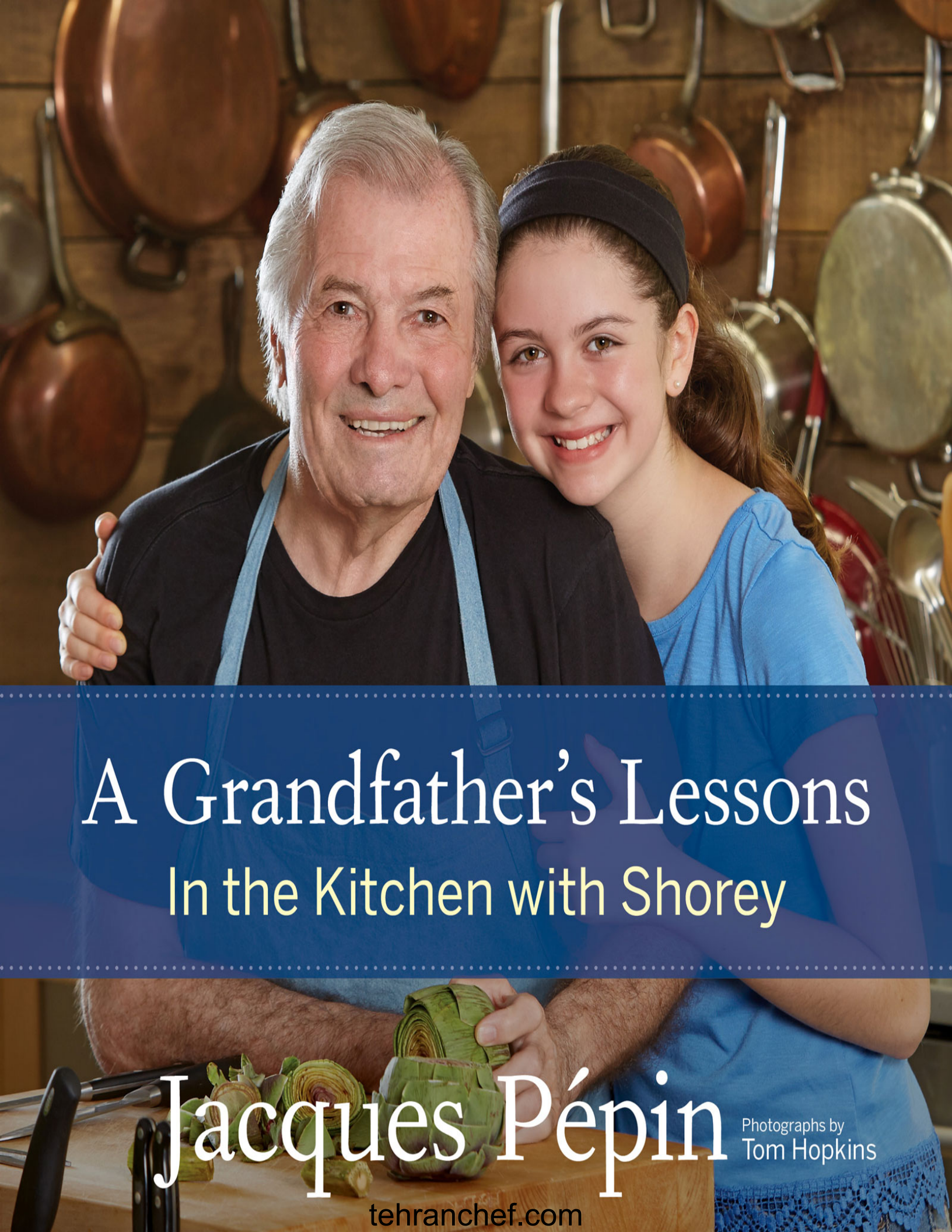


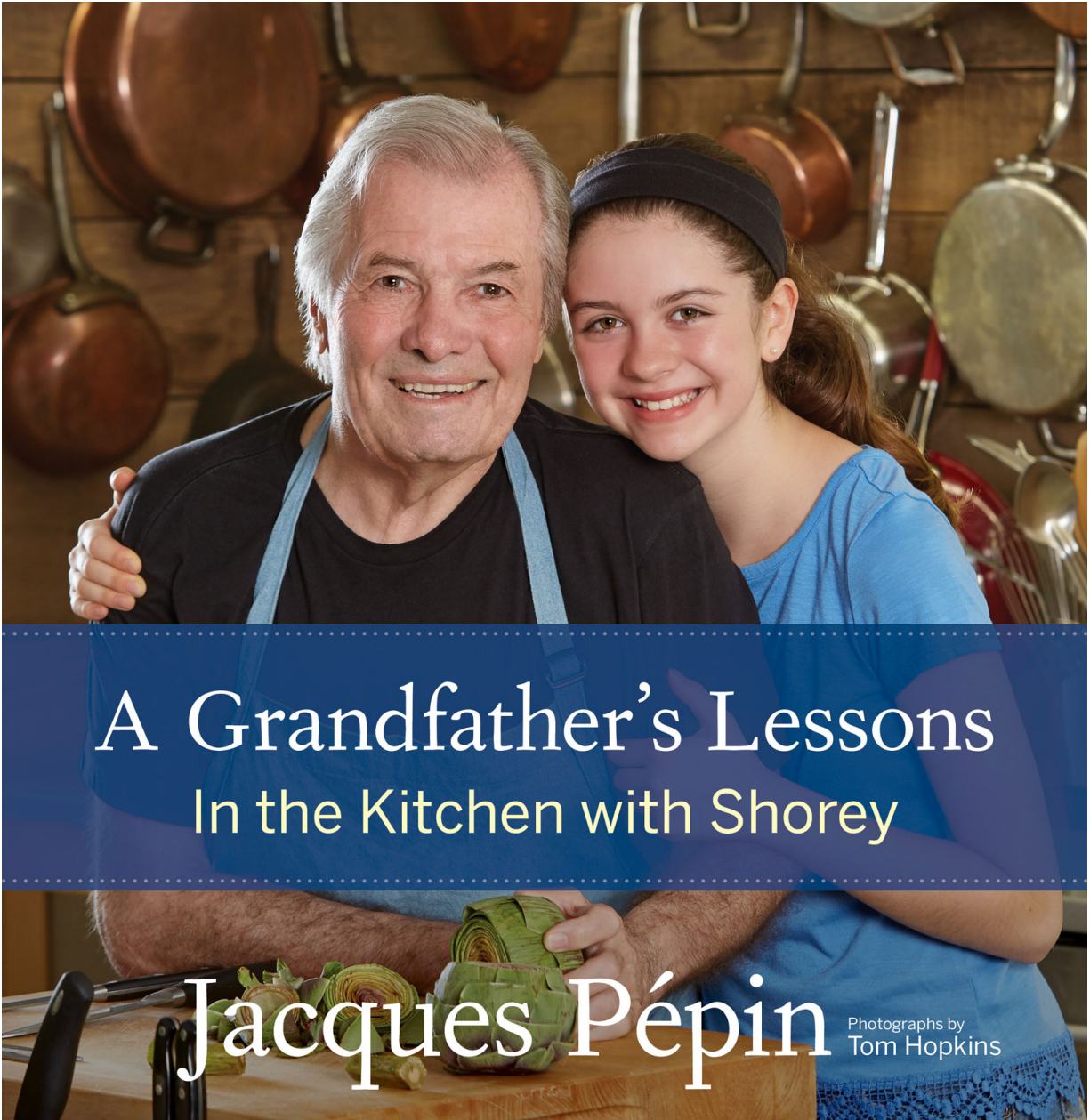


A Grandfather's Lessons In the Kitchen with Shorey

Jacques Pépin

Photographs by
Tom Hopkins

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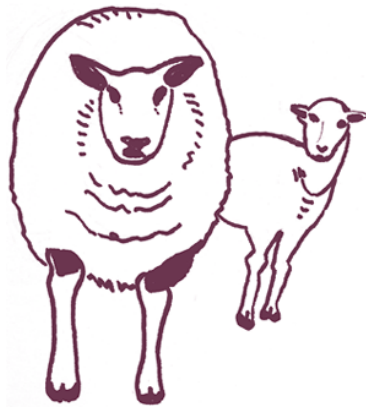
Illustrations by Jacques Pépin

A RUX MARTIN BOOK

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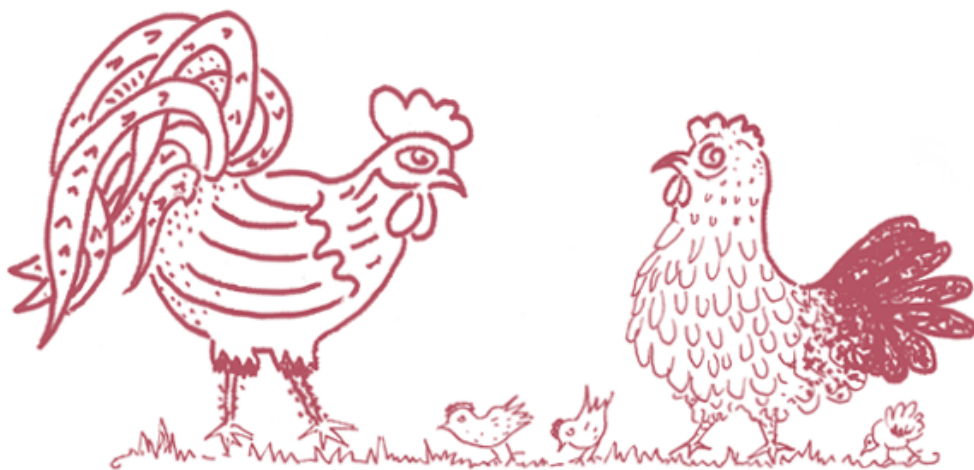
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To my son-in-law, Rollie, and all fathers who cook with
their daughters to create unique and unforgettable
memories





Acknowledgments

LIKE MOST OF MY BOOKS, *A Grandfather's Lessons* originated in our daily life. I've been cooking in the kitchen with my granddaughter, Shorey, since she was about six years old, showing her how to make chocolate truffles—since she, like most children, loves chocolate—and answering questions she asked about cooking, life, and school. We always have fun being together, cooking together, spending time together.

So we continued going to the garden, to the beach, picking wild leeks and mushrooms, collecting eggs directly from the chickens, and going to the market. She enjoyed all things associated with cooking and had a great time, as I did. Eventually, when she appeared on one of my shows, I realized that, like her mother (but unlike her grandmother!), she was very comfortable on television.

One thing led to another, and I finally said, “Why don’t we write a book showing the relationship between a grandfather and a granddaughter and how it can be enhanced and made better by spending time together in the kitchen? Why not film some 8- to 10-minute shows together that demonstrate simple recipes and the fun of cooking together?” At some point, Shorey started drawing in her book of menus at home and in mine. She loves to paint and draw, and this became part of her tradition. Of course, just like any book, *A Grandfather’s Lessons* needed a lot of coordinating and a lot of help to accomplish.



I want to thank my wife, Gloria, for putting up with us in the kitchen; Claudine for helping advise Shorey and directing her; and my son-in-law, Rollie, to whom I have dedicated this book in appreciation for his enthusiasm for the project and his love, ideas, and help in the kitchen when we taped or took pictures for this book and the videos.

I thank Norma Galehouse, my assistant of more than thirty years, for helping me put yet another book together and for her good-natured help.

I certainly want to thank Tom Hopkins a great deal for his friendship and photographic sensibility and for shooting hundreds and hundreds of pictures of Shorey and me cooking or just having fun together. I’m also grateful for his good ideas for the project and for working on the filming of the video segments to go with some of the recipes. I want to thank Rich Kosenski, who assisted Tom during the photo sessions.

Thank you to Sur La Table for sponsoring the video lessons, which express more than just the recipes themselves and help demonstrate the relationship between Shorey and me. Thanks, too, to Pete and Chris, for their video expertise.

I thank Rux Martin, my editor, for her confidence in and help with the project. Thanks, too, to Doe Coover, my agent, who, as always, was very involved and had great ideas for the production of the book as well as the videos.

More than anyone else, of course, I thank my coworker, my granddaughter, Shorey, for her love, her kindness, and for working with me so well. Shorey likes to draw, as I do, and she helped me with the illustrations for the book and the choice of drawings. She made me look terrific! I love her, and this book will cement our love even more.

Finally, my gratitude to everyone involved in the production of this book or the television segments. I'm grateful for your help and your dedication.

"The best meal I've ever had happens almost every day. A homemade meal with fresh, organic ingredients shared by family and friends."

—Shorey





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Introduction

I HAVE ALWAYS COOKED FOR MY FAMILY. Even when I was a child, I cooked with my mother or for her or for my brothers or my father—and later on, for my wife, Gloria, and for my daughter, Claudine. I held Claudine in my arms when she was a couple of years old and let her stir the soup pot or mix the salad. She would get all excited and insist that she had “made it,” and she could not wait to taste it. It was her production. It is important to have a child spend time in the kitchen—the most secure, comfortable, loving place in the house. The smell of food cooking, your mother’s or father’s voice, the clang of the utensils, and the taste of the food: These memories will stay with you for the rest of your life. The purpose of this simple book about cooking with Shorey, my granddaughter, is to show how spending time together in the kitchen can enhance your life as well as your relationship.

My cooking has changed a great deal in the last thirty years, but regardless of the style or the food, traditions remain important at our house. Sitting down together for dinner is an essential part of our daily life. In this book, I wanted to cook things with my granddaughter that she likes, and I also wanted to teach her easy, logical steps that she could understand. I wanted to prepare food that is simple but elegant, and, more than anything, I wanted it to be fun. I have always liked to simplify the steps of cooking to get to the essentials, and I always place more emphasis on taste than on presentation. I wanted Shorey to tell me, “Papi, this is really good!” Like most children, she is very honest—if she likes something, she tells you; if she doesn’t, she tells you that as well.

Shorey is precocious in her food tastes, which is understandable, considering that her father, Rollie, is a chef and her mother, my daughter, Claudine, cooks every day for the family, using the best and freshest possible food available, either from their garden or from organic markets nearby. When she was about two years old, I asked Shorey if she liked blueberries. She responded, “Oh, yes, I love blueberries. They have a lot of antioxidants in them.” I barely knew that word! She is precocious, curious, and inquisitive. From the age of five, whenever she came to our house, she liked to stand next to me at the counter on an upside-down wooden box so she could “help” me cook. She would do small jobs, like wash the lettuce, pass me the ingredients or tools, or go into the garden with me to pick herbs that she would taste and help me clean.



Shorey is a gourmand and eats almost everything because, just as it was with Claudine when she was a child, her parents don't give her a choice: Dinner comes to the table, and whether it is spinach, string beans, squash, tomatoes, poultry, or fish, that is dinner. So she grew up loving artichokes, Brussels sprouts, and spinach, just as Claudine did. I think it is a mistake to feed children something other than what is on the family menu or to reward them for eating spinach or Brussels sprouts. There are exceptions, of course. I know Shorey is not crazy about my tripe and headcheese, but that's okay; I know that eventually that will change. What is important is to put the meal on the table and engage in conversation while enjoying it.

For this book, I wanted to feature dishes that Shorey would have fun making. For example, my Curly Dogs with Pickle Relish ([see recipe](#)) demonstrated a way of cutting hot dogs so they curl. She likes fish, so we made Salmon for Grandma ([see recipe](#)), as well as Lemon Sole with Butter and Lemon ([see recipe](#)), which she prepares with her mother. Sometimes we enjoyed just eating radishes and butter in the French way (see Radis au Beurre, [see recipe](#)). We created a kind of dressing called *mayogrette*, a mixture of vinaigrette and mayonnaise, that we used to dress a potato salad ([see recipe](#)). We also made Garlic Spinach with Croutons ([see recipe](#)), which she adores, and Mashed Potatoes with Garlic ([see recipe](#)). Like me, Shorey loves pasta, so we prepared Macaroni, Spinach, and Ham Gratin ([see recipe](#)) and

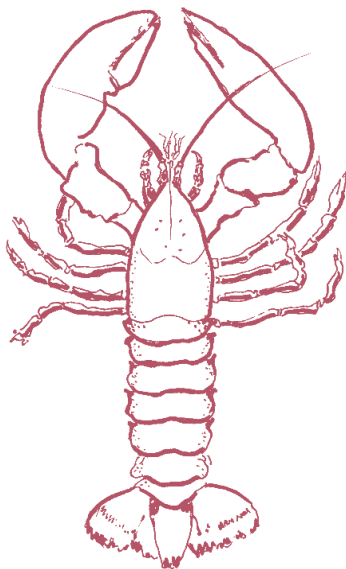
Bow-Tie Pasta in Garden Vegetable Sauce ([see recipe](#)). She had a blast making a big one-dish meal of Sausage, Potatoes, Onions, and Mushrooms en Papillote ([see recipe](#)), which she made again for her dad's birthday.



Probably more than anything else, though, Shorey likes to make desserts. We made a special raspberry cake (Shorey's Raspberry Cake, [see recipe](#)) that she has baked for her mother's birthday, and a Strawberry Shortcake ([see recipe](#)). Chocolate desserts are her favorite, so she particularly liked making Chocolate, Nut, and Fruit Treats ([see recipe](#)).

Most of all, I wanted us to spend time together. I also wanted to teach her respect for ingredients. In the videos that we filmed with these recipes, she has a natural way of handling food, which helps her recover, even when she makes a mistake. Her innate elegance and poise are evident on film.

Shorey is thoughtful in giving me or her grandmother, father, or mother compliments, because she has a kind disposition and good manners, and she always smiles. We loved doing the show on table manners, where she corrected the way I sat at the table, my speaking with my mouth full, putting my elbows on the table, interrupting her when she spoke, slouching at the table, and the like. Shorey has very clear and precise opinions about life, cooking, school, and fun. She tells us bluntly what she likes and dislikes about cooking, what her favorite part of the meal is, and she remembers her first dish and the best restaurant she has eaten in. Of course, I think she is brilliant, but it is the prerogative of a grandfather to boast about his granddaughter.



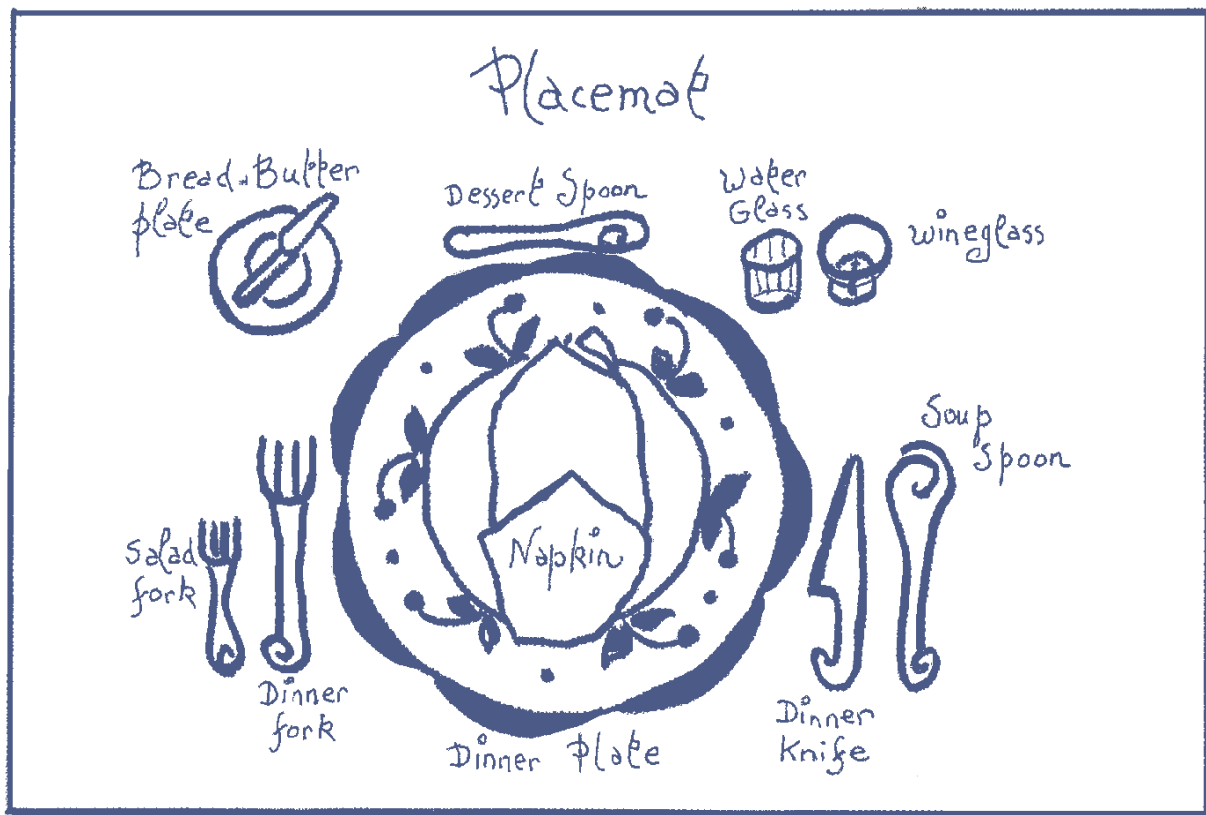
Great meals are always the ones that are shared with family and friends. For me, that started many, many years ago in France and continued with Gloria and Claudine after I came to America. Now I'm sure that our family traditions, our kitchen legacy, will continue with Shorey.

"The first dish I remember my mom making is her spaghetti Bolognese; it is delicious. My dad's blueberry pie and his nachos are part of my earliest memories too."

—Shorey

Setting the Table

FOR A BASIC, SEMIFORMAL SETTING with only one set of silverware, the plates are put on nice placemats. The knife is placed to the right of the plate, cutting edge toward it, and the spoon (if needed) goes next to it. The fork or forks (dinner, salad) are placed to the left of the plate. Some people like to put the fork and spoon right side up, others upside down, which is less common. My wife always places a teaspoon crosswise above the main plate for dessert, although it can be on the right. For more complex meals with more utensils (fish knife, sauce spoon), the knives, forks, and spoons are used starting with the one farthest out from the plate. The wineglass goes just above the tip of the knife and the water glass is to its left. Sometimes several glasses are used: champagne, white wine, red wine, cordial glasses.



Shorey and I write the guests' names on leaves (we use maple, oak, or ivy) and place them next to the plates or on the napkins.

There are many ways to fold napkins; here are five. Napkin 1 is just a square napkin folded in half. Napkin 2 is folded to create a 3-inch-wide strip and the strip is tied into a loose knot. For Napkin 3, two edges of a square napkin are folded underneath to create a point at the top and bottom. For Napkin 4, a square napkin is folded on itself halfway up and the left and right edges are folded underneath to create a small pocket in the center of the napkin, an opening for a piece of bread, a roll, or even a place card. For Napkin 5, the napkin is simply pulled through a napkin ring. The napkin goes to the left of the plate or on the plate itself (my preference).

To see how it's done, go to www.surlatable.com/jacquespepin.

