

# SLICE OF LIFE

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## A gift for all on your list

The "Gooseberry Patch Big Book of Home Cooking" is one of the best all-inclusive cookbooks I've seen in a while. The 367-page hardcover Oxmoor House publication by Vickie and Jo



Ann (no last names given) contains more than 450 of their most treasured recipe, according to their comment on the cover. Maybe one of the reasons this native Buckeye was so taken with the book is that the two women who compiled it got their

start for Gooseberry Patch in the tiny Ohio town of Delaware — next-door neighbors who shared their love of home cooking over the backyard fence. "Take a peek inside and discover new favorites you'll hand down for years to come," they write.

The women also include lots of tips and ideas for "delicious, comforting food at its best."

The "Big Book of Home Cooking," out this year, also contains sensational slow cooker recipes as well as the authors' best bread, candy and cookie recipes. After giving it a careful read, I decided the cookbook would make a great Christmas gift for the younger cooks on your list. In fact, I have already set a copy aside for one such friend this year. Also make sure you get a copy for your own kitchen shelf.

Space does not permit sharing all the recipes I found interesting, but the following are a

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## Cookbook

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few of my top picks.

### SPICED CHOCOLATE COFFEE

Regina Vining, Warick, Rhode Island

- 8 cups brewed coffee
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup chocolate syrup
- 4 4-inch cinnamon sticks, broken
- 1 1/2 teaspoons whole cloves

■ Garnish: Cinnamon sticks, sweetened whipped cream

Combine first three ingredients in a 3-quart slow cooker; set aside.

Wrap spices in a coffee filter or cheesecloth and tie with kitchen string; add to slow cooker. Cover and cook on low setting for 2 to 3 hours. Remove and discard spices. Ladle coffee into mugs and garnish.

Makes about 8 cups.

### JO ANN'S MEXICAN LASAGNA

- 1 pound ground beef
- 16-ounce can refried beans
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

■ 2 cups picante sauce

- 1 1/2 cups water
- 8 lasagna noodles, uncooked and divided
- 1 16-ounce container sour cream
- 1/4 cup green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 2 1/4 ounce can black olives, drained
- 1 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese

Cook ground beef in a large non-stick skillet until browned; drain. Wipe skillet clean. Return beef to skillet; stir in refried beans and seasonings.

Combine picante sauce and water. Pour 1 1/3 cups picante mixture into a lightly greased 13 x 9 inch baking pan. Arrange 3 uncooked noodles over picante mixture. Spread half of beef mixture evenly over noodles. Pour 1 cup picante mixture over beef mixture and top with 3 more noodles.

Spread remaining beef mixture over noodles. Pour remaining picante mixture over noodles. Cover and bake at 350 degrees for 1 1/2 hours.

Combine sour cream, onions and olives in a small bowl. Remove lasagna from oven; spread sour cream mixture over lasagna and sprinkle with cheese. Return to oven and bake, uncovered, 10 more minutes. Let stand 10 minutes before serving.

Serves 6.



- 1 27-ounce can sauerkraut
- 4 tart apples, cored
- peeled and chopped
- 1/4 cup onion, chopped
- 1/4 cup brown sugar, packed

- 1 teaspoon caraway seed
- 4 to 6 hard rolls, split
- Optional: Spicy mustard

Place bratwurst in a 5 to 6-quart slow cooker. Toss together sauerkraut, apple, onion, brown sugar and caraway seed; spoon over bratwurst.

Cover and cook on high setting one hour; reduce heat to low setting and cook 2 or 3 more hours, stirring occasionally. Fill rolls, using a slotted spoon. Serve with mustard if desired.

Serves 4 to 6.

### HOT FUDGE SPOON CAKE

Sara Platt, Monument, Colorado

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 3/4 cups brown sugar, packed and divided
- 1/4 cup plus 3 tablespoons baking cocoa, divided
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup milk
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 3/4 cups hot water
- Optional: Vanilla ice cream

Combine flour, one cup brown sugar, 3 tablespoons cocoa, baking powder and salt in a medium bowl. Whisk in milk, butter and vanilla. Spread evenly in a 3 1/2 quart slow cooker.

Mix together remaining 3/4 cup brown sugar and 1/4 cup cocoa; sprinkle evenly over batter. Pour in hot water; do not stir. Cover and cook on high setting for 2 hours, or until 1 toothpick inserted one-inch deep comes out clean.

Spoon warm cake into bowls and top with vanilla ice cream if desired.

Serves 6.

"Gooseberry Patch Big Book of Home Cooking"  
By Vickie and Jo Ann  
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