



A LIFE WELL FED
Recipes to Remember

Confessions from a Pantry

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Photo of the Month



Dear Friend,

I've got some very exciting news to share. **Tieghan Gerard, creator of *Half Baked Harvest*, has joined *A Life Well Fed*.** When I first had the idea to include a chapter of recipes from Special Guests, many people asked if I had ever heard of *Half Baked Harvest*. I would always smile and say, "Of course...hasn't everyone?"

Tieghan's stunning photography draws you in with tantalizing images of pure deliciousness, and her straightforward approach to creating unique, everyday meals keeps you craving for more. With over 5.5 million Instagram followers, 750,000 TikTok subscribers, multiple New York Times bestselling cookbooks, and numerous awards, Tieghan is truly an inspiration. So the next time you're looking for something new and utterly delicious, check out **Half Baked Harvest** for an unforgettable culinary adventure.





Pomegranate Molasses

Have you ever had a memory randomly pop into your mind, leaving you wondering, " *What in the world made me think of that?*" It happened to me not long ago and it's that memory behind the inspiration for this month's recipe.

At the age of 9, I purchased a pomegranate using the change from a grocery store errand to buy lettuce. As you might imagine, it was a magical moment when I peeled back the thick outer layer, only to discover a maze of the most beautiful, tiny, ruby-red seeds I had ever seen in my life. My mom never asked where the change was from the lettuce, but she did ask about the red stained massacre on my shirt. After a long pause, I gave the only answer I could think of...A blank stare and subtle shrug of the shoulder. Today, I still love buying things at the grocery store that look "interesting," even if I had no idea what to do with it.

Adam, Eve, and the Pomegranate—Today, the pomegranate is celebrated for its health benefits, rich in vitamin C, folic acid, and antioxidants. But perhaps the most intriguing part of its history links back to the story of Adam and Eve where ancient Christian scholars believe that the real forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden wasn't an apple—it was a pomegranate. Who knew!!! But one look at the 15th century painting by Botticelli, ***Madonna of the Pomegranate***, and you realize there may actually be some truth in what those

scholars say.

Still not sure about pomegranate molasses? Don't think twice. I've included one of my favorite recipes, [Burrata, Pistachio and Pomegranate](#), and other delicious ideas to get you started.

Pomegranate Molasses Recipe



Burrata, Pistachio and Pomegranate Appetizer

The Power of Music and Alzheimer's

We all recognize the power of music in our own lives. But what about those who suffer from

Alzheimer's?

There is extensive research being done in the area of musical intervention, looking for areas in the brain that are intact and can serve as bridges to help the areas that are not working well. The disease follows a pattern and begins in areas responsible for memory and eventually reaches the brainstem, which controls vital functions like heart rate, breathing, and swallowing. It is unclear why Alzheimer's targets the brainstem last, but interestingly, long-term memory of music stays intact until just before the disease affects the brainstem.

Music can help reduce agitation and ease some of the behavioral challenges that often accompany the disease. Later, even when verbal communication gets tough, music can create a way to connect when words fail. Incorporating music into your relationship with a loved one can help to strengthen the bond and communication.

To learn more about music and memory, here are two helpful articles on introducing music into your loved one's daily routine. [Senior Services of America](#), [Alzheimer's Association](#).

My Journey



Patty Hewett age 9



Sonola accordion circa 1940s

Like many old-school Italian families, at least one child was expected to learn the accordion. My mother was the chosen one. She began playing at age 9, and just a few years later, it was clear she was musically gifted. My grandparents were so proud of her

accomplishments, that, in 1946, they borrowed nearly three months' salary to buy her a beautiful Sonola accordion—with her name in rhinestones.

Throughout the small town of Ottawa, IL, my mom could be heard playing at the local taverns and entertaining patrons on a Saturday night. You can only imagine the stories I heard of how unfair it was she was stuck playing music for strangers while her brother and all her friends were out having fun.

My mother played that accordion for nearly 75 years. Even in the late stages of her disease, she entertained the residents and staff at the Lancaster Memory Care. I'll never forget the day "it" finally happened. I walked into her room, and for the first time, I realized she didn't know who I was... even after a gentle reminder. Although I had known this day would come, nothing could have prepared me for the heartbreak of that moment. Later that day, everyone gathered around the nurses' station for an impromptu performance. That same mom, who didn't recognize her daughter, entertained everyone with a polka that would have made Lawrence Welk proud. She may not have known who I was, but as I watched her play, I realized that same young girl who once played in the taverns was still in her heart—and that made me happy.

That was the last time I ever heard her play. I am grateful for technology and the [videos of my mom entertaining us with her music](#). After she passed, I stored the accordion in the basement. Until one day I realized that beautiful instrument deserved a special place in our home, where its beauty and the story of the remarkable woman who played it could be shared with everyone. Today, not a single person enters that room without walking up to take a closer look and asking, *"What's the story behind this?"* My answer is always the same —It was my mother's accordion, and what a great story it is.

That's it for this month. The Holidays are just around the corner and it's time for me to get back into the kitchen.

Until next time, I wish you health, happiness, and a life well fed.



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