

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!

You can find lots more information on the web at www.susannye.com and www.susannye.wordpress.com

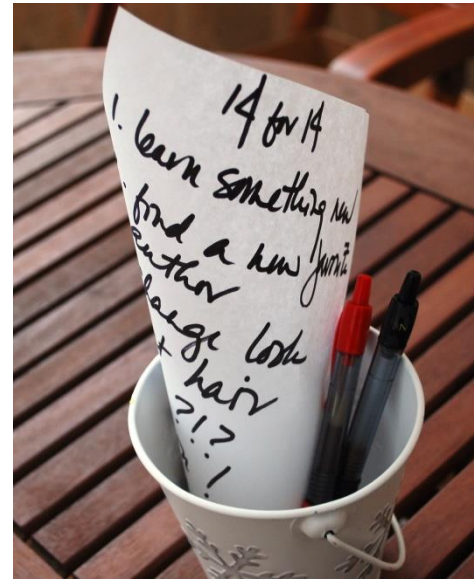
For cooking tips, recipes and more, connect with me on FaceBook www.facebook.com/swny or follow me on Twitter at twitter.com/susannye Watch me cook on www.youtube.com/susannye

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While many people turn to resolutions at the start of a new year, others are taking stock of their bucket list. Some of these buckets are so full that I for one wonder what the heck they've been doing for the last ten or twenty or more years. How about you? Are you starting to think that hiking Kilimanjaro or swimming with dolphins is more pipedream than possibility?

Maybe it's time to take a second or third look at that bucket list. If you need to win the lottery to accomplish your goals, it's probably time to reconsider. (Especially if you don't buy lottery tickets; even when the jackpot is over \$600 million!) So how about a simple list of fourteen things to do in 2014? And then do them. I'm still working on my fourteen for fourteen but here are a few ideas:

1. **Learn something new.** Take a course or design your own self-study with a pile of library books.
2. **Find a new favorite author.** Read reviews, ask friends, family and strangers for recommendations or pick a book by its (gorgeous) (racy) (intriguing) (sophisticated) (you get the picture) cover.
3. **Change your look** with a pair of brightly colored socks or a new shade of lipstick.
4. **Cut your hair or grow a beard.** Afraid of the scissors; change your hair color or go back to natural, find a new style or wear a great hat.
5. **Get a tattoo.** Show it to friends or keep it a secret.
6. **Dive in** and do something that intimidates you. Write a letter to the editor. Send the letter. Hang glide. Go to a party alone. Make a soufflé, Beef Wellington or Baked Alaska from scratch. Wear bright red lipstick or florescent pink socks, out, in public. Talk to a stranger. (A nice compliment is a good way to start.)
7. **Every day for a week, get up** in time to see the sunrise and go for a long walk.
8. **Whether it is a walk-in closet or a tiny cupboard, clean your pantry.** Think of the delicious treasures you'll find. Dried cherries? Israeli couscous? Black beans? Anchovies, Kalamata olives or capers? Whip up a few great dishes with your finds.
9. **Slap a new coat of paint** on your living room or bedroom walls. Or both.
10. **Think positive.** When it's too cold or too rainy to go out, spend the day reading your new favorite author. If you look for the silver lining, there's a pretty good chance you'll find it.
11. **Make a new friend.**
12. **Celebrate the small wins.** When your favorite song comes on the radio, sing at the top of your lungs. When someone holds the elevator for you, thank him with a beaming smile. When you're running late and every light is green; join the radio in joyful song.
13. **Be thankful ...** for new friends, old friends, strangers who hold elevators, favorite songs, and, and, and ...
14. **Be happy;** maybe not every minute of every day but most of the time.



I wish everyone a wonderful 2014 and bon appétit!

Susan

Chipotle Sweet Potato Soup

When the weather turns cold or rainy, a mug of soup will warm you to the core. Enjoy!

Serves 8

3 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into chunks
3 carrots, chopped
4 celery stalks, chopped
2 medium onions, chopped
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon dried thyme
Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper
Olive oil
Sherry vinegar
3 garlic cloves, roughly chopped
1 tablespoon or to taste minced chipotle chiles in adobo
1/2 cup dry sherry (optional)
6-8 cups chicken or vegetable broth
1 bay leaf
Garnish: sour cream, grated cheddar cheese and chopped cilantro or cilantro oil

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Put the vegetables in a large roasting pan, sprinkle with cumin, thyme, salt and pepper and drizzle with enough equal parts olive oil and vinegar to lightly coat. Toss to combine and roast for 45 minutes.

Add the garlic, chipotle and sherry to the pan and toss to combine. Return to the oven and cook for 15 minutes or until the vegetables are tender.

Let the vegetables cool for about 15 minutes. Working in batches, puree the vegetables with a little broth in a blender or food processor until smooth.

Put the vegetable puree in a large soup pot. Add the bay leaf and whisk in more or less broth for a thicker or thinner soup. Reheat on the stovetop on medium and simmer for on low for 15 minutes.

If you have the time, the soup is best if cooled to room temperature, covered and refrigerated for several hours. Reheat on medium-low until piping hot.

Ladle the soup into mugs or bowls, stir in a dollop of sour cream, sprinkle with cheddar and cilantro or drizzle with cilantro oil and serve.

