

# Food & Drink

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CRYSTAL CHATHAM THE DESERT SUN

Cooking with Class executive chef and owner Andie Hubka (left) offers cooking classes for kids. Sierra Silvas, 11, of La Quinta, (center) and Renaissance Alexandre, 9, of Coachella (front) are Cooking with Class alumnae.

## BIG KITCHEN SMALL FRY

BY JUDITH SALKIN  
The Desert Sun

With summer camps coming to an end, it's a good time to let your kids loose in the kitchen to teach them a few lessons in nutrition and self-sufficiency.

Chef Andie Hubka of Cooking With Class in La Quinta has taught kids' cooking camps for the past three years. She noted that with a little help from an adult, children as young as 4 can begin to make snacks and even small meals for themselves.

The result of allowing kids to make their own snacks and choices, Hubka said, is often a more adventurous eater that craves healthier fare.

"They also learn self-sufficiency," Hubka said. "And when they 'own' what they make, they tend to be more willing to try new things."

Here are some tips for ages 4 and up:

### Ages 4-5

- Children love to make "Ants on a Log," Hubka said. Fill celery stalks with peanut butter (or other nut butter) and add a line of raisins or other chopped, dried fruit. There's a protein boost from the nut butter and fiber from the celery and dried fruits. Use honey to add sweetness.

- Sneak in nuts and fruit to store-bought buttermilk roll dough to make monkey bread that includes a larger kick of nutrition. Bananas or chopped apples add a lot of flavor.

- "Little kids can use child-safe scissors to cut the dough," Hubka said. "It's really cool when you invert the pan and the glaze is dripping off of it."

- Add a little extra snap to a PB&J with banana slices (using a slicer) or roll the banana in coconut for a treat.

- Use low-fat, high-protein cheese slices, lean cold cuts and cookie cutters to make cut-out snacks.

### Ages 6-7

- Panini sandwiches are a great alternative to grilled cheese, Hubka advises. "There's no open flame to worry about and the machine stays cool on the outside, so that it's safe once a child knows how to use it properly."

- Add lean cold cuts for more protein.

- Fruit kabobs are a cool, refreshing snack. Once an adult has cut a watermelon, honeydew, cantaloupe or other melon in half and seeded the fruit, kids can go to work using a melon baller.

The dressing only has four ingredients. "It teaches kids about weights and measures, which they really seem to love," Hubka said.

Melon balls can be frozen to use as ice cubes in sparkling water (in place of soda) or for fruit smoothies.

- "Kids love to crack eggs," Hubka said. Teaching a 7-year-old to make scrambled eggs in the microwave is pretty simple. "It's not quite as good as on the stove-top," she said, "but it's a lot safer."

### 8 and older

- By 8 or 9, most children are old enough (and tall enough) to be taught

Please see SNACKS, D2



COURTESY OF COOKING WITH CLASS

Students Abril and Sierra fill ravioli made from won ton wrappers during a Foods of the World class at Cooking with Class in La Quinta.

LET YOUNGSTERS CREATE THEIR OWN FAVORITE SNACKS, MEALS

### Kids can cook, too

**What:** Cooking With Class  
**Where:** 47875 Caleo Bay Drive, Suite A107, La Quinta  
**Information:** (760) 777-1161; cookingwithclasslaquinta.com

### LITTLE CHEFS IN TRAINING

**When:** 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. July 26-30, Aug. 9-13  
**Ages:** 5 to 7 years, must have completed kindergarten before enrolling  
**Course:** Teaches younger children kitchen and food safety, sanitation, table manners and simple recipes.  
**Cost:** \$275

### FUN-DAMENTALS OF COOKING

**When:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aug. 2-6  
**Ages:** 10 to 14  
**Course:** This class is for aspiring future chefs and teaches the same principals as adult classes.  
**Cost:** \$400

### FOODS OF THE WORLD

**Ages:** 9 to 13  
**When:** 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aug. 16-20  
**Course:** Young chefs "travel" around the world learning a little culture and cuisine each day, along with etiquette and kitchen skills.  
**Cost:** \$375

## CHEAP EATS

### Don't fritter your life with frills, opt for fresh instead

BY BARBARA LOWELL  
The Desert Sun

I'll make this short and sweet, just like my recent lunch: Frankie's Fresh Fish makes great sushi.

The popular little restaurant, in a strip mall on Highway 111 in Indio, is known for its fish dishes, everything from salmon and cod to calamari and catfish, but you

### Frankie's Fresh Fish restaurant

81944 Highway 111 Suite A, Indio, (760) 342-2228

can't ignore the sushi bar in the corner. Nor should you.

The long sushi menu includes 20 rolls, a dozen sashimi choices, from 50 cents for a quail egg to \$22.95 for a dinner; 15 nigiri sushi choices that start at \$1.90 per piece; two sumaki (seaweed on the outside) and half a dozen cooked sushi choices.

I ordered the shrimp tempura roll (\$5.50) and was delighted with it. The perfectly cooked rice was still warm from the cooker, the avocado fresh and firm, the tempura light and not at all greasy; the shrimp sweet and juicy.

The presentation here is strictly no-frills: the 8 pieces of sushi were lined up on a foam plate, which in turn was served on a plastic tray lined with a paper mat. A small plastic cup is included, ready to be filled with soy sauce from fat bottles set out on tables.

Service is quick and efficient; my roll arrived in under 10 minutes. Though seemingly compact, the restaurant fits more than a dozen tables, usually filled with diners. At lunchtime, the place is a hit with jurors and folks who want a quick and tasty meal while serving at the nearby Larson Justice Center.

If fish is what you're wishing for — baked, fried, or even raw — just call on Frankie's.

### One more for the road

Here's an extra Cheap Eats bite you can't afford to miss, but it's for one day only, so mark your calendar:

In honor of its namesake founder's birthday, Ruby's Diners will roll back the price of a RubyBurger and fries to \$2.80 from 11:30 a.m. to close of business on Monday, July 26.

Visit Ruby's in Palm Springs and Rancho Mirage. For more information, see [www.rubys.com](http://www.rubys.com).

## DRINK OF THE WEEK

### Give your cocktail a cranberry juice boost

Cranberry juice seems to go well with everything. Not only is it the universal mixer, but it's also packed

with antioxidants and high in vitamins A, C and beta-carotene.

Unfortunately, I can't say the same about vodka, but I figure if you combine the two some of those positive health benefits still apply, right?

Enter the crantini, or cranberry martini, a simple but succulent cocktail perfect for both the summer and autumn months.

Try it at home:



ANGELA FRANZER METROMIX.COM

### Crantini

2 ounces of your favorite vodka  
 3 ounces of cranberry juice  
 A splash of orange liqueur

**Instructions:** Combine ingredients into a cocktail shaker with ice. Shake and strain into a chilled martini glass. Garnish with dried cranberries and a lemon wheel if desired.

— ANGELA FRANZER, PALMSPRINGS.METROMIX.COM

### Need a drink?

Find local bars at [palm Springs.metromix.com](http://palm Springs.metromix.com)

## Starlite Lounge sparkles in Playboy

Pretty in pink, a Palm Springs lounge has made Playboy Magazine's "Guide to America's Greatest Bars," published in the August issue on stands now.

The Starlite Lounge at The Riviera Resort & Spa, 1600 N. Indian Canyon Drive, earned high marks for its 1950s-era ambiance.

"Elaborate billiards tables and a 30-foot-tall video screen that features 'picture shows' of days gone by send you back to a time when Merv Griffin held court, Sammy and Dino played tipsy and face-lifts were just taking off," the piece states.

The Starlite serves up signature cocktails like "A Homemade Tonic with Gin" and the "Hemingway,"



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MICHAEL SNYDER THE DESERT SUN

in addition to a selection of scotch and cognacs.

Sip, sit back and admire the pink décor while listening to "electric

organ stylists who still use the term *tickle the ivories*," as Playboy writers suggest.

— MONICA TORLINE

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