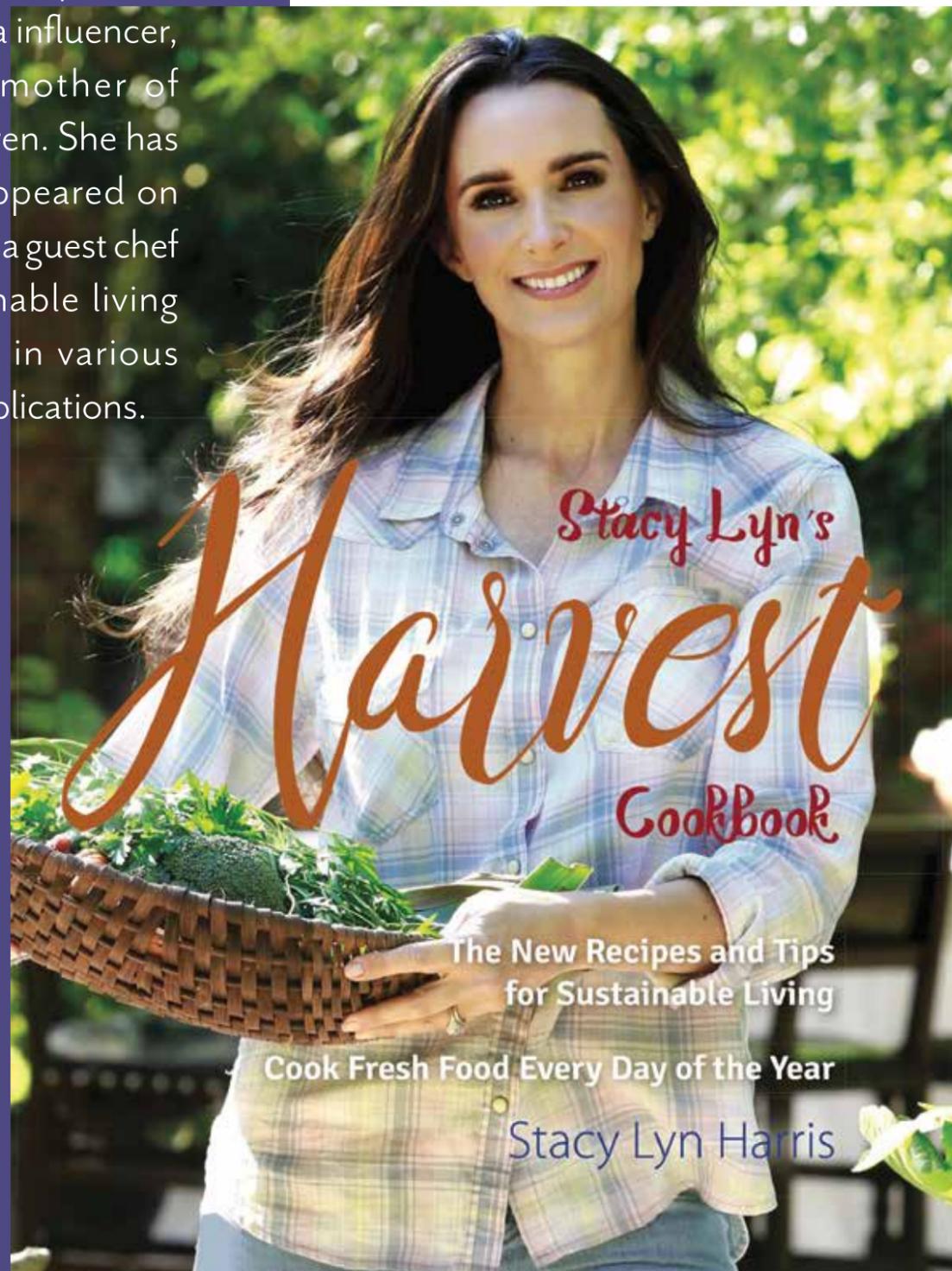


Stacy Lyn HARRIS

Photography by Jon Cook,
Graylyn Harris and
Stacy Lyn Harris

STACY LYN HARRIS

is a bestselling author of three cookbooks, as well as a blogger, speaker, social media influencer, wife, and mother of seven children. She has regularly appeared on television as a guest chef and sustainable living expert and in various national publications.



Food occupies a special place in my life. It's been there with me through every important turn to comfort, inspire, and remind me of who I am. It's even present in my earliest memories.

I remember watching my Granny cook as a toddler. I'd be sitting at her table, which was covered in a red-and-white checkered tablecloth, impatiently waiting for her to finish making her famous vegetable soup. I would gulp that stuff down even when it was piping hot. She'd fry up some cornbread to serve with the soup, and I thought that she must have been working with magic, the way she made all those delicious meals completely from scratch.

The wholesomeness of those meals at my Granny's stuck with me even into my teenage years. At school, I noticed I didn't have the same tastes as my friends. I still liked pizzas, hamburgers, fries, and cokes, but only occasionally. I actually have a funny story about that. One night, our cheerleading squad had a slumber party, and we were going to order a pizza. I was picked to call in the order, and when the poor guy at Domino's answered the phone, I begged him to let us come down and make the pizza ourselves. Much to my amazement, he said yes! We all crowded into our friend's Honda hatchback and made our way to Domino's.

You should have seen the masterpiece we created at that pizza place that night. It had about every topping known to man. It was truly one of the best pizzas I can remember eating, though I'm not sure anyone enjoyed it as much as I did.

I started feeling pretty alone after graduating high school. I was dealing with a breakup, and my mom was having difficulties of her own. It was a rough time for a young girl on the cusp of adulthood, but cooking took me away from that. I sought refuge in the kitchen, refreshing my soul by baking cakes, cookies, and pies. I felt at peace there, sweating over hot stoves, whisking ingredients into batter, bending over for a whiff before stopping myself from tearing into my creations.

My love for cooking continued to flourish in college, but something began to change. I developed a love/hate relationship with food. Cooking and eating cakes, pies, and pizzas brought guilt, not comfort and catharsis. I thought about my Granny's cooking, how beautiful and flavorful those meals were, and set out to find the kinds of fresh ingredients she would use. I asked her to teach me how to cook, can and preserve vegetables. And I talked to my dad about growing vegetables in a garden of my own.



My father is a Vietnam vet. He won't admit it, but he has PTSD. Servicemen returning from the war in those days were encouraged to take up gardening, in hopes that it would help them adjust to life in the States. I believe many of them took that advice because I get all kinds of letters from veterans telling me how much they appreciate my work on gardening. They recount their stories from the war and reflect on how gardening helped them when they came back. And as for my dad, he's an expert gardener with a wealth of knowledge. I've learned all I can from him about gardening and cooking from the harvest.

After college came law school. Back then, I was putting a lot of pressure on myself to be successful. I had to find a way to relieve my stress, so of course, I went back to my roots. In between long study sessions, I'd stow myself away in the kitchen. I'd go cook a big dinner and ask my then-boyfriend, Scott, to come join me at the table. I am happy to say that he is now my husband. I wonder if those meals had anything to do with it? He is a wonderful man (and a lucky one, if I do say so myself!) who thankfully loves eating new and exciting foods. Scott ended up taking me on a few adventures himself, bringing wild game back into the kitchen for cooking.



I love cooking for Scott, but at first, it was a challenge. If you know me, though, you know I love a challenge. I was determined to make venison—this tough, gamey cut of meat—better than anything we had ever tasted. I looked for new ways to master the old ways, to cook with game meat in a way that had never been tried before. As I perfected my techniques, with Scott acting as my guinea pig, I felt the urge to share my newfound knowledge with the world. That led to my first book, *Happy Healthy Family Tracking the Outdoors In*, which is all about cooking with wild game and vegetables fresh from the garden. That book, and all of my work really, is a testament to our everlasting partnership.

A year after we got married, we had our first son and continued to have children over the next several years. Naturally, I wanted them out in the garden and in the kitchen with me. I've homeschooled all of them, and I believe they have learned more in those two places than anywhere else. Having so many kids in the house has taught me how to be a better cook, too. With three meals a day for nine people, how could it not?

I've always heard that what you spend your "off time" doing is what you were meant to do. I've spent a whole lot of "off time" in the kitchen. Today, I'm blessed to be able to call it my career. I will never consider it just work, though, especially when I see my family and friends enjoying my creations. This is why I love what I do. I have the privilege of nourishing others, allowing them to be healthy and revived enough to do their own work, whatever they are called to do. What could be more rewarding than that?



I cherish my role in teaching others how to cook fresh, delicious meals for themselves and their families. That was the goal in writing my latest book, *Stacy Lyn's Harvest Cookbook*: to inspire others to make healthy meals with fresh ingredients. I put all of my heart and soul into that book, and now I've branched out by using television, social media, and my blog to reach people all over the world. My dream is for the pages of my cookbooks to be dog-eared and stained with tomato sauce and homemade jelly by the people who read them and attempt our favorite family recipes. Nothing is more rewarding to me than inspiring others to make memories of their own with the people they love.

WISE WORDS

*"Success is not final.
Failure is not fatal. It is the
courage to continue that counts."*

—WINSTON CHURCHILL

Chicken Farmer's Style

SERVES 4

This dish really is one of my favorite preparations of old chickens. This is one of the first recipes I created from my study of historic techniques used in France to cook their old laying hens. I have updated some of the ingredients, but the technique is the same.

FOR THE BRINE

1 cup kosher salt
½ cup brown sugar
1 Tbsp peppercorns
2 scallions, chopped
2 cloves of garlic
¼ tsp allspice
1 quart chicken stock
2 quarts water
1 chicken, quartered and rinsed

FOR THE CHICKEN

Freshly ground black pepper
12 slices pancetta
2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp butter
4 large carrots, cut into 1" lengths
3 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
1 onion, diced to ¼"
3 bay leaves
3 sprigs rosemary
3 stalk celery
1 cup dry white wine
1 lb whole homemade canned tomatoes
or 15 oz canned tomatoes
¼ cup Italian parsley, finely chopped

To Brine the Chicken

1. Combine kosher salt, brown sugar, peppercorns, scallions, garlic, and allspice in saucepan. Add chicken stock; bring to boil stirring to dissolve salt and sugar. Remove from heat; cool.
2. Combine cooled mixture with water in pot big enough to hold the chicken, stir well. Add quartered chicken; refrigerate overnight.

To Prepare the Chicken

1. Remove chicken from brine, pat dry with towels. Season with pepper.
2. Wrap each piece of quartered chicken in a slice of pancetta, secure with toothpick. In skillet heat olive oil and butter over high heat. Add chicken, brown for 10 minutes on each side. Do not crowd or they will not brown. Transfer to plate.
3. Add carrots, garlic, onion, bay leaves, rosemary, and celery to pan, cook 5 minutes. Add wine and tomatoes. Crush tomatoes as you place them in pan.
4. Add chicken, reduce heat to simmer. Cook uncovered for 30 minutes until chicken is no longer pink. Transfer chicken to serving platter.
5. Adjust seasoning. Add parsley. Pour sauce over meat. Serve with garlic mashed potatoes.

NOTE: This recipe is great using pheasant.



I would experience catharsis as I engaged my mind and body completely in the act of delicious creation.



If you want a lot of small biscuits, roll dough out to 3/4" thickness; cut biscuits using the size cutter you prefer.

Sweet Potato Biscuits

Recipe pictured on page 131.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 Tbsp baking powder**
- 1/4 tsp baking soda**
- 1 tsp kosher salt**
- 3/4 cup buttermilk**
- 1 cup baked mashed sweet potato (about 1 medium-large potato)**
- 6 Tbsp unsalted butter, frozen**
- Flour (for dusting)**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Combine dry ingredients in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, combine buttermilk and sweet potatoes.
2. Cut frozen butter into small cubes, blend into flour mixture using your fingers. Take care not to melt butter (handle as little as possible). Add wet mixture into dry; lightly mix dough with hands to combine.
3. Place on a floured surface (the dough will

look very shaggy). Press it into a 9x6 rectangle (approximately 2" thick). Cut dough into rounds. Gather leftover dough; repeat until you have 8 large biscuits.

4. Place biscuits in a skillet; bake until bottoms turn golden brown, about 12–15 minutes.

Plum Jam

- 4 lbs peeled, seeded, and crushed plums (crushing helps with the seeding)**
- 3 lbs sugar**
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice**

1. Sterilize jars; setup canning equipment.
2. Combine ingredients in a large saucepan. Boil, stirring frequently to dissolve sugar.
3. Reduce temperature to medium-high. Continue to stir frequently to prevent burning.
4. Reduce syrup until the jelly stage is reached.
5. Fill jars to 1/4" from the top; boil in a hot water canner for 5 minutes (10 minutes above 1000 feet, 15 minutes above 6000 feet).

Plum Jam

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The spoon test and freezer test work well, but since I know there is enough pectin, reading the temperature is the easiest method for me. The syrup should read 8 degrees above boiling point, 220 degrees at sea level. Don't get the temperature too high, 223 degrees is the thread stage in candy making! Invest in a good thermometer; you'll be glad you did.

Blueberry Pie

One of my favorite times of the year is late spring when all of our wild blueberries are ripe. Our family tradition is to see who can pick the most berries. Mary, my eight-year-old, won this year, but I think it is due to her self-control. Everyone else was digging into their stash and she saved every one of hers. We come home, announce winners, make this awesome Blueberry Pie and give the first slice to the winner. I hope this tradition lasts through the generations.

5½ cups blueberries

⅓ cup brown sugar

**⅓ cup granulated sugar, plus 2 Tbsp
(for sprinkling)**

1 tsp cinnamon

¼ cup flour, plus 2 Tbsp (for sprinkling)

2 homemade pie crusts, chilled

1 Tbsp heavy cream*

1 large egg, beaten*

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees.
2. In a large bowl combine berries, brown sugar, granulated sugar, cinnamon and flour. Stir gently.
3. Sprinkle 2 Tbsp flour and 2 Tbsp granulated sugar on the bottom of chilled crust. Pour filling into crust. Cut second crust into 1" strips, weave into a lattice pattern on top of the pie.
4. Bake in oven 1 hour or until blueberries are bubbly and crust is golden. Serve with ice cream or homemade whipped cream.

NOTES: You can substitute domestic cultivated berries in the pie if wild berries are not in season. *Brushing the lattice crust with heavy cream or an egg, and sprinkling it with raw sugar gives it a prettier appearance as well as a nice crunch.



*The lessons
the garden
teaches us
are almost as
bountiful as its
harvests, and
the kitchen
has its own
challenging
curriculum.*

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*Happy Healthy Family Tracking the
Outdoors In*, released 2011

Stacy Lyn's Harvest Cookbook,
released 2017