

# Just remember to eat in moderation: Spicer

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the table. Preparing food in the kitchen is a natural arena for families to reaffirm their ties to one another.

"Parents communicate with their children in the kitchen," said Ms Spicer. "They just do."

For that reason, parents should not be afraid to let their youngsters help out with the family meal — even if it is messy at first.

To that end, Ms Spicer has designed her light and easy cookbooks so that they are kid-friendly. In other words, the recipes are fun to eat, easy to make, and healthy.

"The directions are easy enough that even the young people in a family can follow them," said Ms Spicer. "And after the days of instruction are over, the rewards are great. Cooking is so creative, almost everyone loves it once they start."

Ironically, the first generation of working moms didn't often take the time to teach their young ones to cook.

That means cooking classes are filled with busting these days with 30-somethings eager to find out what they have missed.

But the bottom line is that food is as much about connection as consumption.

And not just to individual families, but also to the communities they belong in, and even the world.

That was the basis behind Ms Spicer's Multicultural Cookbook. In it, she allows the food to serve up an evocative slice of the place it originated from. And food, said Ms Spicer, can bridge gaps.

"If you meet a stranger from another country, one of the things you can talk about is food," she said. "You end up learning so much about a person's background."

Ms Spicer developed her own love of food at her mother's feet in Yorkton, Saskatchewan, the tiny town of 8,000 where she was raised. Back then her mother was big on comfort foods aimed at chasing the chill out of the long winter months. And comfort foods are still a big part of Ms Spicer's life — only she has cut back on the fat and other not so healthy ingredients.

Ms Spicer is a big proponent of eating well, and it shows. At age 67, she looks a good decade younger, with a smooth, rosy complexion and easy, lithe movements.

And she believes eating well is for everyone, including those with food sensitivities.

"When a family has someone in it who has special needs, like someone with dia-

betes, its really important for the whole family to share the same foods," said Ms Spicer. "I don't like to see someone isolated because they have a particular need."

In her late teens, Ms Spicer parlayed her passion for food into a home economics degree at the University of Saskatchewan.

Since then she has taken numerous courses and kept up with the latest research on dietary health.

But most of that information could be synopsized into one simple motto — eat a variety of foods, but eat them in moderation.

"It is the simplest eating plan there is. It is almost too easy," she said. "I think people are always looking for some kind of magic that will bring them a beautiful body."

## Tortilla Bean Pinwheels

With the new millennium just around the corner, the time has never been more ripe for gatherings featuring good food and great friends.

These Tortilla Bean Pinwheels, found on page 27 of Kay Spicer's 'Full of Beans' cookbook, are a fun, easy and delicious (not to mention low fat) addition to any celebration.

### Ingredients

- 1 cup cooked kidney beans (250 ml)
- 2 tsp molasses (10 ml)
- 1 tsp chili powder (5 ml)
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard (5 ml)

- pinch freshly ground black pepper
- 3 8 inch (20 cm) tortillas
- 1/2 cup light cream cheese (125 ml)
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced

### Preparation

• In a small bowl or food processor, mash together or process beans, molasses, chili powder, mustard and pepper until smooth

• Spread each tortilla with one-third of the cream cheese. Spread bean mixture over cheese. Sprinkle with green onions.

• Roll up each tortilla, jelly roll fashion to make a log. Trim thin

ends from each roll. Wrap snugly in plastic wrap or waxed paper. Refrigerate for at least 3 hours and up to 24 hours

• At serving time, cut into slices about 1/2 inch (1 cm) thick.

A serving, which is calculated as four pinwheels, contains 82 calories, 1 g total fat, no saturated fat, 8 mg cholesterol, 2 g protein, 10 g carbohydrate, 102 mg sodium and 144 mg potassium

\*\* Gluten-free tortilla may be used instead flour ones.

\*\*\* Uncut, these rolls can be placed in kids' lunchboxes as a mid-day meal.

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