K’s Kitchen: Moo-shu without the meat

By Kathryn Reed

This is one of those dishes I have no idea why I don’t fix more often. It’s easier to make than it sounds.

This is one of three dishes I made last month when my sister and her boyfriend came to visit.



While this is a vegetarian recipe, it could easily be made with meat. It comes from the cookbook “Passionate Vegetarian” by Crescent Dragonwagon.

I use wonton wrappers for the crepes. The leftover wrappers freeze well.

For the hoisin, I think it’s better to start with a pretty full jar and let everyone use as much as they want.

All the notes below are from Dragonwagon.

Moo-Shu Vegetables (serves 4 as an entrée)

Traditionally, this Mandarin dish, an American Chinese restaurant standard, is made with shredded meat, chicken, or duck combined with stir-fried vegetables and scrambled eggs, wrapped in a rather dense, steamed hoisin-slathered pancake. I much prefer this lighter version, with its tofu-studded, full-flavored sprout-vegetable filling, and its delicious Neo-Classic Crepe wrapping. If – and I realize that this is a big if – you have crepes made or crepe batter on hand, as well as commercially made hoisin sauce and black bean-garlic sauce, it is but 10 to 15 minutes work to put together a dazzling,

satisfying dinner.

2 tsp cornstarch

1/3 C water, preferably spring or filtered, or vegetable stock

2½ tsp sugar, honey, or Rapidura

2 tsp fermented black bean-garlic sauce

1½ tsp toasted sesame oil

Pinch of salt

2 good grinds of black pepper

2½ tsp mild vegetable oil, preferably peanut

3 clove garlic, lightly smashed

2 tsp peeled, finely diced ginger

2 large scallions, roots and wilted green parts removed, all the white and 3 inches of green thinly sliced

1 carrot, well scrubbed, julienned

5 or 6 shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, slivered

1 stalk bok choy, both stems and leaves, slivered

4 ounces conventional water-packed tofu, cut into ¼-inch dice

12 Neo-Classic Crepes

About 3 T any good, commercially prepared hoisin sauce

Combine the cornstarch with the water in a small bowl and smush with your fingers until dissolved. Add the sugar, black bean-garlic sauce, ½ teaspoon of the sesame oil, salt, and pepper. Place the bowl close to the stove, along with the remaining ingredients.

Heat a wok over high heat until very hot. Add the vegetable oil and tilt the wok to coat with oil. Heat for another 15 seconds. Add the garlic and ginger, stir one or twice, and count to 10. Add the scallions and carrot and stir-fry to the count of 10. Add the shiitakes and stir-fry for another 15 seconds. Add the bean sprouts and bok choy and count to 20. Give the cornstarch mixture a quick stir and add it along with the tofu and remaining sesame oil. Stir-fry until all of the mixture is coated with the thickened sauce, 10 to 25 seconds more. Taste and adjust with more soy, sweetener, pepper, or whatever you like.

Immediately rush the hot stir-fry to the table. Generously coat half of each crepe with hoisin sauce and scoop a portion of the vegetable mixture into the pancake. Fold and serve.

California may extend last call for alcohol

By Patrick McGreevy, Los Angeles Times

If Los Angeles ever wants to join the ranks of Las Vegas or Miami in attracting tourists who want to party, it needs to free its night spots from having to make the last call for alcohol by 2am, according to one state lawmaker.

State Sen. Mark Leno, D-San Francisco, has introduced legislation that would allow California cities to seek permission from the state Department of Alcoholic Beverage

Control to allow their nightclubs, restaurants and bars to sell drinks until 4a,.

“Many cities in California have dynamic social activities that are vital to their economies, but they lack the flexibility to expand their businesses,” Leno said. “This legislation would allow destination cities like San Francisco, Los Angeles and San Diego to start local conversations about the possibility of expanding nightlife and the benefits it could provide the community by boosting jobs, tourism and local tax revenue.”



A bill would allow alcohol sales until 4am in California. Photo/LTN

Currently, the state allows the sale of alcohol between 6am and 2am for bars, nightclubs and restaurants.

The top 100 grossing social and nightlife venues in the country last year generated $1.5 billion, and 15 of them are in the Los Angeles area, according to Leno’s office.

But all of the top 10 venues are in cities that have extended hours, including Las Vegas, New York and Miami, the senator noted.

Senate Republican leader Robert Huff of Diamond Bar said Leno’s proposal raises a lot of questions and needs more study.

“What impact will this have on families who live around these

establishments?’’ Huff asked. “Will changing the time impact drunk driving rates? These are the questions I would ask before coming to a decision.”

Some of the same concerns explain the initial opposition by Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca, according to spokesman Steve Whitmore. People, he said, “don’t need to have two more hours for drinking.”

SB635 is supported by industry groups including the California Restaurant Association and the San Francisco Council of District Merchants.

Wineries focusing on younger consumers

By Los Angeles Times

Increasingly, Chardonnays, Pinots and Cabernets are sharing shelf space at your local store with some unusual names – such as Bodacious Brunette red and Buxum Blonde and Angel Food whites.

Veteran wine collectors might turn up their well-trained noses. But the wineries promoting such brands aren’t targeting those buyers. With many of their best customers nearing retirement age and starting to cut back, American vintners are going after younger consumers in a bid to keep their $33 billion industry growing.

That means more irreverent labels, easy drinking wines, singles events and laid-back tastings – all aimed at demystifying the elite atmosphere surrounding wine while

grooming the next generation of oenophiles.



People line up at Peachy Canyon Winery. Photo/LTN

“The battle is on” for younger drinkers, said Danny Brager, an alcoholic-beverages expert for global measurement company Nielsen. “Everyone’s being aggressive.”

The courtship was on display last fall in a former bank building in downtown Los Angeles, where event organizing company Second Glass hosted one of its Wine Riot parties.

To bass-heavy tunes mixed by a disc jockey, more than 1,200 young patrons paid $60 each to wander by booths set up by wineries and get unlimited pours from a selection of about 250 wines.

A free smartphone app helped the guests, mostly in their 20s — resplendent in their jeggings and plaid — navigate the event and remember the wines they liked. They flocked to the temporary tattoo station and photo booth, noshing on French fries from food trucks and sipping Rose d’Anjou, touted by posters as pairing well with Thai food and burgers.

“It’s fun socializing and getting tipsy,” said Ellie Yi, 26, an advertising account executive who attended the Los Angeles event with eight friends. “Nobody’s judging you if you don’t appreciate the ‘complex blends.'”

Second Glass founders Morgan First, 29, and Tyler Balliet, 32,

launched Wine Riot in Boston in 2009 to educate and engage young drinkers and took the events nationwide two years later. Their typical guest: novice drinkers, averaging 27.5 years old. The vibe: unpretentious.

Wineries love the events too. In Wine Riot's early days, First and Balliet drew participants from wineries owned by friends and acquaintances. Now, spots for booths sell out six months in advance, creating a waiting list of labels.

Baby Boomers have been the main driver of the U.S. wine market for years, making up 40 percent of the customer base today. They tend to have more sophisticated tastes and are more inclined to buy expensive fine wines. West Coast wineries depend on the demographic for 44 percent of their sales, according to a survey by Silicon Valley Bank.

But Boomers born right after World War II are starting to retire. As they adjust to fixed incomes, they are downsizing their wine spending and the amount they drink, according to research group IBISWorld.

Meanwhile, the youngest drinkers, 21- to 34-year-olds known as Millennials, are looking more appealing.

For starters, there are a lot of them – roughly 70 million. But many young drinkers already are being wooed by the craft beer craze and the rise of cocktail culture, conditioned by celebrity endorsers and targeted marketing to gravitate toward sudsy brews and hard liquor.

The wine industry wants to convert Millennials to Malbecs and Moscatos while they're still young, hoping to create a lifelong clientele.

Young drinkers are enthusiastic wine students, having been more exposed to wine at an earlier age than their parents. And more than half said they're boosting their wine consumption, according to a report from the Wine Market Council trade

group.

“The take-away is that while Baby Boomers are still technically our best customers, Millennials as a group … are the single most dynamic target for wine marketers,” said John Gillespie, the council’s president.

Wine companies also are churning out promotions with an eye toward being less stuffy and more sassy.

Newcomer Calendar Girl Wines dubs its red and white wines Bodacious Brunette and Buxom Blonde. Constellation Brands, owner of old-guard label Robert Mondavi, is trying out feisty brands such as Primal Roots and Simply Naked.

Hot celebrities are lending their names to labels. Early this month, Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie said they were releasing a vintage rose wine called Miraval from their French estate, Chateau Miraval in Correns, for shipment to the United States.

Pop star Stacy Ann Ferguson, better known as Fergie of the Black Eyed Peas, unveiled her Ferguson Crest label in Santa Barbara County last fall. Barrymore Pinot Grigio, created last year by actress Drew Barrymore, reflects her “fresh, dynamic and fun” personality.

Wine magazines are doubling the number of young writers and reviewers. Napa wineries are creating special tours for young guests clad in jeans, yoga gear, flip flops and even Mohawks.

“Top-tier brands that used to be untouchable are, for the first time, realizing that they can’t just rest on their laurels,” said Lara Sailer Long, wine director for the Los Angeles Food & Wine Festival. “They’re trying to dust off their images and appeal to the young drinkers, not just the collectors.”

Event company Rock N’ Roll Wine organizes tasting parties in Las Vegas, such as one last fall featuring indie band Young

the Giant. Some 3,000 guests paid $65 a head to participate in the festival at the Mandalay Bay beach resort.

There, said co-founder Chris Hammond, “no one’s scared to drink rosé.”

Though Millennials tend to be more price sensitive and less knowledgeable than older buyers, they still want to be treated as serious wine consumers and not dollar bin divers, said Mike Veseth, a wine expert and economics professor at the University of Puget Sound.

“Young people are looking for value, but not a cheap buzz,” he said.

Truckee chef one of the best in U.S.

By Kathryn Reed

Jacob Burton thought taking a chef’s job in the mountains would take him off the grid in terms of mainstream exposure. He didn’t care. Growing up in the foothills (Cool in El Dorado County) he knew he wanted pines over cement.

But then the chef at Stella in Truckee got a call last month from *Food + Wine* magazine. He has been nominated as one of the People’s Best New Chefs.

“I was surprised to be honest with you. Just the fact that Truckee is on *Food + Wine’s* radar was a surprise,” Burton told *Lake Tahoe News*. “I cut my teeth in San Francisco, but I love Truckee. I knew I could be sacrificing big time awards that are saved for bigger area restaurants.”



Jacob Burton of Stella in Truckee is considered one of the country's top new chefs. Photo/LTN file

Whether he wins is up to the public. Voting is open online through 2pm March 18. The country is divided into 10 regions, with Burton in the California section.

The California chefs are:

• Matthew Accarrino (SPQR, San Francisco)

• Kim Alter (Haven, Oakland)

• Jacob Burton (Stella, Truckee)

• Justin Cogley (Aubergine, Carmel)

• Jordan Kahn (Red Medicine, Los Angeles)

• Thomas McNaughton (Flour + Water, San Francisco)

• Evan & Sarah Rich (Rich Table, San Francisco)

• Ari Taymor (Alma, Los Angeles)

• Michael Voltaggio (Ink, Los Angeles)

• Kris Yenbamroong (Night+Market at Talésai, Los Angeles).

One of Burton's nominators said, "The young chef is doing some of the most inventive yet simple and delicious food I've had

in a long time.”

“*Food + Wine* gathers the list of nominees from our national network of trusted food insiders – other journalists, chefs and local experts around the country – and we’re always on the lookout for innovative chefs who are pushing culinary boundaries,” magazine spokeswoman Erika Gable told *Lake Tahoe News*.

Burton said he is humbled to be on the list with the other nominees.

“Those two guys in San Francisco are easily two of the hottest chefs on the West Coast,” Burton said of Accarrino and McNaughton. He’s eaten at both restaurants.

The 29-year-old Burton is a graduate of the California Culinary Academy in San Francisco. For the past three years he has been cooking at Stella, which is part of the Cedar House Sport Hotel.

His concept is to use as much locally sourced food as possible.

“Gardening is a large part of what we do. It’s great to grab fresh herbs,” Burton said. “You can run a quick special with a squash harvest. But (the garden is) not big enough to grow squash or tomatoes all summer long to sustain the restaurant.”

If Burton wins, he’s well on his way to being a celebrity chef. And those chefs are often featured at the various events the magazine sponsors. Burton isn’t sure he’s ready for that. He doesn’t have a large staff, and every day Stella has been open he has been on the line cooking.

“For me, Stella always comes first. My job is to ensure the ongoing success of Stella,” Burton said. But if he could find a way to balance the restaurant work with promoting Stella and Truckee on the road, he would give it a-go.

The chef with the most votes in each region will be named a finalist and the finalist with the most votes overall will be named The People's Best New Chef. The People's Best New Chef finalists and winner will be revealed on March 19 online. The winner will be featured in the July issue of *Food + Wine*.

K's Kitchen: Asparagus is the star

By Kathryn Reed

Make sure the marinade covers all of the noodles; otherwise you'll think this is rather bland. And feel free to use more asparagus, but then I'm not sure you could ever have too much asparagus.



The recipe below is from "Vegetarian Cooking for Everyone" by Deborah Madison.

I've used different noodles, so I would pick the Asian noodles you like best. My guess is the recipe would taste good over rice, too.

While I have not tried the marinade with other veggies, I can see this working with other vegetables or used on meat – or tofu.

Sesame Noodles with Asparagus Tips

The Marinade

¼ C sesame oil

3 T dark sesame oil

7 T soy sauce

3 T Chinese black or balsamic vinegar

3½ T dark brown sugar

2 tsp chili oil

1 T minced ginger

1 garlic clove, finely chopped

¼ C chopped cilantro

The Noodles and Asparagus

Salt

2 pounds asparagus, trimmed and thinly sliced on a diagonal

1 14-ounce package thin Chinese egg noodles

10 scallions, including the firm greens, thinly sliced

¼ C sesame seeds, toasted until lightly brown

Mix the marinade ingredients together, stirring to dissolve the sugar.

Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add salt and the asparagus. Cook until bright green and tender but still firm, just a few minutes. Scoop the asparagus out, rinse it under cold water, and set on a towel to dry.

Pull the noodles apart with your fingers, add them to the boiling water, and give them a quick stir. Boil until tender but not overly soft, tasting them often as they cook. It should take only a few minutes. Pour the noodles into a

colander and immediately rise under cold water. Shake off the excess water.

Toss the noodles with all the marinade and most of the scallions, sesame seeds, and asparagus. Mound them in a bowl or on a platter, then garnish with the remaining asparagus, scallions, and sesame seeds.

Sierra heating things up with salsa contest

Do you have what it takes to win Sierra-at-Tahoe's salsa contest?



Salsa judging – it's serious business. Photo/LTN file

Lake Tahoe News Publisher Kathryn Reed will be the judge. OK, one of the judges.

The March 24 event returns to the West Bowl, with the whole area turning into a fiesta of sorts.

Anyone wanting to compete must have their concoction turned in to the Baja Grill by 10am that Sunday. Winners must be present to win. Bring at least 2 cups of either a spicy or fruity salsa.

And if you bring a copy of your recipe, it might be featured on *Lake Tahoe News*.

Climate change affecting food supply

By Vaishnavi Chandrashekhar, Christian Science Monitor

On an early Friday morning, the wholesale fish market at Mumbai's historic Sassoon Dock is in full, cacophonous swing. As fishermen unload their catch, local fish-sellers, restaurant cooks, and housewives swarm the slick wharf, haggling over their favorites – salmon, pomfret, and king mackerel.

There are fewer takers for a new fish on the ice block – the small, oily sardine. Until two decades ago, these fish were found only off the southwest coast of India, but warming seas have expanded their territory north and east. In Mumbai, on the northwest coast, fishermen say sardines have become especially plentiful in the past five years. But they have yet to become popular with local residents.



Reno chef Mark Estee demonstrates how to cut a whole pig. Photo/LTN file

“We can always eat them at home if we don’t sell them,” says Bhavna Tandel, who is selling a big basketful for less than $10.

Mumbai’s new sardine bounty is an example of how warmer temperatures may be redrawing the world’s geographic distribution of food – with potential implications for what and how we eat.

The global average temperature has risen by 1.3 degrees Fahrenheit over the past century, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. Further temperature increases and greater climatic variability are expected to alter production of food staples such as wheat, rice, and maize worldwide in the coming decades. Warming is also expected to shift or expand the cultivation of foods, especially to the north.

In southern England, where average temperatures have risen by 3 degrees F since the mid-20th century, some farmers have started growing foods associated with the sunny Mediterranean – olives, apricots, and grapes.

In the northeastern United States, warming temperatures and a decrease in snowpack are shrinking the maple syrup season. Climatic changes are likely to move production north, according to a 2007 study by the U.S. Forest Service and

Cornell University. Sugar-maple tree sap depends on cold nights and warm spring days.

While farmers in Vermont may be able to maintain yields by adapting to an earlier tapping season, maple farmers farther south in Pennsylvania will see production decline sooner, the Cornell study found.

And shifts in fish stocks aren't restricted to the Indian Ocean. Warming sea temperatures along with ocean oscillations have drawn mackerel northward into Iceland's waters – triggering a fishing conflict with Scotland – and brought sardines back into the North Sea and Baltic Sea after a 50-year absence.

English wine has boomed in recent years, with the number of hectares of vineyard more than tripling since the mid-1980s, according to the English Wine Producers Association. Climatic factors are partly responsible for the boost especially of red wines, the grapes for which usually fare poorly in rainy, chilly British weather. Red wine production increased from 72,000 bottles a year to more than 600,000 in the 2000s.

But as the surplus of sardines in Mumbai shows, adapting to new foods isn't always easy.

Fishermen in this region "should be happy with the increase in sardine catch but that's not the case," says Vinay Deshmukh, the scientist in charge at the Mumbai branch of the government of India's Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute (CMFRI). Because locals aren't used to eating sardines, he says, "fishermen don't know what to do with them."

The fish are sold so cheap – at about 1 cent per pound – they are even used as poultry feed. "The northern way of cooking fish doesn't seem to suit them," he says.

Mumbai's residents tend to favor larger, meaty fish. Shivani Jogle, a working-class mother of three, says her children

don’t like sardines for their fried fish because they have so many bones. “They’re always asking for Chinese or pizza,” she says.

Changing diets and the increasing popularity of seafood restaurants has also hiked up demand for fancier varieties, like pomfrets and tiger prawns, says city chef Anando Solomon.

Some of the sardine catch in the state of Maharashtra, of which Mumbai is the capital, is thus dispatched south to states like Kerala – where the fish is traditionally eaten and sells at much higher prices.

Oil sardine catches only started to increase on the northwest and eastern coasts of India in the 1990s, says Elayuperumal Vivekanandan, the senior CMFRI scientist who has done the principal work on this subject.

Sardines are known to have cycles of abundance and scarcity that correspond with natural ocean system changes. But Viveknandan says there has been no significant change other than warmer temperatures to explain the northern movement of sardines in this region. Sea surface temperature increased by 0.2 Celsius to 0.3 C along the Indian coastline between 1960 and 2005, and is projected to increase by another 2 to 3.5 degrees C by 2099.

Sardines are not the only small fish to benefit from warming waters – Indian mackerel have also expanded their territory north and are also going deeper.

How long the gains will last is unclear. “Right now, we’re experiencing the beneficial aspects of this trend,” says Vivekanandan. “But in the future, that may change.”

Indian oil sardines have expanded – not relocated – northward. But temperatures in southern waters may eventually become too warm for them, say scientists. Meanwhile, in the waters off the northeastern coastal city of Calcutta, sardines could

compete for plankton with another small fish, the hilsa, which is a local delicacy.

The ripple effect on larger fish is even less certain. An increased small fish population may boost numbers of larger, predator fish – or they may eventually replace them. Large fish are generally more sensitive to environmental change and are already under pressure from increased commercial fishing in the region.

In the state of Maharashtra, overfishing has caused a decline in most fish catches, save for small fish like sardines and mackerel, which have doubled in the past five years.

That makes adaptation even more important. A new government initiative on climate change is looking to give fishing communities here access to better fish dryers and deboning machines to help them sell their sardine catch.

As for Mumbai's fish lovers, they may have no choice but to change their tastes, given the declining stock and rising price of traditional favorites like Bombay Duck. CMFRI's Mr. Deshmukh notes that humans have adapted to changes in food availability before – including in this region.

Decades ago, tuna was unpopular here because of its bloody appearance, he recalls. But there was a shift in consumption, partly because of low prices.

"People are now eating it," he says.

K's Kitchen: Tasty Asian tofu

main dish

By Kathryn Reed

When I see a recipe I like in a magazine I rip it out. Then it goes into a pile of “I’ll get to it someday”. Every now and then I flip through them and wonder why I cut out what I did and other times I wonder why I didn’t try something sooner.



The recipe below falls into the latter category. It’s from the March 2010 (yes, it’s really 3-years-old) *Cooking Light*.

Those that become keepers are put into a binder to easily be found in the future. But they don’t go in the binder until they’ve been tried. This is going in the binder.

When my sister and her boyfriend came up the weekend before last I decided to create three Chinese dishes. This is the one I had not made before. (The other two recipes will show up on *Lake Tahoe News* one of these days.)

All three dishes are good, though nothing like what Pam and I had when we were actually in China a couple years ago. But with the Chinese New Year being about the time she visited, it seemed like a good reason to create quite a mess in the kitchen and test my timing skills. (We ate a little late; my timing needs some work to make three main courses. It would also help to get off the computer before guests arrive.)

Any way, I used fresh ginger and not bottled, veggie broth instead of chicken, and I cooked the white rice I usually use instead of bagged jasmine. Safeway has chile paste in the produce section. I left out the salt and used salted peanuts.

And while the recipe has Szechuan in it’s title, this is far from true Szechuan spiciness. The emphasis should be on *style* and not Szechuan.

Szechuan-style Tofu with Peanuts

2 (3 ½-ounce) bags boil-in-bag jasmine rice

1 (14-ounce) package water-packed firm tofu, drained and cut into 1-inch pieces

Cooking spray

½ C fat-free, less sodium chicken broth

1 T sambal oelek (ground fresh chile paste)

1 T less-sodium soy sauce

1 tsp cornstarch

2 tsp black bean garlic sauce

1 T canola oil

¼ tsp salt

1 (8-ounce) package presliced mushrooms

½ C matchstick-cut carrots

1 T bottled ground fresh ginger

½ C chopped green onions

¼ C unsalted dry roasted peanuts, chopped

Preheat broiler.

Cook rice according to package directions, omitting salt and fat.

Arrange tofu on single layer on a foil-lined jelly-roll pan

coated with cooking spray; broil 14 minutes or until golden.

While tofu cooks, combine broth and next 4 ingredients (through black bean sauce), stirring with a whisk; set aside.

Heat oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Add salt and mushrooms; sauté 4 minutes or until mushrooms begin to release liquid, stirring occasionally. Stir in carrots and ginger; cook 1 minute. Add broth mixture; cook 30 seconds or until sauce begins to thicken. Remove from heat; stir in tofu and onions. Sever over rice; sprinkle with peanuts.

What to do when ‘clean your plate’ fails

By Patti Neighmond, NPR

If you’re a parent, you’ve probably heard remarks like this during dinner: “I don’t like milk! My toast is burnt! I hate vegetables! I took a bite already! What’s for dessert?” It can be daunting trying to ensure a healthy diet for our children. So it’s no wonder parents often resort to dinner time rules.

In NPR’s new poll, with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the Harvard School of Public Health, 25 percent of families tell their children to eat everything on their plate, and 45 percent report setting restrictions on the types of foods eaten. Increasingly common are rules like “clean your plate,” as well as newer strictures such as “no second helpings of potatoes,” “no dessert until you eat your vegetables” and

“sodas and chips only on special occasions.”



Trying new foods at any age can be a good thing. Veronica Wong introduces her grandmother, Cleo Reed, to street food in China. Photo/LTN file

This is all well-meant advice. But does it work? Kelly Brownell, who directs the Rudd Center for Food Policy & Obesity at Yale University, says, “No.”

“By demanding that children eat things like vegetables before they have a dessert, it makes it seem like there’s something wrong with eating vegetables, and that you have to swallow medicine before you get to the good part,” Brownell says.

Not only that, but rules like this can backfire, according to Kristi King, a registered dietitian at Texas Children’s Hospital and a spokesperson with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. “Some of the studies have shown us that when they were put in a situation where somebody is saying ‘finish this’ or ‘finish that,’ the kids actually had more negative responses and actually consumed less of the food than the kids who didn’t have that reinforcement of ‘you need to finish.'”

The better option, King says, is creative negotiation. Take, for example, what she calls “Try It Tuesdays.” On a “Try It Tuesday,” parents, along with their children, pick out a new

food to sample. It helps to involve the kids in preparing the dish as well, she says. This investment in the new food increases the likelihood that the child will try it and even enjoy it.

If they still say no, King suggests “no-thank-you bites” – something her friends made up for their 3-year-old daughter. It goes like this: The child just has to take a bite, and if she doesn’t like it, she can say “no thank you,” and that’s that. But typically in this family, the “no thank you” turns into a “thank you,” as the 3-year-old watches her parents eating and enjoying the food.

“You see her little hand reach across to the fork, and it kind of goes over into the vegetable,” King says. “The next thing you know, you turn around and she’s eaten the entire vegetable.”

And, it turns out – as with most other behaviors – your kids are watching you, King says. “I had a parent who came into clinic not too long ago, and I said, ‘OK, what’s our goal for being here today?’ And he looked at me and said, ‘Make him eat vegetables!’ And, my question back was, ‘Well, do you eat vegetables?’ And his answer was, ‘No, I don’t like them.'”

Dad mentioned he loved grilling, so King suggested he try that with vegetables. By their next visit, he’d become an avid veggie griller.

“Zucchini and squash and carrots and eggplants and onions and tomatoes – you name it, he was grilling it,” says King. “[It’s] a dietitian’s dream – getting an entire family involved in eating more healthy foods.”

As for dessert, Yale University’s Brownell says there’s nothing wrong with an occasional treat. “That doesn’t mean that the only options are things high in sugar or fat or salt. There can be wonderful combinations of things like sorbet, sherbet, fruits – things like that can make outstanding

desserts and be really good for people.”

Some parents worry that having only healthy foods at home will lead kids to overdo it with junk food when they head off to college. But Brownell says there’s no evidence to support this worry. And, in fact, the reverse is probably true.

Even if the young adults indulge in unhealthy foods at first, they’re far more likely to return to the healthy foods they grew up with. “Having only good foods around the house makes all the sense in the world, and research supports this,” he says.

So, Brownell says, fill your kitchen with healthy food, don’t buy junk food, and watch what you eat. Your kids will follow your lead.

K’s Kitchen: Easy dip keeps guests happy

By Kathryn Reed

It’s always a challenge for me to think of something quick to serve as a post-play day snack for guests.

Cheese and crackers, chips and salsa – those are always easy and enjoyable. But sometimes it’s nice to have other things to put out.



After a day of skiing last weekend I knew I wouldn't want to come home and spend hours in the kitchen while everyone else was soaking in the hot tub. So the recipe below is what I whipped up and was able to take outside to the guests in the hot water.

I had not made this before, but my sister is always open to being my guinea pig. The four of us enjoyed it – so much so that she asked for the recipe. The recipe is from the March issue of *Bon Appétit.*

I didn't have sherry vinegar so I used regular sherry. I also didn't want to deal with pomegranate seeds, so I used dried cranberries.

Making it again, I would mix more of the mint and cranberries into the dip. Both added great flavor and texture.

While the magazine says it can be served with pita chips or crudités, I had flatbread crackers and the Wheat Thin Stix. Treat this as you would any hummus when it comes to what to dip into it.

Chickpea-Yogurt Dip

Puree 1 small garlic clove, two 15-ounce cans chick peas (rinsed), ½ C plain 2 percent Greek yogurt, 3 T olive oil, 2 tsp sherry vinegar, and a large pinch of ground cumin; season with kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper. Top with olive oil, pomegranate seeds, and coarsely chopped fresh mint.

Makes about 1½ cups.