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Special Fork Blog Helps Cooking Newbies with Tips and Kitchen-Tested Recipes

Blog Focuses on Easy and Delicious Recipes that Provide Teachable Moments

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif. -- Sept. 20 2011 -- The thought of venturing into the kitchen to prepare a meal can make even the most rational new cook break out into a cold sweat. But cooking newbies can take heart from Katie Barreira, blogging on Special Fork (www.specialfork.com).

Special Fork is a free mobile recipe website with a large database of recipes for the time-challenged cook. All recipes are professionally developed and take no more than 30 minutes of prep time. Since it is a mobile website and not an app, Special Fork can be accessed on all mobile phones no matter what platform – iPhone, Android or Blackberry operating systems. Just open an Internet browser and go to www.Specialfork.com.

Blogs are an integral part of Special Fork and are authored by people in the know about cooking and food. There are blogs for the Cooking Newbie, for people cooking for one or two (One or two Bites) and for families (the Family Table).

Barreira, 29, who writes the Cooking Newbie blog, is a recipe tester and columnist for *Everyday with Rachel Ray* magazine. While she may not be a “newbie” herself, she has many friends who are.

“I try to think of my friends and the questions they ask as I write the Special Fork blog,” said Barreira. “Recipe directions seem to be a big part of the uneasiness people feel about cooking. What does it mean to cream butter and sugar together when there is no ‘cream’ in the recipe? I use basic terms such as ‘roughly chopped’ or ‘minced.’ Or if the technique is more complicated, I break it down to a step-by step sequence.”

Barreira notes that people like to watch food shows on TV, but may not be actually cooking at home. “They’re not getting the hands-on experience. I want people to get excited about food and to try recipes themselves,” she said.

If she had just one wish for cooking newbies, Barreira says she hopes they can begin to view food, not as pre-packaged products, but rather as beautiful individual elements that can be combined in a recipe. Visiting a farmer’s market can provide the inspiration to create a real connection to food in its essential state.

(more)

Besides working in the test kitchen and blogging for Special Fork, Barreira is busy with freelance food writing and cooking for friends. And of course, she's always developing new recipes to try.

Barreira's Cooking Newbie blog on Special Fork can be found every Tuesday at:

<http://about.specialfork.com/blog/category/cooking-newbie>. Here's an example of the easy way of she explains a cooking technique, in this case, how to make an omelet:

<http://about.specialfork.com/blog/2011/5/3/traceys-scrambled-omelet.html>

And for a killer recipe? Try Barreira's solution for overripe bananas below. Bet you can't eat just one slice.

Button-Busting Chocolate Chip Banana Bread

3 large, ripe to over-ripe bananas

5 tablespoons melted butter, plus more for greasing the pan

1 cup granulated sugar

1 large egg, beaten

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract

1 teaspoon baking soda

¼ teaspoon salt

1½ cups all-purpose flour

½ cup milk chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. and grease a loaf pan with butter.

In a large bowl, coarsely mash bananas with a fork. Add butter, sugar, egg, vanilla, baking soda and salt; stir until just combined. Gradually fold in flour, then chocolate chips. Pour batter into prepared pan and bake until deep golden and set, about 50 minutes.

Double Duty - Use leftover banana bread to make French toast.

For more information on this recipe, and tips on using and storing go to:

<http://about.specialfork.com/blog/2011/7/12/the-siren-of-banana-breads.html>

Special Fork is a recipe website for your smartphone and PC that solves the daily dinnertime dilemma: what to cook now! Bloggers post Monday through Friday to give you cooking inspiration. Check out the Special Fork [recipe database](#) for quick ideas that take no more than 30 minutes of prep time.