

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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Summer should be filled with fond memories and not regrets. What are three or four, ten or more things you'd like to do this summer? Not should, not could but the things you'd like to do. Why not promise right now, right here to do them! If you need help, here are a few ideas:

1. **Sit on a beach** and watch the sun come up. Listen to the loons, drink a great cup of coffee and enjoy the beauty and solitude.
2. **Make time for your family and friends.** There's no need to fuss and over-plan. Do ordinary things together; take a walk in the woods, build a sand castle or grill burgers. Tell the people you love how much they mean to you and prove it by giving them some undivided attention.
3. **Exercise every day.** With beautiful weather, there's no excuse to stay inside. Get out and walk, run, bike, hike, swim, kayak or, or, or ... If you don't know how already, learn to swim. Old or young, passing your raft test will give you a wonderful sense of accomplishment and security.
4. **Use sunscreen.** The seventies just called and they want their baby oil back. Spend lots of time outside this summer but use your head and lots of sunscreen.
5. **Do a good deed.** Whether every day or once in a while, look for opportunities to practice small acts of kindness. Hold the door for a stranger at the post office. Run an errand for a neighbor. Or just smile, it's contagious and makes everyone feel better. While you're at it, laughter is contagious too so laugh every day.
6. **Try something new, even a little adventurous.** No, you needn't climb Mount Kilimanjaro. You can expand your horizons by taking one small step outside your comfort zone. Perhaps you're nervous about meeting new people. Well then, make a point of introducing yourself to a stranger at the next cookout. Fussy about food; give sushi a try. Small steps will lead to bigger steps and before you know it, you'll be heading off to tackle your own version of Kilimanjaro!
7. **Express your creativity.** Find or rediscover the creative endeavor that makes your soul sing. Maybe it's gardening or drawing or solving complex math problems. Whatever it is, make this the summer you explore and celebrate your imagination.
8. **Take a nap in a hammock.** If you want, bring a book along and pretend to read. If you don't have a hammock, a comfortable chair or blanket in the shade will do. Summer is a great time to relax and recharge your battery.
9. **Eat dinner as a family,** better yet an extended family and even better – eat outside. Family cookouts and picnics are just one of summer's gifts. While you're at it, learn to cook a lobster, eat more fresh vegetables and indulge in local fruit. Don't forget the homemade shortcakes or ice cream for the pick-your-own berries.
10. **Watch the full moon rise over the mountain,** dance and, go ahead, give a howl. When you need a rest, lie in the grass and count shooting stars.



Enjoy the long days and nights of summer and bon appétit!

Susan

Strawberry Shortcakes with Cardamom Cream

Strawberry shortcake is a classic summer favorite. Give it a little twist this year with a touch of exotic spice. Enjoy!

Serves 8

1 1/2 cups plus 1-2 tablespoons heavy cream, divided
 About 1/2 cup brown sugar, divided
 1 teaspoon ground cardamom, divided
 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract, divided
 2 cups all-purpose flour, plus more for your work surface
 1 tablespoon baking powder
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) cold butter, cut into pieces
 3/4 cup sour cream
 2 pounds strawberries, hulled and quartered



Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with a silicon mat or parchment paper.

Combine 1 cup cream with 1-2 tablespoons brown sugar, 1/2 teaspoon cardamom and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla, cover and store in the refrigerator until you are ready to assemble the shortcakes.

Put the flour, 1/4 cup brown sugar, remaining cardamom, baking powder and salt in a food processor and pulse to combine. Add the butter, pulse until it is fully incorporated and the dry ingredients resemble fine meal. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl.

Combine the remaining vanilla and 1/2 cup cream with the sour cream, add it to the flour mixture and stir until the dough comes together. The dough will be sticky. Transfer the dough to a lightly floured work surface, pat into a ball and knead a few times.

Divide the dough into 8 equal portions, pat into rounds, place on the prepared baking sheet. Brush the tops with 1-2 tablespoons cream.

Turning the sheet pan at the mid-point, bake the shortcakes in the center of the oven for about 20 minutes or until lightly golden brown. Cool on a wire rack.

To assemble: toss the strawberries with 1-2 tablespoons brown sugar. (If the berries are very fresh and local, you may not need any sugar.)

Beat the sweetened cardamom cream with an electric mixer until soft peaks form.

Slice each shortcake in half horizontally. Top the bottom halves with strawberries and dollops of whipped cardamom cream. Add the top halves and more strawberries and cream. Serve immediately.