

MAY'S MENU: HONORING OUR MOTHERS AND SOLDIERS



Food

A pasta and chicken dish that will be passed down for generations



Fun

The Family Dinner Project Printable Mother's Day Cards



Conversation

Mother's Day place card conversation starters



MOTHER'S DAY

Name _____

the
FamilyDinner
Project.org

Starters

it would you

be a parent

Need an interesting conversation starter for the table this month? Ask your family what May's two major holidays—Mother's Day and Memorial Day—have in common. While the obvious answer is that they both start with the letter M, there's a deeper connection you may not know about.

According to this History.com article (www.history.com/topics/holidays/mothers-day), what we refer to as "Mother's Day" in America stems from the service and peacekeeping efforts of a woman named Ann Reeves Jarvis. Ann introduced "Mother's Day Work Clubs" in the 1800s to help women care for their children: *These clubs later became a unifying force in a region of the country still divided over the Civil War. In 1868 Jarvis organized "Mothers' Friendship Day," at which mothers gathered with former Union and Confederate soldiers to promote reconciliation.*

See how it all comes together? Service, and peace, and mom?

Whatever this month's holidays mean to you, we offer a few ideas for using them as means for connecting with your family and the wider world in ways that work for you.

1 Pay Tribute to the Moms in Your Family.

There are so many ways to do this—and you can brainstorm with your kids how you would like to be honored, or how you might honor the grandmothers and aunts and any other important women in the family. Certainly writing thank you letters or poems to each person could be a simple and fun project to do together. And of course letting the troops cook you dinner or breakfast in bed is always an excellent exercise! With older kids, why not get a little more creative and suggest a Mother's Day Roast? We dare you.

3 Thanks for Your Service!

So far we've been talking about moms only, but Memorial Day offers an opportunity to say thank you to the men and women who serve or have served our country, whether in your family, your community or the wider world. Memorial Day is about more than just the barbecues (although we love those, too). You can use this brief *Time for Kids* article (www.timeforkids.com/news/meaning-memorial-day/40391) as a mean of generating a discussion about the holiday's deeper meaning with your family, and brainstorm together ways to say thanks. Operation Appreciation, run by our partner Blue Star Families, is a good place to start.

2 Pay Tribute to Moms Outside the Family

There are often lots of ways you can pay it forward with your family on Mother's Day. Do a Google search on 'Mother's Day volunteer opportunities' in your area to find any organized events. Or start right in your own neighborhood, with the people closest to you. Think about who might be alone this Mother's Day. Or who is a struggling single mom. Or who has recently lost their own mother. Then, as a family, pay it forward with a home-cooked meal, or a treat, or simply some of your family's time and attention. We call these meal-oriented acts of kindness #familydinnerforward (And learn how you can participate again for Jamie Oliver's Food Revolution Day on May 15th! (thefamilydinnerproject.org/news-projects/familydinnerforward-and-the-food-revolution/))

4 Pass the Peace, Please.

No mom wishes for fighting, screaming kids during Mother's Day dinner, right? In that spirit, for our final tip of the month, we offer up our tried and true ideas for taming tension at the table (thefamilydinnerproject.org/4week-program/support/tips-for-reducing-tension-at-the-table/) (say that five times fast). If all else fails and peace is still hard to come by, get outside and take a walk together. Nothing soothes the soul like a little nature. For conversation, throw out a relevant conversation starter such as "If you were president, how would you create world peace?" And if your child is ready to take action, check out Kids for Peace (www.kidsforpeaceglobal.org/).



Pasta Poulet

Team member Bri DeRosa shared this family recipe with us. "When we were kids, my sister used to love going out to dinner at a certain local restaurant where they made this chicken and pasta dish called Pasta Poulet," she recalls. "But when the restaurant closed down, my mother tinkered around until she came up with her own version of the dish for my sister, which I think is even better than the original. Whenever we had friends over to the house for dinner, Mom would make this pasta. She once even fed the entire Speech and Debate Team on Pasta Poulet!" Now, many years later, Bri frequently makes the recipe for her own family and occasionally fields phone calls or emails from old friends who remember eating it at her mother's kitchen table and ask for the recipe to pass along to their own kids.



Instructions:

1. Cook the pasta according to package directions.
2. While the pasta is cooking, warm the olive oil in a skillet over medium heat. Add the garlic and saute for about 30 seconds, just until fragrant.
3. Add the chicken to the skillet and cook, stirring frequently, until lightly browned.
4. Season with the basil, oregano, salt, and pepper.
5. Add the chicken broth, stir to combine, and simmer for 5-7 minutes.
6. Add the tomatoes and scallions and cook for an additional 2-3 minutes, just until the tomatoes are softened.
7. Toss the chicken mixture with the cooked, drained pasta. Serve with Parmesan cheese as desired.

Ingredients

- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast, cubed in bite-sized pieces
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 4 medium tomatoes, diced
- 4-6 scallions, diced (white and green parts)
- 1 1/2 cups chicken broth
- 2 tsp. oregano
- 1 tablespoon dried basil
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/2 tsp. black pepper
- 1 lb. angel hair, spaghetti, or other long pasta



The Family Dinner Project Printable Mother's Day Card:


1. Print on standard 8.5 x 11 Paper
2. Cut along red cutlines
3. Fold along brown fold lines
4. Fill out your answers
5. Give it to your Mom

Cut Line	BACK	Fold Line	FRONT
			<p>HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY!</p>
	<p>To _____</p> <p>From _____</p> <p>the FamilyDinner Project.org</p>		
	<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>If I could do one thing for my mother, I would:</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>One thing my mother has taught me is:</p>		<p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>One word I would use to describe Mom is:</p>
			<p>_____</p> <p>Today I learned something new about my mother:</p> <p>_____</p>



CONVERSATION

We're giving you something special this month – place cards complete with conversation starters for Mother's Day!

 Cut Line  _____ Name  MOTHER'S DAY	 Cut Line  _____ Name  MOTHER'S DAY
 Conversation Starters <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is the best compliment you've ever received?• How would you describe yourself to someone who has never met you?• What is your favorite childhood memory?	 Conversation Starters <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you were a fruit, what fruit would you be? Why?• Do you think it's more fun to be a parent or a child?• What has been your proudest moment?
 _____ Name  MOTHER'S DAY	 _____ Name  MOTHER'S DAY
 Conversation Starters <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Who is your oldest friend?• If you could start a new family tradition, what would it be?• If you could have any zoo animal as a pet, what animal would you pick?	 Conversation Starters <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What personality trait has gotten you into the most trouble?• What's something you love to do and haven't done in awhile because you were too busy?• What is your favorite family tradition? Why?

Fold Line

Fold Line