

'Nana Puddin'

- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup plain flour
- dash salt
- 4 large egg yolks, beaten
- 2 cups milk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 box vanilla wafers
- 6 large bananas

Preheat oven to 425°. Combine sugar, flour, and salt in the top of a double boiler. Stir in egg yolks and milk; blend well. Cook, stirring constantly, until thick. Add vanilla. Spread a little custard in the bottom of a 1½-quart casserole dish. Cover with a layer of vanilla wafers and then sliced bananas. Continue to layer custard, wafers, and bananas, ending with custard. (I like to add a final layer of wafers on top.) Spoon meringue* on top, covering completely to edges. Sprinkle top with a little sugar. Bake for 5 minutes or until meringue is golden brown.

*Meringue

- 4 large egg whites, room temperature
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
- ¼ cup sugar

Beat egg whites and cream of tartar to soft-peak stage. Gradually sprinkle in sugar and continue beating until stiff peaks form. Do not overbeat, or meringue will be too dry to spread prettily. Best served warm. Recipe may be doubled.

— *Cynthia Carroll*



Southern Favorites

Cynthia Carroll of New Hill started cooking because she saw that it's one way the women in her family show their love. She then followed her love of cooking into a career.

By Diane Summerville

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MATT HULSMAN

FOOD STYLING BY MATT HULSMAN AND WENDY PERRY

Cynthia Carroll made her first cake when she was 6 years old. When she was 10, she received a Pillsbury cake baking set for Christmas, and by the following summer, she set up a cake stand beside her brother's lemonade stand in the front yard of their Concord home.

"I don't think we ever sold anything, but we had great snacks and lots of friends," Carroll says.

Three years ago, she published *Southern Suppers and Such*, a collection of recipes she gathered and created throughout a lifetime of preparing meals and confections for others.

From the beginning, food has been about more than a meal or a way to earn money. Carroll remembers spending every Sunday afternoon at her grandparents' home, where she and her cousins played in the yard and felt sure they were going to starve before being called in for dinner. Her grandmother Broomie served fried chicken with mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, biscuits, and banana pudding. "There's an unwritten law in North Carolina that 'nana puddin' has to be served at all Sunday dinners, family reunions, church homecomings, and funerals," Carroll writes in the cookbook's introduction.

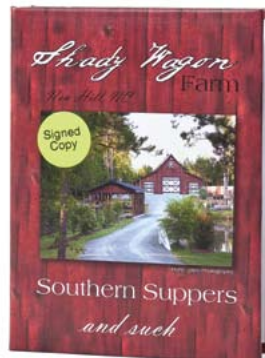
But more than the flavors and a full belly, Carroll recalls the happiness and security she felt at those gatherings. "Family meals are what I love, what have always made me feel like a part of

something," she says.

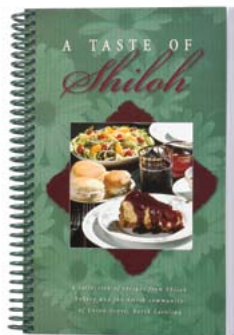
Those days and dinners set the course for her career. Within a year of receiving the baking set, she started decorating and selling cakes to family and friends. For the next 35 years, she ran her own wedding and special-occasion cake business. Six years ago, she and her husband, Doug, opened Shady Wagon Farm, a bed-and-breakfast inn in Chatham County that plays host to weddings and special events.

It's a business the couple built on Carroll's love of not only cooking, but also bringing people together. 🇺🇸

Diane Summerville is the senior editor of Our State magazine.



Southern Suppers and Such, which includes a number of recipes that won Cynthia Carroll blue ribbons at the State Fair year after year, is a celebration of the good times Carroll has shared with family and friends and customers over the years. To order a copy, contact Carroll at ccarroll@embarqmail.com or (919) 542-7172.



A Taste of Shiloh

Customers of Shiloh General Store and Bakery in Hamptonville will recognize some of their favorite treats, such as frozen peanut butter pie, in *A Taste of Shiloh*.

Several of the book's recipes come directly from the bakery, and families who established the Amish community in Union Grove in the 1980s filled out the pages with their own submissions.

Built in 2004, Shiloh General Store and Bakery sells herbs, cheeses, deli meats, breads, jams, homemade baskets, and wooden furniture. The Amish families who moved to this area in search of fertile farmland produce most of the wares for sale.

Copies are available at Shiloh General Store and Bakery, 5520 St. Paul Church Road, Hamptonville, or to order a copy, call (336) 468-4789.

Frozen Peanut Butter Pie

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup and 3 tablespoons powdered sugar
- ½ cup peanut butter
- ½ cup milk
- 10 ounces whipped topping
- 2 graham-cracker crusts
- ½ cup peanuts, chopped (optional)

Whip cream cheese at low speed. Beat in sugar and peanut butter. Slowly beat in milk. Fold in whipped topping. Pour into crusts. Top with chopped nuts, if desired. Freeze until firm. Yields 2 pies.

— *Jerry and Rebecca Mast*



IMAGE OF BOOK BY BERT VANDERVEEN

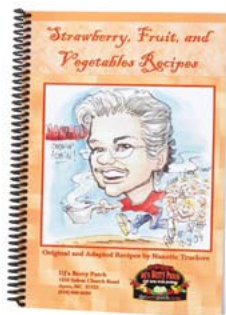
Stuffed Baked Potatoes

- 5 medium potatoes
- ¼ cup butter
- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded and divided
- ¾ cup sour cream
- 1 envelope ranch dressing mix
- 1 tablespoon chives, snipped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- Crumbled bacon
- Chopped green onions



Bake potatoes at 400° for 1 hour. Cut in half. Scoop out potato, and beat with butter. Add 1 cup cheese, sour cream, ranch dressing mix, chives, and garlic. Spoon into shells, and sprinkle with remaining cheese. Bake at 375° for 15-20 minutes. Top with bacon and green onions. Serves 10.

— *Gabriel and Arlene Schlabach*



Strawberry, Fruit, and Vegetables Recipes

People in Willow Springs remember Mary Truelove, the daughter of Italian immigrants, for introducing them to Sicilian cuisine when she retired to the area in 1975. Mary never followed recipes; she taught her daughter, Nanette, to cook the same creative way.

Last year, Nanette's daughter and son-in-law opened DJ's Berry Patch in Apex, and what began as a way to chronicle the family's Sicilian recipes turned into *Strawberry, Fruit, and Vegetables Recipes*.

The Italians believe there is a pasta recipe to go along with everything, Nanette says, and the book includes fresh ideas on incorporating such items as cabbage, spring onions, eggplant, and broccoli into easy family meals.

Copies are available at DJ's Berry Patch, 1223 Salem Church Road, Apex, or to order a copy, contact Nanette at (919) 552-3180 or nanettescookbook@gmail.com.

Eggplant Strata

- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- black pepper, freshly ground, to taste
- 1 large tomato, diced
- 1 large eggplant, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 10 basil leaves, snipped
- 2 cups of seasoned croutons, divided
- 1½ cups mozzarella cheese, shredded and divided
- 1 stick butter, melted and divided

In a large bowl, beat eggs with milk and spices. Mix in the tomato, eggplant, and basil, and add 1 cup croutons, ¾ cup cheese, and ½ stick butter. Pour mixture into a buttered two-quart casserole dish. Top mixture with the remaining croutons, cheese, and butter. Bake at 350° for approximately 45 minutes until vegetables are soft and the strata is bubbly and browned. Serves 6.



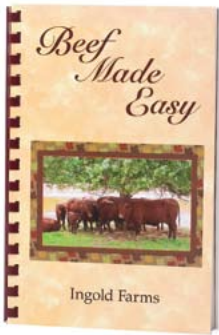
IMAGE OF BOOK BY BERT VANDERVEEN



Roasted Pepper Salad

- 6 red bell peppers
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, minced
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Broil the peppers, turning them frequently until the skin is blackened on all sides. Remove the peppers, and place them in a sealed container to cool. Peel the skin off the peppers under cold running water, and cut the peppers into ½-inch strips. Place the peppers in a bowl with the remaining ingredients, and gently toss; let marinate 30 minutes before serving. Pepper salad goes well with meat sandwiches or served as an antipasto with crusty bread. Serves 6.



Beef Made Easy

The Ingolds have been farming in Randolph County for generations. In 1990, the family started raising Santa Gertrudis cattle. A few years ago, Patricia Ingold-Wright, who runs the farm with her parents and brothers, realized that many shoppers at the farm's store on Ross Harris Road in Asheboro stayed away from certain cuts of meat because they were uncertain how to cook them. So she published *Beef Made Easy*, a collection of her family's favorite beef dishes.

The cookbook offers 50 pages of recipes for steaks, roasts, ground beef, stew beef, ribs, and liver, as well as useful tips on how to best prepare different cuts.

Cookbooks are available at the Ingold Farms store at 793 Ross Harris Road in Asheboro. Or to order a copy, call (336) 625-8481 or email TLLingold57@embarqmail.com.

Steak Fajitas

- 1 cup soy sauce
- ¼ cup honey
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 cup water
- 2 pounds sirloin or flank steak
- 1 red bell pepper, cut in thin strips
- 1 green bell pepper, cut in thin strips
- 1 onion, thinly sliced



Mix together first 6 ingredients in a bowl. Place steak in a second, glass bowl. Reserve ¼ cup of marinade, and pour remaining amount over steak. Cover, and marinate in refrigerator overnight. Drain meat, and slice into thin strips. Stir-fry meat, peppers, and onion in a skillet over medium-high heat until meat is done. Add reserved marinade as needed to prevent sticking. Serve with warmed flour tortillas.

Lil' Cheddar Meat Loaves

- 1 egg
- ¾ cup milk
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- ½ cup quick oats
- ½ cup onion, chopped
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 pound ground beef
- ⅔ cup ketchup
- ½ cup brown sugar, packed
- 1½ teaspoons prepared mustard



In a bowl, beat the egg and milk. Stir in cheese, oats, onion, and salt. Crumble beef over mixture, and mix well. Shape into 8 small loaves; place in a greased 13-inch x 9-inch x 2-inch baking dish. Combine ketchup, brown sugar, and mustard; spoon over loaves. Bake uncovered at 350° for 45 minutes, or until the meat is no longer pink and a meat thermometer reads 160°.