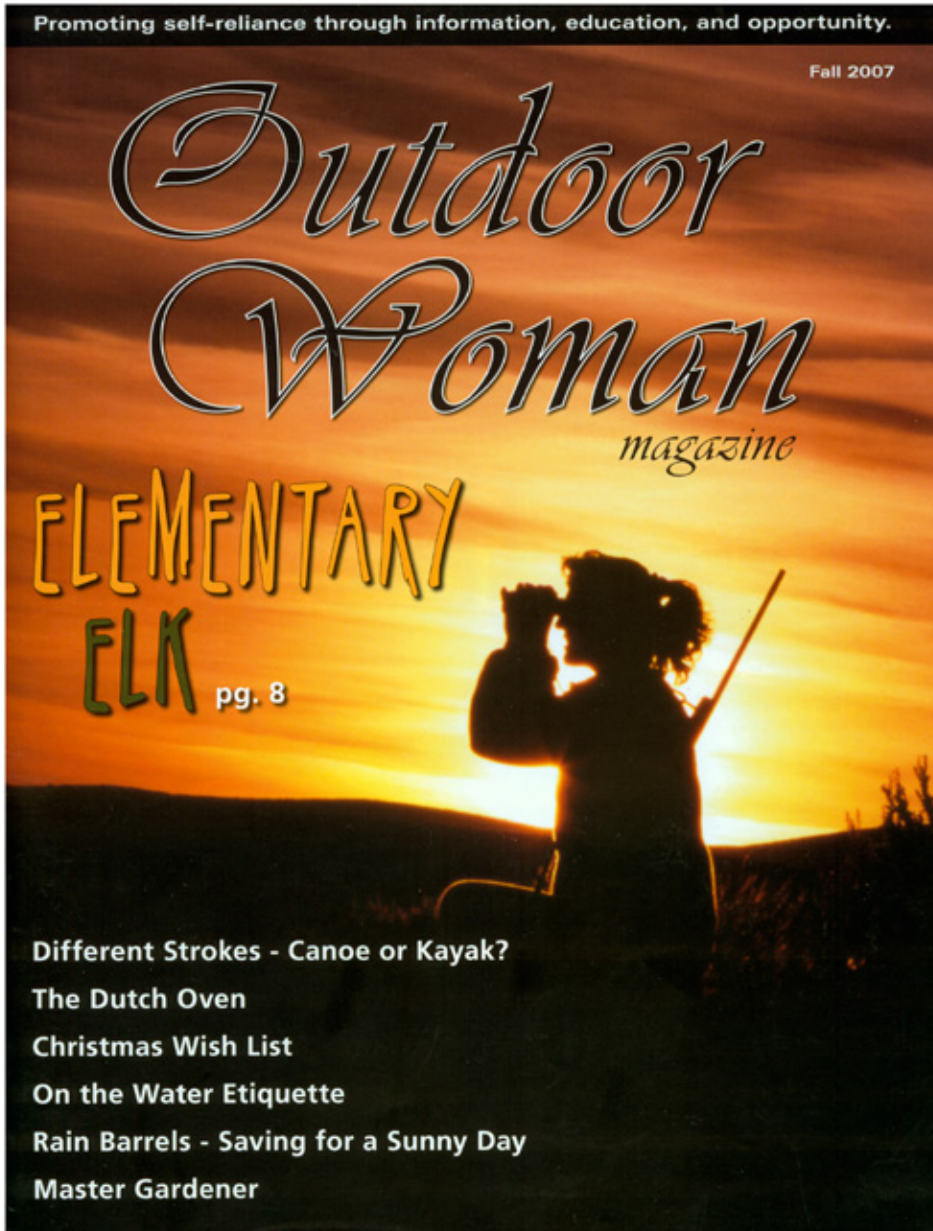




Our Products as featured in...

P. O. Box 380, South Pittsburg, Tennessee 37380
Pho. 423.837.7181 Fax 423.837.8279
ftp.lodgemfg.com www.lodgemfg.com

Page 18



the Dutch Oven

Versatile,
Historic,
and Fun

Story by Andra Bryan Stefanoni
Photography by David Rasmussen & Kenneth Keller

Give outdoor woman Luann Waters the choice of a tool she'd most want to have — whether in her backyard or on a cross-country RV trip — and she'll pick a Dutch oven every time.

She's not alone. The simple but sturdy cast iron cooking vessel has gained popularity to the extent that an Internet search will yield dozens of statewide, national, and international Dutch oven societies and thousands of recipes.

But it's nothing new.

Dutch ovens have played a role in our nation's history starting with early settlers and moving through the decades with cowboys on cattle drives, soldiers in the Civil War, and pioneers on their way west. Lewis and Clark listed the Dutch oven as one of their most valuable pieces of equipment.

Today Dutch ovens make appearances at muzzleloader rendezvous, youth camps, living history demonstrations—even as state symbols (Utah and Texas).

When Waters, a native of Oklahoma, learned to use one, she became so enamored with it that she integrated Dutch ovens into her career and now travels the nation teaching countless others the outdoor cooking technique.

"The beauty of a Dutch oven is that you can cook in one anywhere,

in any condition," Waters said. "The hottest workshop I taught Dutch ovens at was about 99 degrees in August in Oklahoma, and the coldest one was in Wisconsin in March in about 20 degrees. It doesn't matter—the food still turns out great every time."

"Literally anything you can do in your kitchen at home you can do in a Dutch oven. They're great for backyard entertaining, where you can get your guests involved and make it something to experience together," Waters said.

She distributes recipes laminated on index cards to her guests. "You can assign various tasks, like chopping, measuring, or lighting the briquettes, and use it as a tool to ease people into the outdoors if they're not already outdoors people," she said. "They can find out it's fun and can be successful at it, then maybe be inspired to go to a campground and try it on their own."

Steve Robinson, *Northwest Dutch Oven Society (NWDOS)*, says his club's approximately 25 members are

TRIED AND TRUE TIPS:

- Line the bottom and sides of a Dutch oven with parchment paper before pouring in cobblers, cakes, or other messy foods to make clean up a snap.
- When cooking in the backyard or at a campsite use a fire pan underneath the briquettes for safety, to avoid burning grass or leaving marks on concrete, and for ease in disposing of ash. Shallow galvanized metal pans are available from feed stores for about \$5 and hold coals quite nicely; in a pinch a double-layer of heavy-duty aluminum foil will do.
- The brand of charcoal used does make a difference. In informal studies by Dutch oven experts on uniformity of briquette size, length of burn time, and how readily they started, Kingsford™ beat other brands each time.
- A lid lifter is well worth the small investment, allowing the cook to remove the lid in the most efficient and safe manner while avoiding getting coals or ash in the food.

attracted to Dutch ovens for numerous reasons. "For some folks it's the charm of cooking with a heritage-based cooking form; for others it's the friendships that are formed by being in a group that enjoys sitting around the campfire," he said. "For others it may be because the whole family

can participate, and still others may just love to eat." The club, based in Tacoma, Washington, meets monthly to do just that, says Loris Fabyunkey, NWDOS director. "Our activities always revolve around cooking and eating. Sometimes we camp for a weekend in the local area, potluck

at a member's house, or attend an event hosted by another group like the *Mountain Man 'Rain-de-Vois'* put on by the *Washington State Muzzleloaders Association*," she said. The club also hosts a demonstration booth at local farmers' markets and holds workshops—in short, any event

GETTING STARTED

Intimidated by the thought of cooking in a Dutch oven? Have one sitting in your garage that you've wanted to use but just haven't mustered the courage?

It's easier than you think. "Most recipes that can be cooked in a large pot on your kitchen stove, in a crock-pot, or in a casserole dish can be cooked in a Dutch oven," says outdoor woman Ellen Benitz, longtime Dutch oven instructor at *Women in the Outdoors* events.

Here's how:

- For your maiden voyage into Dutch oven cooking, select a simple recipe that basically involves opening cans, chopping a few vegetables, and heating.
- Don't attempt your first Dutch oven meal far from home—try it on the driveway or in the backyard, where any cooking utensils you might have forgotten are only a few steps away.
- Pre-chop ingredients like onions and peppers in an indoor kitchen; place in a zippered plastic bag and transport with your other supplies.
- Set your Dutch oven over an area of bare ground that can accommodate hot coals, or over a disposable foil tray (like the kind you might use to cook a Thanksgiving turkey).
- Use a charcoal chimney (purchased at Wal-Mart or Target for about \$19) for a jump-start on getting your coals hot.
- Most recipes created for Dutch oven cooking specify the number of briquettes to place under the oven and on the lid to ensure the even, all-around heat necessary for cooking (think kitchen oven). Following the recommended formula is especially important when you bake desserts or breads in a Dutch oven.
- Purchase a cookbook especially for Dutch oven cooking to get you well on your way. Try "Cast Iron Cooking for Dummies," (\$19.99), "World Championship Dutch Oven Cookbook," (\$9.99), or "The Dutch Oven Resource Cookbook," (\$16.99), all of which include tips and techniques in addition to recipes and categorize recipes according to level of difficulty.



A 12" Dutch oven is an excellent "first oven." Add a carabiner to the handle to hang your oven over the fire.

DUTCH OVEN SIZES

5", standard depth	1 pint
8", standard depth	2 quarts
10", standard depth	4 quarts
12", standard depth	6 quarts
12", deep	8 quarts
14", standard depth	8 quarts
14", deep	10 quarts
16", standard depth	12 quarts

Ovens with legs and flat tops are best for cooking with briquettes. Ovens without legs are great for sitting directly on your fire.

OPPOSITE: Bubbling hot Hamburger/Tater Tot Casserole, ready to eat



Page 21

LEFT TO RIGHT: A screen shields the Dutch oven from the wind. Stacked ovens share the heat for more efficient use of your briquettes. A charcoal chimney, lid lifter and heavy glove help make Dutch oven cooking easier and safer.

in which they can incorporate Dutch oven cooking.

Fabyunkey has found her Dutch oven invaluable while cooking for a large group of family and friends, as a life-saver during electrical blackouts, and as a way to keep the heat out of the kitchen on hot summer days.

If you think Dutch ovens are simply glorified crock pots, good for mostly soups and stews, think again: Ellen Benitz, longtime Dutch oven instructor at *Women in the Outdoors* events, said she appreciates the adaptability Dutch ovens give to just about any recipe.

"I have ladies at our workshops make everything from pizza to rich crab bisque to decadent brownies," she said. "Once they see that a Dutch oven doesn't just mean a big batch of chili, they're hooked."

Andra Bryan Stefanoni is a Kansas-based freelance writer but has traveled extensively throughout the United States and South America seeking outdoor experiences including hiking, backcountry camping, archaerology, mountain biking, fishing, turkey hunting, and canoeing. With a masters degree in communication, her career includes almost two decades in newspaper, magazine, and broadcasting, and four years as the director of a science education center. She was the

TEMPERATURE CONTROL

As a general rule of thumb, the number of briquettes needed to give you 350 degrees is twice as many as the diameter of your Dutch oven. For example, a 12" Dutch oven would need 24 briquettes to reach 350 degrees.

Depending on the type of cooking you are doing, a certain number of briquettes are placed on top and underneath the oven. For simmering soups, stews and chili, place 1/3 of the total briquettes on the lid, and the remainder underneath in a single layer.

For baking breads, biscuits, pies and cobblers, place 2/3 of your briquettes on the lid and arrange the remaining 1/3 in a single layer beneath the oven.

For roasting meats, casseroles, quiche, vegetables, and beans; divide the briquettes evenly between

the lid and bottom. Again, arranged in a single layer.

Most conventional recipes can be cooked at 350 degrees by varying the length of time they cook.

To estimate an increase or decrease in temperature, figure one briquette equals 10 - 15 degrees of heat in optimum conditions. Using 350 degrees as your base temperature, add or decrease the number of briquettes to reach your desired heat level. Ambient temperature and wind will influence the amount of heat produced, so just keep an eye on your dish. Add more briquettes if necessary. It's best to add heat slowly - it's just about impossible to cool down an over-heated Dutch oven without sacrificing your dinner. When adding or removing briquettes for temperature control, remember to do so from the top and the bottom.

a biologist and avid outdoor enthusiast, have combined their interests in natural history, conservation, and wildlife observation to develop their home, Woods Edge, to include a wetland, small prairie, diverse trees, and gardens.

founding member of the Southeast Kansas chapter of Women in the Outdoors. She now balances writing for her local newspaper and regional and national magazines with teaching a high school journalism class and being a work-from-home mom with two outdoor-loving sons. She and her husband,

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

The International Dutch Oven Society (www.idos.com/)

Based in Utah, this organization has nearly 30 chapters from coast to coast that participate in championship cook-offs and frequent DOGs (Dutch Oven Gatherings). Or visit the Lodge Manufacturing Company website at www.lodgemfg.com.

Page 22

In Season



Raspberry Apricot Glazed Cornish Game Hen

Raspberry Apricot Glazed Cornish Game Hens

- 2 Cornish Game Hens
- 1/2 cup Raspberry vinaigrette
- 1/2 cup Apricot jam
- Seasoned salt
- Pepper to taste

Night before serving: Clean and rinse game hens. Inject sparingly with raspberry vinaigrette.

Next day: Season cavities of birds with seasoned salt and pepper. Rub outside of birds with seasoned salt and pepper. Secure legs with chef's string. Fold wing tips behind back if desired.

Preheat 12" Dutch oven with 12 briquettes on the top and 12 underneath. (For easy clean up, line the bottom of Dutch oven with foil.)

Place birds in pre-heated Dutch oven, breast-side up. Cover and cook 45-60 minutes.

Mix together 1/2 cup raspberry vinaigrette and 1/2 cup apricot jam. Spread 1/2 of the glaze mixture over the birds 20 minutes before they are finished cooking. Spoon remaining glaze over birds just before serving.



DUTCH OVEN RECIPES

Hamburger/Tater Tot Casserole

- 2 pounds lean ground beef
- 1 large yellow onion, diced
- 7 garlic cloves, minced
- Salt & pepper to taste
- 1 can drained sweet corn
- 1 can cream of mushroom soup
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 1-1/2 cups sour cream
- 2 T. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 bag frozen tater tots
- 4 cups Colby-jack cheese, shredded

In hot Dutch oven, sauté ground beef, onions, garlic, salt, and pepper until beef

is brown and onions are translucent. Drain if necessary. Pour meat mixture in large bowl; add soups, sour cream, drained sweet corn, and Worcestershire sauce.

Layer frozen tater tots evenly in bottom of Dutch oven. Spread 1/2 of the meat mixture over tots. Sprinkle layer of cheese over meat sauce (approximately 1/2). Pour in remaining meat mixture, top with remaining cheese.

Cook at 350 degrees for 90 minutes or until cheese is barely starting to brown.

Serves 12-15

Too Easy Cobbler

(This is a great recipe for the kids to be in charge of!)

- 2 cans blueberry pie filling
- 1 box yellow cake mix
- 1 can lemon/lime soda (7-Up, Sprite, Mountain Dew, etc.)

Directions: Pour pie filling into Dutch oven lined with parchment paper or foil*. Pour dry cake mix over filling. Spread evenly. Gently pour soda evenly over cake mix.

Bake for 45 minutes at 350 degrees or until golden brown. Serves 6-8.

Experiment with different combinations of pie filling and soda flavors. There are no rules!

*Pre-formed Dutch oven liners are also available at larger sporting good stores.

LEFT TO RIGHT: Tender golden brown game hens ready to glaze and serve, and Too Easy Cobbler.