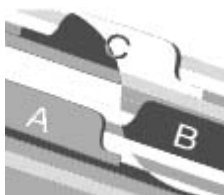


Get Familiar with the Book



Over the years, we have spoken with countless people who struggle with cooking for their family, let alone for guests, when challenged by restricted diets due to food allergies.

We sincerely hope this book will encourage you to explore new opportunities both in cooking and in socializing with family and friends.

All of the meals that we prepare in our home are selected for its flavor and flare and then altered to accommodate our dietary restrictions. We encourage everyone to search for interesting and appealing recipes and to adjust each with alternative allergy-free ingredients until the recipe is perfected.

Each recipe included within this book has been tested numerous times and received a “thumbs up” approval rating by our friends and family. The components of each recipe are tailored specifically to address the allergy restrictions within our household. However, in an attempt to accommodate *all* diets restricted by *any* of the 8 major food allergies, we have denoted every single ingredient with an asterisk (*) that contains any of the following allergens: wheat, soy, egg, milk, peanut, tree nut, fish and shell fish. Therefore, if an ingredient is listed with an *, refer to the Ingredient Substitutions section in the back of

this book if it is one in which you avoid. A list of specific foods and ingredients to avoid for the top food allergies is also included in the back of the book.

For questions regarding specific allergy-friendly brands or product options that are available, feel free to contact Eat, Learn, Live (ELL) via our website at www.ellfoundation.org. We are happy to offer guidance regarding the products that work well for us.

We begin our discussion in the upcoming chapters by reviewing ways to create a “safe” house. The home front must incorporate a system of safeguards prior to entertaining guests when the risk of contamination escalates. Here, we offer a process to evaluate potential *threats* and *solutions* along with critical tips to maximize the safety of food allergic children before guests arrive and thereafter.

As with all of the suggestions shared within this book, we encourage readers to evaluate and select those that accommodate the needs of your individual allergic child.

Since the purchase of “safe” foods directly impacts the extent that the foods presented throughout this book will be safe for allergic individuals, we share some thoughts and guidelines to interpreting today’s food labels and allergy warnings. This is an area that requires diligence and close attention, and you may be shocked at what manufacturers are not divulging.

The lack of accurate, complete and truthful allergy ingredient labeling on food products is a primary cause of a percentage of allergic reactions today. Therefore, we present the critical steps that are recommended if an allergic incident occurs as a result of a suspected food product.

Festive gatherings and celebrations with family and friends inevitably focus on sharing fabulous foods and beverages (nonalcoholic and alcoholic). The next section brings to light some unknown facts about “unsafe” alcoholic beverages. It is important to understand the presence of allergens in many wines and champagnes and the potential risk to one’s “safe” house when entertaining with certain beverages.

Throughout the remainder of the book we present a variety of menu plans followed by the respective allergy-free recipes. The recipes are categorized into specific courses, including openers (appetizers), accompaniments (side dishes), main spread (entrée) and finishing touches (desserts). While the children and younger guests are fans of many of these recipes, we have compiled a special section of their favorites in our Kids’ Picks section.

Finally, at the back of the book we have included several reference sections of useful information, including *Foods and Ingredients to Avoid* for the top 8 food allergens and a section of recommended *Ingredient Substitutions*, as well as the Food Allergy Threat/Solution Worksheets to assist in assessing the safeness of your house.