oven and, using parchment as sling, gently transfer dough and parchment to hot pot. Working quickly and reinforcing score in top of loaf if needed, cover pot and return to oven.
9. Reduce oven temperature to 425 degrees and bake loaf in covered pot for 30 minutes. Remove lid and continue to bake until loaf is deep golden brown and registers at least 205 degrees, 10 to 15 minutes. Using parchment sling, carefully remove loaf from hot pot and transfer to wire rack; discard parchment. Let cool completely, about 3 hours, before slicing.

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Garlic Butter

Yield: About ¾ cup

INGREDIENTS

- 8 Tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 1 head roasted garlic cloves, (8-10 cloves)
- 1 Tablespoon fresh rosemary
- ¼ teaspoon table salt
- ¼ teaspoon pepper

DIRECTIONS

1. Using fork, mash all ingredients in bowl until combined. Garlic butter can be refrigerated for one week or frozen for one month.

Buttermilk Syrup

Yield: About ¾ cup

- ½ cup butter, not margarine
- ½ cup buttermilk
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 teaspoons vanilla
- ½ teaspoon baking soda

1. Heat butter, buttermilk, and sugar in a saucepan. Heat until boiling, stirring often. Boil for about 1 minute. Remove from heat and add vanilla and baking soda. Stir until combined. Serve immediately. Refrigerate any leftovers.

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