

"I Can" at Bygone Basics



September 2010



Experience Preparation

Written by daughter, Jessica

At Bygone Basics we call our sessions, *Experiences* and the attendees are called our *Guests*. Many *Guests* do not know quite what to expect or understand what actually goes into their *Experience*.

Preparing for an experience is almost an experience in and of itself. From her own inventory of knowledge, my mother, Valerie, manages to schedule each experience to the minute-no easy task since every experience is unique. Then it's time for shopping! Usually, farmers' markets are the perfect place for this mission. Not only is the produce fresh, but it's also a great way to support local growers. Valerie has a "secret book of recipes" she loves to use for the experiences, and just about everything can be found at these farmers' markets.

Some steps are partially prepared in advance. This is merely to save a little time. We've all

heard of the saying, "I slaved all day over a hot oven," but this isn't what an experience is about. It's about having fun while exploring a bit of our own history and enjoying unique time together, as well as the time we spend in the shoes of previous generations. AND, in learning the techniques and steps. Knowing this, Valerie spends extra time beforehand to prepare. For example if an experience calls for 10 onions...we might dice 8 of them in advance, leaving 2 to ensure our *Guests* see how they are diced, yet saving them from the eye burning task of doing all 10. (*Guests* visit with all levels of kitchen skills and we never assume someone know how to do things) As her assistant, this is my favorite part! I grew up around this sort of work, but there's always something else that can be taught. It's like my own private experience, mother and daughter. (And I know for a fact that Valerie still has her own experiences with her mother, Nancy).

Soon, it's time for our guests to arrive (I'm always nervous about this part), and the fun begins!

Left-Over Produce

The *Experiences* we have at Bygone Basics are so much more than a class; we have a lot of fun. Have you ever bought produce, put it in your crisper drawer, and had it go bad before you could use it? It sometimes seems like such a huge waste to try and eat fresh and healthy. Fortunately, there's good news, a way to keep this from ever happening again: canning, dehydrating, freezing "putting up" food.

Amanda (unofficially adopted daughter and Bygone Basics helper) was going on vacation at the end of August, and didn't want to leave all of her produce in the fridge to go bad, or throw it out. This is a dilemma which we all face, but she had a great idea. She brought all of it over to Bygone Basics' kitchen, and we

made salsa. There were four people in the kitchen chopping and mixing, there was good music, and good wine. We turned a dilemma into an excuse to get together with family and friends, and managed to put up some great salsa. The great thing is that when you can salsa, you'll find out how truly versatile it is. We love substituting a jar of salsa for canned tomatoes to make chili or goulash. It already has that perfect flavor and the onions and green peppers are already chopped. What a delicious meal!

So next time you're afraid hard-earned groceries or garden produce are about to spoil, get together with friends and a great recipe, depending on your produce. It will be good times for all, and you will be able to hold onto that produce for a future meal.

September Days of Note:

- Childhood Cancer Awareness Month
- Apple Month
- Turn off TV Week 19-25
- National No Rhyme (Nor Reason) Day 1
- Oatmeal Days 4-5
- Labor Day 6
- Jessica's Birthday 8
- Libraries Remember Day 11
- Felt Hat Day 15
- Talk Like a Pirate Day 19
- **Wife Appreciation Day 19**
- World Alzheimer's Day 21
- Dear Diary Day 22
- Autumn Equinox 22
- National White Chocolate Day 22
- Hunting and Fishing Day 26
- Johnny Appleseed Day 26
- Family Day-a day to eat

Celebrate SISTERS!!



Eating Healthy is the Best Diet

Note from Valerie: My daughter Jessica has helped with this month's newsletter. She is home from college and in between her Army training schedules (she is a reservist) A mother can't get any prouder. She writes this article as well...

I sat down with 2LT Darcy Sny, an officer in the U.S. Army Reserves with a Bachelor's Degree in Nutrition, to ask her about how to eat right. Along with heritage preservation, Bygone Basics is also a great way to learn about how to eat healthy by using raw (close to nature) products when cooking meals. This seems to be the key in eating right, as well as in pinching pennies. Talk about a win-win situation.

So many people seem concerned about eating healthy lately, but so many people seem to have different ideas of how to accomplish this. It is so easy to make healthy meals, for a family or just for yourself, if you've spent an hour canning tomatoes, or if you've made a batch of delicious jam. 2LT Sny gave me some great general nutrition tips, and I'm excited to share them with everyone.

-Have a good breakfast. Eat cereal, yogurt, or eggs. Milk or juice is a good beverage. The goal is around 400 calories. *Note from Valerie: Our predecessors had this*

as the biggest meal of the day to start right...they were rarely overweight.

-Smoothies are excellent, especially for breakfast. If you're up to it, throw in an egg for protein, or a veggie in with the fruit. You won't taste them, but they're still there and healthy. *Note from Valerie: At Bygone Basics, we serve smoothies at every Experience...with yogurt in them, not eggs!*

-Get your family involved! You need the support, and it's good to teach healthy tips and have someone to help keep track. Have the kids help make dinner; it's a great way to teach them how to eat right, as well as to help support your goals. *Note from Valerie: Bygone Basics Experiences are often whole families or close friends learning so they can continue to do the skills together in the future...bonding and having fun.*

--Have a rainbow of color on your plate. It's not only pretty, but it also helps you make sure you eat all of the food groups.

--Make your lunch the night before, right after dinner. You will be full from dinner, so you will be able to think about what you pack. Put food in your own containers to control the portion, and try to stick with recommended serving sizes when packing a lunch. This gives you time to incorporate more fresh fruits and veggies ... and food you have preserved, like canned peaches and homemade bread.

Recipes are heritage time capsules

Do you have an old cookbook from your mother or grandmother? Maybe you are lucky enough to have handwritten recipes and tips from someone in your family's past. These are treasures! They are time capsules, connectors to your past-your heritage-the beginning of your story. I have a treasured little handwritten book once owned by my husband's mother, Grace Hanson. She left this world too young...to breast cancer when he just was a boy of 10. These recipes, shared with him by his older sister, connect us to her. John remembers certain dishes she made and how he felt about the care she took of her family. He adores her apple brown betty and apple strudel and we found her recipes! Now I feel as though I know her and he is transported to his heritage when I use those recipes, written in her own hand. Here is her **Apple Strudel**...in her words, which she labeled as coming from her Gramma:

Use a regular pie crust. Roll $\frac{1}{2}$ of the dough. Spread melted butter over dough that has been rolled. Pare 2 or 3 apples and slice onto dough. Sprinkle with sugar - cinnamon - raisins. Roll like jelly roll. Butter tin, also butter the strudel. Bake 425 oven until light brown. Cut and take out of tin right away. *NOTE: I have found that she is referring to half a two crust pie dough recipe.*

Now Scheduling through September and October...and beyond:

Dates are getting filled fast; please get your date on the calendar so you don't miss this unique activity. Email or call me today to discuss how we can tailor make your time with us. This is an experience based business. Whether it is a bridal shower, sisters, husband and wife, grandparents and grandchildren...or, you really want to get involved in "putting food by" through canning and baking, we have an experience for you.

Bygone Basics
915 S Livingston Street
Whitehall, MI, 49461

Phone: (231) 740-4065
Email: ICan@bygonebasics.com
www.bygonebasics.com



Smoot family & Valerie making peach jam