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COOK UP SOME FAMILY FUN WITH LYNN FREDERICKS



Quality Time Starts in the Kitchen

By Missy Carducci
Senior Editor

Soup's On

What: "Soup's On" cooking class with cookbook author Lynn Fredericks

When: 2-4 p.m. Saturday, February 10th

Where: Princeton Wegmans, Nassau Park Pavilion, Route 1 in Princeton

Tickets: On sale at the Customer Service Desk; \$20 for one adult and 1 child; each additional person is \$10.

More Info: Call 919-9300

Lynn's appearance kicks off a series of cooking classes with the new Wegmans Family Chefs' Institute, which will be held through October. Look for our brochure in the store for class dates, times, and descriptions. Future classes will cover:

- March 10: Risotto
- April 7: Fish
- May 6: Southwest
- August 18: Grilling
- September 15:

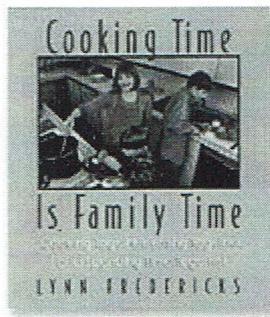
If you're a working parent, whether that's inside or outside of the home, you can't afford to miss seeing cookbook author Lynn Fredericks as she leads our Wegmans Family Chefs' Institute. You will learn far more than great recipes that kids can help prepare. You'll discover a way to communicate better with your children. You'll see how a pressing (and sometimes depressing) chore like getting dinner on the table night after night can become priceless quality time (in the best sense of this well-worn euphemism). Most of all, you'll learn how much greater the whole process of cooking can be compared to its outcome, although that's amply rewarding to boot. All this from coaxing the kids into the kitchen to cook with you? Yes, providing your mind-set is about having fun, bonding, and building a foundation of skills and success your kids will carry for a lifetime.

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Let Them Play with Their Food

The first thing to do, Lynn suggests in her book *Cooking Time is Family Time*, is to lose the TV, or at least misplace the remote control. "Like so many mothers," she writes, "I put so much pressure on myself to get dinner on the table as quickly as possible that I would . . . give in to their desire for the television as a dinner companion so I could think and unwind." Big mistake. But, it didn't take Lynn long to banish it from the kitchen, thus paving the way for the pivotal event that eventually led to a level of togetherness cartoons and sitcoms just can't complete with. Here's what happened: preferring Mom's company to the TV's, her youngest son Stephen (then under two) soon grew bored playing with pots and pans. Out of sheer exasperation she offered a bunch of fresh basil. Eureka! He kept himself amused plucking the leaves, and the rest is history. From there his kitchen participation progressed to

- Asian
- October 13: Pastamania



You'll be able to get Lynn's book in the store or, if it's more convenient . . .

[Buy the book online](#)

Practical Issues Addressed

Here are a few of the mealtime matters that Lynn Fredericks has met head-on to help "de-stress the family dinner hour" by teaching parents how to:

- Cope with picky eaters and help them be more accepting of new foods
- Organize the menu tasks for different aged children
- "Smoke" sullen teens out of their rooms and into the kitchen
- Get your children to value basic nutrition principles
- Help school-age children feel good about becoming more self-sufficient
- Reinforce what kids learn in school - geography, math, science, etc -

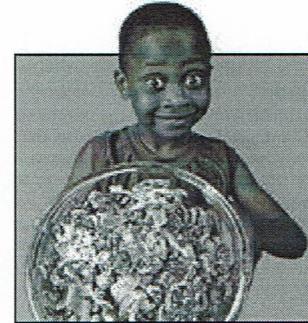
squishing dough and squeezing tomatoes—all with close supervision and lot's of laughing. It wasn't long until her older boy (then age nine) joined the fun. That's the foundation of Lynn's message: Have fun. Talk, laugh, communicate—and don't worry about the mess too much. Whatever you do, resist dismissing Lynn as some kind of preternatural "supermom." She's just a determined one who now (seven years later) enjoys the benefits of exercising patience and overlooking more than her share of spilled milk.

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How to Focus on the Fun

If visions of a pint-sized Animal House are coming to mind by now, Lynn offers a strategy for dealing with the downside of working with kids in the kitchen:

- Anticipate and accept a certain amount of disarray and delay
- Hang onto your sense of humor
- Stay focused on the value of the learning process



"I love a clean and tidy kitchen as much as the next person. But, when you are initiating cooking with inexperienced helpers, any overanxious concern about the inevitable mess will only result in emotional meltdown," she exhorts. Take heart, take it slowly, and follow her safety tips in the book on page 35.

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So, What Kind of Food Are We Talking About?

A kid-friendly menu doesn't mean hot dogs with macaroni and cheese every night, despite what some battle-weary parents may tell you. In fact, it can be downright delicious for you as well as for *der kinder*. Follow Lynn's strategies for encouraging youngsters to broaden their culinary horizons:

- Let the kids pick out their own veggies and other foods at the store
- Determine some guidelines first to squelch "cookies for dinner ideas"
- Set a budget ahead of time to teach money management in the context of food choices

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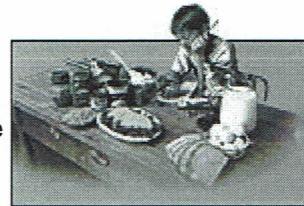
through multicultural cooking

No Ordinary Working Mom

How did Lynn Fredericks identify so much positive potential out of such a seemingly mundane endeavor as making dinner? This is no ordinary working mom you're dealing with. A former economist for the Carter White House who's currently Deputy Director of the Food Studies Institute, Lynn brings her multi-faceted background (which also includes catering and restaurant promotion) to bear on using food to promote family unity. But, getting there wasn't easy. A painful divorce eventually drove her to spend more time with her two young boys in the kitchen rather than slaving away while they zoned-out in front of the tube. After years of trial and error at home, and with a track record of working with hundreds of others, Lynn has written a book that can help transform your dinner hour step-by-step. It's the kind of enlightened encouragement that comes from someone who knows what you're up against.

Super Solutions for Mortal Moms and Dads

Daily interaction with her boys in the kitchen has not only drawn them closer as a family, it has helped diffuse the traditional mealtime tug-of-war. In fact, her sons probably enjoy more of a variety of foods than many adults do, although accomplishing that sometimes called for a bit of subterfuge. For instance, Lynn discovered the best strategy for introducing alien vegetables to the table without undue resistance was to sneak them in under cover of more palatable provisions. Ravioli with pumpkin or mushrooms stowed away with the regular cheese variety, and her boys' favorite pasta with butter began to appear with a "confetti" of different finely diced veggies, like green and red bell peppers or carrots.



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Take Baby Steps

The trick is to be creative and think outside the plate, so to speak: try offering your kids a bowl of soup or risotto with something new in it. Just remember to do it gradually starting with things you know they'll like and moving cautiously towards the more adventurous. "My family worked up to our current family favorite —seafood risotto with tomatoes, red pepper, and shiitakes," she reports. Incredibly, her older son (who like many kids detested mushrooms so much that he painstakingly picked them out) now reminds his mom that it may be cheaper to omit them, but it's not as good! For many parents, such a scenario may sound like pure fiction. The reality is that it takes some sacrifice to get there, but the satisfaction is easy to swallow when dinnertime turns into a feast for the spirit.

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Real Food for Real Kids

All in all, Lynn shares 125 recipes each written for family cooking as a team, with annotated steps for children of different ages and abilities, and organized by food groups with nutritional guidance. Here's a tasty sample of what you'll see:

- **Chicken Goober Stew** [pg. 143]: this Nigerian recipe fascinates children, who love the idea of peanut butter in the dish
- **Cranberry Bean, Sprout, and Tarragon Salad** [pg. 144]: sprouts offer a whole realm of entertaining kitchen science experiments
- **Marcey's Roast Cod with Portobellos and Potatoes** [pg. 1100-101]: dispel the fear of fish while kids have fun making the foil packets in which the dish cooks.
- **Stephan & Alex's Quick Lasagne** [pg. 176]: fashioned by the author's sons from ready-made sauce, fresh ground beef, precooked noodles, and pre-grated cheeses

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