



Recipe for memories

Make your own cookbook—and gain a family heirloom in the process. **By Sheryl Berk**

like each other? I was hoping for the best and was relieved when, between passing plates of penne and garlic bread, Peter's mom and mine struck up a lively conversation about wedding dates, engagement announcements, and oh yes, the art of veal marinara.

My mother, Judy, slices her veal cutlets paper thin and

lightly breads them with a delicate tomato sauce, then serves them atop a nest of spaghetti. "That sounds delicious," said my future mother-in-law, Barbara Berk. "You must give me the recipe."

Which gave me a great idea: Why not ask *both* our families for recipes and combine them into a joint Kahn-Berk family cookbook? It would be something we could all share and contribute to—and

certainly enjoy. I'll admit that at first my motives weren't entirely selfless: As a wife-to-be, I was eager to learn our families' culinary secrets so I could reproduce them in my future home. As Peter and I registered for pots, pans, china, and silver, all I could think of was how our table would look when I served juicy turkey, tart cranberry sauce, and fragrant corn bread stuffing—just like my mom always makes.

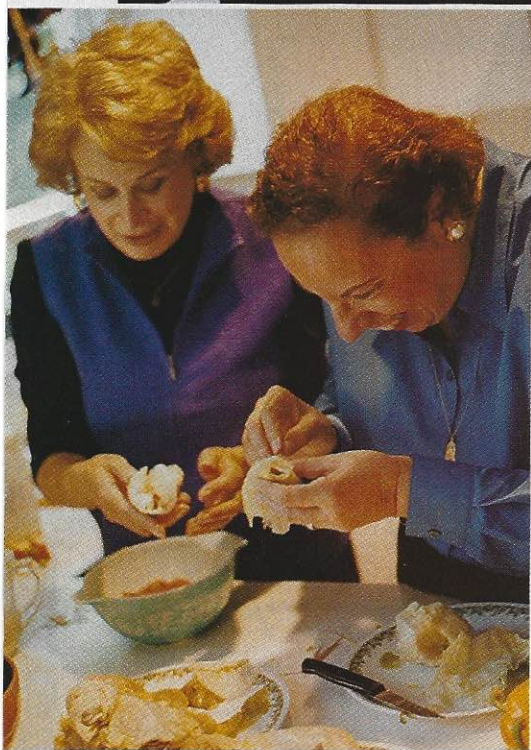
I began by asking Mom about my Grandma Miriam's recipe for stuffed cabbage—always a favorite at Hanukkah. The main ingredients—chopped meat, crushed tomatoes, and large cabbage leaves—were easy enough to guess. But when we came to Miriam's secret for the delectable sweet-and-sour sauce, I pressed my mom for details: "How much

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Our families first met over meatballs. The day after my husband, Peter, and I got engaged four years ago, we arranged a get-together at a boisterous Italian restaurant and asked our parents, siblings, and grandparents to celebrate the occasion with us.

I was understandably nervous about making the introductions: How do you tell total strangers they're becoming one big happy family? What if they had nothing in common? What if they didn't even

(Top, left to right) Barbara Berk, Judy Kahn, Nancy Saperstone, Emily Saperstone, Sheryl Berk, Peggy Berk, and "Mama Chickie" Binder



FROM PAGE 60

lemon? How much sugar?" She thought hard for a few minutes. "You know, your grandma never really did measure things. She'd say, 'A *bissel* of this, a *bissel* of that.'" (In Yiddish, *bissel* means "a little" or "a dash," and Miriam often cooked by instinct rather than by specific measurement.) "The best way to tell if it's right is to keep tasting it," my mother instructed. So I did, making sure it was sweet yet had a bit of a kick to it. My mom also told me how Grandma would work all

day on her cabbage until it was perfect, stirring it in a huge pot on the stove and letting it simmer for several hours, until the entire hallway of her Washington Heights apartment building was filled with the aroma.

One recipe, one family memory done.

A week later, I opened the mailbox to find a letter and recipe card from my

sister-in-law Peggy in response to my call for recipes. Her Baked Brie with Walnuts and Brandy has the distinction of being a "welcome to the family" dish. "When I met Aunt Jane Berk in California for the first time, she made it [for me], and we talked as we dipped bread in the warm cheese," she explained. "It was so delicious, I begged her to tell me how to make it." Beneath the ingredients on the card, Peggy added a personal note that I included in the cookbook: "From one sister-in-law to another," she wrote. "Enjoy!"

The more I asked, the more recipes came pouring in by phone, fax, mail, and E-mail. And each one, I soon discovered, was as unique and special as the person who gave it to me. Even my three-year-old niece Emily—who loves helping her mother (Peter's sister Nancy) decorate butter cookies with sprinkles and colored sugar—wanted to share a

recipe of her own. "I make bagel and cream cheese," she bragged. "First, you put your finger in the cream cheese, then you smush it on the bagel. . . ."

I treasured hearing—and tasting—our families' histories and traditions. I used a cooking software program to enter them into my computer, then printed out copies and placed them in binders, which I mailed out to everyone who contributed. Now I update the recipes every month, filing them under sections labeled "Meat," "Poultry," "Fish," "Sides," "Sweets," "Foreign Dishes," and "Holiday Favorites." I've also added family photos and illustrations. The title, I think, says it all: "Let's Dish!: Our Family Cookbook."

My mother-in-law is perhaps the most creative cook in our clan and the most enthusiastic supporter of my project. Always on the lookout for new and unusual dishes, she derives many of her best recipes from vacations she and my father-in-law, Alan, have taken abroad. A cruise to Greece, for example, yielded a recipe for lamb chops seasoned with

person-to-person

Mediterranean spices. Barbara is also a whiz at whipping up meals that are both healthy and flavorful. Her Rolled Chicken Supreme, she proudly told me, is a Berk original. She wraps a chicken breast around banana slices, sautés it lightly, then cooks it in a light white-wine sauce with assorted fruit. "Anything and everything will work in it," she insists. At different times, she's used grapes, peaches, pineapple—even crab apples. One rainy weeknight—rather than brave a rainstorm to get to the supermarket—I made it with canned apricots and pears. When I shared the story, she said, "See? That's your very own version. Everyone who makes it gets to add a little bit of herself to the mix."

Mama Chickie, Peter's grandmother, makes certain that an anecdote is always an ingredient in her recipes. As she dictates the how-tos, she includes a tale about the person who liked the dish, or some memory of making it 20, 40, or even 60 years ago. Papa Nat (her late husband and Peter's grandfather) could not resist her Cabbage Soup or Tongue with Raisins and Gingersnaps. And she tells me when Peter was a boy, he always asked her to make Chocolate Mousse Pie for his birthday. She even has a photo of him at age six with a chocolate mustache, enjoying every bite.

The culmination of our hard work comes during the holidays. I ask everyone to pick out a dish from our cookbook—preferably one they've never tried before—and bring it to dinner at my in-laws' in Greenwich, Connecticut. (I'm partial to Chickie's Sweet Potato and Marshmallow Soufflé.) As the pages and the years go by, I've realized that we'll be able to hand down this cookbook for generations to come, and that all of these wonderful meals—and the people who make them—will be remembered and cherished. Now, as Peter and I approach our fourth anniversary, our families know each other well and enjoy being together. I would like to think my cookbook had something to do with that, and I plan on filling binder after binder, year after year. We all have so much to learn from each other—and not just in the kitchen. ☺

Sheryl Berk is senior entertainment editor at Biography magazine.

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Create Your Own Family Cookbook

Use these tips to put together your own family culinary treasure.

- Spread the word. Call, write, or e-mail family members, requesting their favorite recipes.
- Include anecdotes with each recipe entry. Ask the cooks to reflect on why a dish is a family favorite—who loves it, who handed it down—and to indicate if it's served at a specific holiday or time of year. The more they elaborate, the better.
- Use a recipe software application, such as Home Cookin (www.mountain-software.com/homecook.htm), MasterCook (www.mastercook.com), or Meal-Master (home1.gte.net/welliver) to format your cookbook. These programs have easy-to-follow templates that make inputting recipes a breeze. They also let you print out grocery lists and import text from

E-mails or disks; depending on the application, you can also import or export recipes from one program to another.

- Personalize your cookbook with family photos and illustrations. Some Web sites (such as www.clipartconnection.com) have free food-related drawings that you can download and import into your recipe files. Or ask a young family member to draw pictures of his or her favorite foods.
- Place recipes in an inexpensive presentation binder that has plastic (i.e., spill-proof) pages. Color-code the categories (red pages for meat, blue for fish, yellow for chicken, etc.), or use stick-on tabs to clearly label and divide each section.
- Send a cookbook to each family household, and mail new pages once a month or as often as you receive recipes. Aim for at least one new recipe a month.

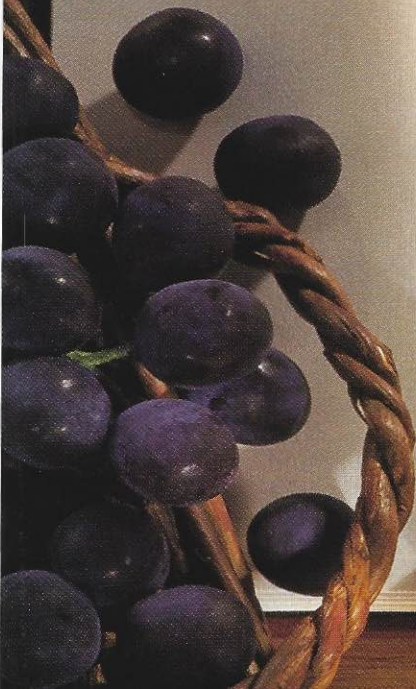
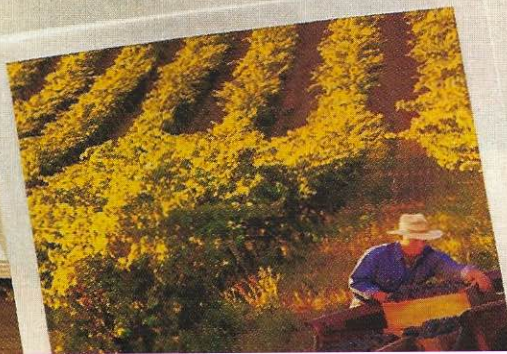


Tuesday

*A GREAT EVENING CAN SOMETIMES
TAKE UP TO FIVE YEARS TO PERFECT.*

Harvest :

*Finally, the sleepless nights
waiting for the precise moment
to harvest are all worthwhile.*



born to dance

It's never too late to chase a girlhood dream, even if it means donning a tutu.

By Sheryl Berk

I was five the last time I wore a tutu. There I am, a chubby kindergartner in a pink puffy tutu and silver ballet slippers. I remember twirling around my living room with my arms outstretched, practicing my pirouettes till I was dizzy. Every Saturday morning, my mother would take me to Suzy Gerko's Dance Studio in the town where I grew up. I was never quite as graceful as the other girls, and month after month, when it came time for the dance recital, I was passed over for a solo. On stage, I was always one in a crowd of butterflies, bluebirds, and buzzing bees. Madame Suzy never picked me for Queen Bee, so I gave up my ballerina aspirations and joined the Brownies.

Fast-forward to this past Christmas: My sister and I sit in the audience of the New York City Ballet, mesmerized by *The Nutcracker*. I watch as the Sugar-Plum Fairy daintily glides around the stage and wonder, Why can't I do that? Then it occurs to me: Maybe I can. What does she have that I don't have (besides mile-long legs, spaghetti arms, and the ability to walk on her tippy-toes)? I decide right then and there to take a ballet class.

After thumbing through the New York City yellow pages, I find Ballet Academy East, which offers beginner classes for adults. I sign up for five of them. I am delighted to find that at \$12.50 a session, it's a lot cheaper than my gym membership. I also shell out \$22 for a pair of pink Capezio ballet slippers (a must—it's tough to point your toes in Nike cross-trainers) but opt for my usual workout wear—a pair of bicycle shorts and a big tee. The dozen or so women in the studio are a bit more dressed for the part in leotards and leg warmers. I love that my classmates are all shapes, sizes, and ages—and all equally comfortable. I

choose a spot in the corner, as far away from the huge wall of mirrors as I can get, and take the barre next to a gray-haired grandmother type. I'm amazed that while I can barely touch my toes, she lowers her forehead to her knees in one fluid motion.

The room temperature is about 30 degrees, and I quickly learn why. After only five minutes of stretching (I mimic the other women who contort their bodies into pretzels), I am "glowing," and I think I've pulled a muscle in my groin. Nina, the instructor, claps her hands to signal the start of class, and a pianist takes the bench at the baby grand piano. "We will begin," she says, "with a simple combination." After that, it's as if she's speaking another language entirely (and she is—French). She instructs us to perform *battements tendus*, followed by a few *demi pliés*, *grand pliés*, and

port de bras (translation: point your toes, squat down, and swing your arms). As tinkly Tchaikovsky music is played in the background, I try to keep up. I teeter and totter on my toes and struggle to align my head and shoulders. "Imagine a string pulling you up—this should be your posture. Graceful, always graceful," Nina reminds us. But when I glance in the mirror, I look anything but graceful. I feel five all over again.

Before the next class, I do some homework: I

buy a book that outlines the lingo and the positions, and watch a few instructional videos. I invest in a pink leotard, tights, and a floaty chiffon skirt. I wrap my hair

into a tight chignon, the theory being that if I look like a ballerina, I will be one. And this time, when the piano starts to play, I can actually follow the combinations. By class three, I can do an arabesque (balancing on one leg with the other extended) without a wobble, and I find ballet creeping into my everyday life as well. In line at the supermarket checkout, I point my toes and do 10 tendus. As I reach for a can of crushed tomatoes while cooking dinner, I sweep my arm up to the top shelf of the cupboard. I hear the teacher's words echo in my ears: "Graceful, always graceful."

I practice every day, pirouetting around my puzzled husband, Peter, who, used to hearing me complain about looming deadlines, wants to know if I have "time for this." I explain that I don't think about work while I'm dancing—in ballet, everything moves in slow motion and time stands still. I am calm and relaxed.

By my last class, I notice a major change in me. As I do each step, I no longer worry about my balance—it's there, rock-steady—through every relevé. My flexibility has improved remarkably—I can not only touch my toes but also place my palms flat on the floor. After talking to some classmates, I realize we all have our own reasons for wanting to take ballet. One woman—six feet tall in her tights—yearned to feel more feminine. Another has two daughters in ballet classes and thought it would be a great way to bond with them. Still another wanted to shape up post-pregnancy.

My reason? Maybe I was longing to recapture a part of my childhood. But what I didn't bargain for was finding an exercise that strengthens both body and mind. I still don't think I'll ever be good enough to dance in *The Nutcracker* (note to Sugar-Plum Fairy: You can relax). But at least I finally feel like the Queen Bee. ■



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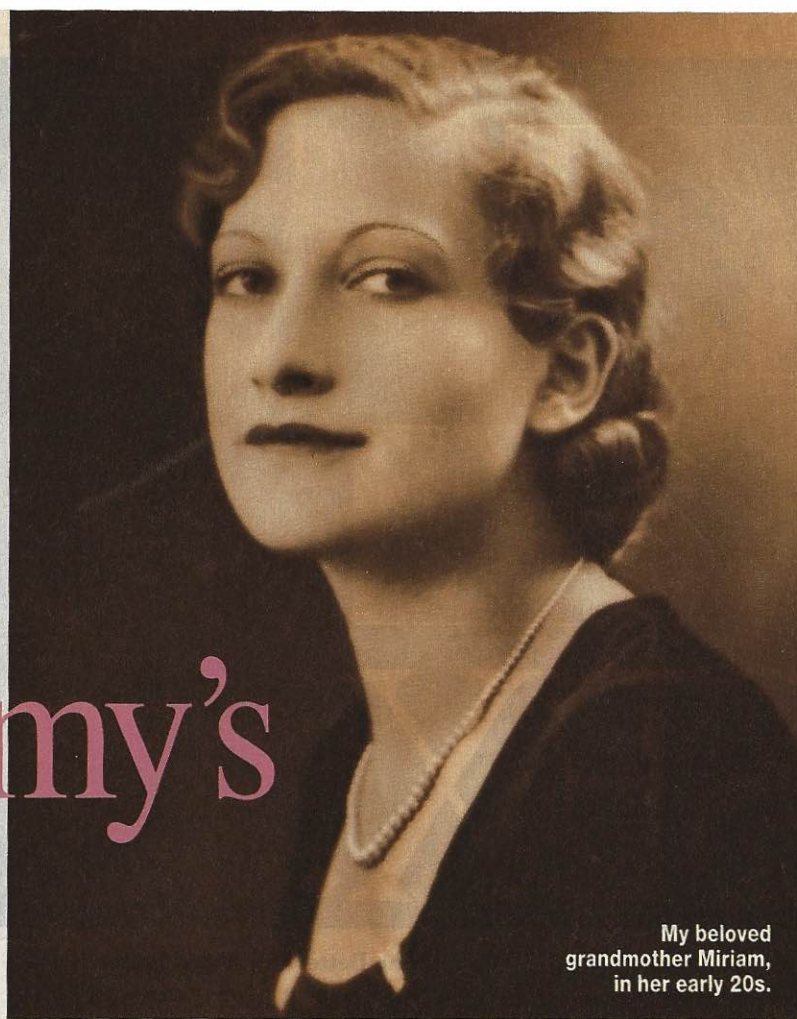
Renaissance Dancewear Leotards, tights, and unitards in a variety of colors and fabrics for sizes up to XXXL; 812-438-4114; www.renaissance-dancewear.com.

For information on ballet books, videos, and more, visit modemag.com.

Nothing I learned in school could ever compare with her wisdom on how to live, love, laugh and appreciate the little things.

BY SHERYL BERK

Grammy's gifts



My beloved grandmother Miriam, in her early 20s.

“What are you looking for?” my husband, Peter, asks, watching me dig through a box in one of our closets.

“Stuffed cabbage,” I reply. It was always a family Hanukkah tradition, served with crisp latkes. I haven’t seen my grandmother Miriam’s recipe in years, but I know exactly where to find it: in the large cardboard carton of mementos I had labeled “From Grammy” when I was 13 years old and she passed away.

The box contains photos of a chubby toddler splashing around a pool in water wings. When I was terrified I’d drown in the deep end, Miriam taught me how to float on my back, supporting my shoulders and assuring me she’d never let go.

The box also holds a graduation card with the words “You always make me so proud. Love, Grammy” scrawled in a thin, shaky hand. And it has her gold wedding band, the one I wore when I took my marriage vows last January.

Miriam knew the most amazing things. She could spell *Mississippi* backwards. She could keep an omelet from sticking to the pan. She could comb the knots out of my long, matted hair without hurting me one bit.

When I was six and she was in her 60s, she showed me how to do the Charleston. “I was an extra in a Gloria Swanson movie, you know,” she’d say, swinging one leg high out in front of her to demonstrate. “It was a party scene with lots of people dancing, and the director put me up front because he thought I had great legs.”

On the nights when my parents went out to dinner, we’d dress up in bangles and boas, and belt out “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy” to an imaginary audience. My grandmother and I were kindred spirits. We laughed and cried at the same things, and we understood each other. I told her we’d travel around the world together, and she showed me how to touch the stars by closing one eye and balancing them on my fingertips.

She taught me how to paint my toenails a perfect shade of Redcoat Red and never gave away my secret when I stalked around the house in sweat socks. When my mother would scold me for hanging upside down on the monkey bars or riding my bike with no hands, Grammy would nod and wink. “Go on,” she’d whisper in my ear. “Do something spectacular with your life.”

She was the first person who ever encouraged me to dream and to put those dreams down on paper. When she became almost completely bedridden and shook with Parkinson’s disease, I would sneak into her room—a makeshift space we had walled off from the dining room—in the middle of the night and crawl under her covers. We’d stare up at the ceiling, watching the darkness fade into dawn, and tell each other tales. We called the cracks in the plaster our cloud pictures and squinted to see an assortment of characters take shape in the shadows.

“Right there’s a one-legged ballerina,” she told me once, pointing her chin in the direction of a paint splatter. “Do you see it?”

I nodded, straining to make out a woman in a tutu *en pointe*. “She lost her leg because she danced too much in tight shoes,” she whispered so my parents down the hall wouldn’t hear us and chase me back to bed. “She should never have bought them on sale at Macy’s.”

Miriam’s lessons are the ones that stuck with me—not all the algebra formulas or Spanish-verb conjugations I studied for years. She taught ▶



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Grammy's gifts

(continued from p. 110)

me important basics: how much constitutes a pinch of salt, how to use seltzer to get a stain out of a silk blouse, how to sew on a button so it stays put. She helped me to appreciate the simple things, like cream-cheese-and-tomato sandwiches, towels warm from the dryer and the quiet moments at dusk when the whole world is draped in a curtain of blue light. She liked the springtime most of all, when the air was warm and the breezes gentle. "This is soft weather," she explained to me. "Not too hot, not too cool, just soft."

But I don't need to rummage through my box to recall Miriam's lessons. My senses often bring them and her back to me: the gardenia fragrance of her hand lotion at a department-store counter, an Andrews Sisters tune playing on Muzak in the dentist's office, the taste of her favorite sticky-sweet cherry cordial. Sometimes I see the back of a head on the bus and recognize the snowy-white hair falling in soft waves. Or



Me, age two, and Miriam.

I catch myself laughing her laugh, a hearty, joyous cry that makes my shoulders shake and my cheeks ache.

And I'm reminded of all those little words of wisdom she instilled in me, about life and love and loss: "Every time a door closes, a window opens," "There's a lid for every pot" and "Don't cry over spilled milk."

My husband calls these little

phrases old wives' tales and teases me when I tug on my left ear each time I sneeze as she advised me (to ward off bad luck). But I cherish her sayings. Miriam's lessons have gotten me through many terrible times—when I lost my job, when I broke up with a boyfriend, when I failed a test or when I simply burned dinner.

As I stir a big, boiling pot of stuffed cabbage (see recipe, *opposite*) on my stove while our menorah burns brightly on the windowsill, I can picture the past as if it were yesterday: My sister, Debbie, and I are spinning a dreidel and snacking on chocolate Hanukkah candy coins, called gelt, as my mother and grandmother work diligently in the kitchen. Miriam sprinkles a dash of sugar into the pot of cabbage for sweetness and squeezes in just enough lemon juice to "give it a kick."

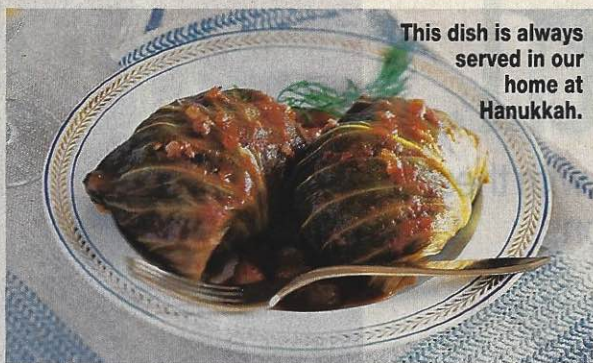
And I can't help thinking life is like that: sometimes sweet, sometimes sour and always a challenge to balance and blend both parts perfectly.

Peter and I eat dinner that night, and it's delicious—we help ourselves to seconds and thirds. My grandmother would have been proud. ■

COURTESY OF JUDY KAHN

PHOTOGRAPHED BY ROBERT JACOBS; RECIPE DEVELOPED BY MIRIAM HORWITZ; FOOD STYLIST, WILLIAM SMITH; PROP STYLIST, LAURA HART

Grammy's gifts



This dish is always served in our home at Hanukkah.

Miriam's Stuffed Cabbage Rolls

- 4 qt water
- 1½ tsp salt
- 1 (3-lb) head green cabbage, tough outer-most leaves discarded

Stuffing

- 2 lb ground beef sirloin or ground turkey
- 1 (14½-oz) can peeled, diced tomatoes in juice, drained (1½ cups)

- 1 cup finely chopped onion
- 1 Golden Delicious apple, peeled, cored, shredded
- ⅓ cup uncooked converted rice
- 1 Tbsp each salt and vegetable oil
- 1 tsp each paprika and sugar
- ½ tsp pepper

Sauce

- 3 cups chicken broth
- 3 Tbsp fresh lemon juice

- ½ cup each tomato paste and finely chopped onion
- ⅓ cup golden raisins
- 4 tsp sugar
- ½ tsp each paprika, salt and pepper

1. In large pot, bring the water and salt to a boil. Cut out core from bottom of cabbage. Remove 12 large outer leaves from cabbage; add leaves to boiling water; simmer 3 minutes, until pliable; drain in colander. Separate smaller leaves from remaining cabbage.

2. Stuffing: In large bowl, mix ingredients.

3. Sauce: In medium bowl, whisk chicken broth, 2 Tbsp lemon juice and the tomato paste to dissolve paste. Add onion, raisins, 2 tsp sugar, the paprika, salt and pepper.

4. Line bottom of wide 8-qt pot with small cabbage leaves in even layer. Place 1 large cabbage leaf on work surface

with thick end closest to you. Place ½ cup stuffing across center, shaping mixture into thick log. Fold sides of leaf over ends of stuffing; roll up from near end. Place, seam side down, on top of cabbage leaves in pot. Stuff remaining large cabbage leaves.

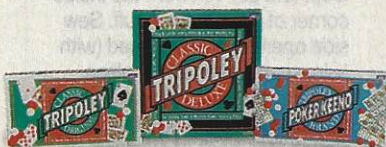
5. Pour sauce over cabbage rolls in pot. Bring sauce to a boil. Cover pot; simmer 2½ hours, until cabbage is very tender, basting rolls with sauce occasionally.

6. With slotted spoon, remove rolls to warm serving platter. Discard cabbage leaves from bottom of pot. Boil remaining sauce 10 minutes or until reduced by half. Stir in remaining 1 Tbsp lemon juice and 2 tsp sugar. Place 2 rolls on each of 6 plates, spooning some sauce over each serving.

■ Makes 6 servings. Per serving: 424 calories, 39 g protein, 35 g carbohydrate, 14 g fat, 105 mg cholesterol, 2,201 mg sodium.

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how far would they go for a baby?

After a year of trying, Sheryl Berk and her husband became members of a very popular club: The Reproductively Challenged.

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What's wrong, Aunt Shewool?" my then 2-year-old niece Emily asked. I was sitting on her bedroom floor, surrounded by Barbies and Barney books, crying. "Nothing, Em," I replied, forcing a smile. For more than a year and a half, my husband, Peter, and I had been trying to conceive. Now, watching this toddler pirouette in her tutu, I couldn't bear the thought that I might not be able to have a child of my own.

I never expected to feel this way. For the first two years of our marriage, I had a million reasons why I wasn't ready to be pregnant. I'd taken up boxing and was in the best shape of my life. I had a novel to write and a mountain of credit card bills to pay. Peter wanted to start trying, but I put on the brakes. We were young (I was 30; he was 33). What was the rush?

But when we did start to try—shortly after my 31st birthday—it didn't happen. Not after six months, not even a year. "Practice makes perfect," Peter would joke, but I couldn't stifle

my frustration. Almost every night, I'd greet him at the door in tears or a tirade.

"If you stopped worrying," my mother suggested, "it would happen." I took cleansing breaths and listened to Andrea Bocelli arias. Nada. Friends offered everything from anecdotes ("My cousin went through the same exact thing . . .") to alternate sexual positions ("It's how I got pregnant with each of my three boys"). "Do you have to tell all our friends?" Peter complained. "It's embarrassing."

After a year, my gynecologist sat us down to talk options. Most couples, he said, get pregnant within a year. We were—according to the medical community's definition—infertile. He ordered a battery of tests, from blood work to X-rays and cervical cultures.

Peter took it in stride ("Some couples spend 10 years trying," he said). I, on the other hand, sprang into action. I charted my ovulation, checked my cervical fluid and took my

temperature every morning. Peter thought I was being overzealous, but timing, the experts said, was everything—whether or not we were in the mood, we had work to do! When you're trying to get pregnant, sex isn't about making love; it's about making babies.

Every month, I'd pray this would be it. I'd buy an early pregnancy test if I was a day late. Peter didn't understand why I'd start crying when a friend announced she was expecting. He didn't get hysterical in the diaper aisle at Rite Aid. Wherever I turned, everyone but me was having a baby: I wanted to kill Rachel on *Friends* and Miranda on *Sex and the City*.

"Don't you get it?" I hissed at Peter. "I feel like a failure!"

"This isn't a competition," he replied calmly. He was right, but it sure seemed that way.

The doctors failed to find the problem even though every test on me came back negative.

odds of conceiving to 20 percent if we were lucky. Peter's semen would be "washed" with chemicals, concentrating the strongest, fastest sperm (he dubbed them his "gold-medal winners"), then inserted through a catheter into my uterus to fertilize one of my eggs. We were to return for two inseminations a month (before and during ovulation), at \$600 a pop.

As we neared the six-month mark, we went skiing in Utah to recharge. I didn't notice my period was late until Peter reminded me. "It's the high altitude," I told him. But when we got home, I raced to the bathroom without taking off my coat and took a pregnancy test. I paced, waiting for it to register, while Peter unpacked. "Don't get your hopes up, OK?" he said softly. I held my breath as I looked at the stick.

There they were—two pink lines. I screamed and waved it in Peter's face. "You're kidding," he gulped. Then he ran out to buy two more



Everyone but me was having a baby: I wanted to kill Rachel on *Friends* and Miranda on *Sex and the City*."

Yet it felt as if the pressure landed on my shoulders. (My fallopian tubes were being flooded with dye during an excruciating procedure to detect blockages; Peter just went to a collection room and watched hot videos.) Since all of the tests were tied to my health, I would spend hours begging for reimbursement every time my insurance company declined coverage.

I assumed Peter wasn't hurting as much as I was, until one day, after meeting with a urologist, he said quietly, "I would understand if you wanted out of our marriage, if you needed to find someone else who could give you a baby."

"I love you. I want your baby," I assured him.


After four months and about \$3,000 worth of tests, my gynecologist urged us to move on to "assisted techniques." So Peter and I reported to one of New York City's biggest infertility practices. It was standing-room-only in the waiting area, which I admit made me feel just a little better. Clearly, the statistics I'd read (about 6.1 million people experience infertility each year) were true.

Meeting with doctors, we plotted our plan: Pinpoint when I was ovulating, then do intrauterine insemination (IUI), which would up our

tests, "just to be sure." These, too, were positive. We laughed and cried and held out a whole week before telling our family the wonderful news: We were going to have a baby!

"She's absolutely perfect"

On December 17, 2002, we welcomed our little girl, Caroline Miriam, into the world. After 14 hours of labor, the doctors gave me an emergency C-section because Carrie was showing signs of distress. Peter gripped my hand tightly as I lay, shaking and sobbing, on the operating table.

When Carrie arrived, they rushed her away to clean her and Peter followed. Minutes later, my husband returned carrying a little bundle in his arms and knelt close to my face so I could see her. I looked at Carrie—she had big blue eyes and a rosebud mouth—then at Peter. "She's perfect," he said, kissing the baby, then me. "She's absolutely perfect." And looking into my husband's red-rimmed eyes—elated, exhausted and brimming with tears of joy—I fell in love all over again. 

Trying to have a baby? For tips on boosting fertility, log on to lifemag.com.