

BETWEEN SEASONS

at the Table

Late Summer into Autumn

Seasonal recipes, intimate hosting, and simple luxury

by Kendra Sanford

A Letter from Kendra

This book was created for the beautiful pause between seasons - when peaches are still sweet, the evenings begin to cool, and the table starts calling us back home.

I believe food can be generous without being complicated, elegant without being stiff, and memorable without requiring perfection. These recipes are meant to help you create a feeling: warm light, nourished people, meaningful conversation, and a table where everyone can exhale.

Beauty is how you make people feel. Luxury is how you care for yourself and your environment. Let this book be one small way to practice both.

- Kendra

The Between-Seasons Pantry

Late Summer	Autumn	Always Worth Keeping
Peaches, tomatoes, corn, basil, berries	Apples, pears, sweet potatoes, mushrooms, sage	Olive oil, good butter, Dijon, honey, flaky salt
Fresh herbs and crisp greens	Warm spices, thyme, nuts, cider	Sparkling water, candles, linen napkins, a serving platter

A simple hosting rule

Choose one beautiful focal point - flowers, a platter, candles, or a signature drink. Let everything else support it. Elegance comes from restraint, not excess.

01 Peach, Burrata & Basil Table Salad

INGREDIENTS

- 3 ripe peaches, sliced
- 8 oz burrata
- 2 cups arugula
- Fresh basil
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp balsamic glaze
- Flaky salt and black pepper

METHOD

1. Arrange arugula on a wide platter.
2. Add peaches and torn burrata.
3. Drizzle with olive oil and balsamic glaze.
4. Finish with basil, salt, and pepper.

Lady of Leisure note: Serve chilled with linen napkins and sparkling water in stemmed glasses.

02 Blackened Tilapia with Brown-Butter Corn

INGREDIENTS

- 4 tilapia fillets
- 2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp thyme
- 4 ears corn
- 2 tbsp butter
- 1 lime
- Salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Mix spices and season fish generously.

2. Sear tilapia in a hot skillet for 3-4 minutes per side.
3. Cut corn from the cob and saute in browned butter.
4. Finish corn with lime and serve beneath the fish.

Lady of Leisure note: A weeknight plate that still feels restaurant-ready.

03 Honey-Chili Chicken with Roasted Grapes

INGREDIENTS

- 4 chicken thighs
- 2 cups seedless grapes
- 2 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp chili flakes
- 1 tbsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Whisk honey, chili, Dijon, and oil.
2. Coat chicken and roast at 400°F for 25 minutes.
3. Add grapes and roast 12-15 minutes more.
4. Rest before serving with pan juices.

Lady of Leisure note: Use a dark platter so the grapes and glaze look jewel-toned.

04 Tomato Butter Pasta for the Last Warm Nights

INGREDIENTS

- 12 oz pasta
- 2 cups cherry tomatoes
- 4 tbsp butter
- 2 garlic cloves
- 1/2 cup Parmesan
- Fresh basil
- Salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Burst tomatoes in butter over medium heat.
2. Add garlic and cook briefly.
3. Toss with hot pasta and a splash of pasta water.
4. Fold in Parmesan and basil.

Lady of Leisure note: Serve by candlelight with chilled mineral water or rosé.

05 Creamy Sweet Potato & Sage Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 2 large sweet potatoes
- 1 small onion
- 3 cups vegetable stock
- 1/2 cup cream
- 6 sage leaves
- 2 tbsp butter
- Salt, pepper, nutmeg

METHOD

1. Saute onion in butter.

2. Add sweet potato and stock; simmer until tender.
3. Blend until smooth and stir in cream.
4. Fry sage leaves and place on top.

Lady of Leisure note: A shallow bowl and crisp fried sage make this feel special.

06 Cider-Glazed Salmon with Apples

INGREDIENTS

- 4 salmon fillets
- 1 cup apple cider
- 1 apple, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp Dijon
- 1 tbsp butter
- Fresh thyme
- Salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Reduce cider by half in a skillet.
2. Whisk in Dijon and butter.
3. Sear salmon, then add apple slices and glaze.
4. Finish in a 375°F oven for 6-8 minutes.

Lady of Leisure note: Pair with roasted green beans and warm bread.

07 Roasted Mushroom & Gruyère Toasts

INGREDIENTS

- 8 oz mushrooms
- 4 thick bread slices
- 1 cup shredded Gruyère
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tsp thyme
- 1 tsp balsamic
- Salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Brown mushrooms in butter.
2. Season with thyme and balsamic.
3. Pile onto toasted bread and top with cheese.
4. Broil until melted and golden.

Lady of Leisure note: Cut into small pieces for an intimate cocktail-hour bite.

08 Maple-Dijon Brussels Sprouts

INGREDIENTS

- 1 1/2 lb Brussels sprouts
- 1 tbsp maple syrup
- 1 tbsp Dijon
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1/3 cup pecans
- Salt and pepper

METHOD

1. Halve sprouts and toss with oil, maple, and Dijon.
2. Roast at 425°F for 22-25 minutes.
3. Toast pecans separately.

4. Finish with pecans and black pepper.

Lady of Leisure note: Serve in a low cream-colored bowl for contrast.

09 Brown Sugar Pear Skillet Cake

INGREDIENTS

- 3 pears
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon

METHOD

1. Arrange sliced pears in a buttered skillet.
2. Beat remaining ingredients into a thick batter.
3. Spread batter over pears.
4. Bake at 350°F for 30-35 minutes and invert warm.

Lady of Leisure note: Serve with softly whipped cream, not overly sweet.

10 Blackberry-Thyme Spritz

INGREDIENTS

- 1 cup blackberries
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup water
- Fresh thyme
- Sparkling water
- Lemon

METHOD

1. Simmer berries, sugar, water, and thyme for 8 minutes.
2. Strain and chill the syrup.
3. Add 1-2 tablespoons syrup to each glass.
4. Top with sparkling water and lemon.

Lady of Leisure note: Add wine or spirits only for adults who choose; the base is elegant without alcohol.

11 Vanilla-Chai Affogato

INGREDIENTS

- Vanilla ice cream
- Strong hot coffee or espresso
- Pinch of cinnamon
- Crushed cardamom cookies

METHOD

1. Place one scoop of ice cream in each small glass.
2. Pour hot coffee over it at the table.
3. Dust with cinnamon and cookie crumbs.

Lady of Leisure note: The drama is in pouring it in front of your guests.

12 The Between-Seasons Board

INGREDIENTS

- Aged cheese
- Fresh figs or grapes
- Thinly sliced apple
- Toasted nuts
- Honey
- Crackers
- Dark chocolate

METHOD

1. Choose one item from each texture: creamy, crisp, juicy, crunchy, and rich.
2. Arrange in loose clusters rather than straight rows.
3. Leave a little open space so the board looks abundant, not crowded.

Lady of Leisure note: This is the easiest way to make an ordinary evening feel hosted.

A Simple Evening Menu

For four people, serve the Peach, Burrata & Basil Table Salad, Blackened Tilapia with Brown-Butter Corn, Maple-Dijon Brussels Sprouts, and Brown Sugar Pear Skillet Cake. Prepare the blackberry syrup and dessert earlier in the day; set the table before cooking; light candles just before guests arrive.

Suggested mood

Low lighting, a clean table, cloth napkins, soft soul or jazz, sparkling water already poured, and phones set aside for the first twenty minutes.

The goal is not to perform hospitality. It is to create enough ease that everyone - including you - can enjoy the evening.

Seasonal Grocery Guide

Produce	Dairy & Protein	Pantry & Finishing
Peaches, pears, apples, grapes, blackberries	Burrata, Gruyère, Parmesan, cream, butter	Olive oil, balsamic glaze, Dijon, honey, maple syrup
Tomatoes, corn, sweet potatoes, mushrooms	Tilapia, salmon, chicken thighs, eggs	Smoked paprika, cinnamon, thyme, sage, basil
Arugula, Brussels sprouts, garlic, onions	Vanilla ice cream	Pecans, crackers, dark chocolate, sparkling water

Closing Note

May your table be beautiful enough to inspire you, relaxed enough to welcome you, and generous enough to hold every version of the woman you are becoming.

Kendra Sanford