

Better Homes and Gardens Timeline

Better Homes and Gardens has always assumed a leadership role when it comes to how America eats. Over the years we've helped spot and create trends in eating, cooking, and kitchen design.

The 1920s: Roaring Urban Advancements

1922: Better Homes and Gardens magazine launched under the name Fruit, Garden and Home.

1923: Household Editor Genevieve Callahan began testing and approving all published recipes from her home kitchen.

1924: First National Magazine Cooking Contest Introduced The magazine's name changed to Better Homes and Gardens, featuring the Cook's Round Table where readers shared their favorite recipes.

- A \$5 prize was awarded for the best recipe received each month.
- There were 20 \$1 prizes for the runners-up.
- All winning recipes were published in Better Homes and Gardens.

1928: Testing-Tasting Kitchen Built Years of planning and development were needed to create a space that mirrored the size and functionality of a standard American home kitchen.

Some Testing-Tasting Kitchen features:

- cupboards near the refrigerator
- stools that turned into stepladders
- countertops at waist level

Recipe Writing Revolution

- In the '20s, a recipe for Raspberry Currant Pie would have read, "Add one cup of raspberries to three cups of ripe currants and bake in two crusts. Serve plain or with whipped cream."
- The Test Kitchen filled in the missing information with level measurements for all parts of the recipe and more precise, descriptive methods.

The 1930s: The Crash, Dust Bowl, Depression

1930: First Edition BHG Cookbook. My Better Homes and Gardens Cookbook was a new kind of cookbook:

- Ring binding, so it would lie flat on a countertop
- Tab dividers for easy navigating
- Combined advantages of a book and a recipe card file

1932: The New MixMaster was tried out in the Test Kitchen

1932: An article "**Six 20-Minute Dinners**" was published in Better Homes and Gardens

1933: The Test Kitchen seal first appeared in the Prize Tested Recipe Contest.

1935: My Better Homes and Gardens Cookbook changed its name to the New Cook Book.

1935: The Test Kitchen seal made its first cookbook showing.



1938: An article, "**Toss That Salad**" was featured. It introduced tossed green salads to American families. The recipe was a variation on a classic French Vinaigrette Salad.

1939: Pomegranate seeds were introduced to the American public in a recipe for Citrus-Avocado Salad.

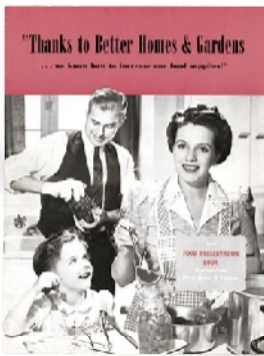
The 1940s: World War II

1940: Famous red plaid design came into being for Better Homes and Gardens.

1941: Backyard barbecuing was introduced to Better Homes and Gardens readers.

Rationing The Test Kitchen helped the war effort in its own way:

- Meat stretching, butter-egg-sugar substituting, and home canning were all widely used ration-friendly cooking techniques that were perfected in the Test Kitchen.
- It developed oven meals in which the main course, sides, and dessert were cooked in the same oven, at the same temperature, in order to conserve energy.
- It reduced the amount of sugar used in recipes so sweets could still be enjoyed despite rationing.



1943: Victory Gardens sprouted up all over the country. The Test Kitchen aided the cause by creating recipes for pickling, preserving, and canning.

1946: Innovations from war time were incorporated into Test Kitchen recipes:

- instant pudding mix
- ready-to-use pie mix
- frozen foods, helped by the spread of freezers
- aluminum foil
- powdered milk

1948: Chiffon Cake was introduced as "the first really new cake in 100 years."

Popular Recipes of the '40s

The 1950s: Prosperity, Baby Boom

"Exotic" Bing cherries, artichokes, shallots, and other fruits and vegetables were no longer rare treats as the growth of supermarket chains, and shipping advances allowed for their wide distribution.

- Better Homes and Gardens' "So Good with Fruit" book helped Americans learn how to best use the new produce.



1952: Better Homes and Gardens introduced the Parfait Pie.

1955: The **microwave** was introduced by Better Homes and Gardens to its readers.

1956: Famous Foods from Famous Places became a Better Homes series responding to the trend of families traveling and eating out more. This feature let people recreate some recipes of well-known chefs and restaurants at home.

The 1960s: Bomb Scares, Generation Gap, the Vietnam War

1960s: With increased personal travel Americans clamor for International cuisine at home. Better Homes and Gardens is there to bring International cuisine home with straightforward, easy-to-follow techniques and readily available ingredients.

1961: Cook-it-yourself parties were fashionable. Hand-in-hand with this came the popularity of:

- fondue pots
- tabletop hibachis
- electric skillets
- hot pots

1963: The May issue featured a foldout highlighting the **Weber Grill** -- its first national appearance.

1968: Your Favorite Man's Favorite Recipe Contest received over 80,000 entries.

1968: The June issue of Better Homes and Gardens was the first issue ever to accept beer and wine advertising.

1969: Traditional Sunday roasts were updated, creating such favorites as Cherry-Almond Glazed Roast, Pork Pot Roast in Cider, and Rhubarb-Glazed Roast.

The 1970s: Peace, Love, Hippies

1970: Meredith Corporation published their first Wine Book.

1971: The crock pot was introduced along with the first self-cleaning ovens.

1972: "Natural" foods such as granola, honey, carob, yogurt, and organic foods came to the fore along with renewed interest in low-calorie and whole grain recipes.

1973: Recession hits and the Test Kitchen responds:

- Turkey Skillet Pie using leftover turkey
- Borsch-Style Casserole using economical short ribs
- Spaghetti Pie and Shepherd's Pie: catch-all recipes for scraps saved from previous meals

The 1980s: The Time of Me, Me, Me

The Test Kitchen again demonstrated its ability to understand and lead America's eating trends.

- The resurgence of comfort food was evident in the Test Kitchen in the late 1980s -- the Test Kitchen's recipe for Baked Brie led the pack.



1981: Nutritional analysis began being included with every recipe as health-awareness grew -- a concept adopted by other cookbooks and food manufacturers in subsequent years.

1983: Better Homes and Gardens features the first story addressing teens and cooking.

1985: A **diet and health column** is introduced to Better Homes and Gardens.

The 1990s: Scandals and Technology Take Center Stage

1993: The July flood ravaged most of the Midwest and all the Better Homes and Gardens Archives -- dating back to 1922 -- were lost.

Readers were asked to help replace the lost issues. The library was complete, including the earliest editions, within three months!

1996: The American Council on Science and Health rates Better Homes and Gardens among the top three consumer magazines for nutrition information.

1997: Better Homes and Gardens celebrates 75th Anniversary with monthly "Best Recipe" retrospectives.

1998: "Nutrition in No Time" column is introduced in Better Homes and Gardens, featuring healthy recipes to prepare in 30 minutes or less.

The 2000s

The new millennium brought a new approach to healthful eating. A smart, everything-in-moderation style of eating became popular.

2005: The Test Kitchen was completely redesigned and outfitted with a diverse mix of the latest in kitchen technology. The Test Kitchen is equipped to lead Americans into the future of food and cooking...