



LifeCraft Day at the Barn Handout for Lecture Two: Wifery

Sofia's favorite tools for the home...

In the Kitchen:

Cookbooks:

Nourishing Traditions by Sally Fallon: This book is full of recipes but its real value is in the side bars describing traditional use of living food and its preparation (they are positively outloud, after dinner reading!)The recipes actually aren't very good but the sections on fermented food (read the sidebars to learn why you should have some at every meal!) and tonics and superfoods is invaluable. Great way to start learning how God designed us to benefit from the fruits of the land in our eating.

Mastering the Art of French Cooking by Julia Child: the hands down "how to" treat all food and learn the most fundamental techniques of food preparation. NO photos and a bit of flipping back and forth between master recipes and variations. Keep it by your bed for night time reading:)

The Greens Cookbook by Deborah Madison: Vegetarian cookbook. Really good recipes for delicious ways to get more veggies into your meals.No pictures

The Smitten Kitchen by Deb Perlman: Great, fun but delicious and healthy, family pleasers. Nothing too exotic so pantry friendly. Good photos

Recipes from My Mother by Rachel Allen: delicious, family friendly farm meals from head instructor of Ballymoe Cookery School, sustainable organic cooking school in Ireland that offers 12 week certification courses (perhaps for an awesome gap year) or 5 week cooking and baking courses using all their farm grown produce and dairy (special sweet 16 mother/daughter adventure or a working vacation for mom? I would LOVE to do this! But I digress...). LOVELY photos and a very peaceful spirit with good cooking techniques.

Baking Cookbooks:

The Cake Bible by Rose Levy Beranabaum. It's just what it says; everything you need to know to bake a good cake, everyday cakes (doesn't everyone eat cake everyday?) and really special cakes. She gives excellent explanations for her recipes so you learn about baking chemistry or why you do things certain ways. Also has a whole section on large event cakes. Probably the only cake book you really need.

Desserts to Die For by Marcell Desaulniers: The title says it all. Special event desserts that aren't too complicated for the home baker. The book is not too big so its not overwhelming and it has great pictures. This is my favorite collection of ice cream recipes. I actually don't

know any others because once I started using these, I didn't look any farther. The Blackberry Praline Ice cream is our favorite.

Artisan Bread in Five Minutes a Day by Hertzberg & Francois: A good entry level book for having fresh bread easily every day. This does not give you the complexity of sourdough or other artisan breads but is WAY better than what you get at the grocery store! Has other good variations on a master recipe for sweet breads and donuts.

Flour Water Salt Yeast by Ken Forkish: really excellent instructional book on how to make real artisan bread that is actually do-able for a home baker. Really good techniques. Also has youtube tutorials in case you learn better from watching someone!

Five Months of Monastery Soups by Brother Victor-Antoine d'Avila-Latourrette because everyone needs a good book of soup recipes and this is it. Nice variety and divided into seasonal vegetables.

Kitchen tools:

Immersion blender: use it for everything from making salad dressings, to smoothies, pureed soups to hand cream. I replace it as soon as it burns out. No questions asked.

Electric bread knife: cuts fresh homemade bread without squishing the bread or making the slices too thick. Also replace as soon as it gives out.

Sharp kitchen knives: wish I could recommend a particular set but alas, too expensive to do much "hunting-around" shopping. Do some research and buy the best you can afford. I desperately try to avoid knives made in China. And never put your cutting knives in the dishwasher as the abrasive detergent, sprayers and heat dull the knives over time.

Sharpening stone: Unfortunately, knives don't stay sharp on their own so you do need to keep sharpening them. The electric sharpening tools that make life easier take off a lot of blade before they sharpen so it's much better to use a stone. Perfect job for the men of the household, young and old; nothing gives a man as much satisfaction as a sharp knife! If you have it, use a sharpening steel for quick tune ups between sharpenings.

Cast iron pan and dutch ovens: I love these for many applications,(especially baking bread) enameled and not enameled. And they probably help maintain bone density as you age :)

USA Pans: heavy, stainless steel bakeware that you will be able to pass on to your kids (my sister inherited my grandmother's) my most frequently used pan is a half sheet pan with a narrow lip (cookie sheet) followed by their stainless bread loaf pan and a 10 in springform cake pan.

Misen Roasting Pan: I only just acquired this. *Where have you been all my life?!?.* Expensive, but great for everything.

3M stainless steel scrubbers: This should probably be at the top of my list. This takes everything (even burnt popcorn) off the bottom of your pots without soaking. EVERYTHING is a quick clean up now. Just be sure to throw them away as they start to unravel or downgrade them to other cleaning uses to avoid the possibility of getting small shards of metal in your food and down your throat (I actually know someone that happened to and it was NOT good)

Cleaning tools:

Home Comforts: The Art and Science of Keeping a House by Cheryl Mendelson: this book is a contemporary guide (okay, 1999) to *everything* (technical) that you want to know about housekeeping, from how to read laundry labels, to a guide to understanding different textiles, to choosing linens, to making beds, to organizing closets, to scrubbing floors and toilets...okay, okay. I think you get it. That there is a whole, fat book detailing how to do all these tasks is a sign how little we are passing on the "ordinary functions of life" to our children. Valuable resource (esp. If you are too mortified to ask :).

Miele vacuum: Hands down favorite home tool. Period. So sorry. Very expensive, but everytime I use it I lament over every time I vacuumed without it. Ask for more details and I will wax eloquent:)

3M stainless steel scrubbers: super star cleaner in the bathroom. Does scratch wood

Cleaning Products:

I use only non-toxic cleaners from a subscription company (kind of a pain) called *Truly Free*. You can get pretty much anything you need there. Their enzyme laundry cleaner gets out everything, even Virginia clay (almost). I almost never use bleach. Did you know that women and children have a higher rate of respiration than men so they are more vulnerable to inhaled toxins?

Microfiber dust mit

Old English Furniture Oil: for wood furniture and antiques

Miscellaneous:

REALLY sharp fabric scissors: NO ONE uses my fabric scissors *unsanctioned*. I have a pair of shears and small snips

Sewing machine: Sears Kenmore 158 about 1960's/70's all metal parts. Nothing fancy just super good sewing!

Interior Decorating:

God is my interior decorator because he always finds me what would look best even if I don't agree, and makes sure I get it by making it what I can afford :)

Books on interior decorating:

Carl Larsson series with Text by Lennart Rudstrom: There are three in this series, [A Family](#), [A Farm](#) and [A Home](#). Probably most formative of my domestic aesthetic sense.

Provence Interiors, *Paris Interiors* and *Alpine Interiors* by Lisa Lovett-Smith: Large full photo format of beautiful European aesthetic

Decores Barbares by Miguel Flores-Vianna: Bohemian aesthetic

The English Home magazine: someone gave me about 30 back issues about 10 years ago and I love it (I let my subscription lapse due to inclusion of homes of alternate lifestyle owners). English decorating style tends to be less matched and more well worn and comfortable which is better suited to decorating on a budget (or if God is your interior designer)

The Private Home by Rose Tarlow: The only interior decorating book that I have READ cover to cover and enjoyed it. Sadly, very expensive (and I lent mine to someone and never got it back) so look for it used or check it out of the library.

French Country by Pierre Deux: also expensive, so look for it used. I LOVE this one. (It was gifted to me and I lent it also and didn't get it back.)

The Pattern Language by Christopher Alexander: this is not interior decorating per se but more an architecture book about how being human determines healthy and pleasing living spaces, from cities to bedrooms. This one is an absolute favorite. More of a concept read and not photos other than a few hand schemes.