

“The people who give you their food give you their heart.”

—CESAR CHAVEZ



BITE by BITE

Conquering My Culinary Bucket List One Dish at a Time

By Emily Banks Wooten

“People who love to eat are always the best people.”

—JULIA CHILD

Gift ideas for your favorite foodie

Not long ago I was at a lunch meeting and this food page came up in conversation. The gentleman with whom I was visiting asked if I had any formal training. That stumped me momentarily. “Does watching an inordinate amount of the Food Network count?” I asked, and he laughed. His question got me thinking though. There may be others out there curious about what training, if any, I may have in order to create a food page week after week.

My official training is a college degree in journalism and English. My unof-

ficial training is that I love to eat and drink. I love trying new foods. I love traveling and experiencing new cuisines from cultures different from my own. I love watching Food Network and Cooking Channel and replicating dishes I’ve seen created on various shows. I love watching documentaries about food and cooking. But I’m not a gourmet or a chef. I haven’t taken the first course at a culinary school. At the end of the day, when it comes to cooking, I’m just a basic home cook who occasionally attempts to spread her wings in the kitchen and

“Cooking is like love. It should be entered into with abandon or not at all.”

—HARRIET VAN HORNE

who, over the last year and a half, has enjoyed creating this vehicle and sharing recipes and experiences with my family, friends and readers. If you’ve learned something from reading this, or tried a new dish, liked it and added it to your repertoire, then

that’s just the cherry on top.

An old friend with whom I’d lost touch for a number of years and then reconnected once remarked, “I had no idea you were such a foodie.” Of course that got me wondering ... what exactly is a foodie? There are many defi-

nitions out there and here are just a few: a person with a particular interest in food; a gourmet; a person having an avid interest in the latest food fads; a person who has an ardent or refined interest in food and alcoholic beverages; a person who seeks new food experiences as a hobby rather than simply eating out of convenience or hunger. I’m certainly not a gourmet. And while some food fads intrigue me, others just make me roll my eyes — remember unicorn frappuccinos? Ugh.

Then there’s another term which is food lover, which according to my research, is

an all-encompassing term that includes food enthusiasts of all types, no matter what drives their interests. I also read that food lovers are people who simply love food.

Whether you’re a foodie or a food lover, or maybe neither, but you have one or the other on your shopping list, I’ve selected 21 ideas for gifts and believe that any number of these items are sure to please. The majority of these items are gifts I’ve received from friends and family, although there are a few that I just picked up for myself. Enjoy!

Twenty-One Ideas for the Foodie or Food Lover on Your Shopping List

1. Candy, assorted kinds, from Julee K’s Sweet Creations, 308 N. Washington in Livingston
2. Texas-shaped cookie/biscuit cutter, from Gokey’s Old Town Emporium, 1056 TX-393 Loop in Goodrich
3. Bread pudding mix from Birdwell’s in Bossier City, La.
4. Everything on Everything Gift Set featuring Classic Blend, Dill Blend and Spicy Blend, made by Stocked Kitchens, found online
5. Refrigerator magnet, found online
6. Stonewall Kitchen jams, found online, locally carried by Petalz by Annie, 500 N. Washington in Livingston
7. The Foodie’s Quiz Game featuring 160 gourmet questions, from Professor Puzzle, found online
8. World Traveler Spice Collection featuring a dozen artisan spice blends, found online
9. Jon Hart “Lil Chill” koozie, from HomeGrown, 1501 Mill Ridge Dr. in Livingston
10. Marble & Wood Coaster Set, found online
11. Swig stainless steel insulated stemless cup, from HomeGrown, 1501 Mill Ridge Dr. in Livingston
12. Grapefruit, Citrus and Evergreen Candle, from Birdwell’s in Bossier City, La.
13. Bitters “Triple Play” Variety 3-Pack: Angostura, Peychauds and Regans, from Amazon
14. Coffee Mugs, from Target and Nordstrom
15. Spoon Rest, from Forever New Orleans, three locations in New Orleans, La., 700 Royal St., 606 Royal St. and 308 Royal St.
16. Butter Crock, from Amazon
17. Personalized Apron, from Polk County Publishing Company Print Shop, 100 E. Calhoun in Livingston
18. Kitchen towel, from Bering’s, two locations in Houston, 6102 Westheimer or 3900 Bissonnet
19. A dozen bags of gourmet popcorn (green apple, toasted marshmallow, coconut, honey mustard, garlic parmesan, sour cream & chives, pizza, spicy nacho, bacon ranch, toffee, blue raspberry and caramel corn), from bulkcandystore.com
20. “Cupcakes & Muffins” cookbook published by Weldon Owen and a dozen colorful silicone muffin baking cups
21. Lemon nesting measuring cups, from Nutcracker Market

