



## Private Chef, Catering & Cooking Classes

I'd be delighted to help you with any and all of your celebrations.

Join Me Around the Table  
for an Eat Well-Do Good Dinner!  
Support the fight against  
Alzheimer's Disease &  
Enjoy delicious food & fun!

## Treat Yourself to an Around the Table Chef's Apron

Cook like a chef or just look like one!

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information on the web at  
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**Oh what a relief it was when the school bell rang its last shrill note of the year.** The last book report had been delivered; the last test had been taken. The last song had been sung, last game of four-square game won or lost and the last sneaker retrieved or left behind forever. Even the studious little nerds like me were happy to dash out the doors.

Within minutes of that bell, my mother had us piled into the back our big blue station wagon and headed for New Hampshire. Finally, summer had begun. The first days of summer were always filled with promise. With ten weeks of vacation stretched out before us, there was no concern about rainy days. Or the endless rounds of Monopoly and jigsaw puzzles that went with them. We didn't worry about sunburns or poison ivy. (But we should have.) We didn't give a thought to the inevitable boredom that attacks children and teens during the dog days of August.

**In all likelihood, we were too happy with our newfound freedom to foster a single worry.** However if some small doubt or care wiggled its way into our thoughts, it surely was for something important. When we were little, it was probably high hopes of passing the raft test on the first try. As we got older, we might have wondered if we looked spectacular in our new bikinis. Or at least okay. We may have given a passing thought to the dance our neighborhood threw every summer to raise money for the hospital. It was the highlight of our summer social calendar. Would we be able to book Aerosmith again? Would we end up wall flowers or dance the night away? Perhaps we dithered about getting up on one waterski and our far-from-powerful tennis serve.

**Meanwhile, my mother's brain would be buzzing.** Multitasking as only a mother can, she'd have eyes on the road and one ear tuned to our excited chatter. All the while she was hatching her plans to keep us busy. Today we were free without a care in the world. As soon as she could manage it, Mom would have us signed up for swimming lessons, tennis round robins and sunfish races.

Except for swimming which she rightfully deemed a critical life skill, Mom did not really care if we improved our athletic prowess. It didn't matter if we had little interest in tennis or sailing. Or if we were any good at either. She was on a mission but it had nothing to do with preparing champion athletes. Her goal was to keep us busy. Busy did not include sleeping until noon or watching hour after hour of television. Mom would have signed us up for sword swallowing classes, trapeze lessons and a high stakes poker tournament if they got us up and out of bed in the morning.

If someone was in need, she was more than ready to offer us up for babysitting, odd jobs and good deeds. Mom offered our lackluster skills to anyone foolish enough to hire us. Pay or reward was immaterial. She also volunteered our time to sell raffle tickets and wash cars. Any- and everything to keep us busy for a couple of hours and away from the wanton dangers of boredom and sloth.

Eventually, we turned fifteen, or maybe it was sixteen. Along with a legion of other teenagers, we found summer jobs. For minimum wage or less, we made beds, waited table, washed dishes, sold t-shirts and bagged groceries. My mother could breathe a sigh of relief and rest easy. For at least a few hours every week, we were out of her hair while some unlucky taskmaster had the unenviable chore of keeping us busy

Wishing you a busy (or not) summer and bon appétit!



## Strawberries & Yogurt Cream

*Strawberries are just coming into season in New Hampshire. Set them off with smooth and extra creamy yogurt. Sweet and a bit tangy, it is the perfect early summer treat. Enjoy!*

Serves 6-8

1 quart nonfat plain yogurt  
 1/4 – 1/2 cup (to taste) brown sugar  
 1/2 teaspoon salt  
 1 tablespoon pure vanilla extract  
 1– 1 1/2 cups (to taste) half & half  
 Grated zest of 1 orange  
 About 1 quart strawberries, hulled and halved or quartered  
 Juice of 1/2 – 1 orange  
 1-2 tablespoons Grand Marnier (optional)  
 More brown sugar to taste



**Make the Yogurt Cream:** Put the yogurt in a colander or sieve lined with a clean dishtowel or coffee filter and drain for several hours or overnight. You should end up with about 2 cups of yogurt cheese.

Put the yogurt cheese, brown sugar, salt, vanilla in a bowl and whisk to combine. Add about 1/2 cup half & half and the orange zest and whisk again to combine. Slowly add more half & half and continue whisking until smooth. Cover and refrigerate until ready to assemble the parfaits. The yogurt cream can be prepared up to 3 days in advance and stored in the refrigerator until ready to use.

**Prepare the strawberries:** put the strawberries in a bowl and gently toss with orange juice, Grand Marnier and brown sugar. Let sit at room temperature for 10-20 minutes.

**To serve:** spoon the strawberries into small dessert glasses or bowls and top with a generous dollop of Yogurt Cream.