

# Finding essential pots and pans: good cookware makes a difference

If you can answer yes to any of the following questions, it's probably time to go shopping: Does your favorite soup pot (you know, the one with all the dings and nicks on the exterior) resemble a well-used army combat helmet?

Has the babysitter's metal fork scraped every bit of the finish from the surface of your favorite non-stick scrambled egg pan?

Does that \$10 skillet you bought at the local five and dime preheat to 400 degrees in 2.5 seconds flat?

Shopping for new cookware can be downright overwhelming due to the enormous number of options available everywhere, all varied in quality and cost. No wonder it's so difficult to choose what will work best for outfitting your kitchen right. Instead of purchasing an entire cookware set, I recommend the purchase of a few good-quality, sturdy pieces that you'll use over a lifetime. Here are my top three pots and pans that I use nearly every day:

## 12 Inch Stainless Steel Skillet with a Tight-Fitting Lid

This is my go-to pan in the kitchen. Because brown is not a color but rather a flavor when you cook, caramelization is tremendously important. This guy lets you brown meats and veggies quickly, and if you choose to pan fry a chicken, you can be assured that a nice 2 1/2 to 3 pound fryer will fit perfectly.

Because the lid fits snugly, you can brown



## Chef Alli Winter

### • Who's Cookin' Now?

off meats (such as roast or short ribs), add the liquid, then cover and oven braise. Once your meat is fork-tender, the skillet is removed from the oven where the pan juices can then be reduced on the stovetop to make a finishing sauce – all from this single skillet.

A good stainless steel skillet that has an aluminum core sandwiched in the center retains heat for maximum browning and even heat across the surface – exactly what you want. Plan on spending about \$120 for this heavy-duty workhorse; my guy is the All-Clad version and I love it.

## Cast Iron Dutch Oven with Enamel-Coated Interior, and a Heavy Lid

A Dutch oven is the vessel you need for those slow braises, soups and stews, and it's also great for deep frying. Thick, tall sides make for splatter-free browning and the cast iron core ensures heat retention like no other.

Another grand feature of cast iron is the slow heat transfer; by adding the heavy lid you'll

find that your Sunday pot roast will be more succulent and tender due to minimal evaporation during the cooking process. My choice here is the Lodge Logic six-quart Dutch oven, though I'd love to braise with the Le Creuset French seven-quart oven one day soon.

**Grandma's Seasoned Cast Iron Skillet**  
Hopefully you were the one in the family who inherited Grandma's skillet, and if it's about 10 inches in size, that's perfect because you can still lift it without the worry of a hernia. I've never used mine to bonk my husband (yes, I've thought about it), but create in it regularly: deep dish pizza, crispy oven bacon, upside-down apple cake and, lately, creamed eggs that I serve over toast for a quick evening meal. If Grandma didn't leave you hers, try the Lodge cast iron skillet.

P.S. You'll also want to have a two-to-three quart sauce pan in your repertoire, along with a nice non-stick skillet so you can teach the kids how to make omelets that slide right out of the pan.

*Alli Winter was raised in Topeka and began cooking at age 4, though it was much later when she attended the Personal Chef Institute in Rio Rancho, N.M., where she acquired her certification. Her website is at www.ChefAllis.com.*

## Senior Progress Center

Thursday will be Volunteer Appreciation at the Senior Progress Center.

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 10:30 a.m. Rummikub. **Tuesday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 backgammon. **Wednesday:** snack day. **Thursday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 11 a.m. volunteer appreciation. **Friday:** 10 a.m. exercise; 10:30 Wii game.

Menus for the week: **Monday:** ground beef stroganoff, spinach, applesauce, noodles. **Tuesday:** Polish sausage with kraut, mashed potatoes, mixed vegetables, cook's choice fruit. **Wednesday:** paprika

chicken, potato salad, apricots, dinner roll, cookie. **Thursday:** Salisbury steak, California blend vegetables, mixed fruit, birthday cake. **Friday:** taco salad, strawberries and bananas, chips, brownie.

The Thomas County Nutrition Center invites anyone 60 and older and guests to lunch Monday through Friday at the senior center. Home delivery is available, as is pick-up service. A contribution of \$3 per meal is suggested for seniors, \$5.25 for others. For anyone under 60, home delivery is \$5.75.

Make reservations at (785) 460-2901 by noon the day before.

## Atwood attorney gets appointment

Gov. Sam Brownback has appointed Atwood lawyer Charles Peckham to the state Solid Waste Grants Advisory Committee.

Peckham is a partner in the firm of Brown, Creighton and Peckham, where he has worked since 1984. Before that, Peckham was a staff attorney for the U.S. Department of Agriculture and a security police officer with the U.S. Air Force. He earned his law degree at

the University of Kansas.

The committee reviews competitive grant applications and establish a project priority lists of each fiscal year based on the amount of money available. The grants usually are for the reuse of construction and demolition debris, recycling electronic scrap and reclamation initiatives throughout the state.

## School Activities and Menus

### Colby Public Schools

**Activities: Monday:** 4, 5:30 p.m. softball vs. Goodland; 4 p.m. junior varsity track, Trego; 7 p.m. school board meeting, administration building. **Tuesday:** 9 a.m. varsity golf, McCook, Neb.; 9:30 a.m. varsity track, Scott City; 2 p.m. junior varsity golf, Goodland; 3 p.m. junior varsity tennis vs. Colby Invitational; 4, 5:30 p.m. softball, Hays High School; 4, 6 p.m. baseball, Goodland. **Thursday:** no school – Colby High School; State Large Group Music Festival, Colby High School; 3 p.m. varsity golf, Norton; 3 p.m. middle school track Colby Invitational; 4, 6 p.m. baseball vs. Liberal. **Friday:** 3 p.m. varsity tennis, Scott City; 3 p.m. varsity track, Holcomb. **Saturday:** 8 to 11:30 p.m. junior/senior prom, City Limits; forensics regionals, Colby; 8 a.m. varsity tennis, Garden City.

**Menus: Monday:** breakfast: toasted oats, apple juice; lunch: corn dogs, curly fries, green beans, mixed fruit, oatmeal squares.

**Tuesday:** breakfast: biscuit, gravy, pineapple slices; lunch: hamburger gravy, mashed potatoes, corn, rosemary applesauce. **Wednesday:** breakfast: waffle stix, syrup, grape juice; lunch: sloppy joes, smiley

potatoes, broccoli with cheese, apple half. **Thursday:** breakfast: cheese omelet, orange juice; lunch: soup day: chili, chicken noodle, broccoli with cheese, cinnamon rolls, strawberry fruit mix, baby carrots. **Friday:** breakfast: cinnamon toast, apple slices; lunch: Frito pie, cornbread, honey, peas, mandarin oranges.

**Sacred Heart**  
**Activities: Tuesday:** 7 p.m. kindergarten and first grade program; **Thursday:** 7:30 a.m. staff meeting; kindergarten visitation.

**Menus: Monday:** hamburger, lettuce, tomato, French fries, fruit cocktail, rice crispy cookies. **Tuesday:** chicken nuggets, mashed potatoes, fresh broccoli, whole wheat roll, bananas. **Wednesday:** chili, whole grain chips, celery, cucumbers, cinnamon roll, orange slices. **Thursday:** pork rib sandwich, tritaters, corn, kiwi. **Friday:** macaroni and cheese, seasoned peas, baby carrots, whole wheat roll, apple wedge.

**Heartland**  
**Activities: Monday:** 7 p.m. board meeting. **Wednesday:** midterm reports go home. **Saturday:** 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. school work day.

**Golden Plains**  
**Activities: Monday:** 7:30 p.m.

board of education. **Wednesday:** state large group music contest. **Friday:** 3 p.m. high school track, Oakley. **Saturday:** regional forensics, Colby.

**Menus: Rexford: Monday:** breakfast: biscuit and gravy; lunch: chicken and noodles. **Tuesday:** breakfast: bagels; lunch: barbecue meatballs. **Wednesday:** breakfast: pancake and sausage; lunch: pizza. **Thursday:** breakfast: scrambled eggs; lunch: chili dogs. **Friday:** breakfast: breakfast pizza; lunch: cheeseburger.

**Selden: Monday:** breakfast: breakfast burrito; lunch: chicken and noodles. **Tuesday:** breakfast: waffle; lunch: corn dog. **Wednesday:** breakfast: biscuit and gravy; lunch: taco salad. **Thursday:** breakfast: donut; lunch: first grade menu. **Friday:** breakfast: scrambled eggs; lunch: grilled cheese.

**Brewster**  
**Activities: Monday:** 7 p.m. board of education. **Tuesday:** 2 p.m. junior varsity golf, Goodland tournament; 2 p.m. junior high track, St. Francis. **Wednesday:** Fort Hays State art exhibit. **Thursday:** 1 p.m. varsity golf, Wheatland tournament. **Friday:** third, fourth and fifth grades, Shrine Circus, Salina; no school.

**Menus: Monday:** breakfast: scrambled eggs; lunch: beef ta-male pie, vegetable salad, baby carrots, pears, orange slices. **Tuesday:** breakfast: cinnamon roll; lunch: chicken and noodles, broccoli, cooked carrots, peaches, pineapple. **Wednesday:** breakfast: French toast, sausage; lunch: ham and cheese sandwich, baked beans, baby carrots, banana, mixed fruit. **Thursday:** breakfast: sausage gravy, biscuit; lunch: spaghetti and meat sauce, peas, carrots, applesauce, orange slices, breadsticks.

**Colby Community College**  
**Activities: Sunday:** 9 a.m. softball tournament; 1 p.m. baseball vs. Hutchinson; men's golf, Salina. **Monday:** 5:30 p.m. board of trustees; men's golf, Salina. **Wednesday:** 3 p.m. softball vs. Barton County; 4:45 p.m. RSVP banquet, City Limits; 5 p.m. baseball, McCook; 1 p.m. women's track, Hillsboro; men's track, Lawrence. **Friday:** 6-9 p.m. Community Art Walk, campus and downtown; rodeo, Hays. **Saturday:** 8:30 a.m. Kick-Off Horse Show, College Farm; 1 p.m. baseball, Pratt; 2 p.m. softball, LaJunta; rodeo, Hays. **Sunday:** 1 p.m. baseball, Pratt; rodeo, Hays; men's golf,

Newton; 11 a.m. softball, Las Vegas, N.M.

**Triplains**  
**Activities: Monday:** school in session, no kindergarten. **Tuesday:** kindergarten; 8:30 a.m. preschool screening, United Methodist Church. **Wednesday:** kindergarten. **Thursday:** kindergarten; 12:30, 2:30 p.m. first and second grades "Wizard of Oz" play. **Friday:** no school; 3 p.m. high school track, Oakley. **Saturday:** prom.

Send us your calendar and menus. E-mail colby.society@nwkansas.com or mail Colby Free Press, 155 W. Fifth, Colby, Kan., 67701.

## Red Barn

Activities for the week: **Monday:** 2 p.m. Barnswallows; tax deadline. **Wednesday:** 10 a.m. ladies' Bible study; Karen Hibbs birthday. **Thursday:** 2 p.m. Come On Down; 7:30 p.m. Spuds 'n Splits; Tina Delgeit birthday. **Friday:** 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. driver's safety class.

## Thieves cop coffee

VIENNA (AP) – In a heist that could fill the mother of all bottomless cups, thieves in Austria have made off with 2 tons of coffee.

Police say the culprits broke into a wholesaler and coffee-roaster's warehouse east of Vienna, loaded a stolen van with the goods and then drove off.

A police statement issued Tuesday put the value of the vehicle and its contents at more than 55,000 euros – \$72,000.

The thieves also took two coffee machines with them.

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