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Inexpensive recipes I learned from Mom



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Ask any chef about his or her biggest influences, and “Mom” is bound to be among them.

That’s true even if she never cooks. Frugal Foodie’s mom, surprisingly, doesn’t like to spend much time in the kitchen, but gave Foodie free rein to experiment and spruce up family dinners. The few things Mom makes well tend to be easy yet impressive, too, which is what Foodie strives for in her own cooking. (One of Mom’s few go-to recipes is the savory [French bake with bacon and cheese](#) we mentioned as a Mother’s Day brunch last year.)

We asked food bloggers, chefs and other foodies to submit a favorite and economical recipe their mother taught them. Think of it as a host of Mom-tested and Mom-approved recipes that might be worth rolling out for Mother’s Day this year.

What must-have food do you make that reminds you of Mom?

Soft Buttermilk Waffles

Cost: \$1, or \$0.25 per serving.

Grandma “Tom” made a buttermilk waffle so memorable, says [Quick-Fix Southern](#) author Rebecca Lang, that Lang still uses a version of her recipe and cooks them just until soft. To prepare: Preheat a Belgian waffle maker according to the manufacturer’s directions. Combine a quarter-cup of unsalted butter and two tablespoons Crisco shortening in a microwave-safe measuring cup. Melt them in the microwave, about 45 seconds. Combine one and three-quarters cups of flour, three-quarters of a teaspoon baking soda, a teaspoon

salt, and one-third cup of sugar in a large mixing bowl. Whisk a large egg, one cup of milk, and three-quarters cup of buttermilk together in a medium mixing bowl and stir into the dry ingredients. Slowly pour the melted butter and shortening into the batter. Lightly spray the heated waffle maker with nonstick cooking spray. Pour half (about two cups) of the batter in the waffle maker. Cook according to the manufacturer's instructions. Repeat with the remaining batter.

White Bean and Red Onion Salad

Cost: \$2.35, or \$0.59 per serving.

After Angela Pritchett of Overland Park, Kansas, lost her mom to cancer last year, she started the blog [Recipes From My Mom](#) as a way to honor her. This [salad](#) is a “perfect reminder of my mom’s flair for full-flavored food, presented beautifully,” Pritchett says. “It was gone before I even had a chance to serve it during a meal — we all kept sampling and snacking on it.”

Crème Brulee French Toast

Cost: \$2.88, or \$0.72 per serving.

You know a recipe is good when it gets the Mom seal of approval. Recipe developer [Sarah Caron](#) says this crunchy and sweet [breakfast dish](#) is a favorite. “I only make it two to three times a year, so it’s one of those really special dishes that she looks forward to,” Caron says.

Mom’s Puppy Chow

Cost: \$5.16, or \$0.52 per serving.

Gooseberry Patch sent along this recipe from its new collection, called “Mom’s Very Best Recipes.” Shonnie Sims of Canton, Ga., who submitted the snack (intended for humans, despite its name), recalls her mom making it every fall. Place 16 ounces corn cereal squares in a large bowl; set aside. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine one cup each of sugar, corn syrup and creamy peanut butter. Microwave on high until melted, about 3 minutes. Add one cup dry-roasted peanuts; mix well and pour over cereal. Toss evenly to coat. Store in an airtight container.

Raspberry Blueberry Pie

Cost: \$9.20, or \$1.15 per serving.

Hopefully we won’t get Anne Maxfield of [The Accidental Locavore](#) into trouble. After plenty of begging, Maxfield’s mom “reluctantly” shared the recipe for her [famous pie](#) last year.

Roxanne’s No-Fail Filets

Cost: \$14.98, or \$2.50 per serving.

“I love serving these at a summer dinner party because they always taste delicious... and everyone asks for the recipe,” says Amanda Yates, the “Everyday Foodie” for meal-planning site [Food on the Table](#). To make, combine two tablespoons soy sauce, six tablespoons good-quality olive oil, a tablespoon seasoned salt

(preferably Lawry's), a quarter-teaspoon of pepper, and an eighth-teaspoon of garlic salt. Rub into six thick steaks (filets or sirloins) by hand on both sides. Let marinate at room temperature for at least two hours before cooking, turning often. Grill to desired doneness (best served medium rare).

Seekh Kebabs

Cost: \$21.50, or \$4.30 per serving.

Sucheta Rawal of [Go. Eat. Give!](#) grew up in India eating her grandmother's kebabs, and finally got the recipe when she moved to the U.S.

"It is much better than any restaurant," Rawal says. "I use a lot of herbs and spices in the marinade and grill them myself." In a food processor, grind together two tablespoons each of ginger paste and garlic paste, four coarsely chopped green chilies, two medium onions, and a half cup cilantro. Transfer to a large mixing bowl. Using your hands, thoroughly mix the ground paste with two pounds minced lamb or goat meat (fat removed), two crumbled slices of multigrain bread and two teaspoons each of salt, cumin powder, coriander powder and garam masala powder. Cover and let stand in the refrigerator for at least two hours.

When ready to cook, take a handful of the meat mixture and roll it firm in your hands. Shape it along the skewer so it starts looking like a long thin hot dog. Make sure the kebab is three-quarters the length of the skewer and is evenly shaped. When all the meat is out on skewers, preheat a grill to 350 degrees. Baste the surface with oil or cooking spray. Put the kebabs on the grill and let cook over medium heat for about 12 to 15 minutes, turning frequently so that all sides cook evenly. Grill until meat firms and chars slightly, but is still moist. Serve with mint chutney, sliced raw red onions and lemon.

Frugal Foodie is a journalist based in New York City who spends her days writing about [personal finance](#) and obsessing about what she'll have for dinner. Chat with her on Twitter through [@MintFoodie](#).