

# Parenting Advice: Cooking Fun with Your Kids



By Megan McIntosh

There comes a time when your kids want to be involved in what mom or dad is doing in the kitchen. They want to bake their own cake or fry their own eggs. Whether you decide to start small or let them help you with a whole meal, it's easy to have some cooking fun with your kids! Celebrity parent and model Chrissy Teigen recently made a special menu for [celebrity baby](#) Luna, and [Jennifer Garner](#) routinely cooks healthy meals for her kids. Like them, you can also have your kids join you in the kitchen!

# Parenting Advice: Cooking with your kids can be a fun and educational experience that lets you have some quality time together, too!

Here's some exciting advice to start cooking in the kitchen with your kids:

## 1. Find some kid-friendly menus:

Find some fun menus that the kids can easily follow with you. Try to make character pancakes with fruit and nuts as decorations. Put together a yummy snack mix, which is simple and should keep the mess to a minimum. There are a variety of kid-friendly menus, but you can even create your own like celebrity parent Chrissy Teigen did when Luna turned out to be a picky eater.

## 2. Start small:

If your child wants to be involved in a the preparation of a grown-up meal, give them something small to start with. Let your child mix the spices, or let them toss some ingredients into a salad. This gets them excited to be involved in the kitchen, but keeps their little hands safe. Help them create something healthy but simple, like Jennifer Garner and her granola recipe.

**Related Link:** [Parenting Advice: Make Your Own Fresh Baby Food](#)

## 3. Let them be a little independent:

Once your child is a little older, you can let them be a little more independent in the kitchen. Let them create their own snack mix rather than following a recipe. Let your child create recipes that have three ingredients like banana pancakes or dunkaroo dip. Let your kid make dessert while you focus on dinner with them making banana oat cookies or peanut

butter fudge. Keep it seasonal by making popsicles in the summer and hot chocolate in the winter.

**Related Link:** [Parenting Tips: Make Popsicles with Your Kids This Summer](#)

**4. Keep it age appropriate:** Though we encourage independence with our children, it's very important to keep it at level with their age. If they're a little younger, you'll want to keep them away from sharp objects and doing more activities like mixing and squeezing. As they get older you can incorporate more difficult tasks such as cutting with a blunt blade or cracking eggs. Eventually they'll be able to help you out in the kitchen so much that you'll get a chance to relax a little quicker.

**Related Link:** [Product Review: Back-To-School Products For Kids Of All Ages](#)

**Any tips for how to get started in the kitchen with your kids? Share below!**

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## **Date Idea: Give Thanks to One Another**





By [Melissa Lee](#)

It's that time of year again. It's time for family, friends, and slaving over a hot stove.

**Are you a newlywed worried about preparing your first Thanksgiving dinner? Don't worry, you're not the only one! Cupid's got you covered, and you may be able to make this into a date idea.**

First you have to determine how many people you'll be entertaining. Try checking out some recipes for large groups of people. These recipes will make it very easy to cook for a crowd. For a small, intimate crowd, try some unique appetizers that will fit perfectly on a small side table, like cheese fondue.

**Related Link:** [Date Idea: Mexican Cooking Classes: Spice Up Date Night](#)

Too lazy to cook? Don't worry. Many food stores sell ready-to-go Thanksgiving dishes. If you live in the Manhattan area, be sure to consider these marketplaces.

**Related Link:** [Date Idea: Give Thanks For Your Health](#)

After the meal, when all waistbands at the table are comfortably tight, be sure to have a dessert prepared. If you want to stay traditional, be sure to have the all-American pumpkin pie waiting in the oven. For those who don't have a taste for pumpkin pie, try having an assortment of cookies, brownies, and ice cream on standby.

**Have any romantic Thanksgiving recipes to share? Comment below and share with our other readers.**

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## **Date Ideas: Be Thankful (And Chefs) Together**





By Erika Mionis. Updated by [Josh Ringle](#)

It's that time of year again. It's time for family, friends, and slaving over a hot stove. Are you a newlywed or a new couple and are worried about preparing your first Thanksgiving dinner? Don't worry, you're not the only one! Cupid's got you covered.

## Check out these Thanksgiving date ideas!

First, you have to determine how many people you'll be entertaining. Here's a great piece of [dating advice](#): Always be prepared! Obviously, the more people, the more work you will have to do. But that doesn't necessarily have to be true. Try checking out some recipes for large groups of people. These recipes will make it very easy to cook for a crowd. For a small, intimate crowd, try some unique appetizers that will fit perfectly on a small side table, like cheese fondue.

**Related Link:** [Former Celebrity Couple Gwyneth Paltrow and](#)

## [Chris Martin Spend Thanksgiving Together](#)

Unfortunately, not all recipes can be as easy as cheese fondue. Turkey definitely isn't easy to do! The *Meleagris gallopavo* was first domesticated by the Aztecs around the year 1100 A.D, and, coincidentally, is extremely hard to cook. Try putting some Rosemary and Thyme under the breast skin, and be sure to check out a few other tips to ensure a delectable main course. And involve your new husband as much as possible.

Don't do all the work yourself. At the very least, take him in as the turkey carver.

Too lazy to cook? Don't worry. Many food stores sell ready-to-go Thanksgiving dishes. If you live in the Manhattan area, be sure to consider these marketplaces. Or, you can choose to see what your favorite [celebrity couples](#) made for Turkey Day last year! Get inspired!

**Related Link:** [Relationship Advice: Four Reasons To Be Thankful For Your Partner](#)

After the meal, when all waistbands at the table are comfortably tight, be sure to have a dessert prepared. If you want to stay traditional, be sure to have the all-american pumpkin pie waiting in the oven. For those who don't have a taste for pumpkin pie, try having an assortment of cookies, brownies, and ice cream on standby.

**Have any romantic Thanksgiving recipes to share? Comment below and share with our other readers. If you want some more Thanksgiving meal ideas, let us know! Until next week, Happy Thanksgiving!**

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# Claire Robinson on Holiday Cooking: “You Have to Remember What Thanksgiving is All About”



Interview by [Lori Bizzocco](#). Written by Shannon Seibert.  
*5 Ingredient Fix* host Claire Robinson knows a thing or two about the fear of hosting Thanksgiving dinner and how to deal with it head on! Plus, she offers relationship advice that will heat up the kitchen this holiday in our exclusive interview with her .



# Exclusive Interview: Claire Robinson's Best Holiday Cooking Tips

"It stresses everybody out – the veterans are stressed too!" she says of holiday cooking. In our celebrity interview, the *Food Network* star advises us to forget the pressures of a full household and stick to the staples. "You have to remember what Thanksgiving is all about," she shares in our [celebrity video exclusive](#). "To me, that is the easiest way to get that pressure to start to release and enjoy your time in the kitchen a little more."

**Related Link:** ['Food Network' Host Claire Robinson Says, "Food Is the Key to Passion"](#)

Of course, we had to ask the chef about the best desserts for the Thanksgiving season too. "Pumpkin is always the classic, but put a little bit of chocolate in there," the celebrity chef suggests.

Robinson also chatted about a cause close to her heart: Unilever's projectSunlight, which helps create a brighter future for children. "There's one in five children in America actually struggling with hunger," she reveals. "That's 16 million children." She encourages people to participate this holiday season by purchasing Unilever products; the proceeds will fund projectSunlight.

*To keep up with Claire, follow her on Twitter @clairerobinson5.*

*For more videos from CupidsPulse.com, check out our [YouTube channel](#).*

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# 'The Chew' Host Carla Hall Talks About Thanksgiving Dinner and Date Night



If you're hosting Thanksgiving dinner this year and are tired of the same old marshmallow-covered sweet potato casserole, dried out stuffing, and gel-like gravy ladled over tough turkey, update your family's traditional meal with tips from *The Chew* host Carla Hall. Follow her advice on how to put personal pizzaz into classic Thanksgiving dishes. With the cool weather and holiday season quickly approaching, Hall also provides dinner date ideas for those chilly winter evenings spent with your sweetie.

**Related Link:** [‘Top Chef’ Alum Richard Blais on Healthy Holiday Cooking](#)

*For more information on Hall, visit [www.carlahall.com/](http://www.carlahall.com/).*

*For more videos from [CupidsPulse.com](http://CupidsPulse.com), check out our [YouTube channel](#).*

**How do you plan to revamp your family’s Thanksgiving traditions this year? Share with us in the comments below!**

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## **Celebrity Relationships: Kate Middleton Taking Cooking Classes, Learning New Recipes for Prince William**





By Petra Halbur

It looks like the Duchess of Cambridge has been getting in touch with her inner culinary queen. As her July due date approaches, Kate Middleton has started taking cooking lessons from her new housekeeper, Antonella Fresolone. Fresolone, who worked at Buckingham Palace for 13 years, has been teaching the mother-to-be how to make “a number of new dishes,” according to [UsMagazine.com](http://UsMagazine.com). Middleton is hoping to learn how to make some of Fresolone’s signature meals, such as her renowned homemade pasta and French bread, at the Nottingham cottage she shares with Prince William.

**How can you show your partner that you care?**

**Cupid’s Advice:**

As wonderful as pregnancy is, it can also be a turbulent, chaotic period of time. With all the effort that goes into preparing for your baby, it can be difficult to take time off for you and your partner. How do you manage to show your partner that you care? Cupid has some ideas:

**1. The little things:** Since it's not always be practical to fly your partner out to Hawaii for the weekend, try doing some small favors that your partner will really appreciate. Whether it's volunteering to do the dishes, or offering to give a massage, incorporate tiny acts of love and consideration into your day. They won't go unnoticed.

**2. Do errands together:** Everyone wants to feel included. While it may not seem particularly romantic, inviting your partner to go on errands with you can be simple yet effective way to show how much you like spending time together.

**3. Express affection:** Whether it's holding hands, cuddling, or simply saying, "I love you," little expressions of affection are a great reminder of how much you care for your partner.

**What are ways that you show your partner you care? Tell us below.**

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## **Date Idea: Turn up the Heat in the Kitchen**





By Amanda Martin

Stay in this weekend and test your skills in the kitchen with your significant other. Prepare the whole meal from scratch and don't forget to set a romantic mood with candles.

Start with something simple for an appetizer. Put together a mixed green salad with fresh vegetables such as grilled eggplant, tomatoes, cucumbers and a balsamic vinaigrette dressing. You'll be eating healthy as a couple, so neither of you will feel too guilty about dessert.

For the main course, make spaghetti with homemade tomato sauce. It's easy enough for beginners and it's the team effort that counts when making the sauce. Be sure that the two of you eat opposite ends of a single strand of spaghetti until meeting in the middle – Lady and the Tramp style.

If you're in the mood for fun romance, individual pizzas are a delicious meal to cook together. Create heart shapes with the dough and make a game out of spinning it in the air like a professional chef. Once the main course is in the oven, start

on the sweets. Mix your own cake batter and frosting exactly how you both like it. Use colored icing to write messages to one another on the cupcakes. It can be something important you've been waiting to say, or it can just be a reminder of your love.

Cozy up on the couch with a bottle of wine after dinner. Shut the ringer on your phones and keep the TV turned off. Instead, use this time to really bond.

**What's your favorite meal to cook together? Let us know in the comments below.**

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## **Elisabeth Rahm Explains Why Family Dinners Are Important**





*Law & Order* actress Elisabeth Röhm took to her [People](#) blog this week to explain the importance of family dinners. Röhm came into contact with cookbook author Ellamarie Fortenbach and learned about the importance of eating dinner as a family. The actress and her 3-year-old daughter, Easton August, participated in the production of Fortenbach's cookbook. "Cooking together and finding a connection through mealtime has been important and a challenge for our family," said Röhm in her blog. "Cooking together and then eating that meal is truly nurturing!"

**What are some reasons it's important to eat meals as a family?**

### **Cupid's Advice:**

Though it can be difficult to coordinate schedules, eating meals as a family is still a valued tradition. Here are a few reasons why it's important:

**1. Catch up:** Mealtimes are an opportunity to share with your family the things that have been on your mind during the day. Your children can voice their worries about school and their



friends while you can chip in with stories from work or around the house.

**2. Good for children:** Children who have meals with their families are statistically proven to do better in school. Bonding time at the dinner table is important for developing minds.

**3. Unity:** A family that eats together is undoubtedly stronger as a unit than one who does not. It's important to find time for your family despite your busy lives.

**Do you eat dinner as a family? What do you like about it? Feel free to leave a comment below.**

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## **Food Network's Anne Burrell and Geoffrey Zakarian Talk Holiday Cooking and Love**





By Steven Zangrillo

As the Holidays draw closer and families get together, it's easy to get roped into the manic hustle and bustle. Cooking with your loved ones, especially your special someone, can act as a great escape from all of the stress. It can even bring you and your partner closer. CupidsPulse.com spoke with Food Network's Anne Burrell and Geoffrey Zakarian and got their take on whipping up some holiday romance in the kitchen.

*For more videos from CupidsPulse.com, check out our [YouTube channel](#).*

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**Date Idea: Thanksgiving for**

# Two



Thanksgiving is a time to celebrate with family, watch football and indulge in turkey, stuffing and pumpkin pie. As fun as the day may be, it can cause strain on your personal relationship if things aren't planned out properly. The day will be extra special if you set aside time to work together as a team.

For example, if you're preparing to host Thanksgiving with your partner, begin the process by sharing responsibilities and scheduling time together in advance. Pick a day where you will choose the turkey and get all of the accompaniments together. This will make things much easier and it will show your partner how committed you are to having a nice experience with them.

As for decorations, unleash your inner child and make them yourself. After all, who didn't enjoy creating outlined hand-print turkeys from construction paper as a child?

An early start and an organized plan are essential for Thanksgiving Day success. For the romantics at heart, leave time for a break with your sweetheart in between all the preparing. Or, spend a few moments making a list of all the reasons you're thankful for each other and then read it aloud. This will also remind you why your relationship is so special and once family and friends arrive, you'll be ready to serve up the meal and mingle.

For those looking to spend some time alone, one idea is to cook and eat dinner together and join your families for dessert. Just don't forget to clean up as a couple – it'll go twice as fast and will end the holiday on a positive note.

No matter what you decide to do together this holiday, remember to give thanks to your partner and tell them how much you appreciate them.

**On Thanksgiving, what are some activities you and your honey work on together? Let us know in a comment below.**

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## **Date Idea: Don't Let Fall Cool Your Dates Down**





Fall is here, and what better way to get ready for the cool weather than by heading indoors for dinner and a movie? Try something new by heading to a recently opened restaurant in your town or trying a dish that you and your date can share. Not only are you creating memories, but you're getting ready for the holiday, which is all about giving thanks to one another.

To get current information on new restaurants coming to your area and for some great deals (who doesn't want to save money before the holidays?), check out websites like Bloomspot, Groupon and Living Social.

If you'd rather stay in, become a chef in your own kitchen and start whipping up some fall-flavored creations. Bake a pumpkin pie for your sweetheart, or embrace the season by making it together. Whether you decide to cook a three course meal or just dessert, finish the evening with a movie by the fire, which will put you in the mood to cuddle well into winter.

**Do you and your special someone have a specific restaurant you**

love? Let us know by commenting below.

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# A Healthy Romantic Dinner for Two



By Brian Steele

Making a meal with your partner can be one of the most romantic things you can do. It's a fun and cheap way to enjoy yourself on a date night, and a simple way to get closer to your partner. The best part about this is getting a home cooked meal – and who can resist the simple pleasure of eating in the comfort of your own home?

However, you *do* want to make sure you're enjoying your meals, not suffering through them. Many individuals find it hard to maintain healthy dining habits because they don't want to sacrifice taste for a decrease in calories and fat. Luckily, you don't have to compromise taste for health, as it's possible to have a dining experience that satisfies both your taste buds and your body.

What's more is that it's simple and rewarding to cook a great meal at home and share it with that special someone. Your significant other will appreciate that you care about their health. In addition, dining together will go far in strengthening the romantic bond you already share with each other.

Make the meal with your partner and feed each other while you're cooking. This can be a very intimate and sensual experience, so get creative!

The following is a recipe for two that will not only satiate your hunger, but will provide a romantic evening at home:

### **Ingredients:**

Four Portobello mushrooms  
Shredded mozzarella cheese  
8 tablespoons of tomato sauce

### **Steps:**

1. Wash the mushroom and remove the stems. Once removed, the stems should be put aside as they will be chopped and used as a topping.
2. Place the washed and dried mushroom caps in a baking pan. Place two tablespoons of tomato sauce on each cap. Then sprinkle the mozzarella cheese over the sauce. When you are finished, set your oven to preheat at 350 degrees.
3. Take the stems that you had removed earlier and chop them

- up. Once chopped, spread evenly over the four mushroom caps.
4. Once the oven is ready, place the baking pan in the oven and let it bake for 30 minutes.
  5. After 30 minutes remove and serve. The cheese may be really hot at first, so be careful!

**Wine:**

This dinner pairs well with red wine – in particular, a merlot or cabernet sauvignon. Red wine has two major benefits: It helps set a romantic mood and is also chock full of antioxidants, which research shows is advantageous to the promotion of good health.

**Dessert:**

This main course can be followed with a simple dessert of tea and Greek yogurt. Tea has additional antioxidants and Greek yogurt contains probiotics. Probiotics has been shown to aid in proper digestive health and no healthy lifestyle would truly be complete without them.

If you are looking for a great romantic evening in, consider trying this delicious, healthy recipe for two. Your partner (and body) will thank you!

*Brian Steele is a contributing writer at various sites like Probiotics.org.*

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**Have a ‘Delicioso Night In’  
With Aarón Sánchez This**



# Valentine's Day



By Aarón Sánchez, celebrity chef and TV personality

*This Valentine's Day, forgo waiting hours on end for a table at a busy restaurant when you can have a fabulous night in right at home. Not only is it a great opportunity to intensify connections with family, friends and significant others, but it's much easier on the wallet! Celebrity chef and TV personality Aarón Sánchez agrees, and has some easy tips to creating your own "Delicioso Night In." You can join the Delicioso movement [here](#). Not only does this give you the opportunity to take part in great conversations, but by joining the movement, you're automatically entered for a chance to win the ultimate Delicioso Night In, prepared by Chef Aarón himself in New York City. After flying to New York for this special evening, one lucky winner and three other*

*people of his or her choosing will be whisked away to Veracruz, Mexico, the home of Kahlua. In the meantime, enjoy the following tips from Chef Aarón to start your Valentine's Day off right:*



### **The Nose Knows**

You don't have to be a chemist to create memorable aromatics for your next evening of entertaining at home. In my home of Veracruz, there is a huge influence of African spices that were brought over when Cortez sailed across the Caribbean. Let such robust spices (think cloves, canela – the *real* cinnamon, cardamom, and black pepper) help set the mood with the help of a standard frying pan. Toast the spices just to their smoking point, and the room will fill with an inviting – and delicious – bouquet.

### **Team Chef**

It's like that old saying goes: those who sauté together, stay together. Collaborate on a menu and invite your guest(s) to help you bring the menu to life. Start the party early and enjoy cocktails as you cook; I like to keep it simple with a glass of Kahlua on the rocks with a splash of ginger ale. Cooking your creations together as you enjoy cocktails will allow for plenty of lean-in moments over the stove top, and eating those creations will be the reward for your labors over delicious conversation.

### **Pairing is Caring**

When prepping for a perfect evening, pairings are a fun way to turn any meal into a special occasion and spice up the fun. Plan three courses and pair each with a small cocktail; use one base spirit in three different ways. Keep in mind when choosing your menu to pick a spirit that embodies the flavors you are working with; for example Kahlua – from the heart of Veracruz, Mexico – will bring out beautiful notes of vanilla, another Veracruz staple that pairs lovely with complex and robust dishes that involve such flavors as molé.

### **Forget the Utensils**

Feeding someone can be a loving, playful proposition (especially sans fork). In Mexico, we love to entertain with botanas – small bites – that incorporate foods indigenous to the region like seafood and black beans. Reconnect with your partner over a selection of botanas like plantains, garnachas (a small fried masa topped with pork or chicken), mushrooms, or fresh cut fruit. Watch those teeth.

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## **Date Idea: Cook a Romantic Dinner**





Need a fun date idea for this weekend? Cupid's got you covered with some amazing [dating advice](#)! There's never been a better time to get creative in the kitchen. Cooking is a skill that can relieve stress and bring people together. Not to mention, it's a useful talent at any event, any time of year. No matter how you choose to perfect your skills, you're bound to benefit greatly; taking a class will allow you to truly master the recipe, and cooking at home will ensure plenty of leftovers. You can take classes as a couple or in a group. No matter how you decide to go about it, you're sure to turn up the heat with this weekend date idea.

**Related Link:** [Prince William and Kate Middleton Take Cooking Class](#)

## Dating Advice for Culinary Enthusiasts

Look at local colleges or culinary institutes for classes. Some restaurants even offer them right in their own

kitchens. Consider your favorite spot in town, and see if they offer what you're looking for. You'll be sure to utilize the skills in the future if you're learning to create your longtime favorite dish. If you're interested in learning how to pair meals with drinks, you can find a class that covers it all! Need help? It's ultra-easy these days to research affordable classes online.

If you want to stay in, there are plenty of ways to work your magic around the stove. Check out the recipes for couples on Cooks.com, or just look up ideas for your favorite ingredient. Remember to go grocery shopping for everything ahead of time, and take into account any significant preparation time. You also want to be sure to create a romantic ambiance, so that all your hard work can be truly appreciated. Reality TV star [Khloe Kardashian](#) is an expert on setting a pristine kitchen scene, so be sure to check out some of her tutorials in order to make sure the night is just right.

**Related Link:** [‘RHONJ’ Star Kathy Wakile Talks Desserts in Celebrity Video Interview: “Indulge. It’s Not Going to Kill You!”](#)

In the NYC area? Check out the New York City Travel Guide for neighborhood restaurants that offer cooking classes and wine tastings for couples.

**Have a romantic recipe or hot spot you'd recommend? Comment below and share your dating advice with our other readers!**