

# "SEEDS ARE FOR SHARING"



## DECEMBER NEWSLETTER

# PLANNING FOR A FESTIVE & HEALTHY HOLIDAY SEASON !

- your family
- your health
- your budget
- your time

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For most of us the months, weeks and days before Christmas are filled with plans & preparations that often include many different activities and responsibilities.

Over the years as we grow older our priorities change and we often focus on what is really most important for us and our families and leave the less important activities off of our to do list so we can better enjoy this season of the year.

For many years we spent a good deal of time before Christmas buying gifts for our sons, their spouses, our grandchildren and our parents. As our family grew in number this could have become very time consuming and hard. We lost track of what each person could use, or what they would even like. So for the past six years, in December we give each one a card with money and tell them to get themselves something. They are happy and it frees us up to be involved in making Christmas special for others as well.

Last week we spent the evening singing Christmas carols with our seniors and then sharing food and fellowship around the tables.

We will be having two women's Christmas events in the coming weeks, giving us opportunity to meet new friends and as well connect with others in the community.

Yes, and we are learning that the best gifts need not be ones that can be wrapped and put under the tree. Sharing our time, talents and our home with others are gifts that can last a life time in our own hearts as well as in the hearts of others.

Today I have received a very special and useful gift. It is a gift of "Time"

Our home is grand central station and I often have no idea who or how many will be at our table at lunch, supper or for a cup of coffee and a chat. We truly love these interruptions as they are often times when we can laugh a bit and forget the usual day to day pressures.

But today I have been given a whole day to do as I wish without interruptions. I put the "Do not disturb" sign outside of our room.

Melvin is on a board and once a year I tag along as he goes to a two-day conference. One full day is meetings and I can spend that day doing just what I want. I have brought along everything I will need and the Gideon's have left a Bible in the room for inspiration.

I packed some fruit, a few slices of my own brown bread, cheese, a flax muffin, a few bags of green tea and a small bag of homemade granola. I packed a health magazine, a few books on nutrition, paper and pen.

My first job this morning was to write a short devotional and now I am doing the website newsletter for December.

This week is our monthly cooking class for 12 ladies and it will be a fun time sharing ideas and recipes on nutrition and then doing some cooking together.

The ladies have asked for recipes they can make ahead of time and use during the Christmas season, so at this class we will focus on the dessert/snack recipes and next month it will be main meal recipes.

Think about it, if we invite guests over and then put out a plate with a variety of dainties, we may wonder how many they want to try without getting too much

sugar as well as calorie overload. But by putting out a tray of yeast baking, they can enjoy a few pieces (with far less calories) and then end up trying a dainty or two. (Or none if they so choose and not feel that they are offending the hostess)

So at this week's cooking class we will make the following sweet bun dough recipe and then caramel corn for them to take home. They will also take home a variety of other recipes using the sweet bun dough as well as other recipes using popping corn that they can try when they will be doing their own baking. I am going to share these recipe and as well the variations of the recipes in this newsletter.

## YEAST BAKING FOR CHRISTMAS ENTERTAINING

### BASIC SWEET BUN DOUGH

This recipe can be used to make plain sweet buns, raisin or fruit buns, cinnamon buns, kuchen and Swedish tea rings. You can decorate or ice the buns to make them look more festive if you wish, just before serving.

3 1/2 cups warm water

3/4 cup cooking oil

4 eggs

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 teaspoon salt

10 cups unbleached flour

4 tablespoons fast rising yeast

1/4 cup melted margarine

1 cup brown sugar (mix with cinnamon)

about 2 tablespoons cinnamon

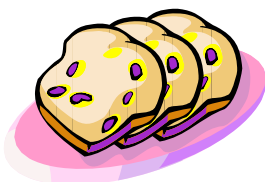
Place water, oil, eggs, sugar, salt and 6 cups of flour into a large bowl. Beat well with a hand beater. As you continue to beat, sprinkle over the yeast. Knead in the remaining flour gradually. Cover & let rise in a draft free place. When double in size, punch down and use to make any of the recipes below.



### Cinnamon Buns

Yes, I will make a batch of this dough into nice big cinnamon buns to enjoy at a brunch or in the evening after caroling or decorating or just when we want to have someone over for coffee.

Remove half of the dough to a floured surface. Roll out 1/2 inch thick. Spread with half the butter and then half the sugar/cinnamon. Roll up the long way and pinch edge. Cut into 1" pieces and lay in well greased pan, leaving room for them to rise. When double in size, bake in 350 °F oven for 20 minutes or until nicely browned. As soon as done, turn the pan over to drop the buns to a board or counter.



### **Raisin or Fruit Bread**

A few weeks before Christmas, I will make a batch of raisin and fruit breads and probably some buns made with the raisins or fruit in as well. I make enough so I have enough to take a few of these to a neighbor or other persons I will visit.

Add **4 cups of raisins of glazed fruit or both raisins and glazed fruit** to the whole batch of sweet bun dough after it has been kneaded and is ready to put into pans. (or you may want to mix half the dough with 2 cups raisins and half with 2 cups of glazed fruit.) The bread pans should be about 1/3 full when putting the dough into the pans so that when they rise and are baked they will be a lower loaf and look really nice when buttered.



### How To Make Buns

Pinch off a piece of dough and shape into a ball, placing it on a greased cookie sheet or in a muffin pan. Shape the remaining dough as well.

### **Swedish Tea Ring**

Another day I will make a batch into about 6 - 8 Swedish Tea Rings. This will depend on how big you want to make them. They can be smaller and baked in a 8 or 9 inch foil pie plate or larger, and baked on a pizza pan or cookie sheet. I will ice them later on, once they are out of the freezer and thawed. Then decorate with a few chopped cherries or nuts.

### How to Make

Using the sweet bun dough recipe, roll out the same as for the cinnamon buns. Instead of cutting off a 1 inch piece, cut off a 10 - 14 inch piece. Place on a well greased pan and shape it into a circle, pressing the edges together well. Stretch the centre of this circle as large as you would like. With scissors, cut into the circle from outside in, spacing the cuts every inch, almost all the way to the center. Twist each of these pieces sideways. Let rise and once baked as directed in the recipe above, cool and freeze **or** to use right away, drizzle with icing and decorate with cherries.

### **Poppy Seed Ring**

A few of us love our poppy seed so I do make a few rings to serve when friends or family come over who also love poppy seed. Roll the dough out the same as for a Swedish Tea Ring and spread with poppy seed filling instead of the butter, cinnamon and brown sugar.

### Poppy Seed Filling

Grind 1 ¼ cups poppy seed in a coffee mill or grinder and add:

1 cup milk	1 cup sugar	2 tablespoons margarine
1 egg	2 tablespoons flour	½ cup chopped raisins

Mix and cook on low heat until thick. Cool and use in dough recipe.

### **Cherry Tea Ring**

Proceed the same as for the poppy seed ring, spreading 2 cups chopped cherries and nuts on the surface instead of the poppy seed.

### **Kuchen**

Kuchen was a traditional food in my mother's family. My Grandma made it every Christmas and Easter. Hers was made in a large baking pan and was covered with chopped red cherries and crumbs. Now I make it with other fruits as our children do not eat glazed cherries. We enjoy it with prune plums, peaches, blueberries or even with any pie filling spread over. And then of course lots of crumbs. All of these types of kuchen are great throughout the holidays and have far less calories than dainties.

### How To Make

Pinch off a piece of dough about 3 cups in size. Spread out on the bottom of a 12 X 18 inch baking pan or 1 ½ cups into a 9 x 12 inch baking pan. Brush the surface with a beaten egg. Top with fruit and then crumbs. Allow to rise. Bake at 350 ° F for 20 - 25 minutes.

You can also cut out circles of dough with a round cookie cutter, place on greased cookie sheets, brush each with beaten egg, press the dough flat in the centre of each and put in a spoon of any fruit filling or poppy seed filling. Top with crumbs, let rise and bake as above, but only until lightly browned.

### Crumbs:

1 cup flour

¼ cup margarine

¼ cup sugar

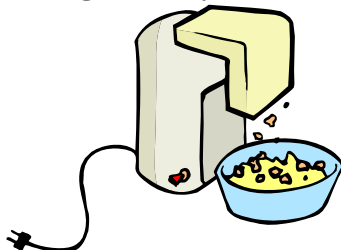
2 tablespoons water

Mix flour, sugar & margarine together into crumbs with fingers. Add water and again crumble with fingers.

## **SNACKS**

For a healthier snack choice, buy nuts (shelled or in shells) or a trail mix to have available rather than candies.

Usually everyone loves popcorn so we always have a variety of different flavored popcorns around as well. I often make these a month before and keep them in a cool place, but also out of sight so they aren't all gone by Christmas.



### **CARAMEL CORN**

Make this ahead of time and have it handy in ice cream pails to enjoy during the holiday season, but as well all year round. I started making it for Halloween as well when our boys were small. I didn't want to buy candy or bars so I would make the caramel corn, bag it in individual bags and give them to the few children who came to our farm, but as well for our own children.



## HARD BROWN SUGAR

Have you ever had a bag of **brown sugar go hard**?

- Place the sugar into a closed container together with a small container that holds a wet cotton ball. The sugar should be dry in a day or so. ( I used an egg cup)
- Put a piece of apple or bread into the pail and close. Check in a day or two.

## HEALTH TIP!

Many of us associate the holidays with parties, plenty of food, lots of calories, and weight gain.

I guess that is a good enough reason to focus our Christmas menu on fewer calories by serving yeast baking instead of a large assortment of dainties. Cookies as well can be lower calorie recipes.

Besides, always have plenty of Christmas oranges and apples on hand. Add a Fruit Platters to your menu often. Guests are often tired of the sweets and will enjoy plain fruit.

Before heading out to an event where you know you may be having lots of calories, eat some raw vegetables, fresh fruit, a vegetable cocktail or just a slice of whole grain homemade bread.

### Vegetable Cocktail

In a blender, process on high speed:

2 carrots

½ tomato

1 speer broccoli

You will be drinking fibre, vitamins and minerals.

### WALK

Do as much walking, or other exercise sports as possible during the holidays.



### HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

Those added calories and weight gain could increase your blood pressure.

To help lower your blood pressure, try:

serving less processed foods.

Using less salt

Increasing your potassium intake by including any of the following in your diet:  
(bananas, potato skins, apricots, prunes, broccoli)

**Winnie informs you, her online friends and clients, that her special offer for the Soybean cookbook is still available.**

## Amazing Offer!

Soybeans are a very nutritious bean that fit well with the suggestions in the new guide. Winnie has discovered that soybeans can be used in so many food preparations with excellent and tasty results. She decided to discount the SOY SATISFIED cookbooks so that everyone can have all of these great recipes at their fingertips.

The suggested retail price is \$16.95 and it is at present selling for \$14.95.

But **NOW**, if you will order directly from *Winnie's Winning Ways*, you will get SOY SATISFIED cookbooks for only **\$10.00** each. (*plus the P&H and GST*).

***You can celebrate the New Canada's Food Guide by ordering this cookbook at this special price for yourself and if you like, more to use as gifts!***

Go to [www.winnieswinningways.ca](http://www.winnieswinningways.ca) to order or contact Winnie at Winnie's Winning Ways Box 59 Morris Manitoba R0G1K0 or call 1 204 746-8162

I trust you will have a very special and meaningful Christmas Season together with your family and friends.

Sincerely Elaine (Winnie)

### ***About the Author***

***Winnie is always looking for ways to provide inexpensive, nutritious meals for her family. Once they pass the test and are enjoyed by her family and friends, she is ready and eager to pass them on to others. Winnie wants to see others enjoy the same success that she does. Her ideas, hints and recipes are all found in the cookbooks & eBooks she has published over the past number of years.***

***Now as well, on her website, you can subscribe to her monthly newsletters that are filled with inexpensive, nutritious recipes, ideas and hints. As you read them through, watch for SPECIAL PRICES on a variety of her cookbooks.***

***To view her cookbooks, go to: <http://www.winnieswinningways.ca/>***

***Much of Winnie's website focuses on physical and financial needs, but she is well aware that her life would be nothing without the spiritual. We need food to keep our bodies and minds healthy, but we need spiritual food to keep our souls healthy as well! The following website is one of her favorite and Elaine Froese is a special friend who has so much wisdom to share.***

## **FOOD FOR OUR SOUL!**

Elaine Froese is a certified coach who wants people to live intentional lives, and have courageous conversations with purpose! Read her columns on her website or feel free to call her on her toll-free number for encouragement.

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