

A Recipe for Solitude

By Sara J. Marchessault

*Note to the chef: Remember that not all “ovens” (hearts, minds, or souls) cook quite the same. Adjust ingredients and seasonings accordingly. Prepare dish in a healthy, calm space, and allow what you need to shine through. Listen to your spirit, play music to awaken it, sing in your space; above all, know that your solitary care nourishes not just yourself (although that’s enough), but those who love you best.

Step 1

Prepare the crust from your favorite flour/grain combination. The crust must be lovingly molded and shaped into a favorite pie-plate or dish. I prefer my artisan plate with the wavy edges. Create a thick and hearty foundation, a support system to hold you safe in times of need, a safe place to call home.

Step 2

Create a filling from the bounty of the earth. Choose vegetables, fruits, sweet or savory tastes, with which to appreciate your solitude. Delight in the simple actions of your time alone – the graceful feel of slicing a tomato, the ease with which to ink transfers from pen to paper, or the simple time spent gazing, reflecting, and soaking up the richness of this gift. We need time alone, its part of a system of perfection. Let it fill your crust.

Step 3

Allow the perfect topping to come to you in the heat of the moment. This will often be a flavor or activity that you are led to through your time of solitude. Follow your intuition; if whipped cream would be the perfect addition, try making it yourself. Fresh basil and garlic with a bit of cheese can cause jubilation of the pallet! The key to this step is to embrace it with ease and joy, like acting on an inspiration after an hour of quiet journaling.

Step 4

Celebrate your time alone! Bake your creation and enjoy the fragrance that permeates your spirit while the flavors meld and blend. Indulge the body and rest during cooking time. When it’s time to savor the delights of your labors, feel free to share the peace and sweetness gained through your experience of solitude with others; it all depends on how the mood strikes you. Above all, celebrate life, its seasons and cycles, honoring the gift of being alone.