

[Brandywine Table]

Setting the Table for Local Food

THE KIMBERTON WHOLE FOODS STORY OF FAMILY, BUSINESS, COOKING AND A COMMITMENT TO LOCAL AGRICULTURE.

Alyssa Thayer



LONG BEFORE THE PHRASE “FARM-TO-TABLE” WENT mainstream, Pat and Terry Brett, co-founders of **Kimberton Whole Foods**, were already pioneering the local food movement. From their humble beginnings running a dairy farm store to their now six locations—Kimberton, Downingtown, Douglassville, Ottsville, Malvern and Collegeville—the Bretts have stayed true to their roots. Their mission is to support regional agriculture and cultivate a vibrant network of producers, growers and makers along the way.

Even today, Kimberton Whole Foods remains a family affair—their oldest son Ezra handles day-to-day operations, middle son Colin is head chef, youngest son Robin manages purchasing and oldest daughter Heidi runs the office. Pat chuckled, as she shared that her youngest daughter Rosie escaped the business to become a lawyer, but is still on speed dial for help with contracts.

In December, they released the *Kimberton Whole Foods Cookbook*—a compilation of 60 recipes ranging from old family favorites to innovative cafe creations. Pat explains her food philosophy in the book as fresh, homemade and right from the source. “For years customers had been asking for our cafe recipes,” says Pat. She and son Colin often

discussed creating a cookbook, but it wasn’t until they connected with local food writer Courtney Diener-Stokes and photographer Seneca Shahara Brand that the project was put in motion.

The final cookbook is much more than a collection of recipes. It shares the interwoven history of the Brett family and their business and pays homage to their community of farmers and artisans. Courtney noted her favorite part of the process was “getting to go visit all the growers and makers ... and of course getting to taste the recipes. When you eat Pat’s food, you can taste the love and care she puts into it.”

Even with five kids and a busy retail business, the Bretts always found time for a family meal. It was a time for them to come together, talk about their days and share wholesome food. Whether you are grabbing a bite at a market cafe or cracking open the cookbook for seasonal supper inspiration, it’s as though the Bretts have saved us a seat at their table.

You can find the cookbook at Towne Book Center (Collegeville), Reads & Company (Phoenixville), through the publisher (Hickory-GrovePublishing.com), and at all Kimberton Whole Foods locations. Look for upcoming signings and tastings on the Kimberton Whole Foods online calendar.



Brett Family Gathering



Pat Brett, left, and her daughter, Rosie

Apple Arugula Salad with Manchego

The peppery flavor of the greens contrasts with the sweetness of the apple and saltiness of the nuts and cheese. It's a very simple salad to put together and makes a good meal on its own.



- ½ C. sliced almonds
- 4 heaping C. baby arugula
- 1 crisp, sweet apple (with skin on), cored and cut into matchsticks
- ½ C. (approx. ¼ lb.) Spanish manchego cheese, cut into matchsticks

For the Honey Sherry Vinaigrette:

- 2 Tb. honey
- 2 tsp. sherry vinegar
- ½ tsp. Himalayan pink salt
- 2 dashes freshly ground black pepper
- 3 Tb. extra virgin olive oil

In a dry frying pan, toast almonds over medium heat for 1 to 2 minutes until fragrant and golden brown on both sides.

Place arugula in a serving bowl and sprinkle apples, cheese and half of the almonds over greens.

To make the vinaigrette, place honey, vinegar, salt and pepper in a Mason jar with lid or small bowl, and shake or whisk to combine until salt dissolves. Add olive oil and shake or whisk again to blend.

Add vinaigrette to salad, and toss to coat. Top with remaining almonds.

Serves 4.

White Bean & Kale Soup

This hearty soup warms you from the inside out and has been a customer favorite at the Kimberton Cafe for years.

- 2 C. dried white lima beans, soaked and drained
- 2 to 3 Tb. extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped small
- 2 C. celery, thinly sliced, including some leaves for extra flavor
- 4 small carrots (or 2 large), sliced into coins
- 6 C. water or vegetable broth
- 1 Tb. Himalayan pink salt, plus more to taste

Top 5 Reasons to be a Locavore

- **Peak Pick** – When you choose local produce, you're automatically eating with the seasons, and that means enjoying foods when they taste best. Don't believe us, do a taste test—July tomatoes vs. December tomatoes. There's no comparison!
- **More Nutrients** – The longer the wait between when produce is harvested and when it's consumed, the more time there is for nutrients to break down. By eating local, you're minimizing travel and storage and maximizing healthful benefits.
- **Better for the Environment** – Small biodynamic farms use sustainable growing methods, which contribute to a healthier ecosystem and a smaller carbon footprint. That, coupled with less shipping, creates a much more eco-friendly food system.
- **Supports Our Community** – When you buy local, your money is reinvested into the local economy and supports a vibrant community of growers and producers.
- **Safer Food Supply** – A shorter supply chain means fewer steps from the source to your table. This provides more transparency and less opportunity for contamination.

Want to eat local, but don't know where to start? "Not everyone needs to jump straight to quinoa," says Pat Brett, co-founder of Kimberton Whole Foods. She suggests starting with a favorite recipe and simply finding organic ingredients for it. Baby steps.

- 1 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 whole nutmeg, grated or ½ tsp. dried nutmeg
- 1 bunch of curly green or lacinato kale, stripped from stems and sliced in ribbons



Begin by soaking the dried lima beans overnight or for at least an hour.

In a large stockpot, heat a thin layer of olive oil over medium heat. Add onions, celery and carrots and cook for about 5 minutes, until softened, but not browned. Add water or broth, lima beans, salt and pepper. Grate in about half of the whole nutmeg.

Bring to a boil, stir well, and reduce heat to simmer.

Check soup at 15-minute intervals, stirring occasionally, until beans are soft to the bite. Add kale and more salt to taste. Stir well and simmer for another 15 minutes.

Grate a bit of fresh nutmeg over the top of soup when you serve for extra aroma and flavor.

Serves 8 to 10.

Mac 'n' Cheese with Pecans and Pears

This dressed-up mac 'n' cheese by Colin Brett, creative food director at Kimberton Whole Foods, is a crowd-pleaser, featuring brie, pears and a pecan brittle topping.



- ½ C. (1 stick) unsalted butter
- ⅓ C. gluten-free flour
- 2 C. heavy cream
- 3 C. whole milk
- ½ lb. brie cheese, trimmed and cut into cubes
- ½ lb. smoked Gouda cheese, cut into cubes
- ¼ lb. sharp cheddar, cut into cubes or shredded
- ¼ tsp. ground coriander
- ⅛ tsp. ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp. Himalayan pink salt
- 2 ripe pears, cored and diced with skin on
- 1 lb. cooked gluten-free penne pasta
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

For the Pecan Topping:

- 1 C. raw pecan halves
- 2 Tb. brown sugar
- ¼ tsp. vanilla
- ½ C. water

Preheat oven to 375°F.

In a medium saucepan, add pecan topping ingredients and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently. Continue cooking until water has evaporated and pecans stick together.

Spread the mixture out on an oiled baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for 10 minutes, and then cool for 10 minutes after cooked. Place in freezer for an additional 10 minutes. Remove and chop pecans into small pieces.

In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium to low heat. Cook butter until it just begins to brown. Add flour and whisk for 2 minutes. Add cream and milk, whisking frequently, until sauce thickens. Add brie and Gouda, continuing to whisk. When melted, add cheddar, coriander and nutmeg. Add salt and half of pears and stir to combine.

In a 7-quart Dutch oven or casserole dish, add cooked pasta. Pour cream sauce over pasta and stir to coat evenly. Sprinkle pepper, pecans and remaining apples evenly over the top of mac and cheese.

Bake for 10 minutes, or until cheese sauce is bubbling. Let sit for 10 minutes before serving.

Serves 6 to 8.

Nut-Free Carrot Cake

This is an original Kimberton Cafe recipe from back in the day that swaps coconut for walnuts to give it plenty of texture without using nuts.



- 2 C. whole-wheat pastry flour or gluten-free flour
(I prefer Bob's Red Mill Gluten Free 1 to 1 Baking Flour or Pamela's Gluten-Free All-Purpose Flour Artisan Blend)
- 2 tsp. organic cinnamon
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. Himalayan pink salt
- 2 large eggs
- ¾ C. sunflower oil (or other mild oil)
- ½ C. yogurt or buttermilk
- 1 C. raw sugar
- 1 C. crushed pineapple, well-drained (reserve a few tsp. of juice)
- 2 C. carrots, shredded
- ½ C. unsweetened dried coconut
- ½ C. raisins

For the frosting:

- ½ C. (1 stick) unsalted butter, softened to room temperature
- 1, 8-oz. package cream cheese, room temperature
- 4 C. powdered sugar
- 2 tsp. vanilla extract
- Reserved pineapple juice



A fall outdoor gathering at the Brett home

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease two 8- or 9-inch round cake pans and line bottoms with parchment paper for easy removal or use a 9-by-13-inch rectangular baking dish.

In a large bowl, combine flour, cinnamon, baking soda and salt.

In another large bowl, beat together eggs, oil, yogurt or buttermilk and sugar until combined. Stir in pineapple, carrots, coconut and raisins. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and stir just until combined.

Pour batter into prepared pans and bake for about 35 minutes until cake springs back lightly in center and begins to pull away from edge of pan. Cool for 15 minutes before turning out onto a cooling rack.

To make frosting, use an electric mixer to cream together butter and cream cheese. Beat in powdered sugar, 1 cup at a time. Add vanilla. If frosting is too thick to spread easily, add reserved pineapple juice 1 teaspoon at a time.

Serves 12. ♦

Alyssa Thayer found her love of food at an early age, frolicking around her mother's organic farm and eating her weight in berries and snap peas each summer. She is a self-proclaimed urban farm girl, whose mission is to bring inspired ideas to life, passionate people together, and good food to every table.



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