

Breakfast in Bed from The Kids' Kitchen

Step by Step Tips for Dads and Kids

Ok, Dad, now's the time to head to the kitchen with the kids. As Mother's Day approaches, you know that Breakfast-in-Bed, or at least Breakfast-that's-not-Burnt, would definitely bless the Lady of the House. The following recipes (and presentation suggestions – HINT, HINT) are bound to bring a smile to Mom's face and ensure you some fun memories with the kiddos

Plan ahead

If you are going to tackle the breakfast in bed deal with any hope of success, you're going to need to plan ahead. The last thing you want to do is rummage through cupboards and pantries early on a Sunday morning, yelling, "Honey, where's the....?" Not only does that raise suspicion, but it doesn't do much for your image as the Thoughtful Guy. So, first, you will need to find a nice serving tray. There might be one -- or ten -- in the house already, so ask your wife ahead of time. If she asks why you need one, you can say that you were looking for something to sort screws on.

Alternatively, you can also purchase one at your local discount department store, like Target or Walmart. You will also need a real cloth napkin, a small bud vase, a real flower to put in the vase, real dishes, a pretty mug or teacup, and real flatware. No plastic or paper serving ware is allowed. Leatherman tools and pocket knives don't count either. Don't forget to buy a card while you're at it.

You'll also need to check that the breakfast ingredients are available. Check out the handy grocery list in the sidebar. Read through the recipes the night before to make sure you understand the scope of the project. You'll also need to place the spinach package in the refrigerator to thaw. In the morning, open the package and squeeze out all the excess liquid from the spinach. That's what it means when it says, "squeezed dry."

The Food

The next morning, wake about an hour and a half before Mom does. Yes, you can, really. Head to the kitchen and prepare this Chick Feast for the Mom of your children. It's the least you can do after her nine months' service of nausea, vomiting, aches and pains, not to mention the delivery. But, we're talking about food here, so let's move on, shall we?

The kids can easily help you with many of these tasks. It will be fun, really. However, use caution near the stove and when knives are involved. The last thing you want on Mother's Day is a trip to the ER. So unless your kids are of an age and maturity that you know they will be safe, you need to handle those tasks yourself. The little guys will definitely be able to help you rinse the fruit and arrange it on the platter, mix the egg casserole, and shape the crescents. Since the crescents and egg dish bake at different temperatures, prepare the crescents first. While they're baking, prepare the casserole. The rolls can cool while the egg dish cooks.

Don't forget! Make sure you clean up after yourselves! A dirty kitchen totally cancels out any points you've earned by serving breakfast in bed. Do not pass GO; do not collect \$200.



Putting it all together

On the tray, you should have the beautiful flower in the bud vase, the cloth napkin, and the "real" fork, knife, and spoon. Now you will add the fruit plate and a second plate to hold a couple chocolate crescents and a square of the egg casserole. Add a pretty mug or teacup with her favorite hot drink. Don't forget the card! Remember to serve it with a kiss and a smile.

You can do this! Even if something doesn't turn out quite right, never fear. Mom will love the effort and love that you put into this project. And you'll make some fun memories with the kids in the process.

The Recipes

Fresh Fruit Plate

- strawberries
- green and red grapes
- cantaloupe

Rinse strawberries well and pat dry. Rinse grapes. Using kitchen scissors, cut the large bunches into smaller, serving size clusters. Rinse the outside of the cantaloupe and pat dry. Slice off the stem and blossom ends. Turn cantaloupe onto one of the newly-cut flat ends. With a sharp knife, shave off cantaloupe's husk. Try not to cut off too much of the orange fruit. Continue until the melon's rind is gone. Discard. Now slice the melon in half lengthwise. Remove seeds with a large spoon and discard. Cut into wedges, about eight per half. Arrange five strawberries in the center of a pretty plate. Arrange four slices of melon around strawberries like the spokes on a wheel. Place grape clusters in between the melon slices, alternating green and red.

Chocolate Crescent Rolls

- 1 package refrigerated crescent rolls
- 1/2 cup chocolate chips, preferably dark
- 2 Tablespoons granulated sugar

Heat the oven according to the directions on the crescent roll package. Open can and separate crescent rolls. Sprinkle surface of triangle with 10-12 chocolate chips. Roll up, starting at bottom of triangle, rolling toward point. Place on ungreased cookie sheet. Sprinkle with sugar. Bake according to package directions.

Eggs Florentine Casserole

- 9 eggs
- 1 pint cottage cheese
- 8 ounces grated Swiss cheese
- 8 ounces crumbled Feta cheese
- 1 (10 ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, completely thawed and squeezed dry

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray a 9x13-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray. In large mixing bowl, beat eggs. Add cheeses and stir to combine well. Stir in spinach. Pour into prepared dish. Bake for 45 minutes to one hour, or until eggs are cooked through. Cool slightly before cutting into squares.

Helpful Tips for Cooking with Kids:

- Make sure everyone washes his hands before touching any food.
- Tie back loose hair.
- Have each child wear an apron or smock of some kind. It's much easier to wipe messy hands on yourself than to hunt down a paper towel.
- Allow kids to express their creativity. If the crescents are a little misshapen, that's okay. Mom will appreciate their charm.

What You'll Need:

- a nice tray
- linen napkin
- real flatware (fork, knife, and spoon)
- bud vase with flower
- 2 nice plates
- tea cup or mug
- Happy Mother's Day card
- Mom's favorite hot beverage
- 9 eggs
- 1 pint cottage cheese
- 8-ounce bag of shredded Swiss cheese
- 8-ounce package of Feta cheese
- strawberries
- green and red grapes
- cantaloupe
- refrigerated crescent rolls
- chocolate chips, preferably dark
- granulated sugar
- 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach