



**Q&A with the authors of
BEST OF BRIDGE SUNDAY SUPPERS
Recipes for Family & Friends**

How would you sum up *Best of Bridge Sunday Suppers* in one sentence?

Julie: Sunday Suppers brings friends and families around the table to share more than just a meal together.

Elizabeth: Sunday Suppers is about showing family and friends how much you care about them by taking the time to prepare a meal worth sharing.

Sue: Recipes to help bring family and friends to the table for good food and good conversation.

What do you most want people to learn/take away from this book?

Julie: I'd love to take the pressure off of family meals, so that people feel more capable of cooking for a larger group on a regular basis.

Elizabeth: I want people to know that preparing a special meal doesn't have to be difficult or require a lot of technical skill. People shouldn't feel intimidated by cooking — it's a lot easier than you'd think!

Sue: Food for gatherings can be as simple or elaborate as you want it to be: you can go old-school with roasts and potatoes, or lighten things up with meal-in-a-bowl salads. Curries, pastas, soups all have their time and place.

How is this book different from every other cookbook book on the market?

Julie: It's (hopefully) distinct as a Best of Bridge book, connecting with home cooks who love to feed people.

Elizabeth: The idea behind this book is about sharing our favorite recipes for classic dishes and family favorites. These are recipes that we make for our own family and friends.

Sue: Simple recipes with gourmet results — the original ladies said it best!

What exactly is a Sunday Supper?

Julie: A Sunday supper doesn't have to be on a Sunday — the idea is bringing the family (or friends, neighbors, co-workers) together to share a meal around the table.

Elizabeth: I think the idea of Sunday suppers come from a time when people had more time to cook on weekends — they could literally take their entire day to bake bread, slow roast meat or put together meals that required several steps. People's schedules have changed (many of us work on Sundays!) but we still love the idea of taking time to cook something a little out of the ordinary. Some of these recipes stick to that old Sunday supper idea while others come together a little more quickly, but are still worthy of sharing.

Sue: A meal that helps us connect with the people in our lives. For many people, Sundays offer a chance to slow things down and remember the important things in life.

Why is a Sunday Supper important in this modern age of convenience?

Julie: Food brings people together — mealtimes provide an opportunity to unplug the electronic devices and share and connect in real life.

Elizabeth: It's so easy to put together a meal made of prepared sauces and convenience foods — and with so many of us being so busy during the week, there's nothing wrong with that. But when we are able to take the time to put love into the preparation of the meal it shows family and friends how much they mean to us. These meals aren't just meant to be prepared with care, they're also meant to be enjoyed slowly, together, over conversation.

Sue: Making a little extra effort once in awhile can reset our cooking and eating habits — and paradoxically remind us that serving up good, homemade food often doesn't take much extra time at all.

What are, in your expert view, the greatest errors the average person commits when it comes to cooking?

Julie: Never trying it.

Elizabeth: With these recipes it's important to read them through before starting so that you have a good idea of what to expect and especially when it comes to some of the roast meats, how much time you need to give yourself. When preparing a meal with many elements it can be tough to time everything accordingly, so people need to make sure that they've got their plan together so that everything goes smoothly.

Sue: Many people assume that every recipe must be followed to the letter. While a few recipes require precision, most will happily adapt to accommodate what's already in your fridge. There's no single 'right' way to cook!



What do you think are the key upcoming food trends for 2018?

Julie: I think food trends will continue heading back to basics, to cooking from scratch rather than opening a package, and in-home dinner parties will come back into vogue.

Elizabeth: While the idea of Sunday Suppers may seem old fashioned in a way, a return to more traditional meals — roast meats, homemade breads and condiments, from-scratch desserts — is very much on trend. People crave connection, which is why this trend is so timely.

Sue: I'll respectfully defer to Julie and Elizabeth on this one!

How does your own cooking philosophy tie into this book/eating?

Julie: I'm very interested in the culture of home cooking — it's the day-to-day food that keeps us all going, and the rituals of dinner that strengthen our communities and create a diverse food culture in Canada.

Elizabeth: I love doing as much as I can from scratch — but I am also busy with work and family, so I don't like cooking to be stressful. Simple, delicious whole food is my favorite way to eat and cook and this book is full of those kinds of recipes.

Sue: I love the chance to turn supper into a social affair! Over the years I've learned that just because I'm cooking for guests, cooking doesn't need to be an all-day affair (though once in awhile that can be fun too).

What would your top five tips be for someone just starting to cook for themselves / their family?

Julie: I'd advise those starting out to start with a few simple recipes — pasta, a roasted chicken, a good curry. You don't need to be able to cook everything, but with a few basic skills you're comfortable with, you can cook a lot of things.

Elizabeth: 1. Don't be intimidated! Cooking is easier than you think.

2. If a recipe doesn't work out for you, don't be too discouraged! We all have kitchen failures. Salvage your meal as best you can and try to learn from your mistakes next time around.

3. Be sure to read a recipe all the way through before starting. If you don't understand some of the instructions, look up the terms (or ask a friend or neighbor) so you know what you're doing.

4. Cook things that you want to eat. If a recipe gets your mouth watering, you'll be more enthusiastic about the cooking process.

5. You don't always need to follow a recipe to the letter. Don't mess around with baking ratios, but you shouldn't be afraid to substitute some ingredients and use up what you have on hand.

Sue: Keep it simple and unfussy at first. Simple food cooked well is a beautiful thing! And don't do everything yourself — ask your bestie to make the salad, and your partner can dish up. Get the kids involved young, doing age appropriate tasks. Same goes for the cleaning up.

And, just for fun...

The most underused food in the world is...

Julie: Ghee, the clarified butter that's a staple in Indian cooking. It's perfect for eggs, fish, pancakes, popcorn...it adds a buttery flavor but with a higher smoke point.

Elizabeth: Slightly wilted veggies. Throw them in a soup or stew!

Sue: Sour cherries — especially when dehydrated at home.

My earliest food memory is...

Julie: Sitting on a chair in a corner, learning to read by reading cookbooks.

Elizabeth: Eating sugary cereals on vacation.

Sue: Sitting around an arborite table in the early 70s with my Mum, Dad and sister.

My guilty food pleasure is...

Julie: Ice cream. Can't get enough of it!

Elizabeth: I refuse to feel guilt over anything...but I'm going to say hot dogs.

Sue: Shop-bought shortbread fingers dipped in white chocolate that's been melted in the microwave!