

My Fare Lady: Gemma Petrie

BY AUDREY SHEFFIELD



Some of us probably wouldn't know what to do without the life-saving frozen TV dinner. We come home from work, from running here and there, and the last thing we feel like doing is cooking. "Just give me some food. Now," you think. "It doesn't matter what."

But for others, food is much more than a means of assuaging hunger or of providing calories for a mid-afternoon energy boost. It's an art, a passion, a way of learning about other people and other cultures. This is how foodies

understand "grub." For instance. Those pretzels - that grub - you get out of the vending machine have history (within the early Catholic church, pretzels were regarded as having religious significance for both ingredients and shape); those pretzels have nostalgia-maybe you shared a humungous, soft one with your first lover at the county fair, and those pretzels come in a hundred different varieties: soft, twisted, braided, looped, sweetened, big, small, buttered.

Meet Gemma Petrie of Chicago, a foodie who writes exclusively about all kinds of delectable dishes, desserts and regional food events. Her recipes are inviting and inspire even the novice or casual cook to flee to the kitchen and start whipping out ingredients and pre-heating the oven. Her recipe this month for apple and thyme turnovers might sound like an unlikely combination, but the flavors in this pastry make for a beautiful culinary marriage.

Learn more about Gemma at Pro Bono Baker, www.probonobaker.com

Apple and Thyme Turnovers

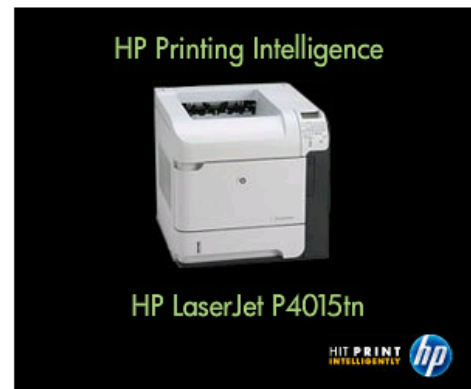
Ingredients

- 2 Granny Smith apples
- 1/4 cup honey
- 6 thyme sprigs
- 2 tablespoon butter
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 sheet all butter puff pastry, thawed
- Flour for dusting
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon milk

Method

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

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2. Core and cut each apple into eight slices. In a large skillet, heat the honey over medium-high heat until simmering. Add the apple slices, thyme and butter and cook for 10 to 15 minutes, turning until well caramelized on all sides and just getting soft. Remove the thyme and add the ginger and salt. Turn off the heat and stir to thoroughly combined.
3. Divide the puff pastry into sixths and gently roll out each piece on a lightly floured surface into five- inch squares. Divide the filling evenly between the six squares, leaving a one-inch border. Beat the egg and milk together and brush the edges of each pastry. Fold each pastry in half to form a triangle and press the edges with fork tines to seal. Brush each pastry with the remainder of the egg wash and gently pierce the tops with a sharp knife. Bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown. Allow to cool slightly before serving.

This article appears in the [February 2010](#) issue of [Sashay Magazine](#)

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