



Jennifer Leckey
Judy Moosmueller

There's a carrot in my piñata

Happy, sparkly and nourishing
whole foods for little people's parties



Over forty scrumptious recipes set within a range of party themes that kick those typically sugar-packed, unhealthy party foods well away from your celebration.

There's a Carrot in my Piñata presents fun party food that is stripped back, free from artificial ingredients, and turned into delicious nutritious alternatives that make our little ones smile inside and out.





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by Jennifer Leckey & Judy Moosmueller

P.S. A piñata is a container often made of papier-mâché, pottery, or cloth; it is decorated, and filled with small toys or candy, or both, and then broken as part of a ceremony or celebration. You can also put carrots into it.



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But first...

MADE FROM SCRATCH

We believe that anything home made from fresh ingredients beats the hell out of commercially prepared, takeaway or store-bought goods: it tastes better, looks better and is infinitely better for you and your party guests. By making the food yourself, you get to decide exactly what goes in and what gets uninvited to the party!

ORGANIC PRODUCE

It's quite simple: pesticides and foods don't mix. Eating organic, local produce is crucial, not only for your internal balance but also for the environment. It is our planet after all.

The best argument for eating organic produce is simply because the food has more nutrients and tastes amazing and we want to serve the best for our guests!

FREE RANGE ANIMAL PRODUCTS

This isn't only a matter of necessity but also of the heart: please make sure your meat is sustainably sourced. We buy only organically-raised, grass-fed meats, from a local producer with a sustainable farm model which has a biological and holistic view.

Remember the animals' diet and its living conditions create the end product. Quality is way more important than quantity and every dollar you spend supports someone or something.

SWEETENER

Please consider the amount and type of sweetener you use as this can have a huge impact on the sugar rush we have all come to recognise at kids' parties. There are some wonderful sweeteners out there that have a much lower GI so they will raise the blood sugars slowly and steadily rather than spiking.

They will also nourish the body with vitamins, minerals and enzymes: honey (contains antifungal, antiviral and antiseptic agents), dates (packed with fibre and iron), maple syrup (a superstar in antioxidants), coconut sugar/nectar (lowest glycemic index and high in minerals) and, an Ayurvedic golden oldie, jaggery (excellent for blood building, high in iron and very strengthening). Rapadura sugar is also a biggie with the Ayurvedics and let's not forget fruit a.k.a 'God's candy' is also an excellent way to add sweetness and health to any party.

FOOD COLOURINGS

Artificial food colourings are highly toxic and full of chemicals that have been linked to adverse side effects such as concentration difficulties and hyperactivity in children. Please always look at the ingredients list and avoid all numbers starting with an 'E', e.g. 'E-120.

There are many natural colours on the markets which use amazing healthy superfood ingredients such as turmeric, beetroot juice, spinach and blueberries. You can also make these yourself.

NUTS & SEEDS

Nuts and seeds contain a huge number of beneficial nutrients but they need to be prepared in order to increase their digestibility and remove any moulds and mycotoxins. We recommend soaking them in 500 millilitres (2 cups) of filtered water with one tablespoon of apple cider vinegar or a quarter teaspoon of Vitamin C powder for anything from 30 minutes to six hours before rinsing them thoroughly with fresh water and quickly drying them in a frying pan to get them crunchy again.

INCREMENTS

Every country has its own culture, customs and traditions around food and cooking. Even measurements vary from country to country, from kitchen to kitchen and whilst following weights will always give you the most exact result, getting out the scales isn't everyone's preferred way of doing things. This is why we chose to feature both metric and imperial as well as a visual

	AUS	UK	USA	Imperial
1 cup	250 ml	250 ml	236 ml	8 ¾ fl oz
¾ cup	180 ml	180 ml	175 ml	6 fl oz
½ cup	125 ml	125 ml	120 ml	4 fl oz
⅓ cup	80 ml	80 ml	75 ml	2 ¾ fl oz
¼ cup	60 ml	60 ml	60 ml	2 fl oz
⅓ cup	30 ml	30 ml	30 ml	1 fl oz

This table is our guide for all basic measurements.

quantity guide where we felt it might be helpful. So take your pick: 100 g banana, 1 cup banana or simply, one medium banana! Our style of cooking is more taste and texture based than exactitudes. Each of these recipes has been created multiple times and with a multitude of different ingredients depending on who we were catering for and what ingredients we had to hand at the time. We want to encourage you to experiment, substitute ingredients if it's not in season or simply not in your pantry, opt for options that suit your allergies (i.e. if a recipe calls for nut butter but you are feeding a child with a nut allergy, try tahini).

A FEW TIPS

Remember presentation is everything. Natural coloured funfetti or sugar eyes transform a veggie ball into a monster rock. Give each dish a fun name and create a little story about it. Don't serve all foods at the same time - start with a savoury dish. With a full belly, your party guests are less likely to eat so much of the sweet stuff. Don't be afraid to serve healthy things even if some kids reject it. A lot of kids go with the flow and if their peers will eat it, they will eat it too. Treat treats as treats. Build up to this special moment and explain to the children that it's super special birthday foods. Party food is about fun and a bit of magic - let's add nourishment to this list too!

...and thank you

We have been incredibly lucky to be supported by a wonderful network of the loveliest, most generous and hardworking women who have spent their time and used their talent to help us bring this book to life.

Most of these inspiring ladies are mummies with a full-time career or a small business on their hands so we are doubly grateful for their tender lovin' input, support and their friendship.

To Clare Reid, thank you for proofreading again, again, again and then again. Your feedback is always spot on and you are a truly beautiful soul swimming on our wave. Get a glimpse of her world at shesayshesays.net

Aizhan Greenwood, you tell beautiful stories with your photographs and we are eternally grateful to you for capturing our stunning studio photography and being able to share it with the world. Thank you also for making it all happen within your crazily busy schedule and keeping a big smile on your face. See more of her beautiful photography at little-reflections.com

Thank you Peta Preston, our fabulous (and it's really the only word that fits her) stylist, who has so effortlessly organised the outfits for our photoshoot and sparkled up the kiddos to perfection. Peta works as an image stylist (she is also a lot of fun) and you can find her at petapreston.com.au

Kelly Low designed a completely unique and monochrome collection for little people. She loves collaborating with local brands and so do we. Thank you so much for your generosity and help for our kids' outfits. We love them! pompomkidsco.bigcartel.com

Catherine Le Souef, you gorgeous thing! Thank you for handmaking all this cool stuff for our shoot in the blink of an eye. You are a star. Find all the beautiful things @ [_louiselesouefandco_](https://www.instagram.com/_louiselesouefandco_)

Rebecca Miller lovingly designs and hand makes dolls with soul, and a hidden crystal heart to remind us to treasure the beauty within. Thank you so much for bringing them to our photoshoot. They brought a lovely personal touch and the kids loved them. Find her at lovmatildadolls.com

Helen Pow is the heart and soul of *The Little Posy Co.* Thank you for spontaneously supporting us and sharing your lovely little posies. You can order them on weekdays at littleposy.com.au

To Mark, thank you for your endless patience (and at times you have needed a whole lot of it!) and encouragement, for sharing my happiness and excitement when we started this project and for always pushing me to follow my dreams. I love you. *Jen*

Allan, this book wouldn't exist without you. Thank you for being a part of all the steps in between that no one sees. When I have doubts, you help me laugh them away and somehow we always make it all work. Thank you for every day and for caring about the little details like the thread colour for the balloons. You are my favourite person in the world. *Judy*

To our recipe testers: Emma Connor, Sharon Chalwell, Clare Ellington, Bettina Frensemeier, Lorren Hawkins, Deborah Noblett, Varsha Hirani, Clea Tibbs Johansson, Angelina Timour, Rachael Wilson.

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To my Mum and Dad, for assisting, cooking, making, decorating and cleaning it all up for *Fresh from the Farm, Into the Woods and Eggstravaganza*. Dad, I'm so glad you kept those old wooden boards! Love you guys so much. *Judy*

To my Dad, for guiding me and always knowing exactly when words of encouragement are needed. I love you. *Jen*

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Franck Tellier for always bringing all the good stuff in our direction and patiently answering all the questions.

Katharina, a.k.a. Wuzzi, who sat patiently for an entire afternoon so Auntie Judy could take *that* photo!

To our stockists who have given us the opportunity to sell our first book *There's a Beetroot in my Cake*.

And to the readers of *Heart to Plate* - where it all began.





Seasonal Celebrations



A top-down view of a pink table set for an Easter meal. The table is decorated with various items: a white tray of ice cream scoops, a large omelette on a white plate, several cups of chocolate sauce, chocolate bunnies, paper carrots, and other festive decorations. A purple banner with the text "Eggstravaganza" is overlaid on the omelette.

Eggstravaganza



Eggstravaganza

Every family has its own unique Easter traditions (from the Easter bunny and egg hunts to egg decorating and Easter trees, to name but a few). As a child, the excitement about the Easter bunny leaving a few surprises in our garden (or equally the determination to catch Mum or Dad in the act of pretending to be the Easter bunny!) was huge! Whatever our traditions, it was usually an eggstremely (!) chocolatey affair!

However, 'chocolatey' can be supercharged! Substitute normal cocoa powder for a veritable Amazonian super warrior: raw cacao. One of the highest plant-based sources of iron and magnesium*, it contains more calcium than cow's milk and has over 40 times the antioxidants of blueberries. Compare this with normal cocoa powder that has been chemically processed, destroying most of its antioxidants and flavanols, and it seems crazy not to 'hop' on down to your nearest grocery store to get some raw cacao. The chocolate treats on our Easter table let raw cacao play a starring role alongside almonds which help maintain digestive health and increase nutrient absorption. We've always loved the bright colours of Easter and this quiche is not only beautiful in colour but is also full of goodness: salmon is an excellent source of vitamins and omega-3 fatty acids and cherry tomatoes may be small but they pack a mean punch when

it comes to vitamins, potassium and fibre. Of course, we had to incorporate bunny fuel, aka the carrot, into our spread somewhere: delicious mini carrot cakes without all the sugar that would leave your little ones bouncing around like excited rabbits!

*the most deficient mineral in the Western world which helps prevent and manage disorders such as high blood pressure, heart disease, and diabetes.

ALMOND & CHOCOLATE MACARONS

Makes twenty-four macarons.

125 g (¾ cups) almonds, finely ground
 2 egg whites, room temperature
 ½ tsp salt
 65 g (½ cup) unrefined raw sugar, powdered
 ½ tsp vanilla extract
 1 tbsp raw chocolate powder
 100 g dark chocolate, melted
equates to one regular bar

Method

Preheat oven to 180 C.

Line a baking tray with baking paper.

Place the shelled almonds into a food processor until finely ground.

Whisk the egg whites with salt and sugar until very stiff. Add vanilla extract, almonds and raw chocolate powder.

Pipe the batter in small rounds onto baking sheets. You will need a pastry bag (or plastic bag with the tip cut open) fitted with a 1 centimetre opening. Aim for 3 centimetre circles.

Let these rounds sit on the baking sheet for 45 minutes. This is crucial as the air will help the rounds set and form a dry shell.

Bake for 10 minutes in the oven.

Then allow them to cool and fill with dark chocolate or your favourite fillings/frostings.

MARZIPAN EGGS

Makes twelve small eggs.

100 g (1 cup) almonds, finely ground/almond meal
 30 ml (⅓ cup) honey
 1 - 2 tsp rose water
 1 - 2 tsp almond extract
 raw chocolate powder for dusting

Method

Cover almonds in hot water and let sit for 10 - 15 minutes. Discard water.

Remove shells pat dry with a kitchen towel and finely grind them.

Combine with honey, add rose water and almond oil.

Roll into little egg shapes and dust with raw chocolate powder.

Store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to two weeks.

Notes

Adjust amount of rose water and almond extract to suit your taste. More will result in stronger marzipan flavour - less will increase taste in honey.

SALMON, CORN, DILL & TOMATO QUICHE

Makes one large round cake.

Ingredients

15 g butter
1 small onion, finely chopped
250 g salmon fillets, cooked and flaked
equates to two small fillets
or 200 g smoked salmon
equates to two large pieces
60 g (½ cup) self-raising flour
120 ml (½ cup) milk
3 eggs
120 g (1 cup) corn
4 cherry tomatoes, chopped
2 tbsp dill

Method

Preheat the oven to 180 C.

Melt butter in large frying pan and sauté onions for about five minutes. Set aside and leave to cool.

Combine milk, eggs and flour then add all remaining ingredients except cheese.

Pour into a well-greased cake tray. Bake in oven for 15 - 20 minutes or until cooked through.

CHOCOLATE MILK

JEN SEND RECIPE

CARROT CAKE MUFFINS

Makes twenty muffins/one large round cake.

100 g (½ cup) butter
100 g (¼ cup) rapadura sugar/coconut sugar
4 egg yolks
100 g (½ + ½ cup) light spelt flour
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp cinnamon
¼ tsp star anise
¼ tsp cloves
¼ tsp cardamom
¼ tsp coriander
250 g (3 ⅓ cups) almonds, finely ground
250 g (2 cups) carrots, peeled coarsely chopped
equates to two medium carrots
4 egg whites

FROSTING

150 g (1 cup) cream cheese
2 tsp honey
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tbsp vanilla essence
juice of a lemon

Method

Preheat oven to 180 C.

Grease a cake tin or muffin forms.

Whisk the egg whites until stiff and set aside.

In a separate bowl, beat the butter and sugar together until fluffy and add egg yolks one by one. Then add spices. Sieve the flour, combine with baking powder and mix with egg dough. Fold in almonds, carrots and egg whites by hand.

Spoon into muffin trays or cake tin.

Bake for 45 minutes until golden or a skewer comes out clean. Let cool.

Mix all icing ingredients together and spread over top of cake or muffins.

Notes

Make your own spice mix by adding all spices into a mortar and pestle and grind them. You can also use a Chinese five spices mix.





Summer Festivities



There's a beetroot in my cake

We'd also love to introduce our first book to you.

With a spoon in one hand, a camera at the ready in the other, and a tiny person sitting slightly skew-whiff in a highchair looking back at you with intrigue: the moment when your little one gets her first taste of real, albeit rather mushy and not particularly appealing-looking, food is an exciting (and slightly daunting) part of parenthood. Whatever your pre-child relationship with food may have been, the arrival of these tiny little bundles of joy sets many parents on a new journey that continues well beyond the highchair stage.

We all want thriving, happy and healthy children and food plays a huge part in that. Nothing makes us happier than seeing little hands tucking in eagerly, smiling faces around the dinner table and, of course, empty plates. The little people that join us on our journey, however, are born with minds of their own, taste buds that take time to evolve, and personalities to boot - one of the reasons why we love them so dearly! So occasionally (well, actually, quite regularly), we have to think a bit more creatively about how and what we will be serving for dinner in order to achieve 'empty plate' status at the same time as providing the nutrition their growing bodies need.

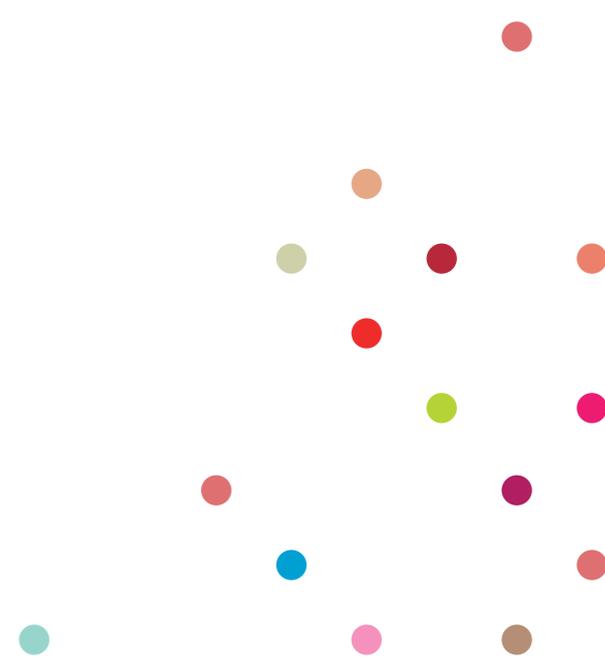
There's a Beetroot in my Cake presents everyday dishes that are stripped back, free from artificial ingredients, and turned into delicious healthy alternatives. Family favourites with a twist.

Over sixty irresistible recipes to get your kids excited about vegetables, fruits and supercharged foods.

There's a Beetroot in my Cake
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www.beetrootinmycake.com.au



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Those who might be at risk from the effects of salmonella, E. Coli and listeria poisoning (the elderly, pregnant women, young children and those suffering from immune deficiency diseases) should consult their doctor with any concerns before consuming raw eggs or raw milk.

Oven Guide: You may find cooking times vary depending on the oven you are using. For fan-forced ovens, as a general rule, set the oven temperature to 20 C (35 F) lower than indicated in the recipe.

Sources

Dr. Hulda Clark, European Food Safety Authority,
I Quit Sugar, World Health Organization