

Food for Thought about Food Convictions



"Umm, does that have gluten?"

"I don't eat anything made with white sugar."

"I'm on the caveman diet."

Thanksgiving in the 21st century... I suspect nothing will darken a good mood at our Thanksgiving tables more than our "food convictions." And, it's ironic, don't you think, that on a day set aside to be particularly thankful for the provision of food, we snub our noses and push it away because of our *principles*.

Just to be clear: I'm not talking here about food allergies, celiac disease, those with diabetes, etc., real medical issues which subject people to *have* to be very careful or else they face certain (sometimes life-threatening) ramifications. I'm talking about those of us who have removed a food group, a food ingredient, or what not... for the sake of "staying slim or questing for longevity." (Both worthy motives by the way).

Once or twice a year I have the privilege of visiting with a very special friend when I travel home to visit my folks. She said something to me at our last meeting that struck a chord and prompted me to write this article...

"Debbie, I don't want to invite people over anymore for a meal, because everyone seems to be on some sort of special diet now."

She also expressed a *disheartening* lack of desire to make a meal for someone in need (or a special treat to simply brighten someone's day), for that same reason.

Our conversation caused me to reflect upon all those times I've snubbed my nose at a particular food for one reason or another, most-likely, many-a-time, hurting someone's feelings (albeit unintentionally). In fact, one of my dearest friends said recently, in response to my refusal of her German apple pie because of its wheat crust,

"Debbie, Debbie, Debbie," (in her thick German accent), **"on your tombstone it will read, 'here lies Debbie, she wouldn't eat gluten or sugar.'"**

I won't expound on her ultimate "point," but I *will* say I quite possibly, and most regrettably, offended her, not to mention missed out on having some of that pie. Was offending her worth it? Would a sliver of her delicious pie have made me gain 5 lbs overnight? Of course not.

Carb-free, gluten-free, sugar-free, caveman, Adkins, weight watchers, Trim Healthy Mama, etc., there are very few people in my little circle of life that are not restricting their diet in one way or

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another, myself included. Do I think it's *wrong* to have certain convictions about what we put in our bodies, and how much of it we indulge in? **ABSOLUTELY NOT.**

we should be good stewards of our bodies, moderate in our eating and our drinking.

But, my point in this article is to ask... when we suspect our friends and family members are beginning to *refrain* from extending an invitation to dine with them because of our "food convictions," we may have crossed the line and become "too extreme." Can we set aside, a handful of days a year, especially on special occasions, to be merry with our loved ones without being anxious (and consequently making *them* anxious) about our "food convictions."

I'm not advocating that you eat anything you want until you feel the need to undo the button on your pants! But, if something is set before you, and you *won't* pass out from anaphylactic shock by eating it, *or suffer with heartburn/reflux all through the night*, at least give it some effort not to grimace or grumble about it having gluten, white sugar, or carbs, and then consider just having a bite and complimenting the cook who labored over it (or thanking the person who purchased it)?

By the way, you can always bring something healthy to contribute to a meal, something you won't feel guilty for indulging in, and equals in deliciousness... fresh out of ideas? Check out

Melissa's "Thanksgiving Veggies" mini-cookbook, available now in the Melissa Chappell Shoppe!

What do you say? Let's strive to have a Happier Thanksgiving this year, shall we?!

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