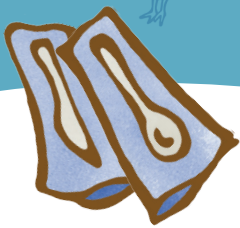


Martin & Sylvia's

Best Breakfast Cookbook

TWENTY-FIVE FAVORITE BREAKFAST RECIPES

BY LISABETH SEWELL AND SPARKLE CONTRIBUTORS
MERYL CARVER AND DAVID SEWELL MCCANN



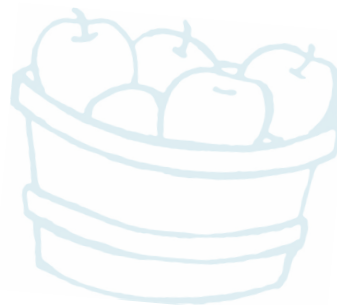
Welcome!

Have you ever noticed how Martin and Sylvia's Momma and Daddy are always making something yummy in the mornings? If you're a regular listener, you'll know that breakfast is a big meal in their tall house with lots of windows.

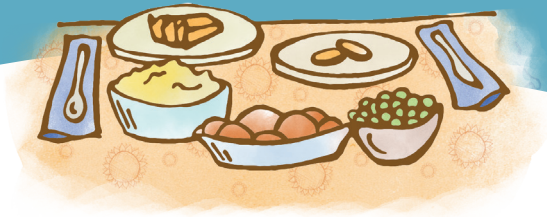
We've compiled a cookbook of twenty-five of Martin and Sylvia's favorite breakfasts so you can start your mornings together with them. From eggs-in-a-poke to Martin's favorite granola, you'll find a little something for all taste buds. We've listed the story along with the recipe, should you want to take a listen and then do some family cooking.

Parents of picky eaters — be warned! Kids may be willing to try new and different things if it's on Martin or Sylvia's plate!

Enjoy!



Sylvia's frown dissipated when she smelled what Momma was cooking. It was something delicious smelling — something with nuts and cinnamon and maybe oats. Could it be granola?



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Martin's Favorite Granola

In the At Home with Martin & Sylvia story "[Playdate](#)," Momma dishes out some homemade granola and yogurt. Did you know that this is Martin's favorite granola? It is — and it's delicious. It's a simple recipe based on the Nut & Seed Granola recipe in Cynthia Lair's [Feeding the Whole Family](#).

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups rolled oats (gluten-free)
- ½ cup sunflower seeds
- ½ cup almonds, chopped
- ⅔ cup dried cranberries
- 1 cup gluten free baking mix (we used Bob's Red Mill)
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon sea salt
- ⅓ cup cold-pressed vegetable oil
- ⅓ cup maple syrup
- ¼ cup almond milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla



DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, thoroughly mix oats, sunflower seeds, almonds, cranberries, flour, salt and cinnamon. In a second bowl, combine oil, maple syrup, almond milk, and vanilla. Slowly add the wet ingredients to the dry, mixing to combine. Line a large baking sheet or shallow baking dish with parchment paper and spread the mixture in a thin layer. Bake at 300° for 45 minutes to an hour, turning every 15 minutes to ensure even toasting. Serve with yogurt or milk, and fresh fruit to top!





Breakfast Tacos

When I was editing the *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* story "[Carrying Your Home](#)," I had to smile. For the first time ever, Martin and Sylvia were eating breakfast tacos!

Breakfast tacos are a staple in our house. I was raised in South Texas, and even when we made our home in Vermont, I always included Mexican or Tex-Mex in our weekly menus. I knew that our time here in Austin was really inspiring the resident storyteller when I read that there were breakfast tacos on Martin and Sylvia's plates!

If you live in Texas or Southern California or Arizona or any state that has a good Mexican border, you'll know all about having your breakfast wrapped in a warm tortilla. But if you don't, I have to show you what we do!

INGREDIENTS

Ingredients:

- scrambled eggs
- home fries
- grated cheese
- pico de gallo
- salsa (either fresh or store bought)
- refried beans
- breakfast sausage
- sliced avocado
- tortillas – corn or flour

For more vegetarian options, include:

- tofu scramble
- pinto or black beans
- veggie sausage
- freshly grated zucchini or yellow squash (my favorite addition)
- pan fried zucchini or yellow squash
- green onions

And if you're a real meat-eater, try:

- bacon-chorizo (mexican sausage)
- carne guisada (mexican beef stew)

So many possibilities!



DIRECTIONS

Very important: the method for heating your tortillas. You want the tortillas to be warm and soft. A dry, tough corn tortilla can be like shoe leather! So this is important stuff.

The very best way to do this: take a cast-iron or heavy skillet and heat it thoroughly on a medium-high flame without oil. You want the pan to be dry and very hot. Lay a tortilla in the pan, and allow it to heat for 20-30 seconds, and then use a spatula to flip. Heat the second side. Sometimes our pan smokes just a bit, but we're okay with that (as long as we're not cooking in oil). Place the heated tortilla between two plates or cover it with a clean dish towel, and warm the next tortillas in the same fashion. Make sure the heated tortillas remain covered until serving.

(What do I do when I'm short on time? I pop them into the toaster for a bit — watching them until they get limp and soft. They're not as moist and soft as heating in the pan, but they're not bad! David likes to put them on a baking sheet, cover them very tightly with foil, and put them in at 400°F for 4-5 minutes until they are steaming.)

Now it's time to serve: Take a warm tortilla and fill it with breakfast goodies, being sure not to overfill. Fold or wrap the tortilla and enjoy. And be sure there's a plate to catch any little bit of egg or potato that wants to jump out the backside.

Enjoy!





Mrs. Brown's Apple Turnovers

In the *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* story "[Rainy Day Help](#)," we discover that the family had been out on a cold, rainy day, harvesting apples with their dear friends, the Browns. And as usual, Mrs. Brown had something luscious to share at the end of the work day. This time it was apple turnovers, fresh out of the oven!

You may not know that, besides being a master storyteller, David Sewell McCann is an accomplished baker. Inspired by this story, we adapted [this gluten-free apple turnover recipe](#) by including almond meal and cutting the sugar. And guess what? They were delicious. Of course they were! Just what Mrs. Brown would make.

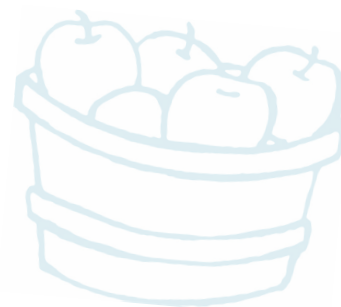
INGREDIENTS

Ingredients for the almond pastry crust:

- ½ cup raw almonds
- 1 cup all purpose baking mix (we used Bob's Red Mill)
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 5 tablespoons butter, cold, chopped
- 1 large egg, cold
- 1 tablespoon ice water

Ingredients for the apple filling:

- 2 apples, peeled, cored and chopped into ½-inch pieces
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon grated nutmeg



Mrs. Brown's Apple Turnovers

DIRECTIONS FOR THE ALMOND PASTRY CRUST

In a food processor, pulse almonds and 1 teaspoon granulated sugar, until you have a finely ground meal, about 1 minute. (Note: don't over-grind, or you'll end up with almond butter! The sugar will help it to stay a meal.) Place into a mixing bowl.

In the food processor, add flour and sugar. Pulse to mix. Add butter and pulse until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Add the egg and ice water. Blend until the dough forms a ball. (Be careful not to over-mix.)

Divide the dough into 6 pieces, flatten each into an oval disk, and place between two sheets of wax paper. Refrigerate for 30-60 minutes.

DIRECTIONS FOR THE APPLE FILLING AND CREATING TURNOVERS

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. In a small bowl, mix apples, lemon juice, sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg.

Remove the pastry disks from the refrigerator. Handle gently — the dough is a bit fragile. Take one disk and roll it between the two sheets of waxed paper. Peel off the top piece of wax paper, and place a dollop of apple mixture along the middle "line" of the dough.

Sliding your hand under the bottom piece of waxed paper, and using the wax paper to support the dough, fold the dough over in half, and crimp the edges together, to form a half moon. Peel off the bottom piece of wax paper, and place the turnover on the parchment-paper lined baking sheet.

Bake for 20-25 minutes until the pastry is golden brown. Serve plain for breakfast, or turn it into a dessert with sweet whipped cream or ice cream!

Enjoy!





Muesli

Sylvia may say "I don't like muesli!" on her grumpiest of days, but the truth is both Martin and Sylvia love muesli.

As grumpy as they both were, however, they couldn't help but enjoy the muesli. It was cool and sweet and chewy, and very pleasant to eat. They did feel a little better after they ate, and willingly cleaned their places and got ready to go outside.

— from "Grumpy Day," *At Home with Martin & Sylvia*

Who wouldn't love muesli? Particularly during the warmest days. Made with oats and yogurt, both dried and fresh fruits, and served cold, it's really delicious. Or, as Sylvia might say, "really really really delicious." Best of all: it's EASY. Mix, refrigerate, serve. Here's how to whip up our version.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups quick or rolled oats
- 2 cups unsweetened almond milk
- 1 cup whole milk yogurt
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup honey
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup raisins
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped almonds
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- fresh fruit to top



DIRECTIONS

Mix all ingredients but the fresh fruit. Place it in a sealed container and refrigerate it overnight or for up to a day (particularly if you're using rolled oats and not quick oats). And in the morning, pull it from the fridge and serve with sliced fresh fruits. Easy! Enjoy!





M+S Migas

If you've ever had migas, you'll understand what the fuss is about. It's a Mexican breakfast *extraordinario*! In our house we do the down-and-dirty variety. Which means what? We use corn chips. (Shhhh! Don't tell!)

Sometimes we use good corn tortillas that we slice and then fry ourselves. And really, it's better with true tortillas. But it's easier with chips. And besides, we get to tell our kids "our migas have CHIPS in them!" That can be very, very appealing to our crew.

Martin and Sylvia enjoy migas in the story "[Butterflies](#)" as a part of the *Martin & Sylvia: More Adventures* series. There's a Mexican festival afoot and the whole family gets into it. Try this recipe and celebrate along with Martin and Sylvia!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 small onion, diced
- 1 small red pepper, diced
- 3 tablespoons cilantro, chopped
- 1 cup corn chips
- 6 eggs, whisked
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- sea salt



DIRECTIONS

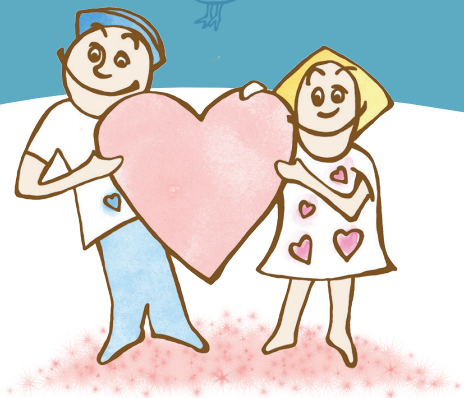
Heat the olive oil in a large frying pan or skillet over medium heat. When the oil is rippling and hot, add the diced onions and pepper along with a pinch of salt. Fry until the onions become translucent and the peppers and onions start to brown, about 5 minutes. Then add the whisked eggs and begin to fold together. Immediately after adding the eggs, add the corn chips and fold in. (If the corn chips are really large, you may want to crush them carefully into smaller pieces before adding.)

Cook gently, turning with a spatula, until the eggs are firm but not brown. Add salt to taste — although be warned, the corn chips do add their own salt.

Serve with a sprinkle of cilantro, a serving of beans, and some salsa.

Buen provecho, amigos!





Breakfast Kasha

Martin and Sylvia's Daddy always seems to be cooking something good. In the *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* story "[Stone Soup](#)," Daddy is up to something unusual for breakfast.

"Stone soup?" asked Daddy, as he added toasted buckwheat to some onions and carrots cooking on the stove. "Where did you hear about stone soup?"

Toasted buckwheat? Onions? Carrots? What is daddy cooking?

In our house, it's called *kasha*, and it's a breakfast staple — especially good on cool spring mornings.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup of buckwheat groats
- 3 cups of stock (vegetable or chicken)
- 2 eggs, beaten
- ½ medium onion, diced
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 2 stalks of celery, sliced
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons of parsley, minced



DIRECTIONS

Sauté the vegetables in oil for 2-3 minutes. Add the buckwheat groats, and sauté until coated with oil. Once coated, add the two eggs and mix quickly until the egg mixture coats the buckwheat and vegetables. Then add 3 cups of stock, and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes, until the liquid is absorbed. Serve with parsley sprinkled on the top. Enjoy!





Popovers

In the *Martin and Sylvia: Saturdays!* story “[A Hunting Morning](#),” Laura is visiting the Browns next door and Martin and Sylvia are invited over for buttered popovers. Mr. and Mrs. Brown then set up a “popover treasure hunt” for the three children where they use their noses to find the tasty treats. When the hunt begins, however, the children are surprised to find they are not the only ones doing the hunting!

For the longest time, I thought that you had to have a special pan to make popovers, so — not wanting to clutter up my kitchen with a one-trick pan — I simply never made them.

But did you know that you can make popovers in a normal muffin tin? It’s true! Popovers made in a muffin tin won’t reach the sky-high puffiness of those made in a proper popover pan, but they’re still plenty billowy to scoop up your favorite filling.

No matter what kind of pan you use, the key is the same — do not open the oven door during the cooking process. Popovers rise because of the steam created as liquid evaporates from the super-light batter. Opening the oven door for even a moment lowers the oven temperature resulting in less steam and deflated popovers.

It’s so tempting just to peek in, but do yourself a favor — make sure your oven light bulb is working and keep your hands away from that oven door. When you have a piping hot pillow of a popover in your hand at the end, I promise, it will be worth your patience!



INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup milk (at least 2%, but whole is better)
- 2 eggs
- 3 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 cup flour
- a pinch of salt



DIRECTIONS

Using a food processor if you have one (and a sturdy bowl and whisk if you don't), combine the milk, eggs, and 1 tablespoon of the butter. Once those are mixed thoroughly, add the flour and salt and process until the batter is a little foamy.

Meanwhile, heat your oven to 450°F. No cheating here — make sure it's fully pre-heated before you go any further.

When the oven is hot, pour the rest of the butter equally into the wells in the muffin tin and put the whole thing in the oven for about 3 minutes.

Give the batter one last good pulse, then carefully pull the hot pan out and divide the batter among the wells. Put the pan back in the oven for 15 minutes, and do not open the oven door.

Reduce the heat to 350°F and bake for 15 minutes, again, without opening the oven. When the popovers are fully puffed and sound hollow when you tap the top, run a butter knife around the edge of each one to get it to release from the pan. Eat them while they're hot with extra butter or your favorite jam.

Enjoy!



Apple Sandwich Stackers

In *Martin & Sylvia* “Apple Pies,” farmer neighbors Mr. and Mrs. Brown are hosting an apple pie contest complete with games, stories, and a lot of apple-pie-eating. All families must bring a pie to be judged.

Sylvia’s contribution to the contest is as unique as her sweet little personality. She makes a “crust sandwich” with jam and then stacks in apples, honey, and cinnamon. Sounds warm and delicious, right?

Sylvia’s idea got me thinking — why not skip the pie and make crustless apple sandwiches? The apple sandwich stackers that follow are the result.

While I’ve chosen to stick close to Sylvia’s original ingredients — only subbing peanut butter for the jam — feel free to get creative with these. Think yogurt, cheddar cheese, or any flavor of nut butter you have on hand. Try different kinds of nuts and grains for the crunchy parts, depending on what you like. And if you aren’t afraid of a little mess, lay out the ingredients and let the kiddos stack them together!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup old fashioned oats
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 tablespoon honey
- 2 tablespoon oil
- ¼ cup pumpkin seeds
- 3-4 tablespoons peanut butter
- 2 large apples
- juice from half a lemon



Apple Sandwich Stackers

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 325°F.

In a small bowl, mix the oats and cinnamon. Add the honey and oil, and stir until the oats are coated. Spread the oat mixture on a baking sheet and toast in the oven for 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally. Your nose will know when they're done.

Meanwhile, prepare a large bowl of cold water with the lemon juice squeezed in. Core and slice the apples and put them in the water. (Tip: If you don't have an apple corer, cut the apples horizontally, leaving out the section with the core.) Once the oats are done, prepare your stacks. Start with the bottom apple slice, then layer on some peanut butter. Sprinkle on toasted oats and pumpkin seeds, then top with another apple slice. Enjoy for breakfast or snacktime!



Sugar Plum Bunny Bites

Sugarplums! When you say the word, doesn't it conjure up all the traditional stories of Christmas?

In our *Martin & Sylvia* story about "[The Nutcracker](#)," there's a whole-family production of the ballet at Martin and Sylvia's house. Martin recreates the entire event for his sister in the funniest and most delightful way! And there are not only Sugar Plum Fairies to make the evening complete, but also real sugarplums to enjoy at the end of the performance. And if you're wondering where the "bunny" part of this recipe title comes in — well, you'll just have to listen to "Living Room Nutcracker."

I've never known exactly what a *sugarplum* is. I figured it was something like a gumdrop. I believe that's because in some of the old Christmas picture books I remember, sugarplums are depicted in bright colors and are sugar-coated, much like gumdrops.

But sugarplums are much much more than gumdrops. Who would have thought that sugarplums are made of dried fruit and nuts? There's honey and a little powdered sugar within — and some spices to make them rich and complex.

These are sweet and hearty little treats — and between the protein-packed nuts, the nutrient-dense, fiber-rich fruits, and the medicinal qualities of those spices (anise, fennel, and caraway are all terrific for digestion) — I do believe we can say these sweet treats are good for you!



Sugar Plum Bunny Bites

INGREDIENTS

- 3 cups rolled oats (gluten-free)
- ½ cup almonds, chopped
- ½ cup hazelnuts, chopped
- ¼ cup dried figs, chopped
- ¼ cup dried dates, chopped
- ¼ cup dried apricots, chopped
- 1 cup gluten free baking mix (we used Bob's Red Mill)
- ⅛ teaspoon cardamom
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon sea salt
- ⅓ cup cold-pressed vegetable oil
- ⅔ cup rice syrup
- ¼ cup almond milk (or other alternative milk)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla

DIRECTIONS

In a large bowl, thoroughly mix oats, nuts, dried fruit, flour, salt, cardamom, and cinnamon. In a second bowl, combine oil, rice syrup, almond milk, and vanilla. Slowly add the wet ingredients to the dry, mixing to combine. Line a large baking sheet or shallow baking dish with parchment paper, and spread the mixture in a thin layer. Bake at 300°F for 45-60 minutes, turning every 15 minutes to ensure an even toasting. Serve with milk or yogurt, and a little bit of honey if you want some extra sweet!

Enjoy!





French Toast with Berry Compote

On the twenty-third day of *Martin & Sylvia's Audio Advent Calendar*, in the story "[A Cleaning Party](#)," Martin and Sylvia enjoy plates of French toast with berry compote for breakfast and anticipate a big day of setting up, baking, and wrapping presents for their Advent Spiral Walk party.

Then, Daddy announces that — in addition to the fun party preparations Martin and Sylvia had planned — they will need to clean their house to prepare for their guests. At first Sylvia protests. "Cleaning is not very magical," she argues. But then, the duo finds a special story in their advent card that inspires them. By the end of the morning, the house is gleaming and Martin and Sylvia have taken to heart what Daddy said at the beginning of the day: "There are few things as magical as cleaning!"

You can easily make French toast by merely cleaning out your refrigerator. A few slices of stale bread, an egg or two, a splash of milk, and — voila! — you have French toast.

At the holidays, however, I like to make a version that is even more special. I start by going to our local bakery and picking out a loaf of fancy bread. This time of year I can often find challah or sourdough studded with chocolate and dried cherries, for example. Then — because slightly stale bread will soak up the eggs and cream better — I try to let the bread sit on the counter for a day before I use it.

INGREDIENTS

- ½ cup heavy cream
- ½ cup milk
- 4 eggs
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- About 12 slices of bread (day old, if possible)
- berry compote (recipe follows)
- syrup and powdered sugar (optional, for serving)



French Toast with Berry Compote

DIRECTIONS

In a shallow pie pan, whisk together the cream, milk, eggs, nutmeg, and cinnamon. Dip the slices of bread in the cream mixture, allowing them to sit for at least 60 seconds to really soak in the creaminess.

Then, place each slice of toast on a griddle over medium heat, and let them cook — flipping as necessary — until they are golden brown on both sides. Serve with berry compote (recipe follows), maple syrup, or a quick dusting of powdered sugar.

Note: For a gluten- and dairy-free version, substitute gluten-free bread of choice, plus oat or almond milk. Skip the cream.

Berry Compote

INGREDIENTS

- 5 cups mixed berries (strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, and cherries are all good choices)
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 2 tablespoons candied ginger, chopped

DIRECTIONS

Wash, stem, and hull your berries, as necessary, then cut them into chunks as small as the smallest type of berry you are using. Toss them in a wide skillet with high sides. Add the orange juice and ginger, then bring the berry compote to a boil.

Reduce the heat slightly to bring the compote back down to a simmer, and stir at least once every few minutes. When your stirring creates a clear wake in the compote, remove it from the heat and spoon into a jar or two. Store in the refrigerator, and use within a few weeks.





Polenta

In “[Forest Treasures](#),” the story of *Martin & Sylvia’s Audio Advent Calendar*, Martin and Sylvia wake up late after enjoying Momma’s singing at the holiday concert the night before. When they finally make it downstairs, Daddy has two bowls of polenta “with little pools of butter” ready for them and they plan their day as they enjoy the delicious warmth.

A warm bowl of polenta — for breakfast, lunch, or dinner — is the coziest thing on a cold day. It’s hearty and thick. Even its golden color gently whispers, “I’m warm!”

It is a bit terrifying to wade into the fray of talking about how to cook polenta because, as with many traditional foods, there are a lot of people who learned to make it “the right way” at their grandmother’s knee. I would never try to contradict that, of course, so I’ll simply tell you what works for me.

INGREDIENTS

For polenta:

- 2 cups polenta
- 10 cups water
- ¼ cup cream (optional)
- 1 tablespoon butter
- salt to taste

For sweet toppings:

- handful of dried cherries
- handful of chopped pistachios
- a drizzle of maple syrup

For savory toppings:

- fried egg
- handful of chopped kale or other
- hearty greens
- hot sauce



DIRECTIONS

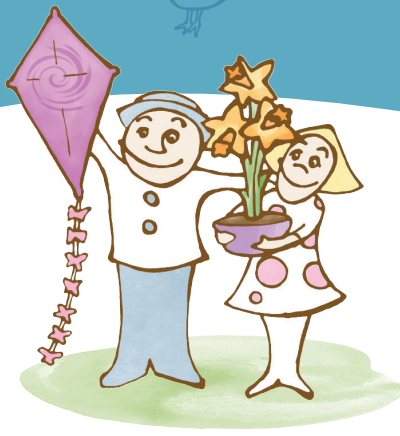
In a large, high-sided skillet (or any pot that can hold at least 3 quarts), mix the polenta and water.

Place the pan over medium heat and stay nearby, stirring frequently and adjusting the temperature as needed — lower if the polenta begins to spurt and pop like an ancient tar pit, higher if there are no bubbles at all.

Continue in this manner until the polenta is done to your liking, which should take something close to 45 minutes. Turn off the heat, then stir in the cream, butter, and salt.

Ladle the polenta into bowls, add toppings as you like, and enjoy hot.

If you have leftover polenta, spoon it into a loaf pan, cover, and chill in the refrigerator. When you're ready to eat it, quickly invert the loaf pan over a cutting board. You can reconstitute this "polenta loaf" by mashing it together with milk and warming it up, or you can simply cut off thick slices and fry or bake them in that form.



Eggs in a Poke

In *"The Tree,"* the seventh story in *Martin & Sylvia's Audio Advent Calendar*, brother and sister wake up to the first snowfall. The pair quickly bundles-and-boots-up to play in their backyard and explore what the snow has done to their favorite apple trees. But then, on a high branch, Martin spots an advent card with a Christmas tree on it. Is it a clue about what the family will do that day?

It's always so cozy on the morning of the first snowfall, and in this story Daddy makes Martin and Sylvia's house even cozier with a hearty breakfast of "eggs in a poke."

Also called "eggs in a hole," "eggs in a basket," and (in Great Britain) "toad in a hole," eggs in a poke is simply an egg cooked in a piece of toast that has had the center cut out. While the hole in the toast is traditionally cut with a biscuit cutter, because we're in the midst of the holidays it's just as easy — and pretty fun — to use a holiday cookie cutter to make a shape.

Another fun holiday touch? Serve up your eggs in a poke on a big platter of sliced avocado and canned tomatoes. Not only does it make this breakfast heartier, it's a lovely dose of red and green, too.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 tablespoon butter or olive oil
- 4 slices bread
- 4 eggs
- 1 avocado
- 1 14.5 ounce can whole, peeled tomatoes
- salt and pepper, to taste



DIRECTIONS

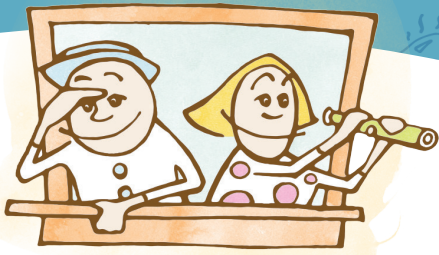
Melt the butter on a large griddle or skillet. Slice the avocado, wring out and chop the tomatoes, and spread them each onto the sides of a large platter.

Then, use your favorite Christmas cookie cutter to cut out the center of each slice of bread, reserving the inside shape for dipping. Lightly toast the bread (both outer ring and insert) on one side, then flip it.

Working quickly, crack one egg into the center of each toast. Cook until the whites are set.

If you like an over-easy egg, remove your eggs in a poke from the heat, and arrange them on the platter. If you want your eggs a bit more cooked, flip the toasts once more — with confident conviction to keep the eggs from coming apart — and let the toast cook on the first side for about thirty more seconds. Again, plate your eggs up with the avocado and tomatoes.

Serve family style with a big spoon for scooping bits of avocado and tomato onto each person's portion.



Ship's Biscuits

In “Many Hands” from our *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* series, brother and sister learn to sail! There are so many different new words and actions to learn — and so much fun to be had. New skills require a joyous celebration!

“Shall we celebrate your first coming-about with a snack?” asked Mrs. Weber, climbing down from the foredeck, “We’ve got ship’s biscuits and jam.”

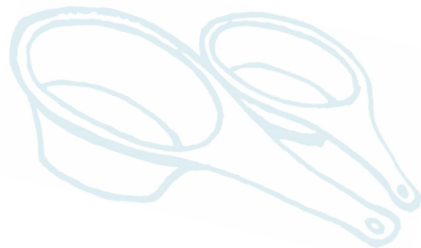
“Yum!” said all four children at once as Momma handed out the hard biscuits of oats and coconut with apricot jam piled on top.

Ship’s Biscuits are historically a type of cracker made of simple, inexpensive ingredients — flour, salt, and water. These plain and long-lasting biscuits were important during sea voyages, military campaigns, and other long and challenging journeys that folks took long-ago.

Our version is hardly plain and so tasty they won’t last very long. They’re buttery, soft, and DELICIOUS. And gluten-free!

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup gluten-free rolled oats
- 1¼ cup all purpose gluten-free flour
- ½ cup shredded coconut
- ¾ cup sugar
- 8 tablespoons (½ cup) butter
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 tablespoons water
- 1 teaspoon baking soda



DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 365°F. In a large mixing bowl, mix the oats, flour, coconut, and sugar.

Melt the butter, honey and water in a saucepan over low heat. When the butter mixture is melted, quickly mix in the baking soda. (Watch out! The mixture will expand. Be sure you're working in a pot that's large enough.)

Add the melted butter mix to the dry ingredients —mixing quickly and completely.

Place spoonfuls of the dough onto baking sheets. Be sure to space them so there's room for the cookies to expand. Bake for 10-12 minutes, until golden.

Allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheets for 5 minutes (as the gluten-free version can be a bit fragile) and then transfer to racks to cool completely.

Delicious foodstuffs for able-seamen of all ages — and land-lubbers, too.

Enjoy!



Lemon Meringue Quinoa Granola

This is the most unique granola recipe I've ever tried. It's crunchy and lemony and sweet — and so delicious that I asked the good and clever Sparkle storyteller if he might include it in a *Martin & Sylvia* story. You'll find that Martin and Sylvia enjoy it for their breakfast in “[Projects](#)” from *Martin & Sylvia: More Adventures*.

INGREDIENTS

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup quinoa (uncooked)
- 1 cup rolled oats
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sliced almonds
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
- 2 tablespoons poppy seeds
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup coconut oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cup honey
- 1 egg white
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon zest
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup dried blueberries



DIRECTIONS

Preheat the oven to 300°F. In a bowl, combine the quinoa, oats, almonds, sesame seeds, and poppy seeds.

Place the coconut oil and honey in a small saucepan and heat slowly until both are melted together. (If your kitchen is really hot, and the coconut oil is already liquid, you can skip this step!) Add to the grain and seed mix, and toss to combine.

In a different bowl, whisk the one egg white until stiff peaks have formed — this is the meringue part! Add in the lemon zest, sea salt, and vanilla. Fold into the granola, and mix well to combine.

Spread the granola mixture onto a baking pan, and bake for 20 minutes. Remove from the oven, give it a good stir, and then bake for 20 minutes more.

Remove from the oven, pour into a big bowl while still warm, and add the blueberries. Stir to combine. Enjoy!





Basic Applesauce

In “[A Kitchen of Canning](#)” from our *At Home with Martin and Sylvia* series, it’s the end of tomato season and the beginning of apple season, which means that it’s time to preserve apples for the winter.

Martin and Sylvia have a smart Momma, indeed! Homemade applesauce — typically dolloped onto a bowl of warm oatmeal at our house — is like a fuzzy scarf and a hug as the weather starts to turn colder.

And fortunately, making homemade applesauce is much easier than knitting fuzzy scarves. With about an hour of largely inactive prep, you can easily stock your larder with enough applesauce to top hot oatmeal and everything else your heart desires for all of fall.

INGREDIENTS

- 3 pounds of apples
- ½ cup water
- 1 lemon
- ¼ cup honey (optional)
- 1 heaping tablespoon cinnamon (optional)



DIRECTIONS

To start, you'll need about 3 pounds of apples. I like to pick a mix of varieties: a couple of Gala, three or four Granny Smith, but that's a personal preference. One of the beauties of making your own applesauce is that you can make it exactly as sweet or as tart as you like it.

Next, pull out a large stock pot, and measure in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water. Squeeze the juice of 1 lemon (about 2 tablespoons) into the water.

Then it's back to the apples. I don't like to peel mine, because I like the little flecks of color the skin gives the finished sauce. Again, that's a personal preference, so feel free to peel your apples first if that makes you happy.

Once they're peeled (or not), begin chopping. No need to dice the apples, just a rough chop into 1-or 2-inch pieces will do. Discard the cores and stems, and add the chunks to the lemon water. Add the optional honey and cinnamon at this point as well.

Put the whole pot on the stove until the water begins to boil, then let it all simmer for about 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. The apples will all cook at different speeds, but you'll know they're done when the firmer apples are fairly soft, and the softer apples are beginning to look a little like sauce. Also, it will smell amazing!



Everything Granola Bites

In the *Martin & Sylvia: Saturdays!* story “[Let’s Do Everything](#),” the children and their friends have so many good ideas for the day — and instead of choosing just one, they decide to try to do them all!

One of the kids’ more brilliant ideas is to make “Everything Granola.”

I love the taste of granola that has little bits of everything mixed in. And — as a hungry runner and a mama — granola is amazing fuel for the days it feels like I could eat everything!

While I sometimes just make baked granola crumbles, I also enjoy the chewier texture of granola that’s been baked into bars. Except that I can never seem to get the bars out of the pan in perfect square pieces. No matter how much I grease and butter, those silly grains always want to stick.

But, truly, by the time the smell of toasted granola hits my nose, I find that I don’t care much what shape it is. We call these “granola bites” and love them just the same.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 eggs
- 1 tablespoon vanilla
- 1 tablespoon honey
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup rolled oats
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup coconut flakes
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup pumpkin seeds
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sunflower seeds
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried apricots, diced
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried cranberries
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chocolate chips
- 2 tablespoons sesame seeds
- a pinch of salt
- butter or oil, to grease the pan



Everything Granola Bites

DIRECTIONS

Preheat your oven to 325°F and grease a 9x9 pan very well.

Mix the wet granola ingredients in a small bowl and the dry ingredients in a larger one. Then pour the liquid into the dry goods, using clean hands to incorporate everything very well. Gently pat the granola into the prepared pan, and bake for about 15 minutes, or until the edges are starting to just barely brown.

Let the granola cool, and then cut into bars or bites. Since this recipe has egg, you'll want to store it in the fridge for no more than a week or so. Enjoy it with a glob of yogurt on the side (for a little extra protein boost) and a drizzle of honey.

Enjoy!





Pumpkin Ginger Pancakes

Curious about the Pumpkin Ginger Pancakes Momma serves up in “Looking for Delight” from the *Martin & Sylvia* series? Sarah, a Sparkle subscriber, emailed to request the recipe after her interest was piqued by this luscious breakfast idea!

This recipe is really easy – easier than you’d think, given its fancy name. And easier still if you want to use pancake mix! Add the right spices and a little cooked pumpkin, and you’ll have a gourmet breakfast for all.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup flour (we used King Arthur Gluten Free flour mix, and added $\frac{1}{4}$ cup more)
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground ginger
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons maple syrup
- 1 cup milk (we used unsweetened almond milk)
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 2 tablespoons melted butter
- 1 large egg
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canned pure pumpkin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mashed banana (about 1 large)

DIRECTIONS

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt, and spices. In a separate bowl, mix the milk, maple syrup, vanilla, melted butter, and egg with an electric mixer. Add in the pumpkin and mashed banana, and mix until well-combined.

Over medium heat, melt some butter or oil on a skillet or heavy pan. Using a small ladle or $\frac{1}{4}$ -cup measuring cup, scoop batter onto the hot pan. Cook until bubbles begin to appear on top of the pancake, then flip and cook until golden on both sides, about 2-3 minutes per side.

Serve warm with maple syrup! Enjoy!





Bacon Apple Mini Pies

In the *Martin & Sylvia* story “[Apple Pies](#),” Martin and Sylvia each try to be inventive with apple pie recipes for Mr. and Mrs. Brown’s pie contest. While Sylvia makes a more traditional pie with jam, honey, cinnamon, and oats, Martin gets really creative with a secret ingredient — bacon!

Though it seems as if it might be an odd combination, bacon and apples are actually quite delicious together. The saltiness of the bacon combined with the sweetness of the apples makes Martin’s idea a brilliant one. Add in a flaky, orange-zest-spiked crust and you’ve got a pie that would win a blue ribbon at any contest.

In order to make these pies more child-friendly, instead of making one big pie, I’ve divided the pie crust recipe into four smaller pies. You could certainly make them in tiny pie pans, but — rather than buy extra kitchen equipment — I shaped mine into rustic pies by simply spooning the filling into the middle and folding up the “crust” edge. While they’re delicious with just the bacon and apples, if you want to make them even more creative, add a sprinkle of cheddar cheese to the top just before serving. Give it a try!

These pies will keep in the refrigerator for a few days, so feel free to make up a batch and reheat one or two as you need a warming treat.

INGREDIENTS

- 1¼ cup flour
- ¼ cup ice water
- 1 stick (8 tablespoons) butter
- 1 orange (zest and juice)
- 2 apples
- 4 slices bacon
- 2-3 tablespoons sugar
- cheddar cheese (optional)



DIRECTIONS

Use the bacon to make bacon crumbles. To do so, cook or bake the bacon until it's nice and crispy. Allow it to cool on a paper towel, then crumble or chop it into small pieces.

Meanwhile, in the bowl of a food processor, mix the flour and orange zest. Working quickly so that the butter stays cold, slice the butter into little cubes and toss them into the food processor. Pulse the food processor until the mixture appears crumbly, add the ice water, and continue pulsing until the dough just starts to come off the side of the bowl. (Alternatively, you can do this by hand. Just use a pair of forks to cut the butter into the flour. Add the water, then stir with the fork until the mixture clumps into a dough ball.)

Dump the dough onto your counter or cutting board, and divide into 4 equal pieces. Pressing the pieces into roughly round disks, layer them on a plate with pieces of plastic wrap in-between them. Put the plate in the refrigerator while you prepare the filling. This is also a good time to preheat your oven to 425°F.

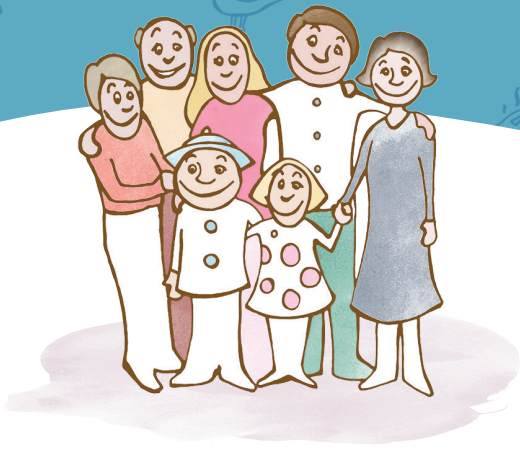
For the filling, peel, core, and thinly slice 2 apples. Toss the slices with the juice from the orange, about 1 tablespoon of sugar, and the bacon crumbles.

Pull the crusts back out of the fridge. Place the first dough disk between 2 pieces of plastic wrap, and roll out into about an 8-inch circle. Flip the crust onto a bake sheet, and layer a handful of apple slices in the center, leaving about an inch around the edges free. Fold the edge of the crust up over the apple slices. Don't worry about it being perfect, these are supposed to be rustic! Sprinkle about a teaspoon of sugar on top, then repeat with the other three crusts. You may have some filling left over, but it makes a good snack while you're waiting for the pies to bake.

Cook the pies at 425°F for 10 minutes, then drop the temperature to 375°F and bake for another 20-30 minutes. You'll know they're done when they start to brown up just a little. To make this even more of a surprise recipe, serve with a few sprinkles of cheddar cheese on top.

Enjoy!





Daddycakes

Daddycakes! Martin and Sylvia love Daddycakes, the inventive creation of their much-loved Daddy.

Now I have to admit: Daddycakes are often totally inspired by the moment, as well as what's in the fridge. So we've created an easy, customizable version that's based on Daddy's creative pancakes (which happen to be very similar to the pancakes that David has been whipping up in our house for years now).

Our version is packed with nut and seed protein as well as a little bit of vegetable goodness. We use the prepackaged squash or sweet potato that you can buy in the frozen section — we steam half a cup before we get started. Daddycakes taste a bit heartier than traditional pancakes, but just a bit! They are sweet and good.

You'll need a food processor, as well as a basic pancake recipe or mix, to get you started. Then you just add those very special ingredients that make Daddycakes unique!

INGREDIENTS

- basic pancake mix (gluten-free or gluten-full)
- ½ cup nuts (almonds, walnuts, or pecans)
- ¼ cup ground seeds (flax or chia are ideal, sunflower is good too)
- ½ cup cooked sweet potato or squash
- 1 banana, mashed
- 1 extra egg (or egg replacer)
- butter or oil



DIRECTIONS

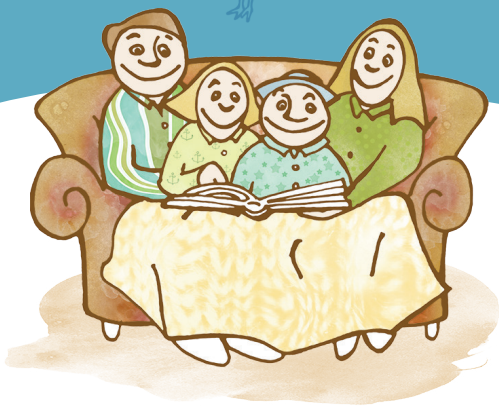
Using the food processor, process the nuts and seeds until they are well ground into a heavy “flour” (but not so long that they become nut butter).

Prepare the pancake mix (or recipe) by the normal instructions, using the normal proportions.

Before combining the wet ingredients with the dry ingredients, add the nut-and-seed meal into the dry ingredients and blend well. To the wet ingredients, add the sweet potato, banana, and extra egg, and use a hand mixer to combine thoroughly. Next, combine both wet and dry ingredients thoroughly. This is your Daddycakes batter!

Heat a skillet or pan with butter or oil to coat, and when the pan is hot pour in ½ cup of batter, tilting the pan to help the batter spread evenly. (The batter is a bit thicker than traditional batter, so it needs a bit of help spreading out across the pan.) Cook on the first side until the up-side is bubbling and the down-side is golden, and then turn, flip, and cook on the opposite side until golden.

Serve with Momma’s Spiced Applesauce (see the next recipe!) or maple syrup and fresh fruit.



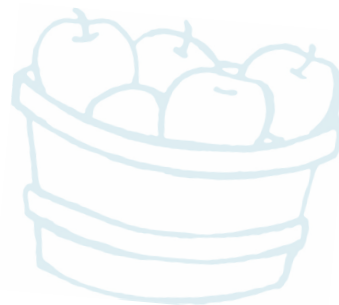
Momma's Spiced Applesauce

In the *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* story "[Kitchen of Canning](#)," what starts out as a-lot-of-work turns into a-lot-of-fun for everyone. Daddy comes in with a full bushel of apples from their tree, and Momma gets excited about the "spiced applesauce" she wants to make this year. And even though it is a little messy, everyone helps with the clean-up.

Spiced applesauce! Cinnamon, cardamom, allspice. Can't you already smell and taste it? We've got Momma's recipe for you — all you need are ripe apples, some honey, some lemon juice, and a few lovely spices.

INGREDIENTS

- 5-6 pounds tart apples (1/2 peck or about 10-12 medium apples)
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 cinnamon stick (3 inches)
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
- a pinch of salt



Momma's Spiced Applesauce

DIRECTIONS

If you plan to use a food mill to process the applesauce, simply quarter the apples. If you don't have a food mill and you want to mash the apples, then peel, core, and quarter the apples.

Place all of the ingredients in a heavy pot or dutch oven with a lid. Cover and cook over medium-low heat for 30-40 minutes until the apples are tender. Occasionally stir the apples to make sure all are softening. Remove from the heat and discard the cinnamon stick.

Mash the apples or process through a food mill. Store in the refrigerator for up to a week, or pour into sterilized jars and can for future enjoyment.

It is truly delicious, hot or cold!





Mini-Quiches

Mini-quiches are not only delicious, they also serve two important breakfast functions: appealing to my boys with their cute little size and filling them with stick-to-the-ribs nutrition. Plus, there's no fussing with a pastry crust!

These quiches are featured in the *Martin & Sylvia* story "[Little House Day](#)" when the family challenges themselves to make meals with only ingredients that they have grown on their own property.

The version below is flavored with goat's cheese and spinach. But here's the deal: using the basic custard mix — that egg and milk base — you can add any variety of ingredients.

For example, yours could be bacon and cheddar — just add six slices of crumbled bacon and one cup of grated cheddar in place of the spinach and chevre. Or turkey sausage and mushroom — add 8 oz each of sliced, cooked turkey sausage and sliced, cooked mushrooms.

A tip for those who prefer a dairy-free version: instead of cream or whole milk, use almond milk or rice milk.

INGREDIENTS

- 6 eggs
- ½ cup milk or cream
- ¼ cup sliced scallions
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen spinach, crumbled
- ¾ cup crumbled chevre cheese
- butter or olive oil for muffin tin



DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350°F. Generously butter (or oil) the muffin tin.

Whisk eggs and milk in a bowl. Add cheese, scallions, and spinach (or your ingredients of choice). Mix to combine well. Divide the egg mixture evenly among the prepared muffin cups.

Bake until the tops are just beginning to brown and the egg is set, about 30-35 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack for 5 minutes or so. Then place a rack on top of the pan, flip the whole thing over, and turn the quiches out onto the rack. (If some are stuck, just run a knife gently around the edges. They'll eventually come out.)

Easy peasy. And they really are good — for the adults in the house too! Enjoy!



Alabama Toast

Here's the recipe you've been waiting for! How many times have we been asked, "What *exactly* is Alabama Toast?"

Alabama Toast is a regular breakfast in Martin and Sylvia's house. It's one of Daddy's specialties and it's featured in the *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* story "[Go to Sleep Fairy](#)."

It's a version of french toast with a delightful "Alabama" spread, made with good ingredients from the southeastern United States: peanut butter and molasses. And it's a hearty way to start the day, combining the protein of the eggs and peanut butter with the iron in the molasses.

INGREDIENTS

For the Alabama spread:

- ½ cup peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons molasses
- 1 tablespoon cream (optional)
- Water

For the french toast:

- 3 eggs
- 4 slices of bread
- 1 tablespoon milk (any variety)
- Butter



DIRECTIONS

Beat the eggs and milk in a bowl, and place in a shallow baking dish. Dip each piece of bread in the egg mixture, coating each side. Stack the bread in the baking dish, allowing the bread to soak up the mixture.

Meanwhile, in a separate bowl, combine the peanut butter, molasses, and cream. Blend together until thoroughly combined. Add water in small amounts until the spread is smooth, with the consistency of a thick sauce.

Next, heat butter in a frying pan, and cook the egg-soaked bread until each side is golden brown. Stack on a serving plate, and slather the Alabama spread between slices and across the top. And serve.





Backyard Porridge

In the *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* story "Spring Sillies Day," Momma served the children Backyard Porridge on this delightful day.

Brother and sister looked cautiously into the bowl, wondering if there were really bugs and grubs mixed in. They poked at the porridge, and saw what did indeed look like worms.

"What's wrong?" asked Momma.

"Is that a real worm in the porridge?" asked Martin.

"Hmmm," said Momma, looking into his bowl, "Let's see." Then she took her spoon, scooped up the worm and popped it into her mouth. "Mmmmm – delicious!"

Brother and sister shrieked at the sight!

But Daddy showed them what the bugs and grubs were really made out of: thinly sliced dried apricots and papaya and chopped walnuts. After a good laugh, everyone dug into their Backyard Porridge, agreeing that bugs and grubs tasted delicious.

You don't have to wait until next April 1 to have some morning silliness. Create your own Spring Sillies Day, and serve up a little of these "bugs & grubs" — Martin & Sylvia style. Here's how.

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup steel cut oats
- 4 cups water
- 1 pinch of salt
- 1/8 cup dried papaya, thinly sliced
- 1/8 cup dried apricots, thinly sliced
- 1/8 cup dried date pieces (in oat flour)
- 1/4 cup walnuts, chopped
- butter or flax oil to taste
- maple syrup, agave, or honey to taste



DIRECTIONS

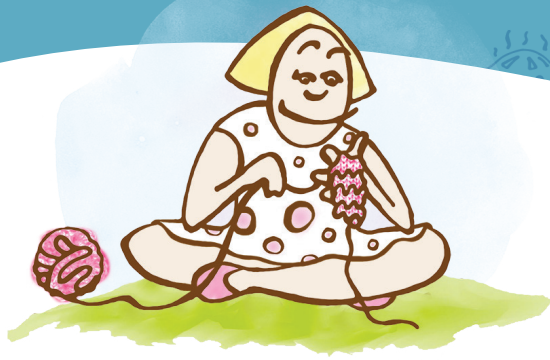
Bring oats, water, and salt to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer, and allow to cook for 20-30 minutes, stirring frequently, until cooked through.

In the last five minutes of cooking, stir in the papaya, apricots, and walnuts. Allow to cook until soft.

Spoon into bowls and serve with butter or flax oil, as well as something to add a little extra sweetness: maple syrup, agave, or honey.

Serve your family this Backyard Porridge complete with nutritious “bugs and grubs” and watch them enjoy!





Wagon Wheel Omelettes

In our house you can't go wrong with an omelette — breakfast, lunch, or dinner. This little creation is the Wagonwheel Omelette from the *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* story "[Westward Ho!](#)" It's the perfect hearty breakfast before a day's adventure.

The Wagon Wheel is a playful take on the familiar Western Omelette. We use traditional Western Omelette ingredients, but you could fill it with just about anything. The idea is that it is shaped like a wagon wheel and cut into spokes. You'll want to use a small omelette or frying pan in order to keep the omelette a manageable size.

INGREDIENTS

- 4 large eggs
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup grated cheese
- $\frac{1}{3}$ red pepper, diced
- 3 green onions, thinly sliced
- olive oil
- 1 tablespoon milk or water
- Salt



Wagon Wheel Omelettes

DIRECTIONS

Heat the pan with a tablespoon of olive oil. Sauté the red pepper and green onions in the oil for 2 minutes with a sprinkle of salt. Remove from the pan and place in a side dish.

Now, let's prepare the first half of the "wheel." Gently beat two of the eggs in a small mixing bowl. Add the milk or water. Pour into the pan, and then tilt the pan so that the egg spreads evenly. Allow the egg mixture to firm up, and then use a spatula to lift the edges. Again tilt the pan to direct the egg away from the center and to the sides; allow the egg mixture to flow into the space at the side of the pan and under the lifted spatula. When the egg is firm on the bottom, use a spatula to gently flip the egg. Cook for just a moment more before gently flipping the first half of the "wheel" onto a separate plate.

Repeat the instructions from above, cooking the second two eggs. Once this second half of the wheel is flipped, turn off the heat under the pan. Layer first the grated cheese, and then the cooked vegetables, and finally top with the first half of the wheel. Slide the entire omelette onto a plate, slice into spokes, and enjoy!





Banana Rafts

"The snack for Daddy, the snack for Daddy – Yum!" sing Martin & Sylvia in the *At Home with Martin & Sylvia* story "[Daddy's Toe](#)."

In the story, the children disappear into the kitchen and make their daddy something extra special while he rests his broken toe. They call the treat "Banana Rafts."

INGREDIENTS

- 1 banana
- peanut butter
- Raisins
- shredded coconut
- Toothpicks



DIRECTIONS

Slice the banana into rounds, spread a little peanut butter onto each round, place a few raisins on the peanut butter, and sprinkle the entire thing with shredded coconut. Serve with toothpicks.

As Sylvia says: "The raisins are the people and the coconut is the snow." But don't forget the toothpicks! "Those are for eating," Sylvia explains, "because it's fancy."

Enjoy!

