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Chef's Apron

Contact Susan Nye at
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More information the web at
www.susannye.com



It's summertime and the livin' is easy. Or at least for the week or two or three when you leave the rat race behind and head for the beach or mountains. It's lovely to say goodbye to schedules, back-to-back meetings and carpools. It's wonderful to relax, breathe some clean country air and take it slow.

With no alarm to blast you out of a sound sleep, taking it slow may include an extra hour or two of shuteye. Or maybe you prefer to get up with the sun and then spend a long lazy morning on the porch with an extra cup of coffee and time to actually read the newspaper. If you're lucky, maybe, just maybe, someone will cook you up a big country breakfast.

My Dad is famous from coast to coast for his waffles. Dad's waffles have become a special tradition with the youngest Nyes. His three youngest granddaughters leave the Boston suburbs behind and spend most of the summer on Pleasant Lake. They frequently charm their grandfather into making them waffles, at least once a week, sometimes more. His great-grandsons visit from California every year or two. They look forward to swimming, kayaking, sailing and Grampa's waffles. Not necessarily in that order.

These are not fresh from-the-freezer-to-the-toaster waffles but are made-to-order and served hot off the waffle iron. They are universally known as Grampa's awful waffles because they are awfully good. Some mornings they deserve the name because it is awfully chaotic as he tries, with limited success, to feed five or six or more kids simultaneously. Dad's waffles have become so famous that other people's grandchildren sometimes stop by, as if by chance, as soon as the iron is hot.

I have to accept at least some of the blame for this mayhem. Sometime in the early nineties, I bought Dad his first waffle iron. He is one of those guys who have everything. Finding Christmas and birthday gifts for him is generally impossible, or at the least very difficult. So from time to time, I skip the gloves, wallet, sweater or golf balls and go for something a bit more creative. Or as some might argue, a bit more foolish. The waffle iron was for one of those Christmases. You may disagree, he may have disagreed, but I thought I was terribly clever.

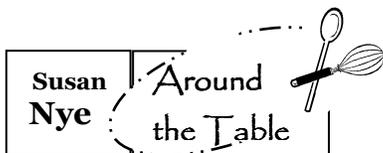
My two older nephews, who are now twenty-something, thought it was a terrific idea. Thanks to them, the waffle iron did not end up at the church rummage sale or in the back of the closet. It was put to work almost immediately and Dad has been making waffles ever since.

His secret recipe? Easy. Buy some Bisquick, eggs and milk and follow the directions on the box. Serve hot, smothered in butter and drenched in pure, sweet New Hampshire maple syrup. But these festive and chaotic mornings are more than a buttery sweet and syrupy breakfast. Kids grow up fast and before long Grampa's awful waffles will be one of many special memories of summer on Pleasant Lake for this youngest Nyes.



Enjoy and Bon appétit!

Susan



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Blueberry Muffins

Since you don't need a recipe for Dad's awful waffles, here's another breakfast treat. Get an extra cup of coffee, pull up a chair on the porch and enjoy!

Makes about 32 muffins

3 1/2 cup sifted flour
5 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon salt
Grated peel 1 lemon
1 1/2 cup (3 sticks) butter
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup brown sugar
2 egg
1 12/ cup milk
1 pint blueberries tossed in 1 tablespoon flour

1. Line muffin tins with paper liners. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.
2. Sift together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt, stir in grated lemon peel.
3. Cream butter and sugar. Add egg and beat on high speed until smooth. Reduce speed to low and add flour mixture and milk alternately in 2 batches, beginning and ending with the flour mixture and mixing until just combined.
4. Toss blueberries with a little flour and fold into batter.
5. Fill muffin cups 2/3 full with the batter. Bake at 400 degrees for 18-20 minutes.