

February 3 - 9, 2008 is National Pancake Week!

Breakfast for Dinner . . . Grammies Flip 'n Out!

Dinner is sometimes the most challenging meal to prepare specially with young and hard to please eaters. I am so envious of those grandparents that proudly state that their grandchildren eat everything. Statements like “Oh, I fixed cacciatore and green bean casserole and every one loved it” will never come out of my mouth or onto a dinner plate for that matter. With my two grandkids, I find with breakfast or lunch, the discussion usually is not too bad or frustrating. There’s no worry about which vegetables they eat (or won’t) and the “right way” to prepare spaghetti – the special way they like it. Also, there aren’t those nutty questions to my daughter like ... do you still do taco Tuesday, what about preparing fish and do you think I could fix Shake and Bake® pork chops? Do you think they’d eat that?

All sorts of hoopla and stress begin around 4:30PM when it’s time to pull together the evening meal. This meal mayhem is all too familiar from my most recent family visit. During this past Christmas, I was in Arizona with my daughter’s family and for my daughter, there’s nothing like having her Mom around 24/7 to help during the hectic holiday times. My help was especially important this past holiday as all four of them were sick. My daughter, her husband, my teenage grandson and my precocious 27-month old granddaughter were miserable with congestion, strep throat and coughing. Lucky me...

The first night I was there, my daughter was trying to manage the final stages of shopping and gift wrapping along with the care of my very sick granddaughter, Skye. It’s tough when you’re so little, being so sick ... and all you want is your Mommy. All my daughter could do is sit on the couch and hold my granddaughter... hours upon hours... just sitting. The clock keeps ticking and I know it’s time to prepare something. No worries I can handle helping out with dinner. There was a problem though. With everyone being under the weather grocery shopping hadn’t been done and there just wasn’t much to work with.





I looked around at my family and simply said; “It’s going to be breakfast for dinner.” They all looked at me with some bewilderment and I realized they must be thinking scrambled eggs, toast and cereal, because they didn’t look all that happy. Then I said PANCAKES and everyone’s expression changed to smiles. *I scored!*

Not too many people know that February 3 – 9 is National Pancake Week! With a little bit of research, I found out that Pancake week is founded in ancient tradition. During the Middle Ages, pantries would routinely be emptied out to prepare for Lent. They’d get rid of luxurious foods such as eggs, butter and milk. Combining these ingredients often turned in to big batches of pancakes. Not unlike the times past, many communities around the world feast on pancakes all the way through Shrove Tuesday – also known as Fat Tuesday or Mardi Gras- before the season of moderation begins on Ash Wednesday.

Pancakes have many names – battercakes, blini, blintzes, crepes, flapjacks, griddlecakes, hot-cakes, johnnycakes but at that moment the name “pancakes” was dinner. During that week no one ever felt like eating much of anything. One night we had take-out and another time pizza. I did manage to get to the grocery store and cooked a large pot of home made chicken soup noodle. My daughter thought it was the homemade soup that helped her turn the corner and start feeling better. She ate it for two days straight. But one week before Santa’s letter was placed on the kitchen counter along with milk and refrigerated cut and bake chocolate chip cookies, there was one meal everyone ate and forgot they were sick. It was breakfast for dinner ... syrupy, warm, gooey pancakes. Stop by your favorite pancake restaurant and have yourself a taste of the Middle Ages. While you’re at it, add some strawberries, pecans and whipped cream too. Not that my grandkids would eat it that way. But hey, knock yourself out... it’s National Pancake Week.



Pat Burns is a popular public speaker and author of Grandparents Rock: The Grandparenting Guide for the Rock-n-Roll Generation. To receive Pat’s 10 Rock’n Tips on How to Help Your Grandchildren Be Happy or purchase her book go to :

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