

Cozy Scribe Vol. 15, June 2026

Summer Traditions

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Hello Cozy Readers:



June is many things. June is the end of the school year and the official announcement that summer is here, no matter what region of the country you live in. June means high school graduations and wedding ceremonies with June brides. June is also summer traditions like backyard barbeques and picnics at the lake.

This June is special for my family. Our youngest grandson, Austin, has graduated from high school and is beginning a new chapter in his life. So proud of this milestone in his life, yet sad that it also signals the end to his childhood.



Where did the time go? Can we capture those precious fleeting childhood memories ... his first tentative steps, the time we took him on a Thomas the Train ride, or his first experience feeling the sand between his toes with ocean waves splashing his feet. The birthdays that flew by in rapid succession ... the loss of baby teeth, Cub Scout pinewood derbies, or the thrill of learning to ride a two-wheel bicycle. Look! No training wheels.

His future stretches before him. What wonders will he see and do? I want the world for him, like any other grandparent. I hope I'll still be around to witness the turns his life will take and the achievements he will make. It's a fact of life that time moves too fast when we least want it to.

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A MADDIE BROOKE MYSTERY

ADMISSION to MURDER



UVA
Nancy M. Wade

Admission to Murder: A Maddie Brooke Mystery

This special project is a cross-over novel blending characters from my two cozy mystery series: A Meadowood Mystery and Maddie Brooke Mystery. It's been interesting writing both characters and trying to keep each gal's unique phrases and mannerisms clear within the storyline. Merry and Maddie are both determined women and a force to be reckoned with and now they combine their efforts to solve the latest murder. Watch for the release of this unique cozy mystery by July 1st.

Two sleuths. One scandal. A son accused of murder.

Maddie Brooke expects a full house at the Magnolia Blossom Inn ... not an involved murder.

When Meredith and Sheriff Doug Gardner from Meadowood, Ohio arrive in Charlottesville for their son Johnny's UVA campus visit, everything is on the line: a coveted baseball scholarship and his future. But after a powerful admissions advisor is found dead, Johnny becomes the prime suspect ... caught near the scene and tied to troubling evidence.

Out of his jurisdiction and out of options, Doug can't protect his son alone as he butts head with Detective Allen Crawford. Merry turns to Maddie for help. Together they dig into a tangled web of rivalries, secrets, and a dangerous college admissions scandal.

As the pressure mounts, Merry and Maddie follow the trail of money and lies, uncovering a truth someone is desperate to keep buried.

Because this time, clearing Johnny's name means exposing a killer and corruption worth millions and a university's reputation.

JUNE RECIPE OF MONTH:



When June celebrations bring guests visiting, an easy buffet charcuterie board solves how to feed everyone and allow them the choice of favorite foods. Here's a selection to arrange that not only appears attractive but is easy to do. You can substitute your own food preferences for any of the choices shown.

SWEET & SAVORY CHARCUTERIE BOARD

PERFECT BRUNCH!

To get started, choose a large sturdy board or platter as your blank canvas. Begin by selecting high-quality, ready-made items from your local deli, bakery or grocery store. Choose items that keep well and taste good cold or at room temperature, such as pre-sliced bagels, donuts, hard-boiled eggs, fresh fruit, melon slices and crunchy granola. As you shop, consider your guest's dietary needs, and add vegan, vegetarian and gluten-free options as necessary. And don't forget about beverages — a pot of freshly brewed coffee, orange juice or mimosas will complement your spread.

1. Divide the Board

Arrange your largest items on the board first. Savory bagels and sweet, puffy doughnuts are similar in size and can be tiled in a diagonal line across the board. This diagonal line will also serve to divide the board so that it has a sweet side and a savory side.



2. Add Savory Notes

Fill the designated savory side of the board with small breakfast breads, such as mini pre-sliced bagels and cocktail croissants. These are delicious as-is, or you can pre-toast them before adding them to the board. Include savory spreads such as herbed cream cheese for a bagel or croissant filling.



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3. Make It Symmetrical

Symmetry is pleasing to the eye and an easy technique to employ when assembling your board. Mirror (or reverse mirror) one side of the board's arrangement so that it matches the other side. Assemble smaller sweet breakfast pastries on the sweet side of the board in the same manner as the savory side. Be sure to include some sweet spreads such as preserves and jellies.



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4. Fill In the Blanks

Add bowls and plates of food to your board to use them as anchor points. Fill in the blank spaces around them with more delicious eats. On the sweet side of the board, we've stacked mini cinnamon rolls next to a plate of fresh orange slices and piled on crunchy granola next to its perfect accompaniment — a bowl of vanilla yogurt.



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5. Include Easy Mains

Continue to fill the savory side of the board with halved hard-boiled eggs, already seasoned and dressed with herbs. Arrange crunchy bacon and plump sausage links nearby along with toothpicks for easy self-serving. Bacon and sausage can be purchased pre-cooked, but you can crisp the bacon in the microwave for 30 seconds before adding it to the board. Similarly, the sausage can be warmed in the microwave to knock the chill off and served at room temperature. Avocado slices are also a good addition and can be used as a bagel topping.



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6. Add Colorful Alternatives

Hash browns are not at their best flavor or texture at room temperature, so opt for brightly colored veggie chips instead. Bags of mixed chips, such as golden potato, sweet potato, taro, yucca, and beet are widely available at most grocery stores. Add a bowl to your brunch board and prepare to refill it as needed.



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