

Join Me for a Cooking Class!  
Winter-Spring 2008 Schedule

**January**

18 French Country Cooking

**February**

1 Italian Country Kitchen  
15 French Country Cooking  
29 Italian Country Kitchen

**March**

7 Mediterranean Easter Feast  
28 Tapas & Finger Food

**April**

4 Italian Country Kitchen  
18 French Country Cooking  
30 Tapas & Finger Food

**May**

2 Italian Country Kitchen  
16 French Country Cooking

**June**

6 Summer Salads

Join me in the Kitchen & Around the Table for delicious seasonal food & fun

Details & Menus on the Web  
[www.susannye.com](http://www.susannye.com)

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Contact Susan Nye at  
[susannye@tds.net](mailto:susannye@tds.net)  
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More information the web at  
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My Mother has never really been an enthusiastic cook. To be fair, she comes naturally by it, she is just one in a long line of indifferent cooks. My Grandmother had no particular interest in cooking. She never collected cookbooks or kitchen gadgets and my Father still jokes about his mother-in-law's dinners. Nana Westland's greatest kitchen legacy was her insistence that all meals have a salad and at least two green and one yellow vegetable. She would have been ahead of her time if she hadn't overcooked the veggies. At least that's my Dad's story and he's sticking to it.

My Great Grandmother spent as little time as possible in the kitchen. In her defense she did not have a lot of time to hang around the pots, pans and rolling pin. She was a single mother and an entrepreneur in an age when businesses were rarely owned by women. With little if any spare time on her hands, she kept it plain and simple. My Mother adored her grandmother but the only thing she remembers about her Nana's cooking was her healthy but somewhat peculiar eating habits. Nana Grant had a fondness for seaweed long before sushi was fashionable.



I don't remember my Mother spending hours and hours in the kitchen. But even if she was not a gourmet chef, she did cook dinner every night. She gravitated toward quick, easy recipes and didn't hesitate to grab a can of soup to use as a sauce for chicken or as a base for a stew. My Mom might not have been keen about cooking but she was keen about bringing her family together every evening.

Dinner was about quality family time, not quantity time in front of the stove. Every night we gathered around the kitchen table to share our news, victories, trials and tribulations. We discussed everything and anything. We talked about our day at school, our favorite books, celebrities and stars as well as the Boston Bruins and Red Sox.

As we got older, political and social issues became key topics during our nightly conversations. In general there were no holds barred. We never really argued, in my Mother's words, we discussed enthusiastically. It was an exciting, turbulent time, a time of great change; kind of like now. We vigorously discussed the virtues and vices of the President and a whole host of politicians, public figures, crusaders and crooks. We deliberated over the war, civil rights, the environment and the feminist movement.

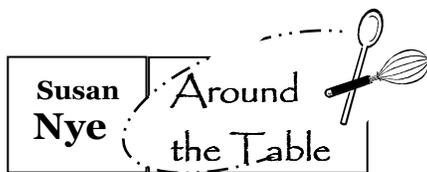
When I was sixteen or maybe seventeen, my Mother told me that she sometimes worried about my younger brother during these spirited discussions and debates. After all he was a little boy surrounded by adults and near-adults. Once in a blue moon, a subject would be deemed off limits, inappropriate for his young ears. Those times were few and far between; for the most part he heard it all. My sister and I were free to discuss, rant and rave about life with the passion and intensity of idealistic teenagers.

My Mother needn't have worried. Today my brother is an easy conversationalist who loves controversy. I have noticed that during big family dinners, he has a particular fondness for heated discussion. John likes nothing better than to see a few sparks fly over the Presidential candidates or the economy. Any hot topic will do, even when we all agree. To this day, we don't really argue, we just discuss enthusiastically.



May and June are crazy busy times for most families. The end of the school year is packed with softball games and lacrosse tournaments, plays, performances and concerts; not to mention graduation and all that goes with it. With all the craziness, I hope that you can find an evening or two for a family dinner around your table.

Bon appétit! - Susan



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Contact Susan Nye at

[susannye@tds.net](mailto:susannye@tds.net) or

603/526 7319

## Libby Nye's Mushroom Soup Chicken

*This recipe is my mother's take on a Campbell's classic. It only takes a few minutes of prep time and was a family favorite when we were kids.*

Serves 4-6

4-6 chicken breasts  
1 can Cream of Mushroom Soup  
1/2 soup can sour cream  
1/4-1/2 soup can dry sherry  
1 small jar boiled onions, drained or 1/4 bag of frozen pearl onions (optional)  
1 small can sliced mushroom, drained (optional)  
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper or to taste

1. Preheat oven to 350°. If the chicken breasts are large, cut them in half. Put the chicken in a large casserole dish. Scatter the onions and mushrooms over the chicken.
2. Put the soup, sour cream, sherry, cheese and pepper in a medium bowl; whisk to combine. Pour over chicken. Bake at 350° for 45 to 60 minutes.