



StoneSoup

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StoneSoup

*The magazine supporting
creative kids around the world*

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Editor's Note

During the holidays, when cookies, cake, and hot chocolate seem to be everywhere, we tend to think of food as a comfort and as a delight. We don't often talk publicly about the many anxieties surrounding food, about the allergies, intolerances, and religious or ethical dietary choices that can make it difficult to enjoy a meal with one's friends and family. In this year's food issue, some of our young writers explore this darker side of eating, alongside its joys. We also have six delicious recipes to share with you, and hope you will enjoy sharing your kitchen with each other and with Stone Soup this holiday!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Wood'.

Submissions: our guidelines for submission are on the Submit page at Stonesoup.com, where you will also find a link to our Submittable online submissions portal.

Subscriptions: to subscribe to *Stone Soup*, please press the Subscribe button on our webpage, Stonesoup.com.



On the cover:
"Snow in Clouds"
Nikon Coolpix L830

by Hannah Parker, 13
South Burlington, VT

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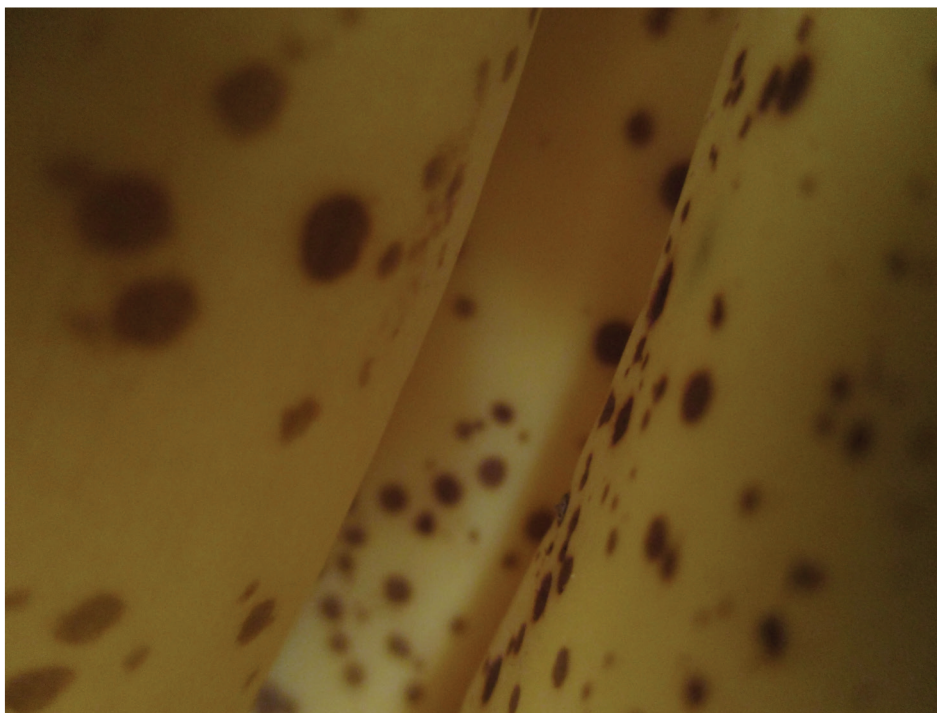
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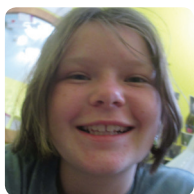
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Composition o

by Sabrina Guo, 11
Oyster Bay, NY



An orphaned painter is given a daunting task—to paint her childhood

When my father first saw my mother on stage, he was amazed by how the words flew out of her mouth so naturally. I've never seen my mother perform, but in old photographs, she always appears angelic. She had luscious blonde curls and stormy grey eyes. She didn't have my frizzy brown hair or my big feet. I only have her grey eyes. In these photographs, my father looked like a young prince, with cool brown hair and soft green eyes. It was truly a miracle that they met—they would always look so perfect together no matter what.

I am an artist myself, in the studio art program at Yale. Throughout my life, I've been told I can paint anything, as long as I use my senses. If I hear a bird's song, for example, I can paint what it sounds like. I'll add a bit of yellow for happiness or brightness here, a bit of white and black for sadness or loneliness there. If I taste berries, I can paint bursts of sweetness in red, purple, and pink; if I smell oranges, I can express it as clouds of sunshine and gold filling the canvas.

My professor's name is Dr. Richards. Up until now, I've been allowed to paint the present world of sounds, sights, smells, and tastes, but Professor Richards wants me to do something different for my next

project. He wants me to remember what my childhood was like and paint it. He gave an example of enjoying a good time with my parents, like a picnic. As if my childhood had been as predictable as that. But the problem is I have very few memories of my real parents. Of my mother especially.

My art studio is an abandoned classroom, a tranquil place that comforts me whenever I get stuck. There is a beautiful view through the window, looking over a small garden with pansies, chrysanthemums, and violets in the summer. You can also see the Yale flag up high, waving, and a perfect reflection pool by the main library. Sometimes I end up staring at it for hours, trying to imagine the different images cast into the pool or create pictures out of the sound of water trickling.

For weeks, I haven't known where to start with my painting. Professor Richards is insistent that if I try hard enough, my memory will tell me what to do, but I can't seem to get it across to him that it is impossible to find a single memory capable of capturing what I can't know about that memory. I guess it's just that I keep going back to how my parents met, wishing I could have been there.

When I try to think on my own

childhood, inevitably my mind wanders back to my parents at Juilliard, and that moment my mother first walked by the music room, not expecting the sound of my father playing the piano. My father had already been struck by my mother's voice on stage, so the fact she walked by, noticing him too, was the closest thing to fate there is, I think. And I guess I want to tell Professor Richards that this is the only memory I need to recreate, even though it isn't mine, but in a way, I want to tell him it is—because the simultaneity of these two moments is what allowed me to be born. I shudder to think of this miracle, that I am somehow here, *alive*—even though my parents aren't here to bear witness to that fact. Yet somehow, I think that if I can try to make my longing real on the canvas, my parents might be able to know that I live on through them and their first memory of one another.

I want to tell him that I'm stuck trying to envision the bright smile of my father and the warm eyes of my mother, the light on the stage, and my father's piano—he once told me his piano was the only way for him to understand anything, especially his love for my mother.

My mother died at the age of 30, when I was just four, and my father left just a week after she died, unable to bear his grief. I was raised by two adoptive parents, and though they have both been very loving and supportive, encouraging me to pursue my dreams as an artist, I still feel think about my birth parents, wondering if they also like to smell soap before they use it, or if they had to set their alarm clock in the same corner of the room, perfectly

aligned against the wall, or if they liked the light buttery taste of corn on the cob or toast as much as I do. I wonder if I would have needed these things as much, too, if my mother hadn't gotten sick and my father was still here to confirm my odd habits.

The repetitions circle my brain like a plague as I try to picture the room in Juilliard where my mother first discovered him playing. I imagine my mother in a pale green dress, walking past the door as “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” from *The Wizard of Oz* seeps through the door.

I imagine my mother pausing by it, ear pressed, devouring the sound of fingers gliding smoothly over the keys.

These repetitions should be enough I think, and I want to tell Professor Richards this, as I pick up a colored pencil and begin to sketch the outlines of my parents over the canvas. A pale green dress for my mother, like the stem of a violet. I hum “Somewhere Over the Rainbow” as my lines grow thicker. My humming is rudimentary, yet I can hear a whole orchestra in my father's single piano that leads to foggy streaks of blue and purple skies, the color of bluebells and soothing lavender.

I sketch a picnic scene and imagine a picnic basket we might have shared if they could visit me: creamed corn, corn on the cob, Greek egg salad, and, of course, sandwiches packed with lettuce, mayonnaise, and tomato, the kind my mother might have made if she'd never turned ill and could visit me here in New Haven, where the buildings are gray and shimmery in the rain and you can see all of the city at the top of East Rock. As I work, I

think about how maybe memories don't always have to be figments from the past, but dream moments, hypothetical scenarios I might have had with the people who brought me into this world.

I draw sponge-like holes in the picnic sandwich bread as if the crusts were more important than the taste of fresh cucumbers my senses want to remind me of. I wish I could smell the variety of mayonnaise my mother liked best or know if she still made my father's with honey mustard even though she hated it. I envy my friends who take their memories for granted, the dozens of traditions and stories by which they can so easily recall their loved ones.

I am still trying to remember my fourth birthday, the last I would have had with my parents. I picture a bright and cozy living room with strings of lights bursting with color, illuminating everyone's happy face. I am sitting in my mother's warm lap, and she strokes my head. My father smiles and plops a perfectly wrapped box in front of me: flashing green paper, like the Emerald City, and a red ribbon for Dorothy's slippers. *Happy Birthday, my dear Lily*, his card said. *May you blossom with life*. I picture my father's meticulous handwriting.

But, as much as I want to paint with bright colors, I am overcome with this same feeling that the colors will never be vivid enough to match the sounds, tastes, and smells of the moment. I decide to swirl the sky with thick whites and grays like the tornado that sends Dorothy far from home—and, as I paint, I think of my mother's stormy eyes, how she might even be the eye of this storm, my memories

spinning around me in pieces: this mixture of my fourth birthday, my parents' meeting, the picnic sandwiches on East Rock.

It is as if my imagination is a tornado, and as I paint in a stanza from "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," the part that expresses "where skies are blue," I imagine fuzzy green grass, illuminated by a twinge of sunshine seeping through the clouds, as if my mother was walking towards my father in the piano room, somewhere outside of the frame. Into the beyond, somewhere my father met her, by fate, or by chance, I think, wishing for the music that might guide my brush.

Move forward, I think suddenly, imagining my mother getting closer and closer to my father, the start of their story, my story, converging at that moment.

I step back and look at the different layers of color, adding more gray and shadow to the clouds, but not so heavy as to cover the sun, and not too windy that the light would be extinguished, because only in leaving that glow and sensing my brush as it continues to stir, can I preserve time as a moment, let our love move on.

I AM Poem

by Kathleen Werth, 8
Silver Spring, MD



I am a singer and a vet
I wonder how people develop personalities
I hear flowers singing
I see a magic carpet
I want my dog to talk
I am a singer and a vet

I pretend I'm my favorite character in my book
I would feel great if I lived in nature
I touch a bird's soft silky feathers
I worry I will die too soon
I cry when something goes wrong
I am a singer and a vet

I understand I need to wear clothes
I say what you believe is what's correct
I dream I will meet a unicorn
I try to make a good first impression
I hope it will snow
I am a singer and a vet

A Trip to the Hospital

by Sophia Fu, 9
Belmont, CA



In the middle of Ms. Imura's lectures on geometry, I rested my head on my palms, with my elbows on the desk, and tried not to fall asleep. My eyelids felt like elephants. I got home from school and curled up on the couch. The room was spinning. My vision was double. And then I fell asleep.

"Do you feel okay?" my mother asked.

"Are you getting enough sleep?" my father wanted to know.

At school the next day, I threw up on my clothes. The teacher stopped class and said, "Sophia, you should go to the nurse."

Shortly after that, the nurse asked me, "How do you feel?"

"Not well," I told her, so she sent me home. That day, I climbed the stairs and curled up in my bed again and slept through the whole day.

On Saturday, I took more naps. My parents looked at me as if I were going to die at any moment and suddenly decided to speed me off to the hospital, where doctors and nurses put me in a bed and gave me a little, white teddy bear. It was a decently big room with giant machines and tubes and computers. There was a small table beside the bed where I put my stuff. There was even a TV in the room, so I could watch *Bunk'd* and *Mickey Mouse*. Also, there was a bathroom with a shower in the room. Out the window, I could see trees

and the Stanford Shopping Mall. I had a needle poked in my skin and a tube connecting it to the IV. When I went to the bathroom, the nurse had to roll the "little metal tower" with me.

Finally, the doctor said, "You have type 1 diabetes." That meant my pancreas didn't make enough insulin to let the sugar go to the cells and make energy. She explained that I would have to check my blood sugar before every meal and take shots. When I heard that I had to take shots, I felt frustrated. I didn't want to take three or four shots every day before I ate! I imagined myself covered with dots. And even more, needles pricking my fingers just so I would know if my blood sugar was stable.

Three weeks later, I have gotten used to pricking my fingers to check my blood sugar and counting carbs, so I'll know how much insulin I need. At lunch, I miss sharing snacks with my friends, like potato chips and fruit roll-ups. Now I just eat rice, vegetables, fruit, and milk. Ten minutes before I eat, I have to check my blood sugar to make sure that my insulin is at the right level.

If I could go back and change anything, I would not have diabetes. However, I can't change that. Instead, I just have to get used to it and pay more attention to my health.



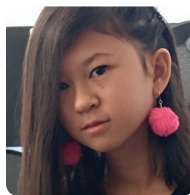
Storing Up, Canon SX600HS



by Sage Millen, 10
Vancouver, BC, Canada

The Girl Who Is Allergic to Everything

by Kyra Yip, 11
New York, NY



Allergies

A lot of people have allergies. Allergies to gluten, nuts, and eggs. I have allergies to a lot of things like nuts, seafood, eggs, and gluten. The list goes on and on. You're probably thinking how I can survive or if I'm lying, but I'm not. I'm alive. I deal with the consequences of being an allergic person. I've never tasted a gooey chocolate fudge cake with gluten in it on my birthday. I've never had scrambled eggs on a Saturday morning, as the sun shines through my window. I deal with it. This is my life. I can't grieve about how sad it is that I cannot eat certain foods. It's a weight that I've carried on my back for years. It's a barrier to enjoying things in life. It holds me back like a parent holds their child back from danger. In my life, having allergies is like a black stain on a white shirt that you can't wash off. It can stay there for an eternity.

EpiPen

Click. The sound the practice EpiPen makes as my mom plunges it into her thigh. For days, I've been dreading doing this. An EpiPen is a hero who saves people from allergic reactions. This is what the stories of kids being saved by their EpiPens have made me

think. In the back of my mind, I know it is a shot that you have to plunge into your thigh.

My mom speaks, and it snaps me out of my thoughts.

"Now that I showed you how to do this, you can try. It has no needle, so it won't hurt," she says to me.

I take the EpiPen in my hand. The green color is inviting and almost seems friendly, but that won't fool me. The part of my thigh throbs, as I think about how much it would hurt if this was a real shot. *Deep breaths*, I tell myself. *This will save your life someday.* It shakes in my hand. *Ten seconds. Just ten seconds. Hold it only for ten seconds. It doesn't have a needle, so it won't hurt. It will be fine.* My thoughts go through my head as fast as a jet plane.

I drop the fake shot. I can't do it.

Even though it will save me, even though it is fake, I will not stab this shot in my leg for ten seconds. I will have to, or I might die.

"I will, I will, I will, I will," I mumble, as I fall asleep.

I will.

Birthdays

"Ooh! What did you bring?" says a classmate.

The birthday boy walks to the back

of the room with a bag. He holds it close to him. It's as if there is a priceless artifact sitting in a display case inside of it. People crowd around him trying to get a peek at what's in the bag.

"Cupcakes!" someone yells and is immediately scolded by the teacher.

The birthday boy chooses people to pass out the treats. In my head, I picture the creamy frosting covered with rainbow sprinkles and soft cake underneath.

No. I can't eat that. Can I? Nope. It contains wheat. Darn it!

"Hi! What flavor would you like?" says a boy who is handing out the treats.

"Oh. I'm okay. I'm allergic to that. I brought my own treat though," I answer.

"Oh. Okay," he mumbles, looking disappointed. Wait, it's pity.

"What are you allergic to?" he asks.

As I go down the list, his eyes go wide.

"Wow," he says. "You're allergic to everything!"

I look for some tone of a joke, but instead, I find that it is a statement. My cheeks burn, and I clench my fists so hard, it hurts. He walks away, leaving me to sulk about this for the whole party. Everything. The way he said it made my anger flare out. If I was allergic to everything, I would be dead. Nobody has ever said that to me before. I'm allergic to everything. I bet I'll be on the news. "The Girl Who is Allergic to Everything."

Twizzler Twist

"Hey. Do you want a Twizzler?" asks a teacher.

I look at the shiny twist of red color. I can smell the sweet aroma coming from the package of Twizzlers. I hesitate a little. *Am I allergic to this? No. The teacher wouldn't give it to me if I was allergic.* It calls to me, and I slowly inch towards the smell.

"Sure!" I exclaim.

I can't wait to try one! I unwrap the packaging and take a giant bite out of the sweet candy. A burst of flavor burns its way down my throat. It tastes delectable. After I finish my treat, I go back to play. After a while, my throat starts itching. My mind races, and I start to panic. This has never happened before! I shrug it off, and I figure it will go away. A few minutes later, my skin starts itching. It's like a million ants crawled under my clothes and started biting me. I need a teacher. I stand up, but I stumble because a wave of dizziness hits me. I feel as though I've been on a roller coaster that goes in a loop-de-loop for hours. I slowly make my way to where the teachers are standing.

"What's wrong?" one asks.

"I don't know," I say, panicked.

In a few minutes, my mom comes bursting into the room like a madwoman. Worry is present on her features, and I immediately feel sympathy. She must be so worried. I spill the beans.

"I'm so itchy, and I don't know what's happening!" I exclaim.

I start to tear up, and then I begin to cry. My mom hands me a medicine cup with pink liquid in it that I identify as Benadryl. I curl up into a ball, and I

sob.

Why does this happen to *me*?

Cake Mistake

Before bed, my mom baked me a cake from a mix.

"Can I please eat one tiny piece?" I plead.

"Ok. Fine! Only one tiny piece," she says, smiling.

She hands me the piece of cake, and I gobble it up in one bite. My taste buds yell in excitement and pleasure.

"Thank you, Mommy!" I exclaim. I crawl into bed and drift off into a deep sleep.

All I remember is the itchy, scratchy, red hives that cover my skin, a towel on the floor picking up the dinner and dessert I had that now went up the other way, and a pink liquid that slides down my throat. Blackness creeps up on me, as I slowly fall asleep with my itchy, scratchy hives, as I am surrounded by the lingering sour smell of throw up that has just been cleaned up.

Epilogue

Allergies are not my burden. They are not my enemy. They have made me stronger as a person. I deal with rude comments and pity looks, but I don't care. I don't care if I'm allergic to everything. I don't care that you can eat some foods, and I can't. My life is not your life.

I wrote this memoir so that I could share my thoughts and struggles of being an allergic person with you, the reader. This is a small part that is neither good nor bad. Even though this has been something I hated earlier in

my life, I won't ever let anything get in the way of me and others being happy. I will live my life to the fullest. I am me. I refuse to worry, and I will not let something like allergies bring me down. When I go out to a store with my friends looking for snacks or go out with my family, I laugh it off when someone makes a rude comment. I take this as a lesson, a challenge that I will face over the course of my life. I want to be those people who walk down the sidewalks, laughing, joking, being themselves, without a care in the world.

I have learned that when life gets hard, you can't just sit there and cry. Push through it when life gets hard. I know my friends and family will always be there and will support me, so I stand strong. I hope everyone does. Be happy. My mom always says, "You have one life. Make it count."

Ode to Flowers

by Irene Surprenant, 8
Santa Clara, CA



Oh, flowers, smelling like nothing else
Your colors shining in the sun
Sitting on the ground and grass
And swishing in the trees
Your petals blowing everywhere
So very beautiful
Red or green or yellow
And all the other colors
Oh, flowers,
I'm happy to be seeing you every day



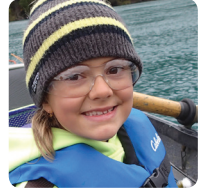
Vase on a Stand, acrylic paint, oil pastels, and tempera paint



by Pearl Lee, 10
Greenwich, CT

Wave

by Irene Surprenant, 8
Santa Clara, CA



I am a wave
I splash on soft shore
I feel the yellow sand
Fishes gliding in me
All windy days
I am so big
sometimes
So big
called
a tsunami
On sunny days
I am so small
Sometimes
not even there
Birds chirping above me
I am salty

The sky above me
making me blue
Without it I'd be clear
People throwing trash in me
I hope it would stop soon
Because the fishes
eating it
dying
I can't feel
so many
tiny
scaly bodies
rubbing against
me anymore
But then more fish
get born
I feel them once again
I am so happy



Rainy Day, Painter Essentials 5 on a Wacom tablet and computer



by Mia Fang, 13
West Lafayette, IN

The Barista

by Thomas Jones, 13
Bradbury, CA



The barista in the LAX airport got to his shop at 5:00 a.m. and opened at 6:00. He did this so he could catch the early tide of people that usually came in at that hour. He would smile and give coffee to all of the tired, angry travelers that came through terminal seven. Their baggy eyes and solemn expressions spoke more than their halting words of thanks. He was the only barista who came at that hour and it usually paid off (along with the fact that his was the only coffee shop at terminal seven). His cafe was usually the first place people went when they arrived or were picking up people from a flight. He usually walked away with \$200 in his pocket.

At the end of the day, he would have to walk through the entire airport. Because he started off as a pickpocket himself, he knew how to avoid them. They were usually the people who slunk in the back or to the sides of the walkway, and they usually preyed on the tired passengers changing planes when all they could do is try to bully their brains into thinking straight.

From his coffee shop, the barista could see everything. He saw a tired father watching his sons with tired eyes and a wife sleeping on the man's shoulder. He saw nervous, impatient people with bags, waiting in a security line for their bags to be checked, their minds rapidly going through all the

things they had packed. A security guard was telling a young boy, "This three-cell flashlight is too big. You can check it or throw it away." The boy looked sullen as his father got the flashlight checked. Flight attendants looking like packs of wolves on the prowl clustered as they were. The barista was the benevolent watcher, seeing all, but not affected by all, the one who served with a smile and who walked through the airport like it was his own personal castle.

One evening leaving work, the barista's watching eyes saw a little boy no more than six, his tiny fist clenched on a small teddy bear until a hurried yank from an oblivious father made him drop it. The barista rushed over and tried to get the father's attention, but the man kept walking, powering through the crowd with long strides. As he searched the walkway he realized he had no chance of catching him. The barista walked back to his little coffee shop, the little boy's distraught face still etched in his mind.

A month later, the barista arrived at his shop one day at exactly six o'clock. He opened the door and saw the little toy bear. He didn't know why he didn't throw it away. He picked it up and stared at the little brown body that had held such relevance to that little boy. He opened the trash can and was about to throw it away when he heard

the counter bell ring and a muffled “Hey.” He turned around to see the boy’s father whose eyes were fixed on the bear.

“That is my son’s,” the man said.

The barista quickly handed over the bear and heard a happy scream of delight. He looked over the counter and saw the little boy hug the bear tightly to his chest.

“We’ve found Baloo,” the boy said in a voice of shrill excitement.

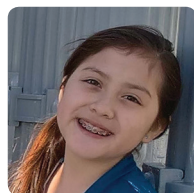
The boy’s father, obviously relieved, turned and shook the barista’s hand. He said, “Thank you. We have looked everywhere since we got back.” He turned back to the boy and said, “Do you want a hot chocolate?” The boy, still ecstatic, nodded eagerly. The father ordered two hot chocolates, paid the barista, and clasping his son’s hand tightly, walked away into the tide of people. The boy held his bear tighter than ever. They were both happy.

The barista watched them walk away then wiped down the empty counter. They had forgotten to leave a tip.

Recipes

Basil-Asiago-Garlic-Olive Oil Tortillas

by Catherine Gruen, 11
Chino Hills, CA



Have you heard of the stinking rose? On nearly every dish that comes from our kitchen, the stinking rose is the star. So much are the garlic-filled dishes loved, it is common to say wholeheartedly, "Don't eat it all!" Once, my dad even ate a raw garlic clove, just to see what it tasted like. While I would never do that, I still love garlic.

Seven years ago, on April 16th, a cool breeze blew our neighbor's tree in front of the window that faced the street. I watched each passing car intently, wondering if it would be the one that carried my baby brother. In the wee hours of the morning, he had been born, and I couldn't wait to see him. My grandparents had bought my sister and me teal jelly beans, so I chewed them nervously as I waited. Just as the clock chimed 11:00, the garage door opened and I heard the small wails of a newborn baby. My sister and I made such a fuss over our new little plaything that we worked up an appetite. After a while of baby tears, my little brother fell asleep and Mama rested with him. Then Daddy cooked his forever-to-be-remembered Basil-Asiago-Garlic-Olive Oil Tortillas. My dad rarely cooks, but when he does, he adds too much cheese or too much garlic, which is awesome. The Italian-style tortillas became legendary.

My little baby brother loves these Italian-style tortillas and has grown to cherish the stinking rose, too. He now joins in the chorus of, "Don't eat it all!"



Taken in the Stone Soup Test Kitchen

Serves 1

Takes 7-10 minutes

Ingredients

2oz / 60g asiago cheese, shredded or thinly sliced (you can substitute with parmesan, pecorino or other hard, melting cheese)

1½ teaspoons olive oil

6 leaves of fresh basil

1 small garlic clove (or half of a medium one)

2 flour tortillas (10-inch / 25.5cm)

1 tomato, diced

Method

1. Pour the olive oil onto a nonstick pan. Set the stove to medium heat.
2. Crush the garlic over the pan and sauté. Do not let it brown.
3. When the garlic is sautéed, transfer it to one tortilla. Place the tortilla, garlic side up, in the pan.
4. Sprinkle the cheese over the tortilla.
5. Tear 5 of the basil leaves and put them on the cheese. Top with the second tortilla.
6. Let it cook for one and a half minutes on each side.
7. Top with freshly diced tomatoes and the last leaf of basil.

Enjoy as an afternoon snack, appetizer, or a quick lunch.

Cream of Tomato Soup

by Lina Martinez Nocito, 13
Sunderland, MA



First of all, I love tomato soup. And knitting. (It turns out that these two things can be a very dangerous combination; strange, I know, but trust me.) Last Hallowe'en, I had almost finished a pair of knitted slippers, which I had been working on for a while—all that remained was to add grippy treads to the soles. But I didn't have time to add them immediately, and I was excited to finally try them on, so I was wearing them when my mom called me in for lunch. Tomato soup and toast with fresh goat cheese. Yum.

And so I, in my very slippery slippers, ran across the very slippery wood floor, and (you guessed it) I slipped. Not just slipped! My feet shot out from under me and I crashed to the ground, landing on my arm. My concerned mother, in an attempt to discern the extent of my injuries, asked if I could wiggle my fingers. Since I could, she was confident that I hadn't broken anything (it turns out that that is not a good test for broken bones). And it wasn't until the doctor insisted that I get an X-ray that we realized that there was anything wrong.

My arm healed quickly, though, and tomato soup is still one of my favorite foods. I've experimented with several recipes, and this one's my favorite. Enjoy—and please walk carefully when you smell its delicious aroma. . .



Taken by the author

Makes four servings

Ingredients

2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 red pepper, seeded and sliced, or roasted peppers from a jar (the latter adds a particularly nice flavor)
1 large onion, sliced
1 carrot, peeled and diced
1 to 2 cloves garlic, chopped
4 cups / 800g chopped tomatoes (canned tomatoes work well, too—include their juice)
1 teaspoon fresh thyme leaves or ½ tsp. dried thyme
1 cup / 250ml chicken/vegetable stock
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
13 oz / 400g cooked / canned cannellini beans (optional)
1 cup / 250ml cream (optional)

Method

1. Place the oil in a 3-quart saucepan and turn the heat to medium. Add the onion, pepper, carrot, and garlic. Season with salt and pepper and cook, stirring, until the onion begins to soften, about 5 minutes.
2. Add the tomatoes, beans (if using), thyme, and stock, bring to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes. You can proceed with the next step now, or simmer for up to 60 minutes longer for a deeper flavor. The beans will give a creamier, thicker, texture to the soup, so you may wish to add more liquid at the end.
3. Allow the soup to cool to room temperature. (You can refrigerate it for up to two days at this point before continuing.) When the soup is cool, add the cream and purée in a blender or food processor. Then, adjust seasonings and reheat before serving.

Honey Beach Bars

by Arielle Kouyoumdjian, 11
Fairfax, VA



Every year, my family and I harvest the honey from our beehives. We scrape off the thin lacing of wax capping, and honey glistens on the frame. It comes in a variety of colors, such as yellow-gold, a deep rust-colored gold, and dark brown. It is rich with flavor, a hint of flowers and clover. We spin the frames with honey in a special contraption that shakes all of the honey off, then filter it three times. I made a dessert with this honey and entered it into the 4-H fair, where it won the grand champion prize. Enjoy the dessert I created.



Taken in the Stone Soup test kitchen

Makes approximately 18 bars

Ingredients

Bottom layer:

½ cup / 115g butter

½ cup packed / 75g light brown sugar

¼ cup / 160g all-purpose (plain) flour

Top layer:

2 eggs

½ cup packed / 110g light brown sugar

½ cup / 170g honey

⅓ cup / 45g all-purpose (plain) flour

1½ cup / 180g dried tart cherries

¼ teaspoon salt

½ cup / 30g shredded coconut

Method

1. Heat the oven to 350°F / 180°C.

2. Crumble the first three ingredients together until there are very few lumps, either by rubbing with your fingers or with a quick blast in a food processor. Make sure that there are no huge balls of butter. Gently press the mixture into a 9 x 9" / 23 x 23cm pan. Bake for 10 minutes. While it is baking, start on the top layer.

3. Beat together the eggs, sugar, and honey, until the mixture is light and thick. Stir in the other dry ingredients and use a spoon to spread it evenly over the baked bottom layer. Bake for 25-30 minutes, until the top is golden. Stick a toothpick into the middle of the pan when you think they are ready, and make sure that no batter comes off on the toothpick.

4. Remove from the oven, allow to cool, and cut the bars into equal rectangles.

Matcha Crepe Cake

by Alicia Xin, 13
Scarsdale, NY



When I think of a crepe cake, I think of the dainty mounds of crepes stealing the spotlight in a bakery window, the creamy sensation that explodes in my mouth after I take a bite. My family and I often go to a little bakery by my home to buy a slice of matcha crepe cake. One day, I thought, why not make one in my own kitchen? I decided to try with my friend Olivia. It seemed a bit intimidating, but how hard could it be?

On Saturday, we met at my house. We blended the crepe ingredients together to make a liquid green mixture, and then put it in the fridge to settle. When mixing the cream to go between the layers of crepes, we accidentally flung heavy cream everywhere. That attracted my dog, Archie. He made a beeline for any cream he saw, and we laughed as he smudged cream all over his snout. After three minutes, the cream hardened into an airy, white fluff, stiff enough to form firm peaks as we pulled the mixer out of the bowl.

Two hours later, we oiled the pan to cook a crepe. It wasn't until we spread the batter that we realized neither of us knew how to flip it. In the end, we managed a maneuver with forks and a spatula, and ended up flipping, but also ripping, the crepe. We called it our "tester", gobbled it up, and then made another one using that spatula operation. Our crepes looked better and better, and in the end, we had a beautiful stack of 20 matcha crepes. We spread the cream with a knife and layered them one by one. Finally, we sprinkled matcha powder on top with a sieve, and then gathered some mint leaves from outside to position on the cake. The end product looked surprisingly like a store-bought crepe cake.

As we were devouring our masterpiece, the combination of the delicate crepes and the sweet cream made every bite melt on my tongue and ooze with flavor. I was surprised that it was such a success, and I learned never to underestimate the power of a good recipe, quality ingredients, and some determination.



Taken by the author

Makes approximately 8 servings

Ingredients

For the crepe batter:

1 ½ cups / 350ml milk

3 eggs

1 teaspoon sugar

1 tablespoon matcha powder

1 cup / 130g all-purpose flour

2 tbsp / 30g melted butter

1 teaspoon baking powder

For the cream:

2¼ cups / 540ml heavy whipping cream

2 teaspoons sugar

Method

1. Mix all the crepe batter ingredients together. You should have a liquid green mixture with a consistency similar to a thoroughly blended smoothie.
2. Put the batter through a sieve, pushing through any lumps, and let it sit in the refrigerator for two hours.
3. In a separate bowl, add the sugar to the heavy whipping cream, and whisk it until it is thick, but easily spreadable. Put it in the refrigerator.
4. Butter a 10" / 25cm pan lightly and pour enough batter in the pan to thinly cover the bottom of the pan. Cook both sides of the crepe. To do this effectively, let the first side cook for a little while and then when the center is firm and the edges are starting to look cooked, try scooping up the edges of the crepe with a thin, metal spatula. Then shake the pan a little to free the rest, and flip the crepe with the help of some utensils. You may need to practice a few times! Do this with the rest of the batter, ending up with 20-25 crepes.
5. Let your crepes cool down, then stack them one on top of the other spreading a thin layer of cream in between each layer.
6. You may want to sprinkle some matcha powder on top of the cake, but this is optional. To make it look more professional, try sprinkling it with your sieve.
7. I put mint leaves on my cake, but feel free to put what you want on yours, such as raspberries or strawberries.

Enjoy!

Apple Rose Tarts

by Mia Widrow, 11
Olympia, WA



When I think of fall, I feel leaves crunching under my boots, globules of rain sliding down the window, and our big tall apple tree. It stands proudly in our yard, brown bark slick with rain. By the time school starts, the tree is drooping under the weight of sweet red apples. We pick hundreds of apples, giving away loads to neighbors and friends. My mom cooks applesauce in the big red pot, and I help my dad juice some to make cider. I think food should look, as well as taste, amazing. But applesauce and cider don't showcase the beautiful crimson of apples.

So I decided to make these delicate apple rose tarts. Since apples are a universal fruit, I think that everyone will enjoy this recipe. The roses are actually fairly easy to make, just make sure to slice the apples thinly. These make a perfect sweet snack or dessert. Enjoy!



Taken by the author

Makes about 14 apple tarts

Ingredients

1 sheet thawed puff pastry (if using ready-rolled, enough to make a total size of 14 x 10" / 35 x 25.5cm)
2 Gala, McIntosh, Fuji, Red Delicious, or other red-skinned apples
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
⅛ tsp. ground cardamom
¼ tsp. ground cloves
1½ tsp. lemon juice
2 tablespoons brown sugar

Method

1. Slice the apples thinly, about 1/16 of an inch / 2 mm. Do not peel them! If they are a little thicker, that's all right. Toss sliced apples in big non-metallic bowl and add in cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, lemon juice, and brown sugar.
2. Roll the puff pastry into a 14 x 10" / 35 x 25.5 cm rectangle. Then, cut it into 1 x 10" / 2.5 x 25.5 cm strips.
3. Microwave the apple slices for 35 seconds, so they are flexible enough to roll.
4. Lay the apple slices on top of the dough strips, overlapping the edges.
5. Carefully roll up the strips. Lay the tarts rose side up—the prettiest cut edge up—in a buttered muffin tin.
6. Bake at 350°F / 180°C for about 40 minutes, or until the edges begin to brown.
7. Remove from the oven, allow to cool slightly, and carefully remove from the pan.

I like to serve these warm with a sprinkle of cinnamon on top. You could also try them with honey or powdered sugar.

Dairy-Free Apple Pie

by Maya Viswanathan, 12
Champaign, IL



The aroma of cinnamon and freshly baked dough. The taste of juicy fruit and a crisp crust. Lattice neatly placed over the filling. What could be more perfect than pie?

Pie always stood out to me, whether displayed in cafes or mentioned in books. It stands for a homey treat that is an American classic. Yet, as much as I wanted to, we never made pie at home. Don't get me wrong, we do bake a lot. We've made all kinds of breads, cookies, cakes, and tarts, yet never pie. Part of the reason is that nearly all pie recipes call for butter, and I am allergic to dairy. My efforts to convince my parents to find a solution never worked.

"Let's make a pie and substitute oil for butter," I'd suggest.

"The dough won't be the right consistency for the lattice. Let me look into recipes," my dad replies.

"You don't have the time for it. Let's just make a tart-it's the same thing," my mom put in.

But it isn't! A pie has lattice. And lattice is what makes pie a pie.

The curtain to the Broadway show Waitress inspired me. It was designed to look like the top of a pie with a cherry filling and a golden-brown lattice. The show was about a waitress who had a hard life. She made scrumptious pies, through which she remembered her mother, and that cheered her up. Later, it helped her create a better life for herself. When the curtain closed at the end, again I saw the lattice and bright filling. Right then and there, I made up my mind that when I got home, I'd make a pie.

The recipe I used was originally meant for Linzertorte. I made a few small changes: oil instead of butter and oat bran instead of nuts because of my allergies. And a dash of maple syrup, which my grandmother does to give the dough a nutty flavor. You can use any filling for the pie. It was summer when I made my first pie, so I made a blueberry-peach pie. Plain peach is sour, and the blueberries make it sweeter. I'm making this pie in the fall, so I am using apples. I think apple pie is a very wintry and autumn thing. I hope you enjoy making this pie and experimenting with flavors for different seasons.



Taken by the author

Ingredients

For the crust:

1 cup / 95g oat bran

1¼ cups / 160g all purpose/plain flour

1 egg, beaten

1 tablespoon of cold water

½ cup / 120ml olive oil (or sunflower oil)

1 tablespoon cinnamon (or to taste)

¼ cup / 50g white/caster sugar

1 teaspoon maple syrup

For the filling:

5 medium to large apples

½ cup / 100g white/caster sugar

1 teaspoon maple syrup

1 teaspoon cinnamon

Method

Prepare the filling:

1. Peel the apples and cut them into half inch cubes. Mix them with the sugar and cinnamon in a pot. Then add the maple syrup and cook on low heat for 20-25 minutes until the apples are soft. Stir as needed.

2. Preheat your oven to 400°F / 200°C.

Make the dough:

3. Mix the oat bran, flour, sugar, and cinnamon. Add the oil.

4. Beat the egg with the water.

5. Add the egg and water to the dough and then mix it with a spoon.

6. Mix it with your hands and then bring it into a ball. The dough might appear dry and lumpy, but that's okay. (If you can't bring it into a ball, then you can add a tablespoon of water.)

7. Divide the dough into two halves and put one half in a round pie pan, 8-9" / 23cm diameter. Push it with your fingertips so that the entire pan is covered with dough, including 1½" up the sides.

8. Put the apple mixture on top of the dough.

9. On a cutting board make a rectangle that is approximately 9 x 4" / 23 x 10cm with the other half of the dough by pressing the dough with your fingertips until it is evenly thick. Then cut it into 9" / 23cm strips, each ½ " wide (1.25cm), ending up with 8 long strips. Now use a knife to pick up the strips and lay them over the apples, 4 in one direction, 4 in the other, evenly spaced. Then weave the strips. If a strip breaks, you can stick it back together with your hands when it is already on the apples, or make sure the join is underneath another strip.

10. Bake the pie at 400°F / 200°C for 20 minutes, and then reduce the heat to 350°F / 180°C and bake for another 25 minutes.

Serve and enjoy!

Honor Roll

Welcome to the *Stone Soup* Honor Roll. Every month we receive submissions from hundreds of kids from around the world. Unfortunately, we don't have space to publish all the great work we receive. We want to commend some of these talented writers and artists and encourage them to keep creating.

Fiction

Kayla Bjorn, 13
Aditi Chowdhary, 10
Julia Marcus, 11
Martha Mayes, 10
Luna Castro Mjoica, 11
Addison R. Vallier, 13

Poetry

Vandana Ravi, 12
Ivy Segal, 13
Ezra White, 6
Cecilia Yang, 12
Caitlyn Zhu, 10

Art

Joshua Garza, 9
Madeline Nelson, 12
Gabi Park, 13
Mary Rothermel, 10

Comics and Graphic Writing

Kathleen Werth, 9

Don't forget to visit stonesoup.com to browse our bonus materials. There you will find:

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