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100% Effective Natural Hormone Treatment
Menopause, Andropause And Other Hormone Imbalances
Impair Healthy Healing In People Over The Age Of 30!

WHEN ONLY THE BEST WILL DO

By Arleen M. Kaptur

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You are planning a party and trying to decide on a great menu. You may have read some new recipes in a magazine that you are thinking of trying to impress your guests. The ingredients sound interesting and the pictures are colorful and enticing. Should you try them out on your guests and hope for the best?

When planning a social gathering, it is your best bet to use recipes that you have tried, tested, and were delicious. Because of the tension and anxiety surrounding any gathering, trying out new recipes and taking the risk that they will turn out perfectly just adds more stress to the situation. When nothing else but perfection will do, you can impress your friends and reinforce your reputation as a great cook and a very competent social planner by little time-savers. Sticking to dishes and recipes that you have actually used before, and found them delightful and appetizing, is just one way. Food can be garnished and decorated for more elaborate affairs. You can let your artistic side go wild and the presentation will be well worth the trouble.

Of course, you could test a new-found recipe several weeks before your event. Try it once, and then try it again. Take note of the time involved, and if the same results are achieved each time you prepare it. Did you get the same expected end product or was there a deviation from what you thought the final result would be?

If there is a major difference, forego the item until you have mastered the details that will insure a uniform presentation each and every time you serve it. This way you insure success with your efforts, as well as eliminating one less detail to worry about. Using recipes that you know are good and that others enjoy, gives you that extra boost of confidence.

If you feel your dishes are not quite "fancy" enough for guests, but they are great for family meals, use them. Garnish your entrees and serve them with the pride they deserve. They have proven their worth and, therefore, they are party fare with a few light touches.

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A sprinkling of parsley, chopped green onions, and shaved carrots add color to any dish. Slices of avocado, cantaloupe, or strawberry fans give any everyday entree a festive appearance. Edible flowers give a change of pace, especially to desserts. Putting chocolate or caramel sauce in a squeeze-type bottle give you an artistic advantage. Spooning a sauce on the bottom of a plate, placing your entree in the middle of the sauce, and then sprinkling with chives, chutney or parsley gives a bistro effect. Mint leaves give a pretty appearance as well as a hint of freshness.

Use food to serve food. Hollow out bell peppers in an assortment of colors (red, yellow, green, purple, etc.) and present your condiments in a special way. Scoop out watermelons, or oranges, and fill with fruit balls, or sherbet. Viola!

Varying the way you slice your vegetables, or fruit adds a different "slant" to side dishes. Simple touches add so much appeal to any meal. Serving a creamed dish on toast—vary the way you cut the toast. Diamond, slant, or even strips give a new look to your presentation.

Another advantage to using food to accent food is that your guests don't have to "finger" the decoration and remove it before they can enjoy the meal. It is also more sanitary and thoughtful.

Experimenting with garnishes is half the fun of a party. The other half is seeing the delight in the eyes of your guests, not to mention the way they appreciate what you serve.

Enjoy your party and have fun preparing it. The colors of nature are beautiful and intriguing, so use them to your heart's content.

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Arleen Kaptur has written numerous articles, e-books and the novel: **SEARCHING FOR AUSTIN**

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