



2015

Holiday Guide

Events, Boutiques,
Recipes & MORE!

#EVMBHoliday

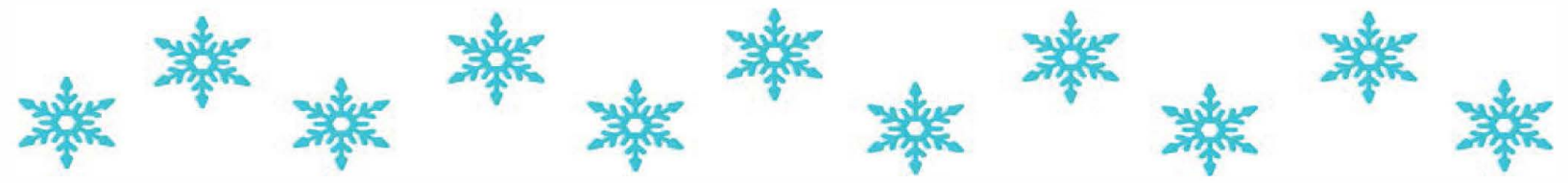


Happy Holidays

from

East Valley Moms Blog!

We wish you and your families the happiest of holidays and a bright New Year ahead!



East Valley Moms Blog Team



Lisa



Michelle



Kari



Angela



Mindy



Candi



Erin



Amber



Jordan



Rowelyn



Staci



Brittany



Erica

Light Displays Around Town



purchase tickets online

Zoolights

November 23 through January 10, 2016 5:30 – 10:30 p.m. nightly

ZooLights, powered by SRP EarthWise Energy, is a magical experience guaranteed to illuminate your holiday season.

- Several new 3-D light sculptures featuring stingrays, flowers, humming bird and tiger
- Search for the new 2-D butterflies and lion cubs
- Enjoy two new Music in Motion shows featuring music from the movie Polar Express and Winter Palace by Trans-Siberian Orchestra.
- Watch as an ice sculptor magically makes an animal appear out of a 300 pound block of ice every

Mesa Temple Lights

This spectacular annual display, provided by volunteers, is free of charge each evening of the holiday season. As you thrill to the sights and sounds of the holidays, we hope that you, your family and friends will enjoy: hundreds of thousands of colorful lights; uniquely illuminated palm trees and flower gardens; an inspiring nativity scene; a display of Mary and Joseph on their way to Bethlehem; recorded messages in English and Spanish and a modern Visitors Center open to all. 525 E Main Street, Mesa.

Open Nightly 5pm - 10pm

Friday, November 27th - Thursday, December 31st



Ahwatukee Festival of Lights

From Thanksgiving until the New Year, Chandler Boulevard from 24th Street to Desert Foothills Parkway is illuminated with more than a million white LED lights. The display can be seen nightly from 6pm-11pm

KICK OFF PARTY

FREE ADMISSION - Desert Foothills Park, Sat. Nov. 28, 2015, 11am-9pm

FREE SANTA PICS - Desert Foothills Park, Sat. Nov. 28, 2015, 12p-2p and 3p-5p

Harley Parade at the Holiday Kick Off Party, Sat. Nov. 28, 2015 6pm

Rides/inflatables from 11am-8pm, \$20 all-day wristbands (indiv. tickets avail. for .50)



Mill Avenue Fantasy of Lights Parade

Its time for one of the most longstanding and cherished holiday traditions in Tempe; the Fantasy of Lights Opening Night Parade sponsored by Wells Fargo! In its 23rd year, the parade will feature as many as 40 units, including floats, balloons, clowns, novelty units, marching bands, and the arrival of Santa Claus. The parade proceeds through Downtown Tempe.

At the conclusion of the parade is the Fantasy of Lights Tree Lighting Ceremony presented by Tempe St. Luke's Hospital, in Centerpoint Plaza.

November 28, 2015 | 6PM Downtown Tempe
Free Admission for Spectators



Tempe Town Lake Holiday Boat Parade

Light up the night and be dazzled at the Valley's most unique holiday event-the Tempe Fantasy of Lights Boat Parade. Featuring many festively lighted boats of all sizes and a top notch firework show, this is one holiday parade you don't want to miss. Special guest Santa Claus will also make an appearance to hear children's gift requests in Tempe Beach Park. So, bring a camera for some free pictures with Santa to capture those precious holiday memories.

Saturday, Dec 12, 2015 4pm - 9pm

SAN TAN VALLEY LOOP OF LIGHTS

The community has joined together in the effort to spread the Christmas spirit to everyone by putting extra effort into our homes with Christmas lights & decorations. Waverly Subdivision E, Pecan Creek Drive and N. Carolina Avenue San Tan Valley, AZ. 85140

Make our tradition, your tradition too! Come walk the Loop Of Lights any evening from...

Dec 5th through Dec 25th from 6:30pm - 9:30pm.





Tumbleweed Tree Lighting Ceremony

Join us in celebrating a unique southwestern tradition that draws visitors from far and wide during the holidays. This community festival also includes the beautiful Parade of Lights. This year marks the 59th Tumbleweed Tree built in Downtown Chandler.

Saturday, December 5, 2015

Event Festivities - 4:30pm to 9pm; Parade - 7pm

Downtown Chandler

Free Admission

Las Noches de Las Luminarias

Join us this holiday season as we bring one of Arizona's best holiday events, Las Noches de las Luminarias, and our newest outdoor exhibition, Bruce Munro: Sonoran Light at Desert Botanical Garden, together for 24 magical evenings.

Each night of Luminaria, the Garden will come to life with the soft glow from more than 8,000 hand lit luminaria bags, thousands of white twinkle lights and Munro's vibrant works of art. As you walk the paths with a warm cup of cider, the sounds of handbells ringing and Mariachis singing will remind you of what the season is all about. Make plans with family and friends to attend this year's very special Las Noches de las Luminarias.



NOVEMBER 27, 2015 - DECEMBER 31, 2015

5:30 - 9:30 p.m. on the following evenings:

Members Only: December 3 - 6

**General Public: November 27 & 28,
December 10-13, 16-23, 26-31**



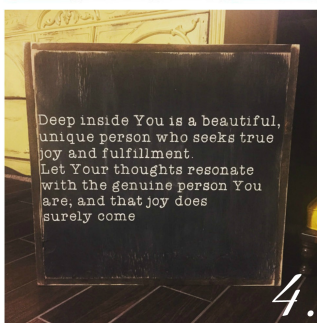
Are you looking for a gift for yourself? Co-founder Lisa, is sharing some of her favorite things to treat yourself to the perfect holiday gift!



1. Nordstrom-'elysian nico' Super Skinny jeans

2. Express- Double Peplum (minus the leather jacket)

5.



3. Fujifilm Instax mini Instant Film Camera kit

4. Jaxn Blvd- DEEP INSIDE YOU YOU

5. Apple- iPhone 6s

6.



7.



8.



9.



6. Sephora- Dolce & Gabbana gift Set

7. Sephora- Urban Decay Naked2 basics

8. Kate Spade- 17 month large agenda

9. Kate Spade- Cameron street racing stripe margot

East Valley Moms Blog Events



Costco Mom Hour Event

City Moms Blog Network, East Valley Moms Blog and Costco present Mom Hour (#CostcoMomHour), a Holiday Shopping Event just for Moms! Have you ever wished Costco opened just a tad bit earlier so you could check your Costco shopping off your list before 10am? Well this is your chance! On **Friday, November 13th**, Costco will be opening it's doors an hour early (9am) .. FOR East Valley Moms Blog moms (+kids) all over the East Valley!

Mark your calendars now and plan on joining moms at your nearest (participating) Costco! And feel free to bring those littles along for the ride too. Don't forget to RSVP for the event!



Breakfast With Santa





Michelle co-owner of East Valley Moms Blog shares a delicious side dish she uses during the holidays!

Grown Up Mac and Cheese:

Ingredients

4 ounces thick-sliced bacon
Vegetable oil
Kosher salt
2 cups elbow macaroni or cavatappi
1 1/2 cups milk
2 tablespoons unsalted butter
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
4 ounces Gruyere cheese, grated
3 ounces extra-sharp Cheddar, grated
2 ounces blue cheese, such as Roquefort, crumbled
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Pinch nutmeg
2 slices white sandwich bread, crusts removed
2 tablespoons freshly chopped basil leaves

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Place a baking rack on a sheet pan and arrange the bacon in 1 layer on the baking rack. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, until the bacon is crisp. Remove the pan carefully from the oven - there will be hot grease in the pan! Transfer the bacon to a plate lined with paper towels and crumble when it is cool enough to handle.

Drizzle oil into a large pot of boiling salted water. Add the macaroni and cook according to the directions on the package, 6 to 8 minutes. Drain well.

Meanwhile, heat the milk in a small saucepan, but don't boil it. Melt the butter in a medium pot and add the flour. Cook over low heat for 2 minutes, stirring with a whisk. While whisking, add the hot milk and cook for a minute or 2 more, until thickened and smooth. Off the heat, add the Gruyere, Cheddar, blue cheese, 1 teaspoon salt, pepper, and nutmeg. Add the cooked macaroni and crumbled bacon and stir well. Pour into 2 individual size gratin dishes.

Place the bread slices in a food processor fitted with a steel blade and pulse until you have coarse crumbs. Add the basil and pulse to combine. Sprinkle the bread crumb mixture over the top of the pasta. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until the sauce is bubbly and the macaroni is browned on the top.

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Holiday Boutiques



AN AMAZING SHOPPING EXPERIENCE

believe
A HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE



NOVEMBER 6 & 7, 2015

FRIDAY, 4PM-9:30PM
SATURDAY, 10AM-3PM

Over 150 Vendors!

Cornerstone: 1595 S. Alma School Rd. Chandler
CORNERSTONEONLINE.COM/BOUQUETTE

Join us
SATURDAY November 7
9:00 am - 4:00 pm
Grandma's Attic
BOUTIQUE
Davit Landmark Home
1018 WEST RIO SALADO PKWY, MESA 85201
FOLLOW US ON *Instagram*
@GRANDMASATTICMESA
Linsey Maxson
480-430-2232

Christ's Greenfield MOPS

Holiday Boutique

Saturday November 7th

7am - 12pm

425 N Greenfield Road, Gilbert AZ 85234

Over 30 vendors

Food & drink for sale

FREE raffle ticket for attending.



cglismops@gmail.com

Hope's Treasures Holiday Boutique

Come shop for quality handcrafted items.
November 11th - 14th

Hope Covenant Church
1770 South Dobson Road
Chandler, AZ
www.hopechurchchandler.com

Free pictures with Santa!

Preview Night	* November 11	* 4:00 pm - 8:00pm
Thursday	* November 12	* 10:00 am - 6:00 pm
Friday	* November 13	* 10:00 am - 8:00 pm
<i>Family Night --- Friday, 5 to 8 p.m.</i>		
Saturday	* November 14	* 10:00 am - 4:00 pm

Bring non-perishable food items to be donated to Matthews Crossing

ETC's
Holiday Boutique
Saturday November 14th
10am-2pm

Over 30 vendors and food trucks
2820 E. University Dr. #116 Mesa, AZ 85213





Sugarplums
HOLIDAY BOUTIQUE

NOVEMBER 12TH-14TH
2928 e ROBIN LANE
GILBERT AZ

thursday & friday 9am-6pm
saturday 9am-5pm

Mark your calendars!

**San Tan Valley
Boutique**

Saturday, November 21, 2015
9am-5pm

54 W Pima Rd. San Tan Valley, AZ 85140
Corner of Ironwood Rd. & Pima Rd.
(1 mile north of Ocotillo)

Swoon
WINTER BOUTIQUE

Saturday,
December 12
8a-4p

1155 S LYN RAE SQUARE

SOUTHERN

LINDSAY

@swoonboutiqueaz

The Paisley Pumpkin Events

2015 Fall
Event Schedule

October 31st
The Paisley Pumpkin Holiday Festival
Dana Park

November 7th
The Paisley Pumpkin Holiday Street Fair 1
SanTan Village

November 14th
The Paisley Pumpkin Holiday Street Fair 2
SanTan Village

November 21st
The Paisley Pumpkin Holiday Street Fair 3
SanTan Village

December 5th
The Holiday Balloon Glow and Gift Bazaar
SanTan Village

ThePaisleyPumpkin.com
info@thepaisleypumpkin.com



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- 10 points for every \$1 spent
- 2,500 points = \$5 reward
- Save INSTANTLY right in the store
- Money saving coupons
- Sale reminders
- Helpful tips to take care of your home
- See store for details or visit: <https://www.acehardware.com/acerewards>

***Get money for repairs,
home improvement,
landscaping, supplies,
paint or carpet in your
new home...***



58 Years in Scottsdale 1800 N. Scottsdale Rd. 480-947-7281	41 Years in Fountain Hills 10605 Palisades Blvd. 480-837-1080	24 Years in Tempe 1153 W. Broadway Rd. 480-966-1791	8 Years in Gilbert 1927 E. Baseline Rd. 480-538-5663	7 Years in Scottsdale 8480 E. McDonald Dr. 480-9483182
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Glass/Plexi-Glass Cutting • Lumber Cutting • Custom Paint & Color Matching
Ace Gift Card • Special Order Services on more than 65,000 items
5600, 7551, 8054, 14099, 14564

Program restrictions:

1. Certificate given and endorsed upon successful close of escrow for sellers/buyers
2. Based upon Realtor's acceptance of client and either a signed Buyer/broker or listing agreement
3. Home purchase or sell must be a minimum of \$150,000.00
4. Certificate will be endorsed at close of escrow with transaction number and Realtor's signature
5. A \$1,000.00 credit will be given to seller that also closes a transaction as a buyer
(not valid on a contract contingent upon sale of current property)

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Brittany is sharing some of her Holiday traditions and a few of her favorite recipes!

One of my favorite holiday memories is baking cookies with the women in my family. The Southern Belles had me baking from age three and up. It was a tradition, much like swiping a piece of raw dough before anyone really cared about salmonella.

When the husband and I married and started making holiday traditions of our own, we wanted to focus on giving back. After calling soup kitchens to volunteer for holiday meal service we learned that they book up fast; everyone wants to help!

We decided to do something anyway, so we baked cookies and took them to the soldiers on guard duty at our military installation. Every holiday since, we have boxed up leftovers and baked dozens of cookies for soldiers and first responders in our neighborhood.



Moose Horn Special Cookies

This is my grandmother's recipe. My grandfather was once a hunting guide in rural Canada, and these are the cookies Dot Dot always had ready for their return

Ingredients:

½ cup shortening
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup white sugar
1 egg
½ cup oatmeal
½ cup cornflakes
½ cup Spanish peanuts
1 cup flour
¼ tsp baking soda
4 tsp baking powder
1 tsp vanilla

Heat oven to 350 F. In a large bowl or with an electric mixer beat shortening until fluffy, then add sugar. In a separate bowl, beat the egg and then add it to the sugar and shortening. In a separate bowl, mix flour, baking soda, and baking powder. Mix dry ingredients into shortening mixture, then mix in the rest of the ingredients and spoon out by tablespoon onto a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Bake for ten minutes or until light brown.



A few years ago, the hubby and I visited Israel. I've traveled beautiful places since, but that soulful journey is one I compare everything else to. While we were there we picked up a beautiful menorah, along with a couple of dreidles, and now every year we celebrate Hanukkah. We do our best to remember why we are celebrating, that it's not all latkes and geld.

This holiday season, consider celebrating or at least learning about another holiday. I'm a firm believer in enriching our own culture through experiencing others. It not only feeds our souls, but those of the littles, as well.

I wish you great joy this holiday season! Here's to putting up the tree in November, stock piling eggnog (guilty), and dancing your hearts out to holiday tunes



Ultimate Vegan Lentil Walnut Loaf

Inspired by the Clean Food Lentil Walnut Loaf (original recipe found here). Yield: 8 thick slices

Ingredients:

- 1 cup dry lentils
- 3 cups vegetable broth
- 3 TBS ground flax seed
- 1/2 cup warm water
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 cup sweet onion, diced
- 1 celery stalk or green onion, chopped finely (optional)
- 1 medium carrot, grated
- 1/3 of an apple, peeled, grated (makes 1/3 cup grated apple)
- 1/4 cup raisins
- 3/4 cup toasted walnuts, roughly chopped
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- Freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 cup regular oats, ground into a flour (use GF oats for gluten-free option)
- 1 tbsp ground flax seed
- 3/4 cup breadcrumbs (I used 2 slices of Ezekiel bread, lightly toasted, and processed in food processor) Use GF breadcrumbs for gluten-free

Sweet Glaze:

- 2 Tbsp ketchup
- 1 Tbsp Balsamic vinegar
- 1 Tbsp maple syrup
- 1 Tbsp apple butter

Directions:

Cook green lentils: In a medium sized pot, add 3 cups of water and a vegetable bouillon cube and boil water until cube is dissolved. Alternatively, you can also use already prepared veggie stock. Rinse lentils and pick over being sure to remove any small pebbles that may be in the mix. Add lentils, bring to boil, and reduce heat to low and simmer until liquid is absorbed and lentils are tender (about 40 minutes). Be sure to stir the lentils frequently so they do not stick to the bottom of the pot. Once the lentils are cooked, remove from heat and set aside to cool. Preheat oven to 350 F and line a loaf pan with parchment so that parchment paper hangs over the edges by 2 inches. >>>>



>>>>Walnuts: Toast 3/4 cup of walnuts at 350F for about 6 minutes and then set aside to cool.
 Flax egg: Mix 3 tbsp of ground flax with 1/2 cup warm water and stir well. Set aside for at least 5-10 minutes so it can gel up. Prepare vegetable mixture: In a large skillet over medium heat, sauté onion and minced garlic for about 5 minutes on low-medium heat, being careful not to burn. After the onions are tender, add carrot and sauté for 2-3 minutes over low heat. Add grated apple, raisins, and chopped walnuts and sauté another minute or two. Add thyme, salt, and pepper to taste. Remove from heat and set aside.

Breadcrumbs: I took 2 slices of Ezekiel bread and lightly toasted them. Then I ripped up the slices and placed into my food processor and processed until small breadcrumbs were left. Alternatively, you can use store bought breadcrumbs too.

Process 75% of lentils and Mix everything together: Once the lentils are cooled, take 75% of the lentils and place into food processor. Process until mostly smooth (some small lentils will remain!). Now take the processed lentils and scoop into a large bowl. Add in the remaining 25% of non-processed lentils and place into bowl. Add the breadcrumbs, flax egg, veggie mixture, oat flour, and ground flax seed. Stir well with a spoon and then remove the spoon and mix well with your hands, pressing it through your fingers. Taste and adjust seasonings if necessary. Dump the mixture into your loaf pan and spread out with a spoon. Now take your hands and press the mixture firmly and evenly into the pan.

Preparing Glaze: In small bowl combine all glaze ingredients. Spread evenly over loaf and bake, uncovered 45 minutes at 350F. Cool for about 10-15 minutes and serve. Serves about 8 thick slices.




Nature's Garden Delivered.com

Purveyors of Sustainable Nutrition

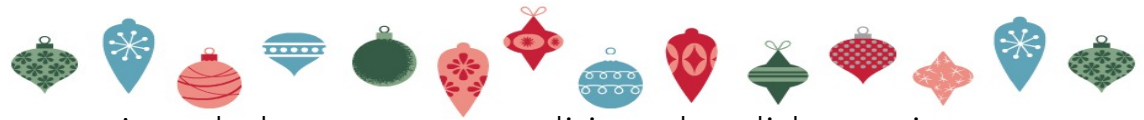
Nature's Garden Delivered (NGD) is a purveyor of sustainable nutrition; providing home and office delivery of Organic and local Produce as well as a variety of other locally and regionally produced provisions.

NGD's service centers on reoccurring weekly and every other week deliveries of organic produce with buy as you need options available. Through close relationships with farms each week a seasonally correct menu is made available through their website. Pre-assorted Farmers Market boxes are generated to take the confusion out of eating seasonally.

Pre-assorted produce boxes are available in several different sizes and types to fit the individual or family. All produce items in the boxes can be adjusted to fit your family's preferences ensuring delivery of receive exactly what is needed. Non produce selections are available for purchase each week and offerings are based on availability.

Also find them on
Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/ngdaz>)
Twitter (@NGDAZ)





Angela has a great tradition she did growing up and continues with her own family.

Angela is the mom of one witty, smart little girl. She is a freelance write/public relations/marketing specialist who has worked in the entertainment industry for over 10 years, including The Oscars®. She has a ridiculous amount of pop culture knowledge.

One of my favorite Christmas family traditions is ice skating! I grew up in Colorado, so there was lots of ice skating. Whether we were at an ice skating rink or on a lake, ice skating was a huge part of my childhood and I love sharing it with my daughter.

For Christmas Eve we would go to the mountains and ice skate on a lake, then we would drink hot chocolate and head home to await Santa's visit.

While "ice skating" isn't the first thing you think of when you think of Phoenix, you may be surprised to know that there are plenty of ice skating rinks in our area which offer public skating. Hockey is a big sport here and most rinks will offer public skating hours, so be sure to check their websites before heading out.

Even though we live in a warm climate, ice skating is still something you can try with your family! It's hard at first, but once you get the hang of it, it's a lot of fun for the whole family! And the best part is drinking hot chocolate when you're done.



Easy Homemade Hot Chocolate Mix

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups instant non-fat dry milk powder
- 1 cup sugar (powdered or granular works too)
- 3/4 cup powdered nondairy creamer
- 1/2 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 cup semi sweet chocolate chips
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- mini marshmallows

INSTRUCTIONS:

In a large bowl, combine the creamer, milk powder, sugar, salt, and cocoa powder.

Mix to combine.

Pour into air tight container or freezer bag for storage.

Add 1/3 cup of cocoa mix to 1 cup boiling water. (Or use 1/2 hot milk for a more decadent cocoa.)

Mix well.

Add chocolate chips and stir until melted. Depending on how "chocolatey" you want it, the amount will vary. Taste test will tell.

Sprinkle top with mini marshmallows and whip cream.


Preparation time: 5 minute(s)

Trips to the North Pole



The North Pole Experience

(Flagstaff; check website for available dates)
Take a magical journey to the North Pole to visit Santa & his elves! You and your family will enjoy the magic of Santa's 400 year old workshop. Help his elves make toys, enjoy cookies with Mrs. Claus, take a class at Elf School plus so much more! This is an amazing experience for everyone in the entire family!



The Polar Express, Grand Canyon Railway & Hotel

Here is a very special chance for you and the entire family to experience the magic of The Polar Express™, the classic children's book by Chris Van Allsburg. Every winter the Grand Canyon Railway's Polar Express comes to life on a journey from the nighttime wilderness of Williams, Arizona, to the enchanted beauty of "the North Pole" —where Santa Claus and his reindeer are waiting with a keepsake present for every good boy and girl. You'll be smiling from ear to ear, as you watch children's faces light up when the train arrives, and enjoy hot chocolate and cookies while listening to this timeless story. Make this a family holiday tradition, and call today to make your reservations (because space is limited to those who truly believe in the spirit of Christmas). The ride lasts a little over an hour, with the train leaving each night at 5:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m., as well as select days that feature a 3:30 p.m. matinee departure. Book online for 2015 now, or call 1-888-848-3511.





Candi is sharing a delicious pie recipe that is a family favorite!

Candi runs a creative business called WhiteFive Designs, this has been a great creative outlet for her, as she enjoys DIY, vintage decor & repurposing. There is never a dull moment at The WhiteHouse! Candi loves people & is passionate about encouraging & empowering women to Live Authentically & to Live Brave.

Raspberry-Apple Crumb Pie

1- single pie crust
3 cups thinly sliced peeled cooking apples
1/2 c sugar
2 T all purpose flour
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
2 c frozen raspberries (from 1 lb bag) thawed
1 c cubed or crumble pure almond paste (from 7 -8 oz package)

Almond Crumb Topping:

1/2 c all purpose flour
1/4 c sugar
1/4 c butter or margarine
1/2 c sliced almonds

Heat oven to 350.

-In large bowl , stir together apples, 1/2 c sugar, 2 T flour and the cinnamon. Spoon into crust-lined pie plate. Sprinkle with raspberries. Sprinkle almond paste over raspberries.

-In medium bowl, mix 1/2 c flour and 1/4 c sugar. Cut in butter, using pastry blender or crisscrossing 2 knives, until particles are size of small peas. Stir in almonds. Sprinkle evenly over almond paste.

-Bake 1 hour to 1 hour 20 minute, covering edge of crust with foil after about 30 minutes, until apples are tender in center and surface is golden brown.

-Serve warm with a scoop of vanilla ice cream. Delish!!

side note -I typically have extra of the apple mixture & raspberries - so make sure to have extra ingredients on hand and make at least two pies!

Great to keep one & give one to a neighbor! :)

Also, baking is always more fun with a friend! My sister in law joined me last year and we made an afternoon of pie making!



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LIMIT ONE COUPON
PER FAMILY

e.l.hicks
PHOTOGRAPHY 

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erin@elhicksphotography.com

Amber is sharing some printables she made that are perfect for the kiddos!



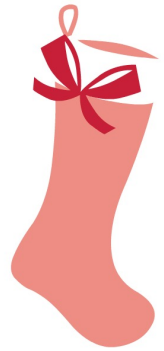
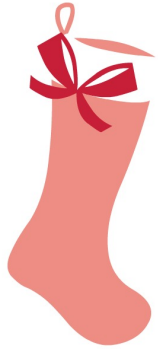
Amber, her husband and 2 boys love spending their weekends exploring the beautiful state of Arizona and enjoying all that it has to offer. Amber enjoys crafting, reading, shopping, traveling, spending time with her family, and hiking. She also has an addiction to Facebook and Pinterest.



Cut the trees out and sort them largest to smallest



Match The Stockings



C c is for

candy

cane



Rowelyn is sharing her families favorite side dish to cook during the holidays!

Roe loves to cook and bake for anyone who will eat it. She enjoy thrifting and crafting on my spare time. Her whole family loves being outdoors and is officially a soccer mom since all three of her kids play soccer. She believes in humility and being humble.

Grandma D's Company Potato

Ingredients:

8 medium potatoes
1 bay leaf
2 tablespoon butter (melted)
1 can cream of...(mushroom, chicken or celery)
1 1/2 c sour cream
1 tsp salt
3-5 stalks green onions (sliced)
1 1/2 cup grated sharp cheddar

topping:

1/2 grated cheese

Boil Potatoes in salted water and bay leaf. Cook till soft (20-25 minutes) Strain and let cool. Once cooled peel and grate coarsely (on the bigger side of the grater).

Note: this can be done a day or two ahead of time and keep refrigerated.

Pre-heat your oven 350 degrees

Combine butter, soup, sour cream, salt, green onions and cheese in a large enough bowl to hold all the potatoes and this mixture.

Add potatoes and mix (a stand mixer might be strong enough to mix this but if not a little hand power will do)

Once mix, taste the potatoes for seasoning...Salt and pepper if needed.

Put into a buttered 9x13 baking dish. Sprinkle the top with the remaining cheese.

Bake in the 350 degrees oven for 40-45 minutes.

Serve with or without your favorite gravy on top.

Thanksgiving 1999 the first one I spent with my husband (then boyfriend) that I tasted this wonderful side dish they served with their turkey. It was mashed potatoes but better, they called it company potatoes because it was usually served when company comes over. It has now been transformed to a you can't have Thanksgiving or Christmas dinner without it potatoes, and oh, P.S. It is not fat or calorie free by any means. I am grateful for my mother in law for sharing this recipe with me and now I am honored to share it with you.





Visiting Santa



SANTA WONDERLAND

The Magic Returns at the Mesa, AZ Bass Pro Shops! Be sure to check out the FREE Crafts, Games, Activities and much more!
Plus get a FREE photo



SANTAS HOUSE

There is plenty of seasonal fun for little girls and boys and their families to enjoy in Chandler during the holidays. Santa is coming to town and the City of Chandler invites the entire Chandler community to visit Santa's house in Downtown Chandler!

Visit Santa's House for FREE!



Saturday, December 5: 4:30pm to 9pm

(Pictures will be closed from 6:30pm to 8pm - Santa will be in the Parade of Lights)

Thursday, December 10: 5pm to 7pm

Saturday, December 12 & 19: Noon to 5pm



Staci is sharing her favorite traditional Hanukkah cookie recipe. It's been passed down from generation to generation and she makes them every year!

Staci is happily living in Gilbert with her hubby Eric, two kiddos Sawyer and Garrett and her pup Angus. You will most likely find Staci in the roles of Super Room Mom, crafter extraordinaire, healthy cooking guru and interior designer.

MANDEL BREAD RECIPE

Ingredients:

- 3eggs
- 1 cup oil
- 1 cup sugar
- 3-3 1/2 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 bag semi sweet chocolate chips

Directions: preheat oven 350 degrees



In large mixing bowl mix eggs, oil and sugar by hand. Add flour, vanilla, chips and nuts (optional). Mix till well combined. On a greased cookie sheet, form 2 long loaves, top with cinnamon/sugar mixture.

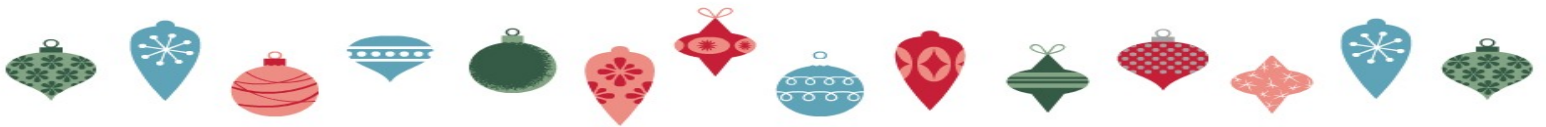
Bake at 350 degrees for 30-45 mins
When cooled cut into slices and serve!

Nutcracker Performances



SOUTHWEST YOUTH BALLET PRESENTS "THE NUTCRACKER"
at Higley Center for the performing arts

Four Performances in the Concert Hall
Friday, December 18, 2015 at 7:00pm
Saturday, December 19, 2015 at 2:00pm &
6:30pm Sunday, December 20, 2015 at 3:00pm



BALLET ETUDES PRESENTS "THE NUTCRACKER"
performances at Chandler Center for the arts & Mesa Arts Center

November 27 at 7:00 pm
November 28 at 2:00 pm and 7:00
pm November 29 at 3:00 pm
December 4 at 7:00 pm
December 5 at 2:00 pm and 7:00
pm December 6 at 3:00 pm
at Chandler Center for the Arts
Tickets: \$25, \$29

December 11 at 7:00 pm
December 12 at 2:00 pm and 7:00 pm
December 13 at 3:00 pm
at Mesa Arts Center
Tickets: \$25, \$29





Kari is sharing her favorite holiday family tradition!

Kari is a wife and mom of 2 toddlers. She believes if you want healthy and active kids you need to be a healthy and active role model. Monkey see, monkey do! She's a total food geek who loves to eat healthy and live a fit life. She likes finding ways to sneak in a quick workout while playing with her kids.



Every year my family gathers for Christmas at my Mom and Step-Dad's house. Besides the opportunity to indulge in a wonderful holiday meal and eat sinful goodies the entire weekend, my favorite tradition is playing White Elephant.

It is basically our way of doing a gift exchange for the adults. We put our own little spin on it though, we don't spend a single dime on our gifts! What?! That's right, our rule is that you have to find 3 things from your home that you no longer want. It could be something great like unused Bath & Body products or great smelling candles or it could be a funny gift like an obnoxiously noisy, singing toy of some sort. The best part is watching everyone trying not to get stuck with the gag gifts in the end. We always end up laughing through the entire game.

Here are the rules:

1. Each person brings a gift (we choose to do 3 each to make the game last longer because there are only 7 adults playing, so we have 21 gifts total). If you have a large group, one or two gifts would be a good number.

2. Place all the gifts in a pile in the middle of the room or on a table.

3. Everyone sits in a circle around the gifts. We play this in the living room so all the gifts are in the middle of the room on the floor and we sit on the couch, chairs or floor around the pile of gifts.

4. Cut out small squares of paper and number them up to how many gifts you have in the pile. For example we have 21 gifts so we number the squares 1-21. Place all numbers in a bowl and go around the room and have everyone draw however many numbers they need to equal how many gifts they will get. For our example, everyone brought three gifts therefore they will receive three gifts, each person will draw three numbers from the bowl.

5. Whoever has the number 1 starts the game. This person will choose a gift and open it for everyone to see. Whoever has number 2 goes next. They can either take an unwrapped gift from the pile or steal a previous gift that was opened. This goes on until all gifts have been opened. The last person to choose a gift gets the option to open the last gift or steal from any of the presents that have been opened.

You can also play this game with gifts that are bought. The family can choose a spending limit and how many gifts each person will need to bring. The gifts can be funny, nice or weird. The more variety, the more fun the game is!

Happy Holidays from my family to yours!



Thank you to our amazing EVMB sponsors and those that contributed to the 2015 Holiday Guide!

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Please contact Kristen Cox at Kristen@eastvalleymomsblog.com

