



Breaking Bread

FORGET THE TROJAN HORSE THAT THE Greeks used to enter the City of Troy. If I ever have to plan such subterfuge, I'll opt to be baked into a loaf of bread, transported and then I'll eat my way out. Tunneling through a loaf of hot, fresh bread, soft on the inside and crusty on the outside? It sounds heavenly. I've always had a soft spot in my heart for breads, scones, muffins, cookies... basically anything of the pastry or carb family. I come by it honestly. My family has never shied away from the ol' carbs, and I struggle with the "man cannot live by bread alone" concept. Really? Let me try!

Foods in general, but favorite foods specifically, play a huge part in each of our lives, building memories and creating opportunities for fellowship. Several food rituals my family had while I was growing up loom large in my memories and set markers on my map of life.

On Sunday evenings during my wee tot years, we would have a pizza picnic in the living room. It all started because one Sunday evening we had a picnic planned, but a rainstorm halted that. Not wanting to ruin the evening, we laid the picnic blanket across the coffee table in the living room and made homemade pizza. A picnic right there in the living room, dining on pizza! It was such fun, we decided to do it again the next Sunday, and thus, a tradition was born. How many slices were served, and how many squeals of laughter were lifted, cannot be counted, but the memories are firmly planted.

On the first day of school each year, we sat down to breakfast as a family. Most mornings we were all out the door at different times and were responsible for getting our own breakfast – usually cereal and fruit eaten in the kitchen. But on the first day of school, it was a sit down swanky breakfast. The table was set, we all ate together and there were two very important items on the table. The first was a new book, gift-wrapped and placed atop our plates. Unwrapping it was like a mini version of your birthday or Christmas. The start of school meant lots of homework, but my parents wanted to make sure we all maintained a love of reading, so they supplied us each with a fun

book in which we could escape to worlds unknown through the pages. After the books were open, it was time to move onto the guest of honor at the first day of school breakfast: the French Breakfast Puffs. They were delicious, light and airy, hot puff pastries dipped in butter and rolled in cinnamon sugar. Looking back, it may not have been the most nutritious nor hearty breakfast upon which to start a school day, but it was one I looked forward to all year long. It was a once a year treat that was oh, so sweet.

The carb/school connection didn't end when public school years did. There was something for college, too. My mom made a coffee cake known as "College Coffee Cake." It received that name because one of her college roommates' mothers used to send them the coffee cake when they were in college, and it soon became known by that moniker. After years of hearing that story and eating the coffee cake at home, when we each left for our respective colleges, my sisters and I expected one to arrive in our dorm mailboxes – and sure enough, one did. My mom baked and mailed us each a "College Coffee Cake" every year we were away at school. It was a little taste of home that filled our bellies, warmed our hearts and put a smile on our faces with the memories it evoked.

More than just sustenance, food almost becomes a friend or member of the family, considering the importance we put upon it, and the memories we associate with it. Like the carbs of my childhood, there are foods and drinks that we all love, and that give us a common denominator in the kitchen of life. We are celebrating our local food scene in this issue by highlighting of some our—and your—best and favorite local food finds (p. 175). It is a feast of fabulousness!

Nowadays, my family once again celebrates each other and food by gathering for family dinners every Sunday night. Pizza is no longer on the menu; however, it is not the food, but the experience that is most important. It is a chance to gather around a table, and, sometimes quite literally, break bread together, strengthening our bonds and enjoying the bounty.

Friends and family aren't the only ones with whom we share food; dinner is a quintessential date activity. For those singles in Spokane, though, is finding someone with whom to dine and to date a challenge? Writer Sherry Jones interviewed singles in Spokane to find out what the dating scene is like in our area. Turns out there are a lot of disgruntled singles out there that have given up on love (p. 47). Nonsense! Enjoy every moment of life and know that in due time you'll find what you're looking for. Like a well-cooked meal is worth the wait, so too is a quality relationship. And when you find that one, it will be like your favorite food, wine or loaf of bread – rooted in your heart forever as a newfound favorite.

Rest assured, my heart does beat for more than just bread when it comes to my favorite foods and drink. I have a few other favorites, some new and some with deep, established roots in my heart. My favorite new wine is from Caprio Cellars, in Walla Walla; my heart leaps for joy at the thought of huckleberries, and no trip to Coeur d'Alene is complete without sidling up to the bar at Hudson's Hamburgers.

We all have our favorites, so pull up a chair, lift your glass, and let's break bread together, for there is much to celebrate in life, and in Spokane.

Happy eating and happy reading!

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