



THE BODY IN THE WEB

A FAITH FAIRCHILD MYSTERY

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HALL PAGE

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In memory of Emanuel Charles Pologe, beloved brother-in-law who was one of the virus’s first casualties. Manny was a voracious reader of all genres. His enthusiasm for mine from the very first book and our chats about them always spurred me along. I wish he could read this one and tell me what he thought.

EXCERPTS FROM

Have Faith in Your Kitchen

by Faith Sibley Fairchild
with Katherine Hall Page

Sheet-Pan-Roasted Delicata Squash

2 medium-size delicata squash ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil Parchment paper
1 teaspoon kosher salt

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees F.

Cut the squash in half lengthwise and scoop out the seeds.
Faith does this with the small end of a melon baller.

Slice into 1-inch crescents.

Toss the slices with the oil, salt, and pepper.

Line a sheet pan with the parchment paper and arrange the slices in a single layer.

Roast for 10 minutes, then turn the slices over. Roast for another 10 minutes. This caramelizes the squash and enhances its sweet, nutty flavor. When cooked, delicata’s skin is tender and delicious. For a kick, add red pepper flakes to the spices, or toss the roasted squash with pumpkin pie spices and a tablespoon of maple syrup.

Serves 4 as a side dish.

Delicata is a winter squash. When spring comes, Faith uses this method to pan-roast fresh asparagus.

Sheet-pan cooking found a new and very wide audience during 2020, becoming popular as people found themselves cooking at home—and liking it! Faith paired various vegetables with fish fillets or boneless chicken, a meal on a sheet, starting the veggies, especially potatoes, sooner, and then adding the rest. High heat is the key.

Beer Bread

3 cups all-purpose flour	2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon baking powder	12 ounces beer (lager or ale is best)
1 teaspoon kosher salt	2 teaspoons unsalted butter, melted

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

Grease a 9 x 5 x 3-inch loaf pan with unsalted butter.

Combine the flour, baking powder, salt, and sugar in a large bowl.

Stir in the beer.

Spread the batter evenly in the pan and bake for 35 minutes, until golden brown. Test with a broom straw or cake tester.

Remove from the pan and brush the top with the melted butter.

Let cool completely on a rack before slicing.

The bread has a nice crumbly crust and is also good toasted.

Although Tom Fairchild is a Samuel Adams beer loyalist, Faith has made the recipe with other beers, including nonalcoholic beer. Ginger beer with 2 tablespoons of flaked ginger—Penzeys works well—stirred into the batter makes a sweet bread for breakfast or tea. Her favorite alcoholic brand for the recipe is Blue Moon Belgian White, a wheat ale with coriander and orange peel.

Amy's Cookies

1 cup almond butter

1 cup sugar

1 large egg

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

1 cup mini chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

In a large bowl, mix the first five ingredients. Fold in the chocolate chips, stirring well. The dough will be sticky.

Form the dough into balls, a tablespoon each. Lightly moisten your hands to make this easier.

Place the balls 2 inches apart on an ungreased baking sheet and bake in the middle of the oven for 10 minutes. The cookies will expand and be soft to the touch.

Immediately transfer to racks to cool.

Makes 2 dozen.

Vanikiotis Baklava

Syrup

1 cup water	½ teaspoon cinnamon or 1 cinnamon
2 cups sugar	stick (ground)
¼ cup honey	1 teaspoon lemon juice

Pastry and Filling

1 pound phyllo dough, thawed, in package, overnight in refrigerator	½ cup sugar
1 pound walnuts	2–3 sticks butter, melted and clarified (start with 2, add another if necessary)
2 teaspoons cinnamon	

Prepare the Syrup

Combine the water, sugar, honey, and cinnamon in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, then cook on medium low for 20 to 30 minutes until thickened.

Add the lemon juice and cool in the refrigerator.

This should be done first, as it needs to cook and then cool, which can take an hour. You can also make the syrup a few days ahead and keep cool. It has to be cold when poured over the hot baklava.

Prepare the Pastry and Filling

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.

Bring the phyllo to room temperature. Leave the package unopened.

Butter the bottom and sides of a metal 9 x 3-inch pan.

Chop the walnuts finely in a food processor. Add the 2 teaspoons of cinnamon and ½ cup sugar. Mix together.

Open the phyllo and place on your counter, keeping it covered to prevent drying out. If the phyllo is too wide to fit the pan, cut it in half. You should have between 36 and 40 layers.

Lay one layer flat in the bottom of the pan. Brush with the

clarified butter. Repeat the process, adding sheets of phyllo one at a time, until you've laid 6 sheets. Sheets that tear apart can be pieced and used in middle layers.

Sprinkle 2 to 3 tablespoons of the nut, sugar, and cinnamon mixture lightly on the top buttered sheet.

Repeat for the remaining pastry (about 24 sheets), reserving 6 sheets for the top. After laying the last 6 sheets, carefully coat the top sheet with butter (no nut mixture) and place in the refrigerator for 15 to 20 minutes.

Remove the baklava from the refrigerator. With a sharp knife, cut three quarters of the way down, going from corner to corner to create diamond shapes about 1½ inches wide.

Bake for 20 to 30 minutes or until golden brown.

Remove from the oven and immediately but slowly pour the cold syrup over the top. It should hiss. Then finish cutting along the diamond-shaped lines, all the way to the bottom of the pan.

Wait at least an hour for the syrup to be absorbed completely and for the baklava to come to room temperature.

I am indebted to my sister-in-law, Barbara Taylor Page, for sharing her Vanikiotis family recipe. It is truly the best version ever, and it's impossible to say how many portions it makes, as it will all go in a flash!