The Catalog is Cooking!

You might already know that jelly beans were a staple in Cabinet meetings with President Reagan, or that President George H. W. Bush was not a particular fan of broccoli, but did you know the National Archives Catalog contains many food related records, including recipes from the White House chefs and First Families?

The holdings of the Presidential Libraries include many favorite recipes of the First Families as well as recipes prepared by White House kitchen staff for special events. Some Presidents, like Dwight D. Eisenhower, were avid cooks, and the Eisenhower Library has a scrap book of clippings that Ike kept of his favorite
recipes.

We invite you to celebrate the New Year by cooking your way through the National Archives Catalog! Here are some historical recipes guaranteed to please a crowd (or at least start an interesting conversation). Bon Appetit!

Breakfast
Waffles or Pancakes? Start your day with President Kennedy’s Favorite Waffles or Betty Ford’s Buttermilk Pancakes from The Republican Congressional Cook Book. If you are looking for something light to go with your coffee, try First Lady Rosalynn Carter’s recipe for Sequoia Orange Biscuits. How about royal scones? Try making Queen Elizabeth’s Scone recipe that she sent to President Dwight Eisenhower and read the letter that accompanied her recipe for additional details.

Lunch
At lunchtime, try making Lady Bird Johnson’s recipe for Pedernales River Chili. This was a much requested recipe, so much so that she claimed this chili recipe was “almost as popular as the government pamphlet on the care and feeding of children.” Why don’t you accompany the chili with the Carter family recipe for Herb Corn Sticks?
Cocktail Hour

As evening approaches, construct a cocktail using this excellent chart from the engineering and architectural drawings of the Forest Service and serve the Plains Special Cheese ring from the Carter family right alongside.
Dinner

We’ve selected a bipartisan dinner menu. Try serving Nancy Reagan’s Piccata of Veal with Rosalynn Carter’s Eggplant Souffle on the side. We think you really could use a starchy side-dish too. We can’t decide on one, so page through the Forest Service’s Lookout Cookbook to find a recipe that appeals to you.
Feeding an army? We’ve got you covered! Try this 1879 Manual for Army Cooks for some practical tips in the kitchen.

Dessert
Since we’re celebrating the New Year, why not make several desserts? Whip up Nancy Reagan’s Pumpkin Pie, the Truman family’s 200 Year Old Pound Cake, or adjust the proportions and make the White House Wedding Cake for Tricia Nixon Cox’s Wedding.

Still hungry? Did we whet your appetite? Browse our Catalog for more recipes and cookbooks.

Have you made one of these recipes? We’d love to see a photo of your dish and hear how it turned out! Email us at catalog@nara.gov.

Wishing you a happy, healthy 2017!

Questions or comments? Email us at catalog@nara.gov.