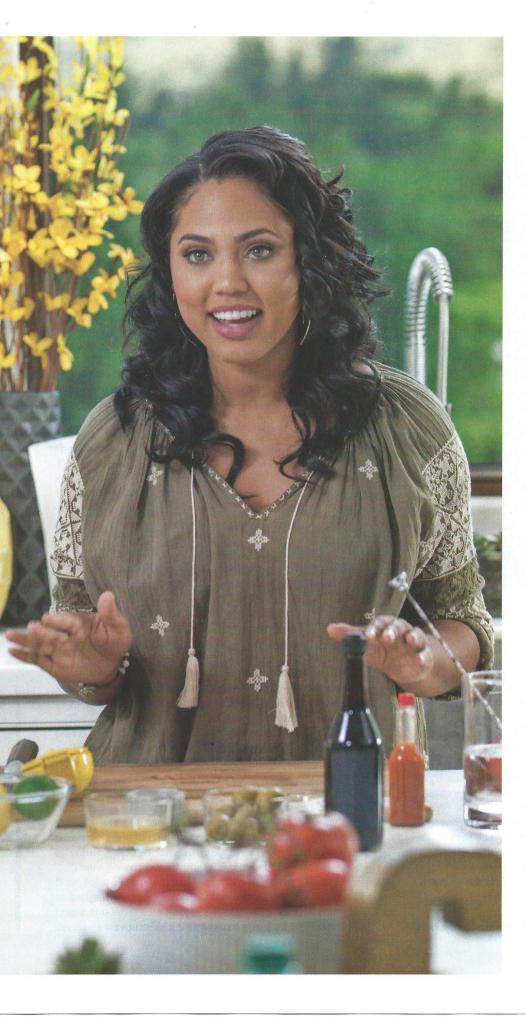


**CELEBRITY CHEF** 

# AYESHA CURRY'S

WINNING RECIPES FOR HER FAMILY'S NEW SEASON

BY GINA ROBERTS-GREY



er husband reigns supreme as one of the NBA's best shooters of all time, having been named the league MVP in 2015 and 2016. But Ayesha Curry, 28, has made some career slam dunks of her own.

The wife of Golden State
Warriors point guard Stephen
Curry skillfully juggles writing
cookbooks, running a national
meal-kit delivery service,
starring in her Food Network
series, Ayesha's Home Kitchen, and
cheering on her husband while
being mom to the couple's two
young daughters, Riley, 5, and
Ryan, 2. And she's doing it all
while readying her family for a
major milestone: kindergarten.

"Everyone tells you time flies by so fast. But until your baby is the one getting ready for that school bus, you don't realize how quickly it feels like you've gone from getting ready to bring them home from the hospital to sending them off to elementary school," Curry says, looking ahead to Riley's first day of kindergarten this fall.

Already an experienced preschooler, Riley knows what it's like to be away from home for a few hours during the day while she's interacting with teachers and peers. However, Curry says it's natural to hope the transition to "big-girl school" won't be too >

## LOVE OF COOKING

On Ayesha's Home Kitchen, which airs on the Food Network, Curry prepares simple but flavorful meals that home cooks can make for their own families.









A FAMILY AFFAIR Curry's husband, Stephen, top, and daughters Riley, left, and Ryan, frequently join her in the kitchen, at home and on her TV cooking show.

much of a shock to her daughter's system. She's also apprehensive about how she personally will cope with the change to the family's routine.

"I am so nervous for this next chapter of our lives," she says. "She'll probably do absolutely great, but I'm sure I'll bawl my eyes out on her first day of kindergarten."

And to keep all her plates spinning while trying to help Riley — and the whole family — prepare for elementary school, Curry relies on one secret ingredient: "I've come to the conclusion that there is no 'right' way to do any of this," she says.

She's written a bestselling cookbook, The Seasoned Life: Food, Family, Faith and the Joy of Eating Well, but Curry says she's yet to find the words for a handbook on how busy moms can strike a balance in their daily lives.

"Maybe one day I'll write that book," she jokes.

Until then, Curry relies on a pen to keep her schedule straight and her life organized.

"The way I find any balance and stay on track is massive planning," she says. "I write everything out so I can see what's filling not only my days, but the schedules of my family, too."

That preparation helps Curry keep a common interruption at arm's length.

"I still struggle with not always answering or responding to a pinging or chirping phone," she acknowledges. "I guess I'm called a Millennial mom and as such, technology and being plugged in is a way of life. So I struggle with ignoring my phone. It's so hard because it's right there in a pocket and is so accessible."

Planning out her day allows Curry to disconnect and enjoy quality time with her family.

"I know it really is the hardest thing to remove

yourself from the world of constant connection. But when we do stop working and when the phone does stop, it feels great to really be in the moment with the girls," she says.

"I tell myself that my phone can blow up, but this is my girls' time. I'll put the phone on 'do not disturb' and set it away. Even if it's just for 30 minutes, I put my phone out of reach or hearing."

#### **ESTABLISHING ROUTINES**

Curry doesn't reserve preparation for just her schedule. She's been busy gearing up for Riley's first day of school for a couple of years.

"We've slowly been prepping ourselves," she says. "In preschool, everything is so regimented and her school has a lot of structure. She's used to that aspect of academic life."

But preschool doesn't necessarily include toting a lunch to school and making healthy choices in the cafeteria. To get Riley ready for that phase of her life, Curry tries both to prepare food in advance, and to teach Riley how to think about the process. "I'll have her help me pack her lunch. That's become a routine we share together and creates the chance for us to discuss how I include things like a napkin, a piece of fruit ... to give her a sense of how to implement thinking ahead in her own life."

Curry also creates opportunities for Riley to develop personal responsibility.

"Some day, she'll have to remember to take her homework or a book to school with her in the morning. And to gear up for that type of accountability, I have her make sure she gathers her blanket or rain boots," Curry says. "Those routines are small steps to the big day when she starts school. And I've been focused on creating opportunities to develop small routines that will help her throughout her academic career and beyond."

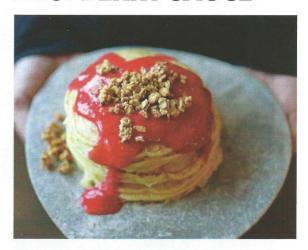
The Curry parents didn't always harness the power of routines.

"I learned the hard way," she candidly recalls. "The first three years of Riley's life, we had no routines. She went to all Steph's games, and our schedule — if you could call it that — was off. She'd go to bed late and then sleep late. It wasn't good."

Ryan's arrival in 2015 cultivated a more structured path for Riley — and her parents.

"That's when I put my foot down," Curry says. Now, regardless of whether they're on the road or hanging out in their San Francisco Bay-area home, the family sticks to a familiar pattern. "Our evenings with the kids are the same no matter >

# **PANCREPES WITH** RASPBERRY SAUCE



#### **INGREDIENTS**

#### **Pancrepes**

4 large eggs

2 cups all-purpose

11/2 cups whole milk

2 T. extra-virgin olive

1 T. honey

1/2 tsp. pure almond extract

Kosher salt (optional)

Granola, for serving (optional)

## Raspberry Sauce

1 cup raspberries

1/4 cup agave nectar

1 T. freshly squeezed lemon juice

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# To make the pancrepes:

Preheat the oven to 175° F. Put a rimmed baking sheet or platter in the oven to keep the finished pancrepes warm before serving.

In a large bowl, lightly beat the eggs. Whisk in the flour, milk, oil, honey, almond extract and a pinch of kosher salt (if desired) until smooth. (A few lumps are OK.)

Heat a large non-stick skillet over medium to medium-high heat. Working in batches, pour the batter into the pan to make pancrepes about 5 inches in diameter. Cook the pancrepes for about 2 minutes on each side, then transfer them to the baking sheet in the oven to keep warm. You will have about 12 pancrepes.

To serve, spoon the raspberry sauce on top of the pancrepes and add a handful of granola for crunch, if desired.

To make the raspberry sauce: Combine the raspberries, agave and lemon juice in a blender and puree. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.





where we are," she adds.

That includes bedtime. "I think that as much as they want to fight back on bedtimes, kids thrive on routine and regimen. I've noticed huge differences since getting Riley on a regular sleep schedule. And in general, parenting Ryan is much easier because of those routines."

#### **COOKING IS A WAY OF LIFE**

Curry has always felt at home in the kitchen. Time spent in her childhood kitchen with her mom, who is of Jamaican and Chinese descent (her father is Polish and African-American) and her grandmother laid the groundwork for Curry's passion for experimenting with foods and flavors of various cultures. And whether they're traditional favorites or twists on recipes her mom and grandma made, fast, fuss-free, healthy meals

are staples in Curry's kitchen. She's found carving out time once a week to prepare them, rather than cooking every day, makes serving healthy meals a snap.

"I know it can be overwhelming to find time to plate food you feel good about serving your family when you're running from school to soccer, dance and gymnastics while trying to find time for homework, storytime and baths," she says.

To steer clear of spontaneous drive-through meals, Curry packs the week's snacks and preps meals every Sunday evening.

"I pack five containers of snacks for the girls and my husband," she says. "Then I'll roast chicken and quinoa in a

rice cooker and (put) some veggies on a tray in the oven to roast. In under an hour, I'll have two to three meals and the week's snacks all ready and packed."

She plans to enlist Riley's help during the school year to assemble her own healthy lunch.

"I like to give her three options I've chosen, like celery, carrots and green pepper. Then I ask her which snack she wants," Curry explains. "That's worked better than me saying, 'You need to eat carrots,' because she feels like she's part of the decision-making process."

Cooking with her daughters has made the girls "more willing to expand their palates and try

foods that are new to them," she says.

One of those new foods is Curry's recipe for chicken tenders (available via her meal-kit delivery service, Homemade, cookhomemade.com).

"That's a perennial kid favorite, but instead of dipping them in batter and frying the tenders, I coat them in flaxseed and bake them."

No matter how much she plans and prepares, Curry knows having a child in elementary school is sure to throw a few curveballs into the family's schedule now and again. The cool and collected mom has a plan for that, too.

"I've already started reminding myself not to sweat the small stuff," she says. "Life is hectic and crazy. It just is. But I'm not going to let the small things (get to me) like bows not being perfectly tucked in their hair."

Instead, Curry is focused on the big picture.

"As long as kids are healthy, fed and getting to school safely, moms need acknowledge they're doing something right."

One thing she's not worried about: social media. Riley became an Internet darling in 2015 when the then 3-year-old adorably stole the show at her father's MVP news conference; she is the subject of several humorous Internet memes and has her own Twitter account, but Curry carefully manages her and her girls' social media presence.

"I think too many people stress about and strive for Instagram perfection," she says. "But that's not realistic and can create a lot of unnecessary and unfair mom guilt.

"I have a Food Network

show and I'm far from a perfect mom. Who knows, I may forget the cupcakes for a class party or something like that," she confides. "There's always someone doing it better. For me, the key to my family having a successful school year comes down to balance, and keeping things in perspective by remembering I am a busy, working mom. And that's OK, because I'm setting good examples for my girls to be strong women.

"As long as my girls are happy and healthy," she adds, "there's no need to get stuck in a cycle of trying to be seen as the most perfect mom and feeling awful if you can't live up to that unreasonable expectation." ■



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