HOLIDAY ** gift guide II **

'Tis the season for holiday baking

he holidays are a busy season. From cooking and baking for family and friends to holiday shopping and preparing for time-honored traditions, the season will pass in a blur. Regardless, it's also the time of year when everyone has holiday cookies and extra-special meals on their minds.

While dreaming of countless delectable treats, like homemade eggnog and royal icing, there is also a risk that at-home cooks and bakers strive to avoid: salmonella. Renowned baker and author of The Cake Bible and Rose's Christmas Cookies, Rose Levy Beranbaum, uses pasteurized eggs instead of worrying about the risk of salmonella when baking her holiday treats.

Beranbaum offers tips for baking this holiday season and her favorite iced sugar cookie recipe.

- **Prep the kitchen.** Put away unnecessary items, clean off the counter or table top and make sure that all of the tools and ingredients are available to make for a smoother baking process.
- Measurement is key. Unlike cooking, baking requires exact measurement. One important technique is the spoon-and-

sweep method for measuring flour, which can settle. Scoop the flour into the measuring cup, ensure it is full and sweep off the excess with a knife.

- **Be patient.** Allow the cookie sheets to cool completely before using for the next batch to avoid flat cookies.
- Think through baking times. Looking for a slightly softer, chewier cookie? Roll the dough to 1/4-inch thickness and reduce the baking time slightly
- Use high quality ingredients. Products like Safest Choice Pasteurized Eggs eliminate the risk of salmonella and they add a little fun and excitement back into the kitchen for anyone who enjoys a quick taste of cookie batter or using eggs in raw preparations like Beranbaum's royal icing recipe.



ROLLED SUGAR COOKIES

Makes about 4 dozen 3-inch cookies **Ingredients:**

2 1/4 cups (11.25 ounces) bleached all-purposed flour

1/4 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup sugar
12 tablespoons unsalted butter
1 large Safest Choice Pasteurized Egg
1 tablespoon (finely grated) lemon zest

1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
Royal Icing (recipe follows)

Directions:

Soften the butter. In a mixing bowl, cream together the sugar and butter until fluffy. Add the egg, lemon zest, and vanilla extract and beat until blended. In a small bowl, whisk together the remaining dry ingredients. On low speed, gradually add them to the butter mixture and mix until incorporated. Add water, a few drops at a time, only until the dough starts to come away from the sides of the bowl.

Scrape the dough onto a sheet of plastic wrap and use the wrap, not your fingers, to press the dough together to form a thick flat disc. Wrap it well and refrigerate for at least 2 hours, preferably no longer than 3. Place 2 oven racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven. Preheat oven to 350 F. On a lightly floured surface, roll out the dough, covered with plastic wrap to prevent cracking, to a 1/8-inch thickness. Cut shapes using your favorite cookie cut-

ters or freehand with a knife. With a small spatula, transfer the cookies to the prepared cookie sheets. Bake for 8 to 12 minutes or until the cookies begin to brown around the edges. For even baking, rotate the cookie sheets from top to bottom and front to back halfway through the baking period. Use a small spatula to transfer the cookies to wire racks to cool before decorating with Royal Icing, dragees, sprinkles and glittering holiday edibles. Store in an airtight container at room temperature.

ROYAL ICING

Ingredients:

3 large Safest Choice pasteurized egg whites

4 cups (1 pound) powdered sugar **Directions:**

In a large mixing bowl, place the egg whites and powdered sugar and beat, preferably with the whisk beater, at low speed, until the sugar is moistened. Beat at high speed until very glossy and stiff peaks form when the beater is lifted (5 to 7 minutes). The tips of the peaks should curve slightly. If necessary, more powdered sugar may be added. Keeps for 3 days in an airtight container at room temperature.

(BPT)





The season of giving: What is your family passionate about?

How many times has your child come home with news of a penny drive or fund-raiser happening at school or a place of worship? How often does this come with an explanation of who the cause or charity serves and how else your child can get involved? Often, children are eager to get involved with these fundraising efforts because there are reward incentives at the end, but parents can take this opportunity to discuss with children the real value of supporting nonprofit organizations.

So what's the best way to start this conversation with your kids? Find out what's important to them. Everyone has a cause or charity that is close to their hearts. For your kids, was it helping that lost kitten found in the backyard that sparked their philanthropic passions? Was it when they spent the weekend helping grandma plant a garden? Was it helping mom clean out their toys and taking them to kids who had nothing to play with?

Nonprofit organizations span across

many different categories, such as arts, education, environment, animals, health and more. When children focus on things they find interesting, they'll be more apt to stay with them. Whatever it is they are passionate and motivated about, you can help them make a positive impact in the community through giving. It's important to let kids know that even little contributions can make a big difference.

Below are tips to help you get your child engaged in giving:

- Learn what they love. Have a conversation with your children and ask them what they care about. Learning about their passions can help to motivate them, and also help you find more ways to get them involved, such as volunteering.
 - Make it a family affair.

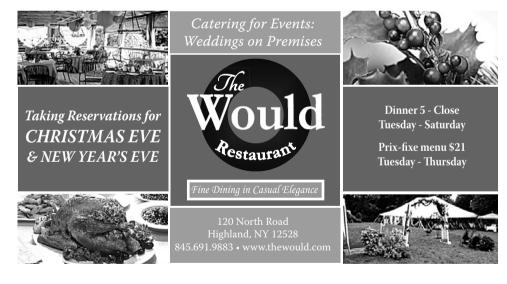


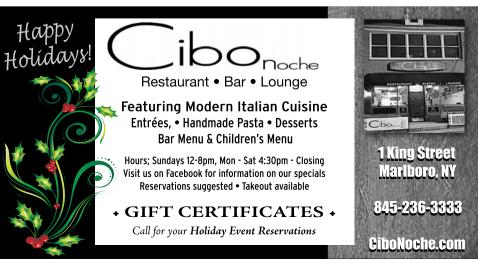
Include your children in your decision-making process, too, so that they can start to see that there is a clear and thoughtful manner in which you make contributions to charity.

- Acknowledge their good deed. Since children don't get the tax deduction or other tangible benefits of giving that adults often receive, their reward is based on your words of encouragement and evidence of the impact they made. Let them know you're proud of them and tell them exactly why, using specific examples.
- Make this an ongoing effort. There are many ways to get involved with a charity, so introduce children to other forms of donating besides monetary contributions, such as their time and talents. This can foster a lifelong joy of proactive giving.

(BPT)









Winter beauty woes: Caring for your skin during cooler months

Temperatures are poised to plunge this winter and severe climate changes can negatively impact skin. Plus, harsh irritants, dyes and artificial perfumes can trigger sensitivities, making it even more difficult to effectively care for skin.

Simple skincare consulting dermatologist Dr. Jennifer Segal reveals common seasonal sensitive skin triggers and shares her top tips for maintaining healthy-looking skin throughout the cooler months.

Stay hydrated: Winter air often lacks moisture, which can cause skin to become dry and sensitive. 'Remember to drink one or two liters of water per day,' says Segal. 'Also, eat fruits and vegetables that are packed with water, such as apples, celery and cucumbers.

Re-evaluate your skincare routine: Women change their wardrobes and diets every season, so remember to update your skincare routine too. 'Use a gentle, moisturizing cleanser to nourish skin and avoid that tight feeling you can get after washing your face,' suggests Segal. 'I love the Simple® Moisturizing Facial Wash. Like all of the Simple facial skincare products, it has all the good ingredients that nourish and cleanse the skin, without the dyes, artificial perfumes, or harsh irritants that can upset skin. -In fact, because of this

philosophy, the complete range of Simple facial skincare products is perfect even for sensitive skin.' Moisturizer should be applied liberally and frequently. In addition, gently exfoliating once a week will help make skin brighter and more receptive to moisturizer, resulting in a healthy glow. Try using a gentle scrub to lift dry, dead skin cells and help skin look brighter and more evenly textured.

Adjust the heat: When temperatures drop, the natural reaction is to raise the thermostat. However, dry indoor air causes water to evaporate from skin, leaving it dehydrated, tight and flaky. Segal recommends using a humidifier to replace lost moisture in the air. This creates a more humid and moisturized environment for skin. Also, avoid long hot baths or showers because they cannot only compromise skin's natural lipid barriers, resulting in an increased loss of moisture, but also, in so doing, increase the risk of skin irritation. Instead, keep water at a lukewarm temperature and limit the amount of time spent in the bath or shower.- Applying a rich, non-irritating moisturizer immediately after the bath or shower will help the skin retain moisture, which nourishes and soothes the skin.

Lay it on thick: Despite the chilly air,

the sun's rays are just as strong during the cooler months as they are in the warmer ones. Plus, women who have sensitive skin are more prone to experiencing visible signs of irritation as a result of the sun's harmful effects. Segal warns, 'Going out without wearing sunscreen can lead to redness, burning, breakouts and other damage - no matter what season. Always be sure to incorporate a moisturizer with UVA and UVB protection into your skincare routine each day.'-

Take a well-rounded approach: Skin sensitivities can be triggered by lifestyle factors such as diet and stress. 'Our skin reflects our overall health, both mind and body. In addition to maintaining a healthy diet, be sure to manage stress levels by taking time each day to decompress. Fitness activities can be a wonderful way to alleviate tension, keeping your mind, body and skin in great shape,' says Segal.

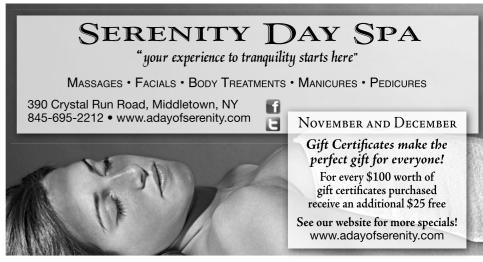
For more information, visit www.sim-pleskincare.com. (BPT)





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The Rockefeller Center tree tradition

The first Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center was erected in 1931, two years before the opening of Rockefeller Plaza, where the tree now draws thousands of tourists. The tradition began when construction workers hard at work on building Rockefeller Center decorated a 20-foot tall balsam fir tree on Christmas Eve in 1931. Strings of cranberries and tin cans were among the items used to decorate the tree. The first official tree was unveiled in 1933 in Rockefeller Plaza, and the lighting ceremony was broadcast over NBC

Radio. The 1933 tree, at 50 feet tall, paled in comparison to the 10-ton Norway Spruce erected in 1999, which measured 100-feet tall and remains the tallest tree ever erected at Rockefeller Center. The tradition of the Rockefeller Center tree continues to evolve to this day, but the evergreen it is no longer lit with incandescent light bulbs. LED bulbs that consume a fraction of the energy of traditional bulbs are used now. In 2007 Rockefeller Center partnered with Habitat for Humanity, who used the tree lumber for home construction.













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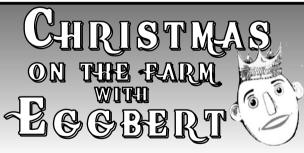
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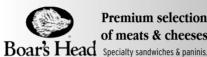
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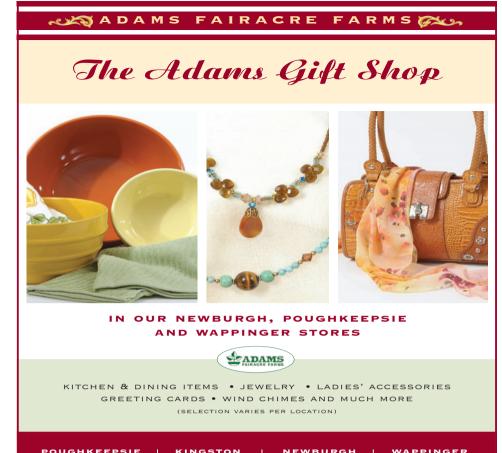
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