

Home on the Range

Ring In The New Year With These Tasty Tidbits

Entertaining is defined as pleasing, amusing, diverting, and interesting. No where do we see the words tension, anxiety, starched linens, polished silver, or elaborate menus ascribed to its meaning.

Here are fun foods to prepare, many that can be made ahead of time. Whether you're hosting an intimate gathering or an all-out bash for a crowd, the basics of entertaining are the same:

- Make a detailed list.
- Plan the menu
- Keep it simple.

- Gather the serving pieces ahead of time. Feel free to use paper products. Or mix and match plates, flatware, and stemware. As long as the pieces complement each other, blending is in the "in" thing to do.

- Keep the lights low so you don't have to dust.

Anything goes when it comes to entertaining in the '90s. So relax, be casual, and let the fun begin.

SMOKED SALMON AND HERB CHEESE NAPOLEON SLICES

2 packages frozen puff pastry, thawed
 1 egg, lightly mixed with 1 tablespoon water
 3 ounces cream cheese, softened
 ¼ cup shredded muenster cheese
 ¼ cup shredded havarti cheese
 2 tablespoons milk
 2 teaspoons mustard
 ½ large cucumber, peeled, thinly sliced
 2 tablespoons fresh dill, chopped
 ½ cup thinly sliced red onion
 8-10 ounces thinly sliced smoked salmon or lox
 Fresh dill sprigs (optional)
 Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Thaw frozen puff pastry, if necessary. On a lightly floured board, roll one sheet of the pastry into a rectangle approximately 12x15-inches. Cut rectangle crosswise into 3 strips making three 12x5-inch pieces. Place rectangles on a lightly floured baking sheet. Pierce three pastry rectangles with a fork at 1-inch intervals. Brush

tops with beaten egg, without dripping egg down pastry sides. Bake for 5 minutes, repierce any puffed areas. Bake an additional 10 to 12 minutes or until golden brown. Rotate if necessary to ensure even browning. Remove from oven and cool. If stored overnight, cover with foil at room temperature. In a medium-size bowl, mix cheeses together on medium speed with an electric mixer. Add milk until mixture is of spreadable consistency. Trim pastry to even edges if necessary. Place on pastry rectangle on a platter and spread with a thin layer of mustard. Spread with ½ cup cheese mixture and top with half of cucumbers, overlapping slightly. Add half of the dill, onions, and salmon. Place second pastry rectangle on top and spread with ½ cup cheese. Repeat layering with remaining cucumber, dill, onion, and salmon. Spread underside of third pastry rectangle with remaining cheese and place on top of Napoleon, cheese side down. Garnish with fresh dill. Cut into 10 1-inch slices. Makes 1 Napoleon, serves 10.

MAMMA

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Smoked Salmon and Herb Cheese Napoleon Slices are well worth the extra time required to make this spectacular dish for a New Year's buffet.

New Year Brings Reflection, Anticipation For Bashores

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 LEBANON (Lebanon Co.) —

The year 1997 is coming to a close and 1998 lies ahead. For the Bashores and most other families,

it's a time for reflection and a time of anticipation.

Ricki and Roberta Bashore are counting their blessings, remembering what could have been, "if they hadn't found the brain tumor so quickly.... If they hadn't operated. If she hadn't gone to the doctor to find out why she couldn't hear out of one ear. If they had listened to the first diagnosis.... If they hadn't operated. If medical technology hadn't been able to patch her skull with a steel plate. . . ."

But all these "ifs" were eliminated and the outcome is optimistic because the Bashores believe in Roberta's adage: "pray a lot and believe in miracles."

That belief was established nine years when daughter Melissa was born after doctors had told the Bashores she could never have another baby. Andrea, then 8, prayed fervently for a baby sister, and was rewarded with a baby sister born on her birthday—Dec. 22.

The Bashores live on a 150-acre farm, most eye-catching for the red painted message etched on the side of their white barn: "Drink Milk" and the real seal.

With 100 cows to milk, Roberta's place had been firmly entrenched in the barn along with her husband Ricki and kids Ricki Jr., Jennifer, Andrea, and Melissa, until. . . .

"After they put a metal plate in my head, they warned me not to get hit in the head," said Roberta, who had been kicked and bumped in the head numerous times while milking cows.

The family decided milking cows wasn't a safe place for her to be, especially after she touched a frayed wire and the electrical currents defined the exact spot where the steel plate was in her head.

Since then son Ricki Jr.'s wife took over Roberta's milking chores.

"Now I get to babysit my grandson," Roberta said. Make that and granddaughter. Last week Ricki Jr. and Stacy had a baby daughter.

The saga of Roberta's brain tumor actually began in September 1996. Because she had lost hearing in one ear, her husband encouraged her to go to the doctor. She had no other symptoms.

A magnetic resonance image (MRI) revealed a brain tumor. The news was devastating to the family. "I had grown up with only one grandmother, my kids had grown up with only one grandmother who died recently, and I thought my grandson was going to grow up with only one grandmother. I bawled for three days," she said.

But life had to go on. Two days after the diagnosis, she was in charge of the closing program for Bible school. The kids were showing cattle at the county fair and she, as a 4-H leader, was to set up a booth at the fairgrounds.

Despite the family doctor's belief that it was a slow-growing tumor and non cancerous, the family insisted on a second opinion.

A Hershey neurosurgeon recommended immediate surgery. It's a good thing he did. When they operated, the tumor had already penetrated the skull, and that is the reason a steel plate needed to be inserted to replace the section of the skull that was removed.

Today, Roberta has no side effects from the tumor. Ironically, the hearing loss for which she first sought medical treatment is not considered to have any connection to the brain tumor. Roberta still cannot hear in that ear and believes that her hearing is deteriorating in

her other ear.

"I appreciate life more—especially the grandchildren. I live one day at a time and enjoy each day for what it's worth," she said.

Andrea said that the diagnosis of her mother's brain tumor changed her perspective on everything.

Her dad said of Andrea, "She has the softest heart in the family. It's changed us all. I'm not into as much rushing as before. I don't go for this rushing through milking, taking a quick shower, and driving as fast as I can so I won't be late for a meeting. Now I work slower. I stay home more and just enjoy the farm and family."

In a way, Ricki and Roberta came out with opposite ideas on what it means to enjoy life to the fullest. While Ricki desires to stay home and savor each moment, his wife is so delighted to be alive that she wants to do everything and go everywhere.

"She's in enough of stuff for us both," Ricki said of his reason for dropping membership in several farm organizations.

In addition to serving as dairy promotion chairperson, Roberta is a 4-H leader. She is president of Lebanon Farm Women Group 20. She has a dream—and a verbal commitment from her husband—to open a craft shop in the summerhouse on their farm. She sews extensively and enjoys numerous types of craft making.

More pressing at this time of the year is the upcoming Pennsylvania Farm Show. It's the time when daughter Andrea will receive the FFA Keystone Degree. (Andrea along with other Keystone recipients will be profiled in Section 1 of the Jan. 9 issue of *Lancaster Farming*).

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The end of the year, the beginning of the new, brings a time of reflection for Ricki and Roberta Bashore and their children. After surviving surgery for a brain tumor, Roberta said, "We have learned to appreciate life more, to live one day at a time, to enjoy each day for what's its worth."