

Mainville adds flavor to cookbook

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The holiday season is a time for sharing with friends and family.

Food plays an important role at most seasonal gatherings. Hosts and hostesses often stress for hours over what to serve.

Denise Mainville has the answer for holiday menu planning: Chicken with garlic and rosemary followed by peppermint stick treats.

The Huber Heights resident recently submitted both recipes to Gooseberry Patch, a national distributor of cookbooks and country items.

Mainville isn't a new contributor; she has contributed to approximately six other Gooseberry Patch cookbooks.

"The very first recipe they chose was for molasses sugar cookies," said Mainville. "Sometimes they chose one recipe. In the last two books, they printed two."

The chicken with garlic and rosemary and peppermint stick treats are featured in "Christmas in the Country," Gooseberry Patch's 2007 Christmas cookbook.

Mainville said she enjoys this time of year because she likes baking.

"I do most of my baking during the winter. Even with air conditioning, it's too hot to bake in the summer," Mainville said.

Peppermint Stick Treats

2 1-oz. sqs. semi-sweet baking chocolate, chopped
1 t. shortening
1/3 c. chopped walnuts
8 4-inch peppermint sticks

Combine chocolate and shortening in a small saucepan over low heat; stir until melted. Transfer to a bowl. Spread chopped nuts on wax paper. Dip one end of peppermint sticks into chocolate; roll in nuts. Place on wax paper and let stand until set. Wrap each stick in a clear plastic bag and tie at end. Makes eight.

Recipe courtesy of Gooseberry Patch, "Christmas in the Country."

A self-admitted kitchen lover, Mainville said her family enjoys her winter-only goodies.

"There's a recipe for almond poppyseed bread that I got out of a Gooseberry Patch cookbook; I tweaked it a little and I only make it this time of the year," Mainville said. "My daughter lives in Oregon; she requests a loaf."

Mainville is originally from Michigan. She lived in Arizona for a while; she moved to Huber Heights in 2005.

Although it isn't her profession, Mainville said cooking is one of her favorite hobbies.

In fact, it's a very handy hobby during the holidays.

"It's fun to try different things. There are recipes you can only use during certain times of the year," said Mainville.

Gooseberry Patch was founded in 1984 by Vickie Hutchins and Jo Ann Martin. The women decided to start a mail-order business so they could work from home. Based in Delaware, Ohio, the company has grown over the years.

It operates from a 52,000-square-foot building in the country.

Mainville said she "absolutely fell in love" with Gooseberry Patch after hearing about it from a friend.

She said the catalogs have "the neatest stuff."

Mainville also warns newly interested readers: It's easy to "get hooked."

"You can sit and read these for hours. They have memories from recipe-contributors and craft ideas. It's more than a cookbook."

"Christmas in the Country" is available on the Gooseberry Patch Web site for \$16.95. The cookbooks are also available at various retailers.

For more information about Gooseberry Patch, visit www.gooseberrypatch.com.