

TWO HEARTS - FOUR HANDS

A Guide for Cooking Together

by *Sulin Bell*



Love in the Kitchen

Menus with Step-by-Step Directions for Two Cooks —
couples, friends, family, neighbors, new relationships . . .

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Sulin Bell

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Ukiah, California

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Introduction

This is a unique book, the first of its kind. It is designed to help you put love into your food and food into your love. Use this guide to structure cooking dates with your partner, child, friend, lover, housemate, parent, neighbor, business associate or new relationship. Creative camaraderie in the kitchen can foster a change of attitude from “How fast can I buy it, make it, eat it, and get on with life?” to “How can I use inspired time in the kitchen to improve my quality of life?”

By cooking together two people can create a work of art. They can increase intimacy, excitement, and bonding in their relationship while also saving time and bringing better health to their bodies. Besides all that, it's fun!

In preparing and sharing a meal, talking about food habits, preferences and aversions, you will naturally develop a “culinary intimacy”. Cooking dates are a delicious way to share time with a new friend or associate, deepen an established relationship or bring healing to a problematic situation with another person. Whatever your game plan, this book provides a variety of menus with individual step-by-step directions for two people that can foster positive experiences in the kitchen and dining room, and by extension, to all rooms of the house.

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Read this section before your cooking dates

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Sample Menu

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Velvet Yam Soup and Jalapeno Cornbread

from the Feelin' Homey section

Note: The letter codes before each step for Cook One and Cook Two designates the recipe for which that step is related.

Velvet Yam Soup and Jalapeno Cornbread

So soothing and delicious, this surprisingly simple and tasty soup complements the rich flavors of the cornbread—which is not very hot and spicy despite the jalapenos. The meal will calm, yet at the same time, delight you. It is a royal way to have an interesting and satisfying meal that's easy, inexpensive and pleasing.

Yam soup:

1 lb jewel or garnet yams
(2-3 large yams)
1 small onion
2 Tbs butter
Salt & pepper to taste

Garnish:

Serve soup with a dollop of
yogurt or sour cream
and a sprig of parsley.

Cornbread:

1 cup medium ground cornmeal—
organic recommended
½ cup whole wheat flour
2 tsp low-sodium, non-aluminum
baking powder
½ tsp salt
1 Tbs unsulfured molasses
1 Tbs honey
2 eggs
1 cup dairy or non-dairy milk
¼ cup canola or corn oil
½ medium grated onion
2 jalapeno peppers,
seeded and chopped fine.
1 cup grated sharp
cheddar cheese
1 cup fresh corn kernels
(1-2 ears)

Optional:

Butter for the cornbread
For extra “heat” add crushed
red peppers.

UTENSILS:

soup pot
timer
spatula
soup ladle
sauté pan
hand grater
smaller bowl
8 x 8 baking dish
medium large bowl
vegetable peeler
blender or food processor
measuring cups and spoons
2 mixing bowls and wooden spoons
2 cutting knives and boards

BEVERAGE COMPLEMENTS:

A light fruity style wine such as
Sangiovese by Martini & Prati
or a Chardonnay or Chablis
Dry beer with full hops – such as *Warstiner*

MUSIC TO COOK BY:

_Manhattan Transfer - jazz
or The Legendary Joao Gilberto:
The Original Bossa Nova Recordings 1958-1961

HEALTH BYTE:

Yams are packed with beta-carotene
(an anti-oxidant that fights free-radicals)

COOK ONE

Yam Soup (Y):

1 lb yams
1 onion diced fine

Cornbread (C):

½ onion grated
1 cup grated sharp cheddar cheese
Oil for pan

- Y 1.** Peel yams and cut into medium sized pieces. Place them in the soup pot with enough water to barely cover. Place lid on the pot and bring to boil. Lower heat and simmer about 20 minutes or until yams are tender. Set timer.
- C 2.** Preheat the oven to 375 degrees.
- C 3.** Peel and grate the ½ onion with a hand grater or use food processor.
- C 4.** Shred the cheddar cheese.
- Y 5.** Finely chop the whole onion for the soup, or use a food processor.
- C 6.** Lightly oil the baking pan.
- Y 7.** When yams are done, allow to cool somewhat. Use the ladle to put some of the yams with their liquid into the blender or food processor and blend until smooth and creamy. Repeat 2 or 3 separate times to avoid overflow. Use the extra bowl to hold the yams.
- Y 8.** Return yams to the soup pot and reheat on a low heat, stirring frequently.

(more on reverse side)

- C 9.** Remove the cornbread from the oven and allow to cool about 8-10 minutes.
You can test the readiness of the bread in a number of ways:
- a) Insert a toothpick. It should come out relatively clean, but some of the cheese may cling to it.
 - b) Tap the top of the bread and listen for a hollow sound.
 - c) Look for browning around the edges and bottom of the cornbread.

Cornbread can be served warm directly from the baking pan.

COOK TWO

Cornbread (C):

- 1 cup cornmeal
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 Tbs molasses
- 1 Tbs honey
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- ¼ cup canola or corn oil
- 2 jalapeno peppers
- 1 cup corn kernels

Yam soup (Y):

- 2 Tbs butter
- Salt & pepper to taste

Garnish (G):

- 4 Tbs yogurt or sour cream
for soup
- 2 sprigs of parsley, cilantro
or basil

- C 1.** Mix the dry ingredients for cornbread in one mixing bowl and then mix the wet ingredients in the other bowl.
- C 2.** Seed and finely chop the jalapenos. Wash your hands well with soap and water!
- C 3.** Cut the corn kernels off the ears into a bowl. (If you happen to use frozen corn, expect the cooking time to increase somewhat due to the extra moisture.)
- C 4.** Mix the wet and dry ingredients together and add the jalapenos and corn kernels.
- C 5.** Pour the mixture into the greased baking pan prepared by Cook One and place in the preheated oven. Set timer for 30 minutes. Bake until browning and crisp on top, but don't let it dry out.

(more on reverse side)

- Y 6.** Melt 2 Tbs butter in the skillet and sauté the finely chopped onions from Cook One until transparent. Add salt and pepper to taste. After yams are blended Add the onions to the soup pot. Don't blend the onions.
- G 7.** Rinse the parsley sprigs or other herbs and pat to dry.
- Y 8.** Together with Cook One, fine tune the yam soup to your tastes with the salt, pepper, and perhaps more butter.
- Y 9.** When serving the soup, place a dollop (1-2 Tbs) of yogurt or sour cream in the center with a sprig of parsley.

Key: Y=Yam Soup G=Garnish