

INTRODUCTION

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Let's go back about 22 years, as if it was yesterday, and my supervisor, Beth Kammer, called and said, "I want you to take off tomorrow." I had reached my limit in vacation hours and I was about to begin losing my accumulated time. "I hope you can find something fun to do on such short notice," she said. "Oh, I will. I'll work on my cookbook." "That doesn't sound like fun. Tell me you are going to walk the dog or something," Beth replied. "I'll do that too," I said.

The next day I spent two hours working on the cookbook, and it brought back fun filled memories of family gatherings, food gifts from special people, and food gifts for special people. It also brought excitement and anticipation of the joy I would receive if I could share all of these recipes with other people, specifically, other peanut butter lovers!

I have been collecting recipes for many years, and not just peanut butter recipes. My initial collection is still in the shoe box where I first began to save recipes. I progressed to index cards in beautifully designed recipe boxes, and then on to three ring binders with plastic cover sheets and dividers, separating appetizers from main courses and salads from desserts. I now have two cupboards full of cookbooks, recipes and binders. And I keep collecting!

My friends continue to bring me peanut butter recipes because I have talked about my "Peanut Butter Cookbook" for so long. I

imagine some have lost all hope that I would ever begin it, let alone ever complete it. But I have recently begun a new chapter in my life, retirement, and I could not think of a better way to continue life's journey than by doing something I love to do!

IT'S NOW OR NEVER!

As a peanut butter lover, I have been experimenting with different recipes for years. Some have become favorites, not just of mine, but of friends and family alike. When you see the word ***favorite*** in bold italics at the bottom of a recipe, you will know it is one of my favorites and more than likely many others, too! Certain family gatherings require a special dessert from me and I better not show up empty-handed. As my cousin would say, "Annie always brings the Chips of Chocolate Peanut Butter Cake or John's Secret Peanut Butter Cake," made fresh, so that it is still warm when I arrive. The smell creates the anticipation for desire and, once tasted, the memory returns. It is as good, if not better, than remembered!

When I first began thinking about compiling my recipes in to a cookbook, I mentioned it to family. I then tested the waters with co-workers and friends. Reactions were mixed! Non-peanut butter lovers could have put a damper on my fire of enthusiasm with their reactions. Looks alone suggested, "Are you crazy? No one would be interested in that." Two fans in particular, Anne Ross and Susanne Ryan, encouraged me to move forward.

I finally realized, what others think of the idea doesn't really matter. This book is a labor of love, dedicated to Peanut Butter Lovers who are drawn to recipes with peanut butter in the ingredients. I hope my passion for Peanut Butter translates into hours of pleasure for many people. As you read the recipes, experiment and savor the taste of the one ingredient that can turn any recipe in to a masterpiece to remember, **PEANUT BUTTER!**

You will find recipes indicating a specific brand of peanut butter and others without. If you have a favorite brand, use it. I use our local Giant brand peanut butter in most of my recipes, unless other-

wise specified. All recipes are to be made with creamy peanut butter unless otherwise specified.

I like delicious, but easy. You will find most of these recipes easy and quick, with a few more time-consuming ones interspersed here and there.

This is not a calorie conscious cookbook, but I urge everyone to eat in moderation so you can savor a taste of all these wonderful recipes. I often bake, taste and give away!

I hope the joy I have received in compiling my recipes will become a blessing for many. One thing I plan to do is offer 10 percent of the proceeds to charities. I also plan to approach local Nursing Homes and Retirement Communities that have fundraisers each year and provide them with the opportunity to sell the cookbook at their bazaars and bake sales. I will take back the cookbooks they do not sell and **I WILL GIVE THEM A PORTION ON WHAT THEY SOLD!**