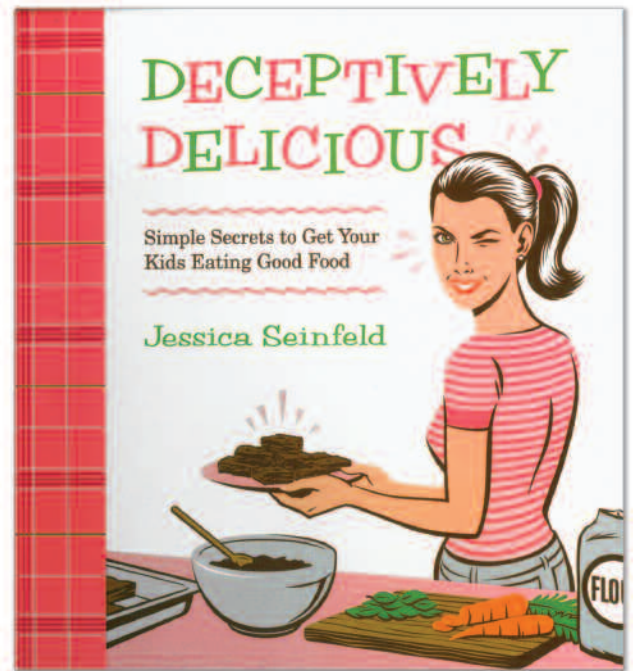


Deceptively Delicious: Simple Secrets to Get Your Kids Eating Good Food

by Jessica Seinfeld (HarperCollins, \$24.95)



For dinner tonight, Mom, may we have the broccoli-camouflaged chicken nuggets followed by a side of butternut-squash-drenched macaroni and cheese? And for dessert, please, please may we have spinach-laced brownies?

You may not ever hear these words come out of your children's mouths, but if you believe Jessica Seinfeld, wife of comedian Jerry Seinfeld, these are her kids' favorite dishes. Of course, her children do not know that their best-loved foods are usually spiked with healthy pureed vegetables and fruit.

A culinary delight? Or a cruel joke?

Parents have to constantly scheme to stay one step ahead of their children, who seem to have written the book on avoiding healthy foods. What father or mother hasn't begged, bribed, cajoled, even promised a hot fudge sundae if only their child would eat one measly bite of peas?

Seinfeld's theory is: If you can't beat 'em, join 'em—or at least, trick 'em. Her new cookbook, *Deceptively Delicious*, is well organized and user-friendly.

She succinctly describes the process, starting with proper kitchen equipment, which includes a rice steamer and a food processor, along with a cornucopia of basic kitchen utensils that most of us already own. She even provides a helpful list of pantry basics.

Step-by-step instructions for pureeing are outlined in a detailed though not overly cumbersome fashion, with brief nutritional facts added in for good measure. As a bonus there are accompanying photos for many of the recipes. Interspersed throughout the book are helpful tidbits, sidebars, and quotes.

At the heart of the book, of course, are the recipes, which were approved by a nutritionist. All of the recipes featured are those generally favored by children, and they are categorized into Breakfast, Mealtime, and Desserts. Some examples from each section include: scrambled eggs with cauliflower; pancakes with sweet potato; pita pizzas with spinach; burgers with mushrooms and zucchini; couscous with yellow squash and carrot; chocolate pudding with avocado; chocolate chip cookies with chickpeas; and marshmallow crispy treats with brown rice and flaxseed.

None of the recipes is too complicated, and most take only minutes to prepare, appealing to the busy mother. The biggest investment of time, Seinfeld says, is the one day a week that she spends pureeing all of the various fruits and vegetables she will use

in recipes throughout the rest of the week. This, she says, takes her about an hour.

Seinfeld stresses that she still offers her children fresh vegetables in their undisguised state with every meal so that they won't get the idea that it is acceptable to eliminate these from their diets.

Deceptively Delicious is also well-indexed; for example, you can find the recipe for Carrot Cake Muffins under the name of the recipe itself, under all the recipes that use a carrot puree, and under all the recipes that use a cauliflower puree.

Seinfeld is not the first frustrated mother to use trickery and deceit to ensure her children consume healthy food. Earlier this year, Missy Chase Lapine released *The Sneaky Chef*, a book that is very similar in concept to Seinfeld's. Like Seinfeld, Lapine advocates sneaking pureed vegetables into her children's food and has written a similarly styled cookbook.

With childhood obesity a national epidemic, these cookbooks are timely and relevant, especially if it causes you to think about how to better serve your children. □

Holiday/Seasonal Books

After you've deceived your children with sweet-potato cocoa, reward them with some of these newly released holiday picture books:

The Christmas Candle by Richard Paul Evans. Illustrated by Jacob Collins (Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing, \$9.99).

Olivia Helps with Christmas by Ian Falconer (Atheneum, \$18.99).

The Best Hanukkah Ever by Barbara Diamond Goldin. Illustrated by Avi Katz (Marshall Cavendish Children's Books, \$16.99).

Bear's First Christmas by Robert Kinerk. Illustrated by Jim LaMarche (Simon & Schuster / Paula Wiseman Books, \$16.99).

Letter on the Wind: A Chanukah Tale by Sarah Marwil Lamstein. Illustrated by Neil Waldman (Boyd's Mills, \$16.95).

The Latke Who Couldn't Stop Screaming: A Christmas Story by Lemony Snicket. Illustrated by Lisa Brown (McSweeney's, \$9.95).

Merry Christmas, Cheeps! by Julie Stiegemeier. Illustrated by Carol Baicker-McKee (Bloomsbury USA Children's Books, \$9.95). Baicker-McKee is a Pittsburgh resident.