

Susan Nye

Around the Table

# The Leaf Peepers Edition

Fall 2006/volume 6

Fall and Holiday  
Cooking Parties

Girls' Night Out  
Take a break from the  
same-old/same-old!

Easy & Elegant  
Entertaining  
The holidays are right  
around the corner – are you  
ready?

Cooking for 1 or 2  
Don't settle for peanut  
butter and jelly, cornflakes  
or frozen food every night.

Kooking with Kids  
Have your kids cook for  
you!

For more information  
visit the web at  
[www.susannye.com](http://www.susannye.com)

or contact Susan Nye at  
603/526 7319 or  
[aroundthetable@tds.net](mailto:aroundthetable@tds.net)



## Aaahhhhh...October in New Hampshire.

The trees change to brilliant reds, oranges and yellows and tourists appear in droves throughout the State. Packed into buses or rambling around back roads on bicycles – the Leaf Peepers have arrived. Called Dead Leaf Watchers by my Dad, these autumn visitors ooh and ah over the scenic vistas. They join the celebrations at harvest festivals, visit farm markets and sip apple cider. They enjoy the romance of country inns and the comfort of cozy cafés while bolstering the State's economy.

**So why do the leaves change color?** When I was little I visited the library, read beautiful picture books and learned that the fall foliage was due to a magical combination of a Native American Princess, a mysterious tragedy and a Medicine Man or witch. Many years later, memories of these stories are vague, but somehow these three elements came together and brilliant leaves exploded across the landscape.

It was certainly disappointing to study biology in high school and learn that growth, temperature and chemical change are the true creators of fall's bright colors. As chlorophyll dissipates, the already present carotenes and xanthophylls, anthocyanin and tannins take over and brighten the landscape. How magical!

Over the past few weeks, it has been my good fortune to enjoy kayaking on and walking around Pleasant Lake. Whether it is due to chemistry or princesses and witches – the lake, surrounded by evergreens mixed with brilliant red maples and yellow beeches, is indeed magical.

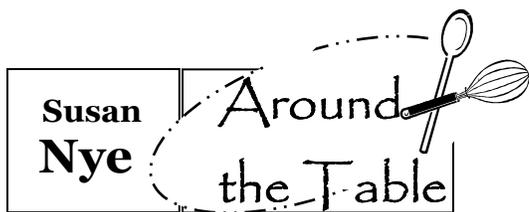
Enjoy the fall sunshine, take a walk, peddle a bike or paddle a boat. The fresh air and exercise are good for you – and build a good appetite for hearty autumn comfort food. Regardless of what's in the oven – sweet apples with cinnamon or a spicy ragout – is there anything better than the wonderful aromas of an autumn kitchen after an afternoon out in the cold, clear sunshine?

Bon appétit! –

Susan

**Starting this fall! Kooking with Kids Birthday Parties!**

Visit the web or contact me for more information.



## The Leaf Peepers Edition

Fall 2006/volume 6

October 9<sup>th</sup>  
Cooking with Kids  
Pasta Party

October 12<sup>th</sup>  
Girls' Night Out  
Soup's On

October 26<sup>th</sup>  
Girls' Night Out  
French Country Cooking

November 4<sup>th</sup>  
Easy & Elegant Entertaining  
Hors d'Oeuvre Party

November 11<sup>th</sup>  
Easy & Elegant Entertaining  
Thanksgiving 202

December 9<sup>th</sup>  
Cooking with Kids  
Christmas Cookies

Ask about  
Cooking with Kids  
Birthday Parties

Additional dates and special  
programs available on request

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### Sausage with Caramelized Onions, Bitter Greens and Polenta

An easy fall supper – cool weather greens, comforting sausages and warm, creamy polenta. Top it off with fragrant baked apples or a homemade pie for a perfect fall meal.

Serves 4

1-1 ½ pounds sausages, I like to use a variety of chicken or turkey sausages  
1 large onion, thinly sliced  
1 ½ pounds mixed bitter greens; tough ribs removed, washed and cut into pieces – I like a mix of escarole, radicchio and chicory  
2-3 tablespoons roasted shallot vinaigrette (recipe follows)  
1 cup instant polenta  
1 tablespoon fresh sage, finely chopped or 1 teaspoon dry sage, crumbled  
1 teaspoon fresh thyme or ¼ dry thyme  
2 ounces freshly grated parmesan  
Olive oil and balsamic vinegar  
Salt, freshly ground pepper and chili flakes

1. In a 12-inch heavy, oven proof skillet toss onions in 1-2 tablespoons of olive oil, 1 tablespoon of balsamic vinegar, salt, pepper and a pinch of chili flakes. Cook in the oven at 350° for about 20 minutes. Add sausages – wiggle down to the bottom of the skillet, cook for another 10 minutes or according to package directions, turning a couple of times.
2. In a large, oven proof casserole, toss the greens with roasted shallot vinaigrette, salt and pepper. Cook in the oven at 350° until wilted and caramelized, 5-10 minutes.
3. Cook polenta according to package directions. Add sage, thyme and grated parmesan and stir.

### Roasted Shallot Vinaigrette

Makes about 1 cup

3-4 cloves garlic, peeled  
1 shallot, peeled and halved  
½ teaspoon dry thyme  
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling  
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar  
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard  
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice  
Coarse salt and freshly ground pepper

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Place garlic, shallot and thyme in a small oven proof baking dish (I use a custard cup), drizzle with a little olive oil, and season with salt and pepper. Roast until garlic and shallot are very soft, about 30 minutes. Set aside to cool.
2. In the bowl of a mini food processor, combine roasted garlic and shallot, balsamic vinegar, mustard, and lemon juice. Add olive oil; process until incorporated. Season with salt and pepper.