

GENIUS

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The new edition includes recipes like their top-selling hot chocolate cookies, packed with mini marshmallows. Among the old favorites: spicy caramel corn, studded with fat pieces of bacon. Although Ovenly became famous for its cookies, scones and stout-spiked Brooklyn Blackout cake, “the secret beginning,” says Kulaga, “is that we started off as a bar snack company.”

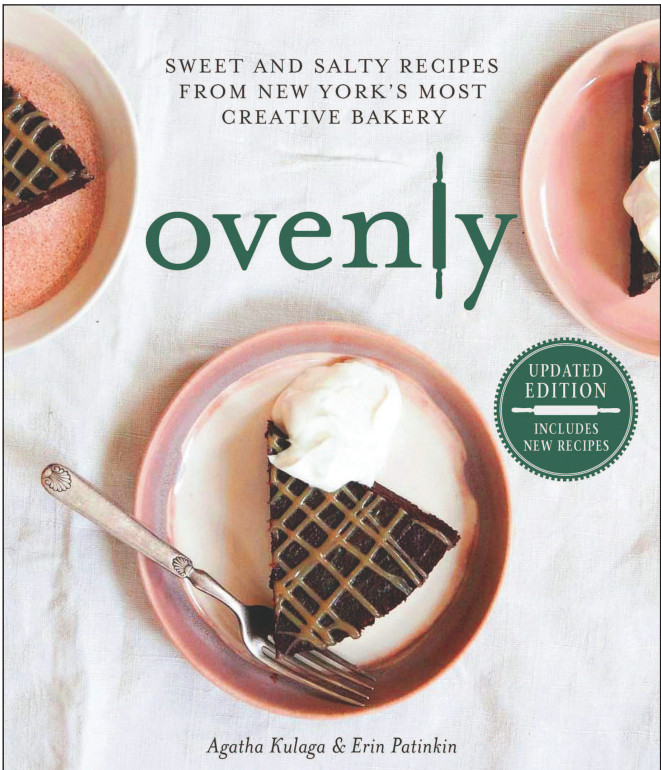
“We grew up in the ‘80s, the era of Combos,” she continues. “We spent a lot of time brainstorming business plans over drinks, thinking what went well with booze. Our plan was to level up lame bar snacks.” Their pastry may have taken off more quickly, but their first big idea — that popcorn — is a sight to behold.

The kernels are doused in a cayenne pepper caramel infused with ale. Add bacon, and the result is addictively smoky, sweet, and spicy, combining a large amount of crave-able products in one place. It’s a no-brainer with beer, since that’s the secret ingredient, although it’ll complement a wintry whiskey drink, too.

And as a show-off snack for playoff games, as well as any series you are compulsively streaming on Netflix? Fuhgettaboutit.

Presumably everyone knows how to prepare the base ingredients, bacon and popcorn. That leaves the beer caramel, which is the trickiest part, but made infinitely simpler with a candy thermometer (they cost less than \$10 at grocery stores or online). Then it’s just a matter of combining the products and waiting for the popcorn to cool enough to start eating it.

The following recipe is adapted from “Ovenly: Sweet and Salty Recipes From New York’s Most Creative Bakery” by Agatha Kulaga and Erin Patinkin.



Park Row/TNS

“Ovenly: Sweet and Salty Recipes from New York’s Most Creative Bakery.”

SPICY BACON AND BEER CARAMEL CORN

Makes about 4 cups

- 6 slices thick-cut bacon or 10 slices regular bacon
- Vegetable oil cooking spray, or vegetable oil
- 1/3 cup popcorn kernels
- 4 tablespoons rendered bacon fat (from cooking the bacon)
- 3 cups sugar
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1/4 cup dark English ale
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 1/2 tablespoons salt
- 1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste

In a pan, fry the bacon until crisp, about 10 minutes. Transfer to paper towels to cool, then crumble into large pieces. Pour off 4 tablespoons fat for the popcorn. Reserve the remaining fat for another use. (The book’s authors, who are strong no-waste advocates, recommend mixing leftover with softened butter for a porky spread for bread and muffins.)

Spray a large mixing bowl, baking sheet, and two large metal

mixing spoons with non-stick cooking spray. In a popcorn popper or large pot with a lid, heat the bacon fat over medium-high heat. Add the popcorn, cover and cook until all the kernels have popped, shaking constantly to prevent burning. If using a popper, follow the manufacturer’s directions. Transfer the popcorn to the coated bowl, and mix in the cooked bacon. Combine the baking soda and cayenne in a small bowl.

Combine the sugar, ale, water, butter, and salt in large pot. Cook until the mixture turns a rich golden brown and reaches 305°, or the hard crack stage) on a candy thermometer, about 15 minutes. (If you don’t have a thermometer, drop a spoonful of syrup in cold water; it should be hard enough to crack if you mold it.) Remove the pan from heat and stir in the cayenne and baking soda for 30 seconds until any clumps have been dispersed and the foam subsides. Immediately pour the caramel evenly over the popcorn and bacon and mix well using the prepared spoons, until everything is well coated.

Spread the caramel corn onto the prepared baking sheet. Let cool, then break apart into bite sized pieces and serve.



Dreamstime/TNS

Even before we are born, we need key nutrients found in fish and seafood.

Seafood: It’s good for us even before we’re born

Barbara Quinn
Monterey Herald

Even before we are born, we need key nutrients found in fish and seafood. That’s according to the current Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025 (DGA), which advises pregnant women to consume 8 to 12 ounces of a variety of seafood each week. Besides being an excellent source of baby-building protein, seafood provides nutrients such as omega-three fats and iodine which are important to baby’s brain and mental development.

Seafood is also on the list of protein-rich first foods to introduce to infants at about six months of age. Just 2 to 3 ounces a week supplies baby with a good dose of EPA and DHA—vital omega-three fats that young children need for optimal brain development.

Here’s how the experts say it: “The long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids, specifically the essential omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids supplied through seafood, nuts, seeds, and oils, influence the infant’s fatty acid status and are among the key nutrients needed for the rapid brain development that occurs through the infant’s first 2 years of life.”

What’s the catch? Some seafood contains high amounts of methylmercury, a toxin that exists in the atmosphere. Large fish such as shark, swordfish and king mackerel are typically high in methylmercury and should be avoided by pregnant women and young children.

That’s no reason to avoid fish meals entirely, however. Good choices that are high in EPA and DHA and low in methylmercury include anchovy, black sea bass, catfish, clams, cod, crab, crawfish, flounder, haddock, hake, herring, lobster, mullet, oyster, perch, pollock, salmon, sardine, scallop, shrimp, sole, squid, tilapia, freshwater trout, light tuna, and whiting.

Here’s another catch: If we all start eating the amount of fish and seafood experts advise, there will not be enough wild fish to meet the demand. And farmed fish isn’t that great, right?

Wrong, say scientists with the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Specialized processes now produce farmed fish that is similar to wild-caught species and is also good for the planet, people and business. Find their best choice recommendations for farmed as well as wild fish at seafoodwatch.org.

OK, but isn’t wild fish more nutritious than farmed fish? Current farming methods produce fish with a similar nutrition profile as wild raised fish, says Linda Cornish of the Seafood Nutrition Partnership. Farmed salmon, for example, get feed that mimics what salmon eat in the wild. And by the way, both farm-raised and wild fish can contain methylmercury that leaches into oceans and other water bodies from the environment.

Need more info on what types of fish to choose? Check out these: FDA.gov/fishadvice and EPA.gov/fishadvice.

SALAD

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- 1 1/2 pounds (680 grams) mixed orange citrus (see note on Page 1B)
- 1 1/2 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/8 teaspoon crushed red chile flakes
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1 inner stalk of celery, thinly sliced
- 1 ounce (28 grams) feta, preferably in brine
- 4 green olives, preferably Castelvetrano, pitted and torn into 3 to 4 pieces

1. Take one of the smaller orange citrus and, using a

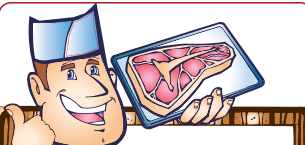
Microplane, finely grate the zest from half of it into a small bowl. Stir in the vinegar, olive oil and chile flakes, then season the vinaigrette with salt and pepper.

2. Working on a cutting board, remove the pith and peel from all the citrus. For citrus bigger than a tennis ball, cut between the membranes to free its wedge-like sections. For smaller citrus, simply slice across the sections to make thin rounds, about ¼-inch-thick, removing any seeds as you go. Transfer all the sliced citrus and juices to a serving platter big enough to fit them in a single-ish layer and preferably

one with a lip to contain their juice. Spoon the vinaigrette over the slices.

3. Arrange the celery slices evenly over the citrus. If your feta comes with brine, drizzle a couple teaspoons of the brine over the salad. Roughly crumble the feta and arrange it over the salad, followed by the olives. Cover the whole salad with a sheet of plastic wrap or foil and refrigerate until cold, at least 1 hour or up to 8 hours.

4. Uncover the salad and serve chilled. This is great as a side to salmon fillets, roast chicken thighs or sliced duck breast.



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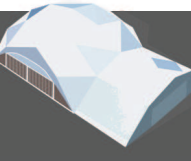
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