

Pediatric Corner

By Dr. Michael Anderson, MD
NORTHSIDE CHILDREN'S PEDIATRIC CENTER

A holiday tradition: Cobbler comfort, cast-iron style.

We all love tradition. It connects us with our past, each other, and with the hope of our families' future. Tradition can single-handedly draw us to cherish any holiday. And, this season more than any season, is the mother load of tradition.

Most prized? Our families own individual, most cherished tradition. Dusted off each November. Re-shaped. Re-shared. Then, lovingly handed down to our children to hopefully follow suit to their children. Such rituals allow family members to unite in their identity. Family traditions create intimacy as we share something common to each other that may not be known outside of your clan.

Whether frying chicken or baking cornbread on your great grandma's 12" cast-iron skillet, it's impossible not to feel a part of something huge. These are the experiences in tradition that make any holiday event more fun. Unlike those who use the cookware's distant relative, Teflon-clad aluminum, the Cast-Iron family meal has ritual. And, it's this ritual that helps create your family's fun.

Our family skillets have detailed rules for cure and care. For example, they never touch soap and water. After meals, clean up is performed by using high heat from the oven or stovetop to char excess food residue, and remove with a wooden spatula. Then, we rub a light coat of oil on the black metal, and let our two girls store our magic pans until their next use. Thus, preserving the original "non-stick" surface other pans only try to imitate.

PULL QUOTE: With the culinary assistance of a 12" skillet, and Mrs. Bertha Russell Gonce's special recipe, our family classic cobbler is second to none. Your family should consider cast-iron cobbler trying the following classic.

Preheat oven to 375. Sift together 1-cup flour, 1½ tsp baking powder, and ¼ tsp salt. With a fork, separately fluff ½ cup real butter and ½ cup white sugar. Mix-in 1-cup whole milk and 1 tsp. pure vanilla, and beat all moist ingredients together. Then, combine moist and dry ingredients to a batter and pour into a 12" lightly butter-greased cast-iron skillet.

Peel, dice 1 apple, gently arranging slices atop the batter. Arrange 1½ oz. raisins between the apple pieces. Generously spoon 21 oz. can peach pie filling over the apples and raisins. Spoon 12 tbs. dark brown sugar on the top peaches, then place 4 tbs. thinly sliced butter into 12 pads. Sprinkle with cinnamon as the final layer, and bake uncovered for 35 minutes. Serve warm over vanilla ice cream any holiday evening, it's simply perfect.

Why not let your children begin their own family tradition with cast-iron cooking? Not just for traditions sake, but for newly re-discovered health benefits as well. You can shop the net for cast-iron treasures, or discover several others in the camping section of your neighborhood Super store.

Here at the Anderson home, our personal family tradition highly recommends the "Combo Cooker" by Lodge, and "Cast-Iron Cooking for Dummies" from Amazon books.

From our home to yours, we wish you
Happy. Healthy. Holidays.

Michael G. Anderson, MD, FAAP
Stephanie H. Anderson, DNP, RN, PNP-C, WNP-C
321 East Main Street • Canton, GA 30114
(across from the Bank of North Georgia)