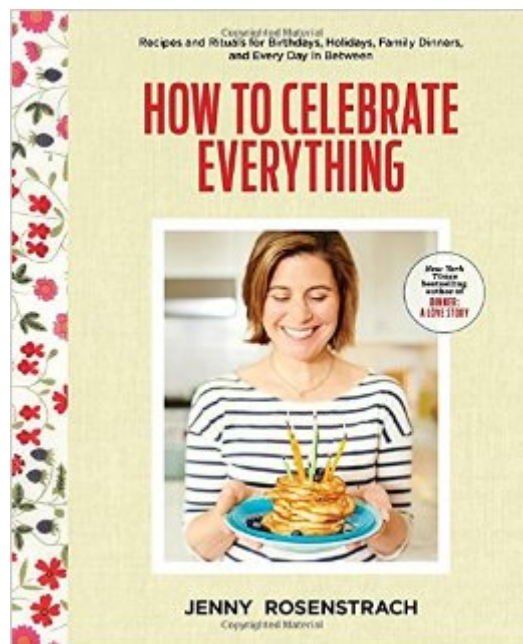


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# How To Celebrate Everything: Recipes And Rituals For Birthdays, Holidays, Family Dinners, And Every Day In Between



## Synopsis

A warm and inviting guide to turning birthdays, holidays, and everyday occasions into cherished traditions, with more than 100 time-tested recipes from the creator of the popular blog and book *Dinner: A Love Story* and author of the New York Times bestseller *Dinner: The Playbook*. "Families crave rituals," says Jenny Rosenstrach, and by rituals she means not just the big celebrations—Valentine's Day dinners, Mother's Day brunches, Halloween send-offs, Thanksgiving feasts, holiday cocktail parties—but the little ones we may not even realize are rituals: a platter of deluxe nachos on Super Bowl Sunday, or a bowl of creamy mashed potatoes after every braces-tightening session. Whether simple or elaborate, daily or annual, these rituals all serve the same purpose for Rosenstrach: to bring comfort, connection, and meaning to every day. 100+ recipes, including: popovers, apple fritters, and golden pancakes, perfect for sleepover mornings or birthday breakfasts; Interfaith Sliders: one version with ham and another with brisket; Rosenstrach's legendary chocolate Mud Cake; plus an entire section on birthdays, including a one-size-fits-all party planner that does not rely on pizza; complete menus for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Eve; and, of course, dozens of Rosenstrach's signature family dinners: Grilled Soy-Glazed Pork Chops, Harissa-Roasted Chicken, Crispy Chickpeas with Yogurt Sauce and Naan, Grilled Spicy Shrimp Tacos with Avocado Butter and Summer Cabbage, and more. In this digital, overscheduled age, *How to Celebrate Everything* helps families slow down, capture the moments that matter—and eat well while doing it. Advance praise for *How to Celebrate Everything* "I have been an ardent fan of Jenny Rosenstrach's beautiful writing for years. I always know that every word of her books will be something to savor, and *How to Celebrate Everything* will strike a chord with anyone who enjoys family, friends, and delicious food." —Ree Drummond, New York Times bestselling author of *The Pioneer Woman Cooks*

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

How to Celebrate Everything is a guide to doing just that -- celebrating everything from traditional holidays to memorable family events to Sunday dinner. The book is not organized like most cookbooks; the sections are as follows: 1. Holidays we Didn't Invent (Easter, Thanksgiving, Edible Gifts, etc) 2. Our Family Rituals (Farmer's Market, Lunch with Dad, Vacation Rituals) 3. Birthdays 4. Family Dinners (Sunday Dinner, Signature Dinner, Eating in Front of the TV) The author draws from her eclectic family history -- she was raised both Jewish and Presbyterian. Her family background includes Italian, Russian, Catholic, Cuban, German, and quite a few more. The recipes range from challah bread to Easter ham, nachos to curried lentil soup. Interspersed among the recipes are anecdotes from the author's family. She includes ideas for creating family rituals and planning events such as a kid's birthday party. Some recipes are more involved, while others are extremely simple. When reading through the book, I felt inspired to try some new things with my own family at our next gathering. One thing to keep in mind is, this book is not really a party or event planning guide. It's more of an example of how to work really good food into your family routine, not just on special occasions but every day. I really enjoyed the section about cooking while on vacation -- it's one of the things we already do when we go on vacation. I feel like this book encourages you to look at your own family routine and take pleasure in small, happy moments and comforting rituals. There are some good charts and ideas for birthday parties, but overall this is a good collection of recipes and tips for family bonding around cooking and food. I would suggest this as a lovely wedding, baby shower, or housewarming gift.

The premise of this cookbook is welcome but not unique--how food is incorporated in celebrating life. The author generously includes examples of how this functions in her own family, inviting the reader into her life. And although there are between 80 and 90 recipes in this 300 plus page book, the reality is the volume is mostly text (stories) and artful but not particularly useful or relevant pictures of family, dog, home, etc. with recipes that range from inspired to mundane. The sentiment that surrounds this project is full of merit but the execution is inconsistent. The author wisely cautions that while she is presenting personal particulars from her situation, the purpose is to trigger

inspiration not necessarily imitation. And perhaps most importantly the realization that family traditions may and do happen without any prompting at all. So, although a well-planned hot chocolate and cookie snack may occur while decorating the holiday tree it may be less meaningful or memorable than a simple family walk around the block after a big meal. No need to force it, traditions find their way in with or without intervention. Regarding the recipes I have less trouble with the limited number than the fact that some of them, no matter how novice the cook, it seems fair to characterize as filler. Recipes for Tomato Sandwiches (thick white bread, Hellman's<sup>TM</sup> mayonnaise, sliced tomatoes and sea salt) or Spicy Mayonnaise (mayonnaise mixed with Sriracha sauce) or Strawberry Almond Milkshakes (strawberries and almond milk), Cold Brewed Coffee and others that raise questions as to utility. Are these included to inspire or aid in meal preparation? As an avid canner I was disappointed with the directions included in the advanced reader copy for Dill Pickled Vegetables, a main ingredient in the recipe for Ham Sandwiches with Pickled Vegetables. There is a sufficient amount of questionable information provided that I feel compelled to encourage, before attempting the recipe, a check of a reputable canning book like Ball's<sup>TM</sup> Blue book for accurate directions on how to prepare and process the jars in a hot water bath. Things like why a rack is necessary to ensure the water can circulate all around and under the jars, why air bubbles should be removed from the jar contents before sealing, why the inner seals should not be boiled and the amount of space needed between contents and rim for a recipe like this one. And/or check with your local county extension service for proper processing times which depend upon altitude, not a fixed time. For example, my processing time for the recipe given would be double what is noted. I enjoy reading cookbooks and own many but never lose sight of the fact that they are tools. Time and money in food preparation is involved and should be respected. If this book is viewed strictly through that lens it only partially succeeds. As a nudge to create traditions and memories it is a lovely book but the specific recipes are a mix of excellent, questionable and useless filler. This is a book that charming as it is, is more about form than substance.

"How to Celebrate Everything" is more than a cookbook. The author, Jenny Rosenstrach, intertwines the themes of her family history, repeated events, e.g., rituals, and of course the preparation of food. Her family is particularly interesting in their multicultural and multireligious background. This gives the author the opportunity to provide recipes for disparate ethnic foods, challah and ham, for example. The book is a celebration of rituals associated with secular and religious holidays: Thanksgiving, Christmas, Easter, Rosh Hashanah, New Year's, as well as family celebrations with an emphasis on birthdays. There are recipes associated with all of these events.

The book is filled with attractive photographs. The combination of family history with food is seamlessly integrated. Descriptions are well written. I am a potato lover. I grow several varieties in my vegetable garden. Some varieties are well suited to frying, others for making mashed potatoes. One of my friends can take all of my varieties and turn them into sliced baked potatoes. I approve of the author's potato recipes. She adds a few twists that I had not thought of. The entire book is successful in its approach. We are presented with not just food recipes, but a recipe for happy living.

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