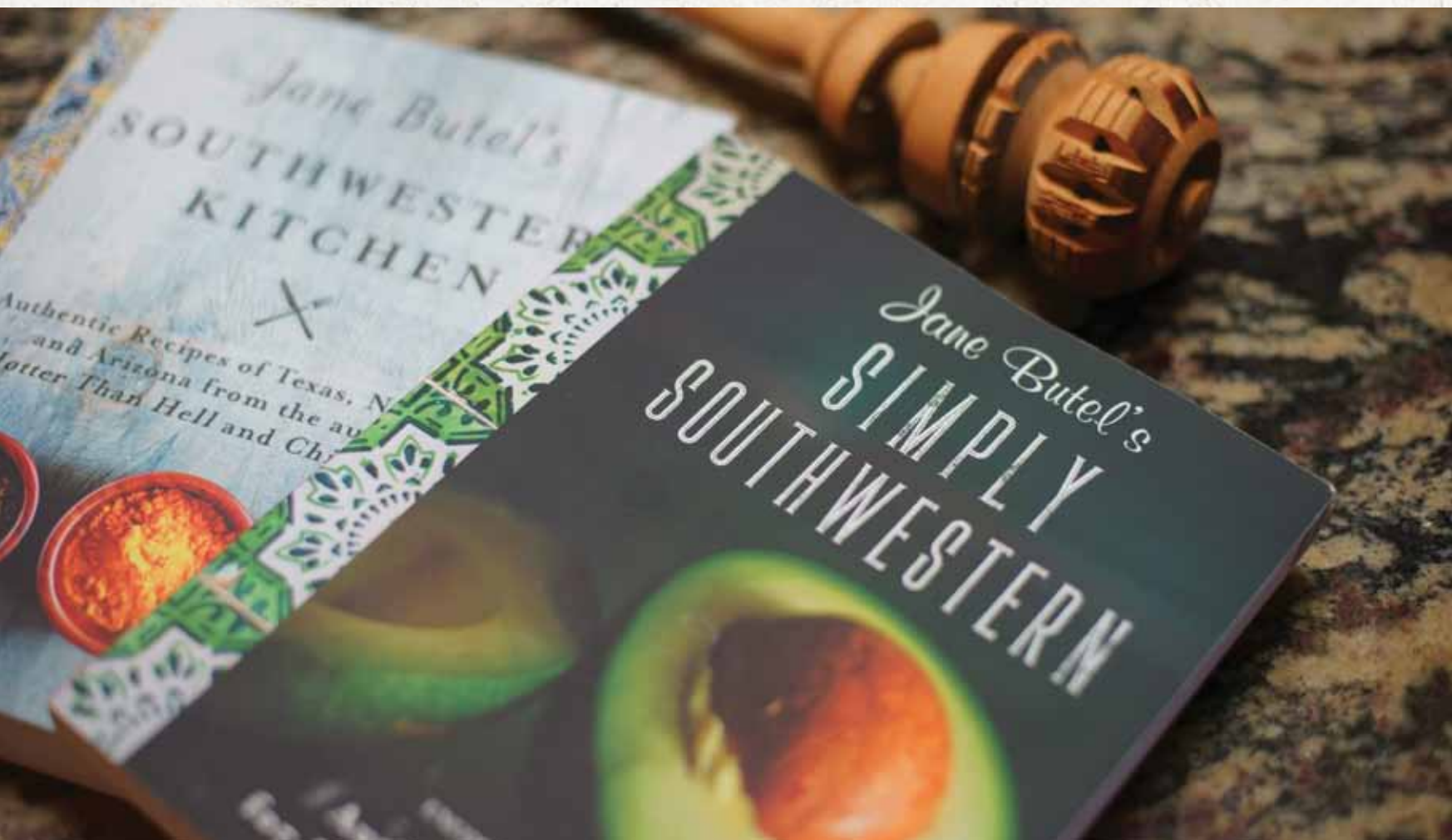


JANE BUTEL

After a 20-year career as a consumer marketing professional, which included being the first woman corporate officer of American Express, Jane Butel wanted to return to her first passion — cooking. She published “Jane Butel’s Tex-Mex Cookbook” (Harmony, 1980), which was a huge success and the first mainstream cookbook that defined American Southwestern cooking. At the request of millions of her readers, eight of her cookbooks are being republished by Turner Publishing, and her 23rd cookbook, “Simply Southwestern,” hit shelves in November of 2016. Now, 23 cookbooks later and after many years of successfully teaching cooking to food lovers from all over the world, Jane is still developing recipes to share with others.





My passion for cooking developed very early. My first memory of cooking is one Sunday evening when I was about 3 or 4 years old, when my father placed me on a chair so I could watch him make a very simple supper of scrambled eggs. He wanted to show me how to keep stirring the eggs to make them soft. “What fun! This is easy!” I thought.

Growing up on a northeastern Kansas farm from the age of 8, I began cooking more and more dishes. I always liked chili and began working on making it ever more flavorful, although I was not privy to my grandfather’s recipe for Bowl ’o Red at that time. By the time I was 12, I was cooking huge amounts of food for school fundraisers. On the farm, I helped my mother with much of the cooking. During the summer for the hay and wheat harvest, we made two major meals and two snacks a day for the farmers and hired help who came to get their hay baled and wheat combined. My mother and I prepared all the food from scratch — not a single box mix or frozen anything. ▶



BIG BOWL 'O RED

Serves 6 to 8

This recipe came from my maternal grandfather. While working with the Santa Fe Railroad, he was stationed in Dodge City, Kansas, which was at the end of the cattle-drive trail. He developed this recipe after commiserating with a lot of “cookies” (trail cooks) who cooked for the cowboys. It has won numerous chili cookoffs and is one of the really true original chilis. I like to gussy it up with “fixin’s ‘n mixin’s” of chopped onion, pickled jalapeños, mixed grated cheddar and jack cheeses, sour cream, lime wedges edged in powdered mild red chile, and a bowl of pequin quebrado for those who like it red hot!

- 2 TB. lard, butter, bacon drippings, or rendered beef fat
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- 3 lbs. chuck roast, cut into ½" cubes
- 3 medium garlic cloves, finely chopped
- ¼ cup pure ground hot chile, or to taste
- ¼ cup pure ground mild chile
- 1 TB. ground cumin, divided
- 3 cups water
- 1½ tsp. salt

1. Melt lard over medium heat in a large heavy pot with a flat bottom and straight sides. Add onion and cook until softened. Remove from heat.
2. Add meat, garlic, ground chiles, and half of cumin to pot; break up any lumps. Stir in water and salt. Return to heat and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, uncovered, for 2½–3 hours, stirring occasionally, until meat is very tender and flavors are well-blended. Add more water if necessary.
3. Taste and adjust seasonings, and add remaining cumin. Serve with fixin’s ‘n mixin’s as noted above.

NOTE: Placing a lid on a stew such as this will steam the meat, toughening it, rather than allowing it to break down and become tender.



Our farm had huge gardens and orchards, and chickens, hogs, sheep, and cattle, so there were a lot of fresh, flavorful ingredients to choose from. I would help harvest, cut corn off the cob, and pick and shell peas and green beans. We also made a lot of jams, jellies, and pickles. When I developed a great love for baking, I took to baking cakes and pies. Fancy cakes were my specialty and I started entering them in the county fair. Thanks to the supportive merchants in our county, the prize money was quite generous.

During my teen and college years, I seemed to always be the dedicated cook, creating special dinners as well as snacks; spaghetti, homemade pizza dinners, and chili were my specialties. In the meantime, I developed an interest in acting and really wanted to become a “star” — but that was not in the cards. I had received a scholarship to cover my tuition at Kansas

State, and I graduated with a double major in home economics and journalism. I got married between my junior and senior years of college, and after graduation my husband and I moved to Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he had a great job offer.

Since we had planned to move to New York City where I would work in fashion/advertising, I had no idea what I would do in New Mexico. Luckily I landed a position as a home economist with the electric utility, where I got to use my food and writing skills. After a year, I was promoted to head of the department. I stayed with the company for 10 years, winning seven national awards and coming to the attention of the executives of the world’s largest electric utility — Con Edison in New York City — who gave me an offer to develop a consumer marketing department for them, which I accepted. ▶



PERFECT GUACAMOLE

Serves 4

- 2 ripe avocados (Haas)
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 clove garlic, finely minced
- 1 tsp. freshly squeezed lime juice, or to taste
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- ¼ cup finely chopped Spanish onion
- 1 medium fresh jalapeño, minced
- 2 TB. coarsely chopped fresh cilantro

1. Halve avocados, scoop pulp into a bowl, and coarsely chop (for greatest flavor, appearance, and keeping quality, cut avocados with two knives into coarse chunks about ½ inch square).
2. Add salt and garlic, and slowly add lime juice to taste. Fold in tomato, onion, jalapeño, and cilantro. Let stand a few minutes before serving to allow flavors to blend. Taste and adjust seasonings.

NOTE: To keep the guacamole from discoloring or oxidizing, cover it well or sprinkle it with a few drops of ascorbic acid (used to prevent darkening when freezing fruit). Be careful not to add too much of the acid, as it can be slightly sweet.



P.S. I love this!
My favorite things
in my kitchen are my
hand-carved mojecates
and machadoras
(wooden bean mashers).

REFRIED BEANS

Serves 6 to 8

- 2 TB. butter, bacon drippings, or lard
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 TB. finely chopped Spanish onion
- 1 cup cooked pinto beans
or ½ (16 oz.) can pinto beans
- Salt & freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 2 TB. mixed shredded cheddar
& Monterey Jack cheese (optional)

1. Melt butter in a large heavy skillet over medium heat. Add garlic; as soon as it starts to turn golden, add onion. Immediately add pinto beans with a little liquid; using a bean masher, potato masher, or heavy wooden spoon, mash them, leaving some beans less mashed. Add additional liquid as needed.
2. Fry beans over medium heat for about 15 minutes, turning to prevent burning, until beans reach a thick, paste-like consistency. Top with cheese, if desired, and serve piping hot. Place under a hot broiler to completely melt cheese for added flavor.





PERFECT MARGARITAS

Serves 2 to 3

I once had a neighbor who called my margaritas “crawl home margaritas” when they were made as directed below. Afterward, if we made them using half of the tequila, we started calling them “walk home margaritas,” and the name stuck among our friends. They are definitely the best when made with freshly squeezed lime juice, good-quality silver tequila, and Triple Sec or Cointreau. These margaritas are strong, so be careful!

2 oz. freshly squeezed lime juice, approximately 2 or 3 limes (save lime halves for salting rims)

Coarse or kosher salt (optional)

6 oz. tequila, or to taste

2 oz. Triple Sec

1 tsp. raw egg white, lightly whipped (optional)

Ice cubes

1. About 1 hour before serving, squeeze limes. If salted rims are desired, place salt in a small, dry saucer. Gently rub squeezed lime half on rims of glasses. Lightly press rim of glasses into salt, and place in freezer so they will be frosty.
2. Combine lime juice, tequila, Triple Sec, egg white (if using), and about 8–10 ice cubes in a blender or cocktail shaker; blend or shake well. Taste and add more lime juice or Triple Sec, if desired. Pour into frosted glasses, and serve.

NOTE: The egg white sustains a foam on top of each margarita, which is very attractive.



My wish had come true — I made it to New York. I was fortunate in my corporate career, receiving multiple promotions and landing the position as the worldwide consumer marketing director for General Electric, and then vice president of consumer affairs and marketing for American Express. But as I climbed the corporate ladder, I had gotten further and further away from my love of culinary. The kitchen called to me, so I left the corporate career to write cookbooks, teach cooking, and start a spice company. I have been teaching cooking as my own business since 1983. I am pleased to note that in 1996, Bon Appetit magazine selected my cooking school as one of the four best non-vocational cooking schools in the world. Also, Gayot.com selected my Scottsdale Fairmont-Princess hotel cooking school as the “Best in the U.S.” and one of the “10 Best in the World” every year it operated. ▶



COMPOSED NACHOS

Serves 2 to 4

When artfully arranged as described below, the nachos are beautiful and look like a sunflower. The crispy, cheesy nachos serve as a scooper for the guacamole, refried beans, and garnish!

6 (6") corn tortillas, fried or baked
 1 cup mixed shredded cheddar & Monterey jack cheese
 ½ cup Perfect Guacamole (see recipe), or to taste
 ½ cup Refried Beans (see recipe), or to taste
 ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh or pickled jalapeño chiles, or to taste
 2 TB. each chopped onion, fresh tomato & ripe olives
 2 TB. sour cream (optional)

1. Deep-fry whole tortillas in vegetable oil heated to 375 degrees Fahrenheit until crisp, about 22 seconds. If baking tortillas, preheat oven to 425 degrees Fahrenheit. Arrange tortillas in a single layer on a baking sheet topped with a smaller baking sheet. Bake 5 minutes, remove top smaller sheet pan, and finish baking for about 8 more minutes or until crisp. Generously sprinkle cheeses on tortillas. Bake about 5 more minutes or until cheese melts.
2. Cut each tortilla into four pieces like a pie. Arrange on a large round plate or platter, placing them in an overlapping chain. Position a mound of Perfect Guacamole in center of platter. Spoon a circle of Refried Beans around outside edge of guacamole. Garnish with jalapeño slices, onion, tomato, and olives. Top beans with sour cream, if desired.



“LIVING WELL IS THE BEST REVENGE.” — Jonathan Swift

Over the years I have hosted countless chili parties, even staging a “Chili, Champagne, and Caviar” party to celebrate Seagram investing in my spice business. Other memorable chili parties include the “How the West was Won in the East” benefit for Myasenia Gravis at Madison Square Garden with Tony Randall hosting and Zsa Zsa Gabor as an honored guest. Another was at Rockefeller Center where we had to park in the underground parking 10 stories below and carry and cart the food to the 90th-floor banquet room. Here, I am sharing my favorite chili party menu of Composed Nachos, Big Bowl ‘o Red, Blue Corn Parfait Bread, and Perfect Margaritas. I hope you enjoy it all as much as I do!

I finished my 23rd cookbook in 2016 and eight of my best-sellers are being updated and republished by Turner Publishing, which is very exciting. It has not all been easy, but I continue to enjoy developing new dishes and teaching cooking skills. Food is my destiny!

Where Women Cook would like to thank Jane Butel for her involvement in our spring issue. To learn more, visit janebutel.com.

Photography by Steve Larese. Learn more in *Traveling Companions* on page 130.



BLUE CORN PARFAIT BREAD

Serves 9 to 12

A lot of blue corn on the market is filled or blended with white or yellow corn. For the best flavor, buy pure blue cornmeal, if it is available. The best blue cornmeal is smoked in adobe ovens and then lava-wheel ground to a fine flour consistency.

- 1 cup blue cornmeal
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- ¾ tsp. salt
- 2 eggs
- ⅔ cup butter or margarine, melted
- 1 cup sour cream
- 2 cups cooked or canned whole-kernel corn, drained
- ¼ lb. Monterey jack cheese or cheddar cheese, or both, sliced ¼" thick
- ¼ cup sliced jalapeños, pickled or fresh



1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit. Grease a 9-inch cast-iron skillet or a 9-inch round or square cake pan. Mix dry ingredients together and make a well in center. Add eggs, butter, and sour cream, and blend thoroughly. Fold in corn kernels.
2. Pour almost half of batter into prepared pan. Cover with sliced cheese and jalapeños. Pour remaining batter over cheese and chiles, and smooth to cover filling.
3. Bake for 30–40 minutes or until golden and a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Serve warm.