

WAFFLES & MORE

a Love and Feathers recipe book



DANA CUTTS & SHANNON CUTTS
WITH PEARL

"Waffles & More: A Love & Feathers Recipe Book." The long-anticipated companion volume to "Love & Feathers" is finally here! Within these pages you will learn how to make the Small Chef's top-secret recipes for fluffy waffles, crispy waffles and many other now-declassified flock favorites!

Waffles & More

A Love & Feathers Recipe Book

by Dana Cutts & Shannon Cutts

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....A Love & Feathers Recipe Book

Dana Cutts (aka the Small Chef, aka Pearl's Grandma)

with Shannon Cutts

....and, of course, **Pearl.**



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Editor's Note

I was eight years old when my first parrot, a yellow and green parakeet I promptly named “Perky,” joined our family. Right from the start, the experience was pure heaven. In fact, I became quite convinced I was part avian on the inside—with one notable exception.

I didn’t fancy birdseed for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. What I had yet to comprehend was this: when given a choice, neither do most avians.

Fast-forward about three decades and there we sit, Pearl and his mommy, companionably sharing yet another a slice of my mom’s famous Home Stone Pizza. Pearl, as usual, has pounced on a particularly choice section of crunchy-chewy crust while I am plowing through the soft cheesy innards. Occasionally I stop, not to sagely question Pearl’s dietary choices or attempt to introduce healthier parrot-appropriate alternatives, but to snap pic after cute pic of my feathery darling burrowing his small, sharp curved beak into a slice the size of a whole flock of cockatiels.

Pearl’s enthusiasm for pizza is noteworthy. But it is still nothing compared to how he feels about that most perfect of all foods: the waffle. At flock-wide brunches, Pearl’s technique for selecting his waffle is simple and straightforward—he simply watches to see who gets served the first piping hot waffle (usually his Grandpa, aka the Tall Tree) and then he sprints across the table and jumps on top of it. Not surprisingly, the waffle’s former owner never hesitates to hand over the delicacy.

When I was little, Mom used to say she just knew one of her offspring—her choices being me or my younger brilliant brother—would someday make her famous. Little did she realize it would be neither. Rather, her enduring legacy seems poised to come in the form of a diminutive feathery waffle eater who dines the way he loves—with unfettered exuberance and all (um) consuming enthusiasm.

Thanks to Pearl, his large featherless flock mates have since realized that sometimes the most sensitive and appreciative palates come in pint-sized feathery packages. We have also learned these same palates typically come pre-packaged with a heaping side order of robust determination garnished by flat-out gumption, especially where any new choice delectable edible is concerned.

For this reason, our flock’s official unanimously approved and ratified Tableside Rules & Regulations read as follows:

So long as it is (basically) avian-safe and (at least sort of) nutritious, Pearl can sample it if he wants to.

For this same reason, the recipes we share here remain in their original “people food” versions, complete with salt, sugar, butter and other mouth-watering goodies both featherless and feathered beings should consume with care.

When we eat together as a flock, what Pearl samples – within reason, of course – is what we are all already eating (as the photos you will see here faithfully reflect). If a dish contains ingredients parrots shouldn’t ever consume, we try to at least find a little corner that is free from those ingredients he can nibble on just for fun.

But if he can't safely eat it, he doesn't get it, period. Pearl might find our governing motto of "avian safety above all else" somewhat tiresome, but the rest of our flock takes this credo quite literally!

However, when we—and by “we” I mean Mom—make up a batch of something delicious (say, waffles) for Pearl to eat later, my mom typically “birdifies” it to make it healthier. For example, “birdified” waffles might have no salt or sugar and only enough butter to keep the waffles from sticking to the waffle iron—think closer to “birdie bread” than true waffles and you’ll be on the right track.

With that being said, we hope you and your own flock mates enjoy these tasty recipes, both “original” and “birdified” as you see fit, as much as we all do here at Casa Feathers & Beak & Shells!

To send us your favorite recipes, stories, pictures of your flock, or anything you want to share, really:

shannon@loveandfeathersands shells.com



Grandma and her sous chef (with feathers) taste-test a new creation.

Fluffy Waffles

CHEF'S NOTE: *While the waffles can be eaten as soon as they are removed from the waffle iron, they will have a crispier exterior if left in a warm oven for 10 minutes. Buttermilk powder is available in most supermarkets and is generally located near the dried-milk products or in the baking aisle. Leftover buttermilk powder, which can be used in a number of baking applications, can be kept in the refrigerator for up to a year. Seltzer or club soda gives these waffles a light texture that would otherwise be provided by whipped egg whites. (Avoid sparkling water such as Perrier—it's not bubbly enough.) Use a freshly-opened bottle of sparkling water for maximum lift. For crispier waffles, leave out the butter.*

Ingredients:

- 2 c. unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 T. sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp. table salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. dried buttermilk powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ c. sour cream
- 2 large eggs
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ c. vegetable oil
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ c. unflavored seltzer water or club soda

Instructions:

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 250°F. Set a wire rack inside a rimmed baking sheet and place baking sheet in the oven.

Whisk flour, sugar, salt, buttermilk powder, and baking soda in a large bowl to combine. Then whisk sour cream, eggs, vanilla, and oil in a medium bowl to combine. Gently stir seltzer or club soda into the wet ingredients.

Make a depression in the center of the dry ingredients and pour in the wet ingredients. Using a rubber spatula, gently stir all ingredients until just combined. Batter should remain slightly lumpy with streaks of flour throughout.

Heat up the waffle iron and bake the waffles (refer to the waffle iron manufacturer's instructions for specifics).



A champion waffle eater samples a new batch of his favorite delicacy.

Crunchy Corn Muffins

Ingredients:

- 2 c. unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 c. fine-ground, whole-grain yellow cornmeal
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- ½ tsp. table salt
- 2 large eggs
- ¾ c. granulated sugar
- 8 T. unsalted butter, melted
- ¾ c. sour cream
- ½ c. milk

Instructions:

Move a rack in your oven into the middle position. Preheat the oven to 400°F. Spray a standard muffin tin with nonstick cooking spray.

Whisk flour, cornmeal, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a medium-sized bowl just to combine all ingredients, then set it aside.

Whisk the eggs in a second medium-sized bowl until they appear light colored (about 20 seconds). Add the sugar into the egg mixture and continue whisking vigorously until the whole mix appears thick and well-blended (about 30 seconds).

Next, add the melted butter in three equal portions, whisking to combine all ingredients after each addition. Add half of the sour cream and half of the milk and whisk to combine, then whisk in the remaining sour cream and milk until combined.

Now add the wet ingredients to the dry ingredients and mix the dough gently with a rubber spatula until the batter is just combined and evenly moistened. Do not over-mix!

Using an ice cream scoop or a large spoon, divide the batter evenly among the muffin cups, just dropping it in so it forms a rounded mound. Do not level or flatten the surface of each mound.

Bake until the muffins appear to be light golden brown (about 18 minutes). After the first 9 minutes, rotate the muffin tin in your oven. This will help muffins to cook evenly. You will know they are done when a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean.

Cool the muffins in the tin for 5 minutes, then turn them out onto a wire rack and stand each one upright.



“Crunchy corn muffin” —handfed for optimal flavor.

The Small Chef's Signature Home Stone Pizza

Dough Ingredients:

- ½ c. extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra to brush over dough
- 1¾ c. water (heated to 110°F)
- 1 T. sugar
- 5 c. all-purpose flour
- 2 envelopes (or 4½ tsp.) instant or rapid-rise yeast
- 2 tsp. salt

Pizza Ingredients:

- 1 jar marinara sauce
- 1½ c. grated parmesan cheese
- 3 c. shredded mozzarella cheese

Instructions:

Place an oven rack in the lowest position and heat your oven to 200°F. When your oven reaches 200°F, turn it off.

Grease a large bowl. Evenly coat one 18" by 13" rimmed baking sheet with ¼ c. of the olive oil.

Combine the warm water, sugar, and remaining ¼ c. olive oil in a measuring cup.

Fit your standing mixer with the dough hook attachment. Add the flour, yeast, and salt into the mixer bowl and mix on low speed until all ingredients are combined. Increase the mixer speed to medium-low and slowly add the water, sugar and olive oil mixture into the dry ingredients until the dough is uniform in texture.

Transfer the dough into the large greased bowl. Cover the bowl with plastic wrap and place it in the warm oven. Let the dough rise until it has doubled in size.

After the dough has doubled in size, remove it from the oven. Turn out the dough onto a lightly floured flat work surface.

Use a rolling pin to roll the dough into a 16" by 12" rectangle.

Next, transfer the dough onto a baking sheet and stretch it to cover the pan, pressing the dough into all four corners evenly.

Brush the dough with the extra olive oil and cover the whole baking sheet with plastic wrap. Set the baking sheet in a warm spot (but not in the oven) until it has risen slightly. Wait about 20 minutes.

Heat your oven to 450°F.

After 20 minutes, remove the plastic wrap from the baking sheet and make small indentations all over the dough with your fingertips.

Sprinkle the dough with 1 c. of the grated parmesan cheese. Bake the dough until the cheese begins to melt (about 7 to 10 minutes).

Remove the baking sheet from the oven and spoon out the marinara sauce over pizza, leaving a 1" sauce-less border on all sides.

Return the baking sheet to the oven and bake about 7 to 10 minutes, or until the sauce appears deep red and steaming.

Remove pizza from the oven. Add desired toppings.

Sprinkle the mozzarella and remaining parmesan cheese evenly over the sauce and toppings and bake for about 12 minutes, or until the cheese mixture appears to be golden brown.

Remove the pizza from the oven and let it cool for 5 minutes. Serve.



How to know the pizza was really, really good!

Baked Cheesy Mashed Potatoes

Ingredients:

- 1 T. butter
- 4 lbs. russet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 c. whole milk
- ½ c. (1 stick) melted butter
- 1½ c. grated mozzarella (fresh or packaged)
- 1 c. freshly grated Parmesan (or other cheese as desired)
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 2 T. plain dry bread crumbs

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Coat a 13" by 9" by 2" baking dish with 1 T. of butter and set aside.

Cook the potatoes in a large pot of boiling salted water for about 15 minutes or until they are very tender.

Drain out all of the water. Return the potatoes to the same pot and mash them well.

Mix in the melted butter first, then add in the milk, mozzarella and ¾ c. of the Parmesan cheese.

Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Transfer the potatoes to the prepared baking dish.

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Stir the bread crumbs and remaining $\frac{1}{4}$ c. of Parmesan cheese together in a small bowl just to blend.

Sprinkle the bread crumb mixture over the top of the mashed potatoes.

Bake the potatoes in the oven (do not cover) for 20 minutes or until the bread crumb topping is golden brown.



Grandma and her petite sous chef having a private confab about menu planning.

Deep Dish Brandy Pumpkin Pie

Pie Ingredients:

- ¾ c. sugar
- 1 tsp. each ginger and cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. each of salt, powdered cloves, nutmeg
- 2 c. pumpkin puree (canned)
- 2 T. molasses
- 3 eggs
- 1½ c. light cream or evaporated milk
- 2 tsp. brandy
- Pre-baked pie shell

Topping Ingredients:

- ½ pt. whipping or heavy cream
- 1 T. powdered sugar
- ½ tsp. vanilla

Instructions:

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Mix the dry ingredients in a bowl to combine. Then add the pumpkin and molasses to the dry ingredients and mix.

In a second bowl, beat the eggs, cream or evaporated milk, and brandy together. Pour the ingredients from second bowl into the first bowl and mix all ingredients well.

Pour the pie filling into a pre-baked pie shell and bake for 45 to 60 minutes or until a knife inserted into the filling about 2” from the edge of the crust comes out clean or almost clean.

Cool for 10 to 15 minutes on a wire rack; then refrigerate. Cover the cooked pie loosely with plastic wrap.

While the pie is cooling, add whipping cream, vanilla and powdered sugar into a small bowl and beat with a mixer (do not use a blender) until the cream forms soft peaks.

When you are ready, remove the pie from the refrigerator and cut it into slices. Top each slice with whipped cream and serve.



A fierce and feathery hunter poses with his fresh pumpkin prize.

Oat and Nut Granola with Sunflower Seeds (gluten-free)

Makes 4 cups.

Ingredients:

- 3 c. old fashioned oats
- 1¼ c. whole wheat flour (or equivalent gluten-free flour)
- ½ c. packed brown sugar
- ½ c. sliced almonds
- ½ c. chopped walnuts
- ½ c. dry nonfat milk powder
- ¼ c. shelled unsalted sunflower seeds
- ½ t. salt
- ½ c. vegetable oil
- ½ c. water
- ¼ c. honey
- ¾ t. vanilla
- ¾ t. maple extract
- Cooking spray

Instructions:

Preheat oven to 300°F.

Use 13” by 9” by 2” pan. Spray with cooking spray.

Combine all dry ingredients.

Whisk all wet ingredients together. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients and stir to incorporate fully.

Turn out granola into the baking pan and spread it out evenly.

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Bake until crunchy, stirring every 15 minutes (1 to 1½ hours).

Cool before serving. Store in airtight container in a cool, dry place.



All's well that ends with the Small Chef's crispy, crunchy, and oh-so-flingable gluten-free granola.

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