

Beef tenderloin with a creamy horseradish sauce (*right*) is perfect with Cheddar mashed potatoes and garlicky green beans. Jessie Price and her mom, Robin Coleburn, enjoy moist Maple Walnut Cake (*below*). A nationally acclaimed gardener, Robin grows trees like Harry Lauder's Walking Stick (*opposite*) that look great even in a long Vermont winter.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY KEN BURRIS



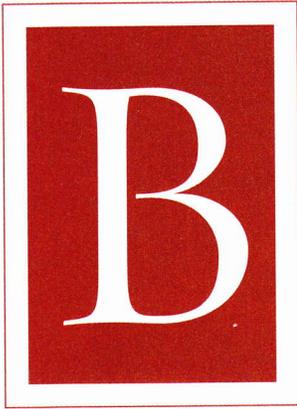
| OUR HOLIDAYS |

# A VERMONT CHRISTMAS

OUR EASY FEAST LEAVES TIME FOR FAMILY

BY JESSIE PRICE & KATIE PRICE WEBSTER





BEFORE WE WERE OLD ENOUGH TO COOK, we would perch on stools in the kitchen to help Mom brainstorm menus for holiday feasts. Once we gained a little experience (and eventually both started working for EATINGWELL) we were invited to help out. Holidays took on a whole new meaning—they became all about getting into the kitchen together and trying out new recipes. After all, what’s the fun in cooking the same thing every year?

This spirit of adventure has gotten us in over our heads at times—maybe Christmas Eve dinner wasn’t the best time to try smoking a whole brisket for the first time. By the time our guests arrived, we were delirious from staying up all night in 33°F drizzling rain, tending the monstrous 16-pound slab of brisket. Worse, by dinnertime we realized that the brisket wasn’t anywhere near ready. We delayed as long as possible by serving extra rounds of drinks to our now-tipsy guests. Then we crossed our fingers and hoped that no one would notice that we were serving up meat that was more like smoky lederhosen than tender, lacy, Texas-style brisket. After one bite, Grandpa declared it the worst brisket he had ever eaten.

Which is why we’ve decided that sometimes it’s better to keep it simple, healthy and close to home. Yes, the risk and excitement

factors are down, but the upside is that with delicious dishes that are easy to prepare there is plenty of time to enjoy friends and family. So for this year’s menu, we chose to let great ingredients shine in straightforward preparations. Inspired by our home state, we’ve highlighted some Vermont culinary gems like Cheddar cheese, maple syrup and apples. Luxurious beef tenderloin, one of the leanest cuts of beef available, gets a rub of horseradish before being roasted on high heat. Mashed Yukon Gold potatoes, with the skin left on for the extra fiber and rustic texture, are tangy with a touch of buttermilk and sharp Cheddar. We’re huge on salads (both of us eat small truckloads of greens each week) so we lavished the Red & White Salad with some of our favorites like endive, radicchio, fennel, hearts of palm and apples. For dessert, a moist maple walnut cake, with a decadent maple-flavored drizzle, has ground walnuts in the batter that provide a nutty flavor as well as a dose of healthy omega-3 fats and vitamin E.

With bright, fresh flavors, fantastic ingredients, loads of nutritious vegetables and easy techniques, this menu is elegant and wonderful enough to become a holiday tradition for years to come. Unless, of course, you’re in it for the adventure, like we are.

Jessie Price is EATINGWELL’s senior food editor and her sister Katie is a recipe developer, tester and food stylist.

## Horseradish-Crusted Beef Tenderloin

Healthy Weight Lower Carbs

ACTIVE TIME: 15 MINUTES | TOTAL: 1 HOUR 10 MINUTES | EQUIPMENT: Kitchen string

Luxurious beef tenderloin shines when treated to a simple horseradish-mustard rub and roasted for a nicely seared and flavorful crust. Add 5 to 10 minutes to the roasting time for well done.

- 2 tablespoons prepared horseradish
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
- 2 pounds trimmed beef tenderloin, preferably center-cut (see Note)
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 teaspoons freshly ground pepper
- Creamy Horseradish Sauce (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 400°F.
2. Combine horseradish, oil and mustard in a small bowl. Rub tenderloin with salt and pepper; coat with the horseradish mixture. Tie

with kitchen string in 3 places. Transfer to a small roasting pan.

3. Roast until a thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the tenderloin registers 140°F for medium-rare, 35 to 45 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board; let rest for 5 minutes. Remove the string. Slice and serve with Creamy Horseradish Sauce.

MAKES 8 SERVINGS.

PER SERVING: 220 CALORIES; 11 G FAT (5 G SAT, 5 G MONO); 76 MG CHOLESTEROL; 3 G CARBOHYDRATE; 25 G PROTEIN; 1 G FIBER; 334 MG SODIUM; 364 MG POTASSIUM.

NUTRITION BONUS: Selenium (41% DAILY VALUE), Zinc (31% DV).

**NOTE:** You’ll need 2 pounds of trimmed tenderloin for this recipe. Ask your butcher to remove the extra fat, silver skin and the chain (a lumpy, fat-covered piece of meat that runs along the tenderloin). If you buy untrimmed tenderloin, start with about 2½ pounds, then use a sharp knife to trim the silver skin, fat and chain.

## Creamy Horseradish Sauce

ACTIVE TIME: 5 MINUTES | TOTAL: 5 MINUTES | TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

The flavor of this pungent sauce combines beautifully with rich beef tenderloin or a forkful of Cheddar mashed potatoes. Or try it on a roast beef sandwich.

- 1¼ cups reduced-fat sour cream
- 1/3 cup prepared horseradish
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper

Combine sour cream, horseradish, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Chill until ready to serve.

MAKES 1½ CUPS.

PER 2-TABLESPOON SERVING: 38 CALORIES; 3 G FAT (2 G SAT, 1 G MONO); 10 MG CHOLESTEROL; 2 G CARBOHYDRATE; 1 G PROTEIN; 0 G FIBER; 125 MG SODIUM; 49 MG POTASSIUM.

## Red & White Salad

Healthy  Weight    Lower  Carbs

ACTIVE TIME: 25 MINUTES | TOTAL: 25 MINUTES | TO MAKE AHEAD: Prepare salad without dressing, cover and refrigerate for up to 4 hours. Toss with vinaigrette just before serving.

 *Bitter, sweet and peppery flavors marry well in this confetti-like salad of wintery fruit and vegetables.*

- 4 cups thinly sliced hearts of romaine
  - 2 heads Belgian endive, cored and thinly sliced
  - 1 bulb fennel, trimmed, cored, quartered and thinly sliced
  - 1 15-ounce can hearts of palm, drained, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced
  - 1/2 head radicchio, cored, quartered and thinly sliced
  - 1 red apple, cored and cut into matchsticks
  - 1 cup thinly sliced radishes
- Champagne Vinaigrette (*recipe follows*)  
Freshly ground pepper to taste

Toss romaine, endive, fennel, hearts of palm, radicchio, apple and radishes together in a large salad bowl. Add vinaigrette and toss to coat. Season with pepper.

MAKES 8 SERVINGS, ABOUT 1 3/4 CUPS EACH.

PER SERVING: 111 CALORIES; 7 G FAT (1 G SAT, 5 G MONO); 0 MG CHOLESTEROL; 11 G CARBOHYDRATE; 2 G PROTEIN; 3 G FIBER; 424 MG SODIUM; 324 MG POTASSIUM.

NUTRITION BONUS: Vitamin C (30% DAILY VALUE).

Crisp, flavorful Red & White Salad (*top left*) is great as a first course or served as a complement to the main event. Radishes and radicchio give it red highlights for Christmas. Fluffy mashed potatoes get a touch of Vermont with Cheddar cheese stirred in (*bottom right*). Sizzled garlic and fresh tarragon liven up fresh green beans (*bottom left*).

## Champagne Vinaigrette

ACTIVE TIME: 5 MINUTES | TOTAL: 5 MINUTES | TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 week.

 *Whirring this dressing in the blender gives it a creamy consistency. If you don't have a blender just mince the shallots, then whisk the ingredients in a medium bowl.*

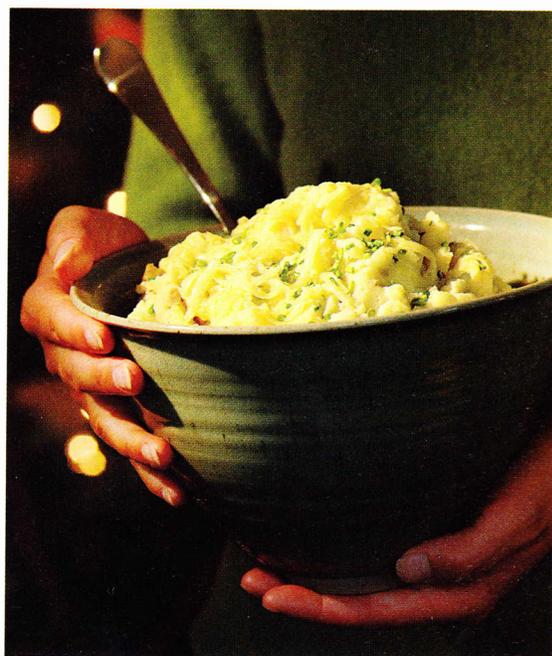
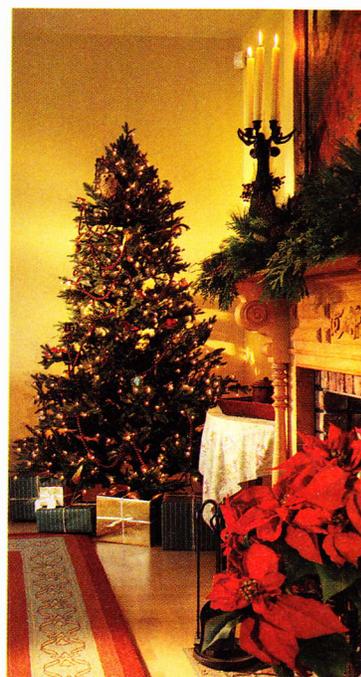
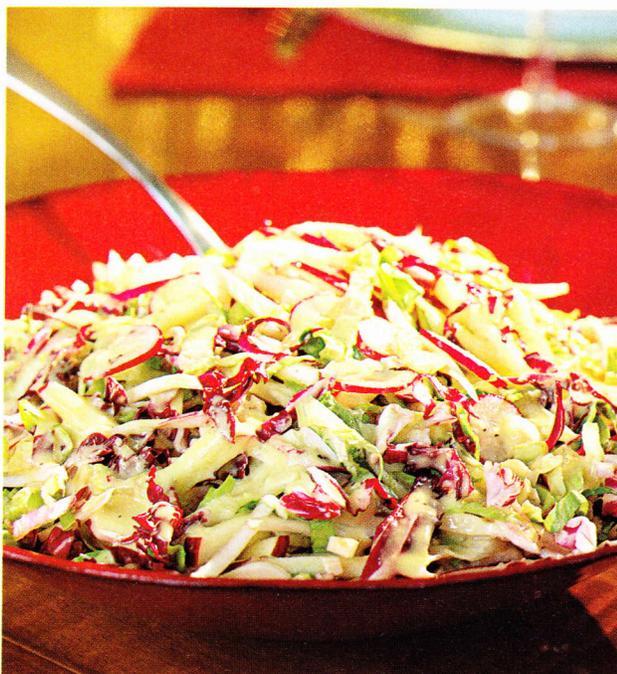
- 1 shallot, peeled and quartered
- 1/4 cup champagne vinegar or white-wine vinegar

- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 3/4 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

Combine shallot, vinegar, oil, mustard, salt and pepper in a blender. Puree until smooth.

MAKES 2/3 CUP, FOR 8 SERVINGS.

PER SERVING: 70 CALORIES; 7 G FAT (1 G SAT, 5 G MONO); 0 MG CHOLESTEROL; 2 G CARBOHYDRATE; 0 G PROTEIN; 0 G FIBER; 242 MG SODIUM; 5 MG POTASSIUM.





*Clockwise from top left: Friends Jain and Peter Doremus join the family for Christmas dinner. A variety of fresh greens and lemons adorn the mantel. Robin has plenty of time to enjoy friends and family with this easy menu. Maple Walnut Cake looks festive garnished with seasonal fruit.*



## Vermont Cheddar Mashed Yukon Golds

Healthy  Weight

**ACTIVE TIME:** 20 MINUTES | **TOTAL:** 45 MINUTES | **TO MAKE AHEAD:** Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days. To serve, reheat in a double boiler and garnish with cheese and chives.

 *Extra-sharp Cheddar and buttermilk add a tangy punch to these potatoes. And, yes, we may be a bit biased, but we prefer Vermont Cheddar cheese.*

- 3 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes, cut into 1 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 1/2 cups shredded extra-sharp Cheddar cheese, divided
- 3/4 cup nonfat buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 1/4 cup sliced fresh chives, divided

Place potatoes in a large Dutch oven and add enough water to cover. Bring to a boil over high heat. Boil until very tender when pierced with a fork, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from the heat. Drain and return the potatoes to the pot. Mash with a potato masher. Stir in 1/4 cups cheese until melted. Add buttermilk, salt and pepper and stir to combine. Gently fold in 3 tablespoons chives. Transfer to a serving dish and garnish with the remaining 1/4 cup cheese and 1 tablespoon chives.

**MAKES 8 SERVINGS, ABOUT 1 CUP EACH.**

**PER SERVING:** 223 CALORIES; 6 G FAT (4 G SAT, 0 G MONO); 19 MG CHOLESTEROL; 31 G CARBOHYDRATE; 8 G PROTEIN; 2 G FIBER; 425 MG SODIUM; 935 MG POTASSIUM. **NUTRITION BONUS:** Potassium (27% DAILY VALUE), Calcium (15% DV).

## Garlicky Green Beans

Healthy  Weight Lower  Carbs

**ACTIVE TIME:** 35 MINUTES | **TOTAL:** 45 MINUTES | **TO MAKE AHEAD:** Prepare through Step 2 and store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 day.

 *We cook then cool the beans in advance so they can be heated up and seasoned moments before the meal. If you don't like tarragon, substitute dill or leave it out completely.*

- 2 pounds green beans, trimmed
- 3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 3 tablespoons minced garlic
- 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh tarragon or 2 teaspoons dried
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Place a large bowl of ice water next to the stove.
2. Add half the green beans to the boiling water and cook until tender-crisp, about 4 minutes. Transfer the beans with a slotted spoon to the ice water to cool. Repeat with the remaining beans. Place a kitchen towel on a baking sheet and use a slotted spoon to transfer the beans from the ice water; blot dry with another towel.
3. Just before serving, heat oil in a large Dutch oven or large skillet over medium heat. Add garlic and cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add the green beans and stir. Add parsley, tarragon, salt and pepper and cook, stirring, until heated through, 1 to 3 minutes.

**MAKES 8 SERVINGS, ABOUT 1 CUP EACH.**

**PER SERVING:** 92 CALORIES; 6 G FAT (1 G SAT, 4 G MONO); 0 MG CHOLESTEROL; 10 G CARBOHYDRATE; 2 G PROTEIN; 4 G FIBER; 148 MG SODIUM; 186 MG POTASSIUM. **NUTRITION BONUS:** Vitamin C (25% DAILY VALUE), Vitamin A (20% DV), Fiber (16% DV).

## Maple Walnut Cake

**ACTIVE TIME:** 45 MINUTES | **TOTAL:** 2 HOURS | **EQUIPMENT:** 10-inch springform pan | **TO MAKE AHEAD:** Prepare through Step 5 up to 8 hours ahead. Glaze and decorate the cake (Step 6) when ready to serve.

*Reminiscent of a British sticky toffee pudding, this cake gets its moisture from dates; toasted nuts and maple give it an intoxicating fragrance.*

- 1 cup chopped pitted dates (6 ounces)
- 1/2 cup boiling water
- 1 cup whole-wheat pastry flour
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chopped toasted walnuts (see *Tip, page 78*), divided
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda

- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg
- 3/4 cup pure maple syrup, preferably dark amber (Grade B)
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 teaspoons cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract

### GLAZE

- 2 tablespoons pure maple syrup
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar
- 3/4 cup gently packed confectioners' sugar
- 1-2 teaspoons water, if needed

1. Preheat oven to 325°F. Coat a 10-inch springform pan with cooking spray.
2. Place dates in a small bowl. Pour boiling water over them to soak. Let cool to room temperature.
3. Process whole-wheat flour, all-purpose flour, 2/3 cup walnuts, baking soda and salt in a food processor until the walnuts are completely ground and the mixture resembles coarse meal. Transfer to a medium bowl; make a well in the center.
4. Puree the dates and soaking water in the food processor until smooth, scraping down the sides as necessary. Add egg, 3/4 cup syrup, oil, butter, 2 teaspoons vinegar and vanilla and process until smooth and creamy. Scrape the date mixture into the well in the dry ingredients and stir together gently until just combined. Transfer to the prepared pan.
5. Bake the cake until a skewer inserted in the center comes out clean, 30 to 35 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack and let cool completely. Run a knife around the edges to loosen the cake, if necessary, and remove the sides of the pan.
6. **To glaze cake:** Carefully lift the cake from the pan bottom and place on a cake stand or serving plate. Whisk maple syrup, vinegar and confectioners' sugar in a small bowl. Add water, 1 teaspoon at a time, if necessary to make a spreadable consistency. Spread the glaze evenly over the top of the cake, then decorate with the remaining 1/3 cup walnuts.

**MAKES 12 SERVINGS.**

**PER SERVING:** 342 CALORIES; 16 G FAT (4 G SAT, 4 G MONO); 28 MG CHOLESTEROL; 48 G CARBOHYDRATE; 4 G PROTEIN; 3 G FIBER; 136 MG SODIUM; 201 MG POTASSIUM. **NUTRITION BONUS:** High omega-3s. \*