

The PennyWhistleTM LUNCH BOX BOOK

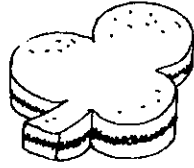
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Egg Clovers are a very nutritious lunch—the egg, parsley and broccoli provide much-needed vitamin A and potassium.

Curried Egg Clovers



- ¼ cup chopped cooked broccoli
- 3 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion
- ¼ teaspoon curry powder (or to taste, optional)
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 2 to 3 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 slices whole wheat bread

In a bowl, combine the broccoli, eggs, onion, curry powder and parsley. Add just enough mayonnaise to bind the ingredients together. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Cut the crusts off the bread and flatten each slice with a rolling pin. Spread a thin layer of the curried egg salad on the bread and cover with another slice of flattened bread. Cut the sandwich with a clover-shaped cookie cutter. Wrap the sandwich in foil or plastic. Cover the remainder of the spread and keep refrigerated.

MAKES ENOUGH SPREAD FOR 4 SANDWICHES

Cheese and Fruitwich

- ½ cup cream cheese, at room temperature
- ⅛ cup chopped unsalted peanuts
- ½ apple, cored, peeled and sliced
- Few drops of fresh lemon juice
- 2 slices date-nut bread

Combine the cream cheese and nuts in a bowl.

Sprinkle the apple slices with the lemon juice to keep them from turning brown.

Take a slice of date-nut bread, spread with the cheese and nut mixture and cover with apple slices. Use another slice of date-nut bread to top the sandwich and wrap well.



As a child, Annie would eat no eggs—categorically, no eggs. She didn't care about the high content of vitamin A, or about the iron or the calcium or the phosphorus. But Annie's mother, smart as she is, knew how to get around her. She used to make hard-cooked egg bowls and fill them with anything Annie loved. Thus, she got an actual, honest-to-God egg into her little body.

Mom's Tiny Egg Bowls

- 2 hard-cooked eggs, peeled, top cut off and yolk scooped out (gently)
- Dab of filling

Choose your child's favorite fillings, such as tuna fish salad (the simplest—remember, eggs are small, and you don't have room for a chunky salad), salmon cream filling, cream cheese or chopped liver. Mix the yolk into the filling (your child will never know). Fill the egg-white bowl with a teaspoon of filling and wrap individually in foil or plastic.



Mom's Chicken Salad

Mayonnaise:

- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons raspberry vinegar
- 1½ cups vegetable oil
- 1 cup crumbled Roquefort cheese
- Salt
- Pepper

Salad:

- 4 poached chicken breasts
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1½ cups seedless grapes, halved
- ¾ cup chopped peanuts or pumpkin seeds

Make the mayonnaise: In a blender or food processor, combine the egg yolks, mustard and vinegar. Process for about 30 seconds. With the machine running, add the oil in a thin steady stream and beat until thick. Add the cheese and process until well combined but not smooth. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Discard the skin from the chicken breasts and pull the meat off the bones in large chunks. Cut the meat into 1-inch chunks.

In a large bowl, combine the chicken, celery, grapes and peanuts. Add enough mayonnaise to cover and toss to coat the ingredients well. Cover and refrigerate until chilled. Pack in a plastic container or spread on a sandwich.

Crunchy Chicken Salad


- 1 cup chopped cooked chicken (the meat from 2 legs and thighs)
- 1 tablespoon chopped onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped sweet pickles
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce
- 1 hard-cooked egg, chopped
- ¼ cup chopped cooked broccoli
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise (you can use more)
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- Salt and pepper
- 1 pita bread (regular, whole wheat or miniature)

In a bowl, mix together all of the ingredients except the pita bread and season with salt and pepper to taste.

Cut into one side of the pita to make a pocket. Fill the pocket with chicken salad, but do not overstuff. Wrap in foil or plastic.



Crunchy Salad

-  1 onion, thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- Pinch of grated lemon zest
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup olive oil
- 1¾ pounds jicama, peeled and julienned, or 1 bunch celery, cut up (or any other sliced vegetable)
- 1 head butter lettuce

Cover the onion with lightly salted cold water and set aside to soak for 2 hours.

To make a vinaigrette, blend the lemon and lime juices, lemon zest and salt in a small bowl. While whisking, pour in the oil in a thin stream.

Drain the onion and pat dry. Place in a larger bowl. Add the jicama and toss with the vinaigrette. Send in a covered container. Remember the fork!

Chinese Chicken Salad Sandwiches

- ¾ cup bean or alfalfa sprouts
- ¼ cup chopped canned bamboo shoots
- ¼ cup chopped cooked broccoli
- 2 cups chopped broiled chicken
- 1 teaspoon low-sodium soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 slices whole wheat bread, crusts removed

In a bowl, mix the sprouts, bamboo shoots, broccoli, chicken and soy sauce. Let it stand while you make breakfast (or if this is your Sunday night preparation, let it stand for about 15 minutes). When you are ready to use, drain well.

Stir in the parsley and mayonnaise. Spread a slice of bread with additional mayonnaise, butter or margarine. Top with a not-too-thick layer of the salad. Cover with another slice of bread.

Cut the sandwich with a chicken-shaped cookie cutter and there you have it—a Chinese Chicken Salad Sandwich! Refrigerate leftover salad, covered.

Mini Meat Loaf Pockets

You haven't tasted fabulous meat loaf until you've had this! Even the pickiest of kids who absolutely and positively detest meat loaf will love this one. It is juicy and tasty—a treat!



- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 egg
- ½ cup dry bread crumbs
- ½ onion, chopped
- ½ cup ready-made spaghetti sauce
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ teaspoon liquid hickory smoke or a dash of hickory powder
- Pinch of dried marjoram
- Pinch of dried thyme
- 1 tablespoon chopped parsley
- 1 pita bread
- Avocado slices (optional)
- Tomato slices (optional)

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Butter either 2 mini loaf pans or 1 small loaf pan (about 7½ x 3½ inches).

Place all of the ingredients except the bread, avocado and tomatoes in a large bowl. Mix well.

Shape the meat mixture into a loaf and put in the pans. Bake for 40 minutes. (If mini loaf pans are used, check for doneness after 30 minutes and take care that the loaves don't dry out.) Let cool to room temperature. Cover and refrigerate to use later.

Roast Beef Wrappers

Richard Krause, chef at Wolfgang Puck's Chinois on Main in Los Angeles, California, devised this favorite.

- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- 6 thin slices rare roast beef
- 1 carrot, peeled and cut into 3 long thin "sticks"
- 1 celery rib, cut into 3 long thin strips

Spread the mustard and mayonnaise on the roast beef slices. Wrap each stick of carrot and celery in a slice of meat. Wrap in foil or plastic and chill.

Make only as many as your child will eat.

In the morning, cut 2 slices of the meat loaf. Open a pita at one end and place the meat loaf in the pocket. Add a slice of avocado and tomato, if your child likes them, and you've got a pita pocket.



Try making the Meat Loaf in a buttered muffin tin. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Wrap and refrigerate. When packing for the lunch box, wrap in aluminum foil (you don't need pita pockets for the meat muffins).



NANA'S MEAT LOAF GLAZE

- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 8-ounce jar apricot preserves
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce

Heat all the ingredients in a saucepan. Pour over the meat loaf ½ hour before it's done.

MAKES 2 CUPS

Ham Rolls

- ¼ cup sunflower seeds
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 apple, peeled, cored and finely chopped
- Pinch of ground cinammon
- 2 slices boiled ham (about 4- by 6-inch slices)
- 2 hot dog rolls, preferably whole wheat

In a bowl, mix together the sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, mayonnaise, lemon juice and apple. Add the cinammon to taste.

Place the ham slices on a cutting board. Spread each with half of the apple mixture. Roll up each slice.

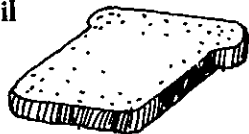
Toast the hot dog rolls. Place a ham roll in each. Wrap in foil.

Peanut Butter Bread

This bread is very nutritious—full of vitamin A, potassium and calcium.



- ½ cup chunky peanut butter
- ½ cup orange or plain honey
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup grated carrots
- 2 bananas, mashed
- ¼ cup low-fat milk
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- Pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1¾ cups whole wheat flour



Preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Butter a 9- x 5-inch loaf pan.

In a bowl, blend together the peanut butter, honey, oil, eggs, carrots and bananas. Add the milk, spices, vanilla, salt, baking powder, baking soda and flour. Blend together well.

Pour the batter into the prepared pan. Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool the bread on a wire rack.

Use plain or top with a spread.

Orange, Cucumber and Peanut Salad

- 1 cucumber, scrubbed and thinly sliced (not peeled)
- 1 navel orange, peeled, quartered and thinly sliced
- 1 tablespoon chopped peanuts (add more if you like)
- 1 tablespoon rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Oriental sesame oil
- Salt and pepper

In a plastic container, mix together all of the ingredients. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Cover tightly.

Be sure to include a plastic spoon or fork in the lunch box.

Michael's Peanut Butter Salad

Here is a peanut butter salad inspired by one made for us by Michael Roberts, chef at Trump's restaurant in Los Angeles.

- ½ cup smooth peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon Oriental sesame oil
- ½ teaspoon cider vinegar
- 2 cups cooked green beans
- 2 cups thinly sliced jicama
- 1 cup grated carrots
- 1 cup cooked green peas



In a bowl, mix together the peanut butter, oil and vinegar. Set the sauce aside.

In another bowl, mix together all of the vegetables. Pour on the sauce and toss. Cover and chill if making the night before.

If you make it in the morning, place about 1 cup of salad in a plastic container. Cover tightly. Include some pita slices or pita chips to eat with the salad.

Jenny's Peanut Butter Noodles

This is the salad Jennifer Brokaw chose as her favorite lunchtime salad.

- 1 package (8 ounces) linguine pasta
- 2 to 3 tablespoons peanut butter
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 2 tablespoons soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Oriental sesame oil
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon white wine vinegar
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 1 teaspoon chopped grated onion

Cook the linguine according to the directions on the package. Drain.

Meanwhile, in a large bowl, mix all of the remaining ingredients together.

Add the linguine to the sauce and toss to coat well. When ready to pack the lunch, put a portion in a small container and cover.

Indian Peanut Dip

- ½ cup smooth peanut butter
- 1 teaspoon chopped onion
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- Pinch of garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander

In your food processor, mix together all the ingredients until smooth. Store in a covered container in the refrigerator. In the morning, place about 2 tablespoons of dip in a plastic container and cover. Send to school with some cut-up vegetables (carrots, celery, green or red peppers, cauliflower, cucumber). Your child can dip these for lunch.

MAKES ½ CUP



When Melissa and Jesse Bochco were growing up, mom Barbara had her own treat for their lunch boxes. She would take a large apple, core it, peel it and cut it into 4 pieces. She then spread peanut butter on all the center sections, reassembled the apple and wrapped it tightly in foil so it wouldn't turn brown. Yet another favorite trick was to stuff the apple with cheese slices.



For extra fun, cut a piece of whole wheat bread and a piece of white bread to create a two-color sandwich. You can also get an hors d'oeuvre cutter (in any housewares store or hardware store) and cut out the center of the flower. Leave it out or flip the centers so the whole wheat one is in the white flower and vice versa.



Variations for stuffing Chicken Salad:

- stuff salad into pitas
- roll it up in tortillas
- core an apple and stuff with the salad

Vegetable Squares

- ½ cup smooth peanut butter
- 2 carrots, peeled and grated
- ½ cup raisins
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 slices bread

In a bowl, mix together all of the ingredients except the bread. Be sure you have enough mayonnaise to bind the ingredients but not so much as to make the mixture runny.

Toast the bread lightly. Spread the mixture on one side and cover. Cut each slice into small squares and wrap.


Peanut Butter Ladyfingers

- 8 dried figs
- 2 cups smooth peanut butter
- 4 ladyfingers, chilled

In a food processor or blender, process the figs and peanut butter to a fairly smooth paste.

If they are not already pre-cut, slice open 4 ladyfingers. Spread one half with the peanut butter mixture and cover with the other half. Wrap in plastic wrap.

Tuna Pasta Salad

- 
- 2 eggs, hard-cooked and sliced
 - 1 cup steamed broccoli florets
 - 1 tomato, chopped
 - 2 cups cooked fusilli pasta
 - 1 cup tuna packed in water, drained
 - ½ red bell pepper, chopped
 - ½ cup steamed chopped green beans
 - ½ cup kidney beans (optional—but nutritious)
 - ½ cup chopped jicama (optional)
 - ¼ cup chopped scallions
 - ¼ cup vinaigrette dressing

In a bowl, combine all of the ingredients and toss to coat with the vinaigrette (a ranch dressing is also good on this). Cover and refrigerate.

When ready to pack a lunch, place a portion in a container and cover.

Tuna Swirls

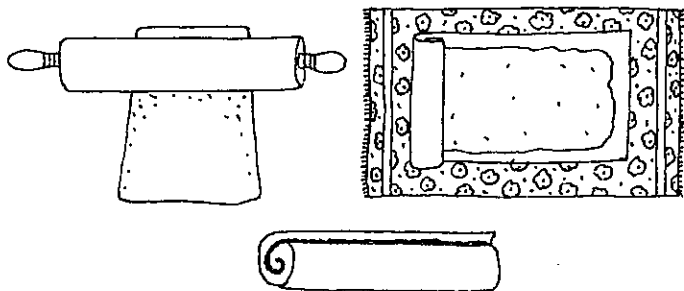
- 1 can (12½ ounces) tuna packed in water (unsalted, if possible), drained
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise or other spread
- ½ onion, chopped
- 1 small sweet pickle, chopped
- Dash of liquid hickory smoke
- ¼ teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- 3 slices whole wheat bread
- Dab of butter or margarine

In a bowl, combine the tuna, mayonnaise, onion, pickle, liquid smoke and lemon juice. Cover and refrigerate.

In the morning, cut the crusts off the bread and flatten each slice with a rolling pin (be careful not to roll so hard that you tear the bread).

Spread a thin layer of the tuna filling on the bread. Lay the bread slices out on a slightly dampened cloth and roll up as you would a jelly roll. Seal each seam with a dab of butter.

The result is a tuna roll that looks much like a jelly roll. Three will be plenty for most children under 13.



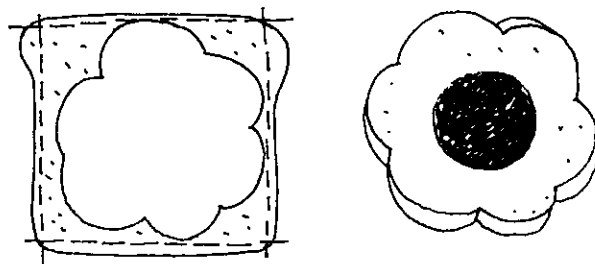
Betty Kerpen loves this tuna and pasta combination. Her hint: put half of the dressing on before you chill the salad. It marinates the vegetables and makes it even better. Then put the rest on when you are ready to eat (or are packing the lunch).

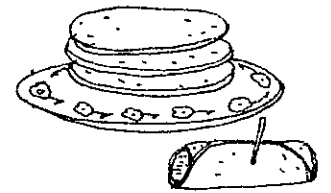
Tuna Sunflowers

- 1 can (12½ ounces) tuna packed in water, drained
- ½ cup shelled sunflower seeds
- 1 small onion, chopped
- ½ teaspoon dried basil
- ½ cup plain low-fat yogurt
- 2 slices whole wheat bread, egg bread or raisin bread

In a bowl, mix together all of the ingredients except the bread. If you are preparing this ahead of time, pack in a container and store in the refrigerator. If you are making it in the morning, put it in the refrigerator long enough to set (about 30 minutes).

Cut the crusts off the bread. Cut with a flower-shaped cookie cutter. Spread one slice with the tuna mixture and cover with the other.





Yogurt Pancakes are terrific cold. If your child likes pancakes with jam, spread them with just a little of his or her favorite flavor (too much will drip out of the roll), then roll up as before.

Yogurt Pancakes

- 1 egg
- 1 cup plain yogurt, blended or beaten until completely smooth
- 2 tablespoons safflower oil
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- Vegetable oil, for frying



In a large bowl, whisk the egg, yogurt and safflower oil together. Add the flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt and mix well.

Lightly coat a skillet with oil. Make the pancakes as follows: Drop a tablespoon of batter in the pan. When bubbles appear, turn the pancake over and continue to cook until the underside is browned. Cool, roll each up and fasten with a toothpick or refrigerate until needed.

MAKES 10 SMALL PANCAKES

Provolone Crisps



- 1½ cups shredded provolone cheese (about 6 ounces)
- ½ cup grated romano cheese
- ½ cup (1 stick) butter, at room temperature
- Few drops of hot pepper sauce
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano, crushed
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 cup uncooked quick or old-fashioned oats

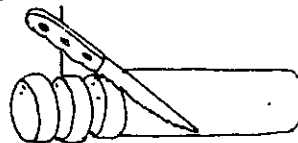
In a bowl, blend together the cheeses (reserve about 1 tablespoon romano), butter, pepper sauce and 3 tablespoons water. Add the flour, oregano, paprika, salt and oats and mix well. Form into a roll and wrap in plastic. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Butter a baking sheet.

Cut the roll into ⅛-inch slices and sprinkle with the reserved romano cheese. Place on the prepared baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes, or until lightly browned.


Remove from the sheet and cool on a wire rack.

The dough will keep, stored air tight in the refrigerator, for a week.



MAKES 8 TO 12 CRISPS

Blond Brownies

- 
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, at room temperature
 - 1 cup all-purpose flour
 - 1 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 cup packed brown sugar
 - 1 tablespoon baking powder
 - 2 eggs
 - Pinch of salt
 - ½ cup coarsely chopped walnuts
 - 4 ounces (¼ cup) chocolate bits or mini-chips
 - Powdered sugar, for dusting the tops

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Butter a 9- x 12-inch glass baking dish or a jelly roll pan.


In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream together the butter, flour and granulated sugar until fluffy. Add the brown sugar, baking powder, eggs and salt, and beat until well mixed. Fold in the walnuts by hand.

Spread the batter in the prepared pan. Sprinkle on the chocolate bits.

Bake for 15 minutes. Reduce the heat to 350 degrees and bake for another 15 minutes. To test for doneness, the toothpick should not come out clean—these brownies should be chewy.

Sift the powdered sugar over the top while they are still warm. Cut into squares. Store covered.

Ambrosia Salad


- 
- 2 cups pineapple chunks (if canned, use juice-packed and drain well)
 - 2 bananas, sliced
 - 1 to 2 small apples, peeled, cored and chopped
 - 2 oranges, peeled, sectioned and cut into pieces
 - 2 cups strawberries, sliced
 - 2 peaches, peeled, stoned and sliced (if not in season, you can use canned peaches, but drain well)
 - 1 cup seedless grapes
 - ½ cup raisins (optional)
 - ¼ cup honey
 - 1 cup plain or vanilla yogurt
 - ½ teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 2 cups miniature marshmallows (optional)
 - Shredded coconut (optional)

In a large bowl, mix together all of the fruits.

Mix the honey, yogurt and vanilla. Pour the dressing over the fruit and toss to coat. Add the marshmallows and toss again. Cover and chill.

In the morning, place a portion of the salad in a small container, sprinkle on the coconut and seal.

Joanna's Chocolate Chip Meringue Kisses

- 
- 4 egg whites, at room temperature
 - ¼ teaspoon salt
 - ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
 - 1 cup granulated sugar
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
 - 1 cup mini chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 300 degrees. Spray a cookie sheet with vegetable spray.

In the mixing bowl of an electric mixer, beat the egg whites with the salt and cream of tartar. Begin beating on low and gradually increase the speed to high. Beat until soft peaks form.

Gradually add the sugar and continue beating. Add the vanilla and beat until the peaks are stiff. Fold in the chocolate chips by hand.

Drop teaspoonfuls of the mixture onto the prepared baking sheet. Bake for 25 minutes. Turn off the heat and allow the kisses to cool in the oven for about 10 minutes. (You may need to repeat the process, depending on the size of your cookie sheet and kisses.)

Store the kisses airtight in a tin. Send to school in plastic sandwich bags.



Dried Fruit Bites

Dried fruit has a lot of potassium and calcium—so this is a surprisingly nutritious treat.

- 1 small package (3 ounces) cream cheese, at room temperature
- ½ cup ricotta cheese
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- As many dried fruits (apricots, figs, cherries, dates) as your child will eat
- 2 tablespoons chopped pistachio nuts (or any others you have at home)

Blend the cheeses together in a food processor or blender. Add the vanilla and continue processing until the mixture is smooth. Cover and chill.

When you are making lunch, take each dried fruit and slice part of the way through on one side, forming a small pocket. Fill each piece with some of the mixture. (With apricots, spread the mixture on one slice, then top with another to form a tiny sandwich.) Sprinkle the top of each fruit with the nuts (stuff nuts inside the apricot sandwich).

Two to 3 pieces are enough for most kids.

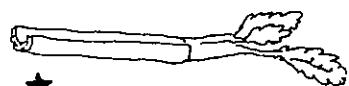
Favorite fillings for Pita Pockets:

- sliced turkey with shredded cheddar cheese, slices of red or green pepper and a teaspoon of chutney
- sliced avocado, crumbled bacon, shredded mozzarella cheese and a dab of sour cream
- falafel balls, hummus, chopped tomatoes, shredded lettuce and slices of pickles
- cream cheese, slices of roast beef, chopped scallions and chopped tomatoes
- chopped pineapple, slivers of ham or smoked turkey and honey mustard
- egg salad, lettuce and relish
- tuna salad with marinated artichoke hearts
- slices of ham and cheddar cheese, melted in the toaster oven



★ Leslie Alexandra Cohen may be only three, but she insists on making her lunch for nursery school. She spreads her own peanut butter topped with jelly. Leslie didn't care if the sandwiches looked a little sloppy and slightly misshapen. Neither did her mother, Jean, who thought it was more important that Leslie have the confidence to make her own lunch than to have the sandwiches look perfect. The next step? Jean is teaching Leslie how to cut the sandwiches with her cookie cutters.

★ Want to add zip to a cream cheese sandwich? Janice Payne's son Juston swears by a dash of jalapeño jelly on cream cheese on whole wheat bread.



★ Whenever you give a dinner party and you have leftovers, think of the kids' lunch the next day. Creamy french cheeses, pâté, stuffed mushrooms, celery sticks, sliced meat—all make great surprise treats to a kid who is used to peanut butter.

★
A TUNA SALAD VARIATION

- 1 6½ ounce can white tuna packed in water, drained
- 2 tablespoons light mayonnaise
- 1 teaspoon sugar (the miracle ingredient)
- 2 tablespoons pickle relish

Place the tuna in a food processor and process, pulsing on and off. Add the mayonnaise and sugar and pulse a couple more times. Place in a small bowl and stir in the pickle relish.

Spread on your favorite bread and enjoy.

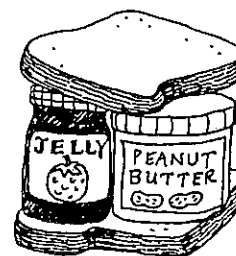
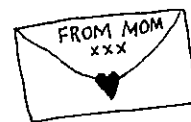
★ Here's a variation on that old cream cheese in celery recipe. After you fill a piece of celery with cream cheese, wrap it in a slice of ham or turkey and seal with a toothpick or dab of butter. You can also use this wrapping trick on vegetables or fruits—wrap a spear of melon or cucumber in a slice of ham.

★ Of all nuts and seeds, the highest and most complete protein is found in pumpkin seeds. Cheese and sesame seeds are also good sources of protein and add flavor to this recipe.

★ Veronica Chambers tells her favorite lunch box story: "After making the kids' lunches yet another night, I got this bright idea to take a huge bite out of their sandwiches and granola bars and stick a note inside saying, 'Kilroy was here!' When the kids returned home that afternoon, neither one said a word. But that night at dinner, Katy and Chris insisted on my letting them serve me dinner. Imagine my surprise when they gave me an empty plate with a note saying: 'Kilroy was here, too!'"

★ In a pinch, Ronna Gordon puts a frozen burrito (with beans and cheese) in the microwave in the morning, then wraps it in foil and puts it in the lunch box. Josh and Gabe Gordon are always happy with this alternative.

★ Sometimes Joyce Bogart has to be out of town in the middle of the week. To ensure Evan, Jenna and Taylor are not lonely, she makes sure they can "hear" from her even though she's miles away. Joyce prepares a series of little notes and gives them to the kids' babysitter to put into each lunch box. Sometimes she mentions specific things ("Remember, soccer practice is today"; "Have fun in rocketry class"; "Good luck on your spelling test—I know you'll do great!"), and other times she just sends love notes to remind the kids that she is thinking of them even though she is not there.



★ Parker O'Halloran, in first grade, always insisted on the same lunch every day: peanut butter and jelly sandwich, carrot sticks, an apple, two cookies and milk. When mom Susan asked him why, the reply was memorable: "You know, Mom, I never know just what is going to happen at school, so I need to be able to at least count on my lunch!"