

Family Traditions

Take **21** ideas and create a lifetime of great memories

Family traditions are passed down from one generation to the next. They give children a sense of pride. And because traditions are predictable, they encourage a sense of security. Traditions can be a way of celebrating and sharing the special qualities that you and your family possess. You don't have to keep them to yourself. Share them with your community. Here are some family projects that could become traditions and create a lifetime of great memories.

- § Identify one day a month as Family Day. Decide on something fun to do together.
- § Invite new arrivals in your neighborhood over to dinner.
- § Invite a friend to a movie on their birthday.
- § Save pennies and donate them to your favorite charity at holiday time.
- § Celebrate a good report card with your own card of appreciation.
- § Participate in a charity project that supports your community.
- § Visit the shut-in on a holiday.
- § Build appreciation by finding out what home life was like for your grandparents.
- § Attend or participate in an annual community event.
- § Attend local festivals in your community.
- § Make a family milestone scrapbook.
- § Pick a day to spend "special time" with a child.
- § Take your child to places that were special to you as a child.
- § Research or create your own family crest.
- § Learn to play an instrument and share a song on a special occasion.
- § Write an original poem for someone special on Father's or Mother's Day.
- § Bake birthday cakes for family and friends.
- § Make a dish from another country once a month.
- § Build model planes or cars together.
- § Make a habit of taking your child to the park or zoo as a reward.

Since food is often the centerpiece of family traditions, cooking special foods is a good way to promote a dialogue between the generations as the parents or grandparents teach the young members of the family to cook something special and to cook it with pride.

Irish Soda Bread: one of the flavorful breads popular throughout Ireland

Ingredients: 6 c. flour, 1 teaspoon baking soda, 3/4 c sugar, 1 pound raisins, 3 teaspoons baking powder, 1 1/2 teaspoons salt, caraway seeds to taste (approx 1/8 cup), 1 quart buttermilk

Mix all the dry ingredients in a LARGE bowl. Mix in caraway seeds and raisins. Mix in buttermilk. It helps to use your hands to mix this because the dough is sticky. **DON'T USE AN ELECTRIC MIXER** or the bread comes out flat. Divide batter into two buttered cake pans. Flour a knife and cut a cross into the tops of each. Bake at 350°F for about an hour. The top should not be allowed to get to brown.

Potato Latkes (potato pancakes): a holiday tradition

Ingredients: 4 large potatoes, peeled and grated with the large holes of the grater; 1 medium onion, grated, 1 large egg, 1 tsp. salt and pepper to taste, 2 TBSP flour; 1/2 tsp. baking powder, 1/2 c (or more) vegetable oil for frying

Heat the oil in a deep, heavy 10" to 12" skillet. For each latke, drop about 2 TBSP of the mixture into the pan. Flatten with the back of a spoon until it is 2 1/2 - 3" in diameter. Fry over medium heat until golden brown and crisp - about 4 minutes on each side. Drain on paper towels. Stir batter before each new batch and add more oil to the pan if necessary. Makes about 15. Serve with applesauce or sour cream.

Buñuelos: a Mexican dessert or snack

Ingredients: 3 1/2 c regular, all-purpose flour, 1 tsp salt, 1 tsp baking powder, 1 1/2 TBSP sugar, 1/4 c butter or margarine, 2 eggs, 1/2 c milk, salad oil for frying, sugar and cinnamon for coating

Sift flour with salt, baking powder and sugar into a bowl. Add butter and rub into flour with fingertips until mixture is liked coarse meal. Beat eggs lightly with milk, then pour into flour mixture and stir until dough forms a solid mass. Turn dough out onto board and knead lightly for 2 minutes or until smooth. Cut dough into balls the size of marbles and let stand 15 minutes.

Roll each ball onto a lightly floured board into a very thin pancake, 4" in diameter. Cut a hole in center with a thimble. After you roll out the circles of dough, place them in a single layer on waxed paper until you are ready to cook. Fry in hot, deep fat (375°), until puffed a golden brown, about 30 seconds on each side. Drain on paper towels. To coat, mix 1c granulated sugar and 1 tsp cinnamon in a paper bag. Reheat Buñuelos in a 250° oven for 5 minutes, then shake gently, one at a time, in bag, to coat with the sugar-cinnamon mixture.