“Start now!” That was the key takeaway from the NYC Nutrition Education Network’s (NYCNEN) March 3rd meeting titled Building Your Brand: Social Media and Beyond. Over 75 students and professionals gathered at the City University of New York (CUNY) School of Public Health to hear from three registered dietitians on different aspects of marketing and branding in the nutrition field.

Adelaide Feuer, RD, Senior Vice President of Brand Marketing at Edelman, a communications marketing firm, opened attendees’ eyes to the strategies used by the private sector to engage consumers. She stressed the fact that marketing is now a two-way street in which consumer respect must be earned. In an era of information overload, telling a compelling story with appealing packaging is what captures consumers’ attention. She then described Edelman’s 3-step approach to developing campaigns: (1) Research the target audience (how they feel, what they think,
Dear Students, Faculty, Alumni, and Staff,

The Grapevine would like to congratulate the 2017 graduating class! We know how hard you’ve worked and we can’t wait to see what you do next.

Something that may help our graduates—and the rest of us—distinguish ourselves are the tips on building a brand that were presented at the March NYCNEN meeting, as shared with us by Tyffanie Ammeter. And for those embarking on the TC dietetic internship in the fall, Lela Swartz shares with us her experience from this past year.

If you haven’t heard about the new food hub coming to the Bronx, Jessica Wilson will fill you in. For fun and a few insights, Callie Troutman reflects on several ways she has observed that food is different for kids today than it was for her as a child in the 80’s and 90’s, and Faith Arnowitz shares ways to deal with coworkers who try to push food on us at work.

For those of us with a real love of cooking and a day to fill, Isabelle Carren-LeSauter shares her adventure, tips, and ricotta cheese recipe for making lasagna from scratch. For another treat, Maeda Qureshi shares another, quicker way to use the ricotta you make: lemon ricotta and kale toast. Also check out our article about turmeric as a potential treatment for major depression.

The Grapevine is written by students in the Teachers College Program in Nutrition. I encourage all of you to get involved. Send your ideas to me at jmo2144@tc.columbia.edu. Thanks to all of the students who contributed to this issue!

Enjoy the issue!

Julie M. O’Shea
Editor-In-Chief
Master’s Candidate, Nutrition Education
facebook.com/TheGrapevineTeachersCollege
Fresh Off the Vine: Events and Announcements

• Congratulations to Dr. Joan Gussow for receiving the 2017 Annual Award of Excellence in Nutrition Education from the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB)! The award will be given out at the Awards Ceremony at SNEB's annual meeting in July.

• You can be there to cheer Joan on as she accepts the award! Save the date for the SNEB's 50th Annual Conference on July 20-24, 2017, in Washington, D.C. For more information about the conference see https://www.sneb.org/2017.

• The Grapevine is seeking an editor-in-chief to begin in the fall 2017 or spring 2018 semester. If interested, email jmo2144@tc.columbia.edu.

2017 master’s graduates (left) and doctoral graduates (below)

Congratulations to Our Class of 2017 Graduates!
Develop a strategy that considers the political environment, risks and opportunities of the product or service, and how the messages will be received. (3) Add a creative piece that will evoke emotions and capture consumers’ attention. Ms. Feuer also offered insights into how RDs working in the private marketing sector can influence the products that companies offer. One example she gave was working with a fast-food chain to meet consumer demand for healthier options, especially for children. In this case, Ms. Feuer helped the company incorporate a serving of fruit with each kid’s meal. Another example is working with a pasta company whose sales have suffered since the low-carb diet craze. The goal of that marketing campaign is to convey the message that pasta is not evil and can be a healthy, appropriate, and fun choice to cook at home.

Pam Koch, EdD, RD, Executive Director of the Laurie M. Tisch Center for Food, Education & Policy, spoke about the identity crisis of the nutrition education field. While the field has evolved since its inception over 100 years ago, many people think of “nutrition education” as simply providing knowledge and facts to people. Dr. Koch described why the term nutrition education works: it’s short, positive, attractive to policy makers, and opens the door to a broader conversation. But there are also aspects that don’t work: it’s boring, outdated, limited, and implies that knowledge is enough. We all know that nutrition education is about so much more than just the nutrient content of the foods we eat. It also includes food security and access issues, among others. Dr. Koch said that one of the next steps nutrition professionals can take to help redefine the term nutrition education is to develop a tagline to go along with it. Dr. Koch concluded by suggesting that nutrition educators begin to work together to develop a unifying message that includes food supply and production, which are often forgotten about as we tend to focus on nutrients and individual health.

Alissa Rumsey, MS, RD, CDN, CSCS, owner of a private practice, rounded out the meeting with a session on how to effectively market yourself online using social media. Her talk was filled with examples, resources, and tips on how to build your brand. She began by clearly defining what a “brand” is: the intentional creation of content that defines you and what you represent. She stressed the importance of developing a clear brand strategy with a consistent message and ensuring your social media content follows suit. Similar to Ms. Feuer, she said consumers buy into branding and content before your credentials, and this is an important consideration to keep in mind. She provided concrete steps for defining your brand, the most important of which is setting aside time to define your ideal clients: who are they, what are their lifestyles, and what will you offer them?

More than anything, Ms. Rumsey emphasized the importance of being authentic. Build a brand that you believe in, that represents what you stand for, and do not be dissuaded from your unique vision by how others are doing it. Figure out what is unique about your brand and let that shine. She ended by encouraging us all to start now. You can always rebrand as your practice evolves. The sooner you start, the sooner you get your name out there and find your voice.

Whether you’ve thought about how to market yourself on social media yet or not, this meeting showed exactly why it is important for professionals in the nutrition field to develop competitive brands, supported by our credentials, so we can maintain our place as the nutrition experts.
This past August, Governor Cuomo announced that New York State will invest $15 million into a new Greenmarket Regional Food Hub in Hunts Point in the South Bronx. The existing Greenmarket Co. food hub will be integrated into the new larger facility. The new facility will also consist of separate areas for other farm and food businesses and for food processing. The new hub is expected to open in early spring or summer of 2018.

A food hub is basically a middleman between local/regional farmers/producers and consumers, restaurants, and institutions, such as hospitals and schools. Food hubs can vary greatly in their operational model, size, and services offered. In addition to aggregating and distributing products, some food hubs also store and process products, such as chopping fruits and vegetables before distribution. Some hubs also run a farmers’ market or farm store and offer food-based classes at their facilities.

The Greenmarket Regional Food Hub will be 120,000 square feet and include a wholesale farmers’ market and cold storage and processing facilities. The purpose of the new hub is to increase New Yorkers’ access to fresh, locally grown and produced food. There are many advantages of this project: increased access for underserved communities; increased support for small- and mid-sized regional farms, helping to strengthen our regional food economy and ensure that our farmers will be able to thrive and continue farming; and the creation of 150 construction jobs and 95 permanent jobs. While these are undoubtedly positive, one potential disadvantage is that it may increase pollution in the neighborhood due to increased truck traffic.

Announced along with the Greenmarket Regional Food Hub was the New York State Grown & Certified Program, which is a voluntary, free program that New York producers can participate in if they are certified under the USDA’s Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) and New York State’s Agricultural Environmental Management (AEM) program. The program includes a New York State Grown & Certified on-product label and a marketing campaign aimed at retail and wholesale buyers and consumers. The goal is for consumers to be able to see the label and know that the item was 1) produced in New York, 2) handled with good food safety practices, and 3) grown in a way that helps protect and conserve natural resources. There is an active Facebook page for the program, where they have been featuring participating farmers—a great resource to learn about the farms and see how the food is produced! Check it out at https://www.facebook.com/NYScertified.

Two existing local food hubs are:

- Corbin Hill Food Project, which aggregates products from 30 New York farms, distributing them to individuals via farm shares, wholesale buyers, groups through Community Connect, and a new Faith & Food Initiative. The minimum order for wholesale and groups is $250.
- Greenmarket Co., which is a food hub run by GrowNYC that aggregates products from 53 farms (mostly from New York but also from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Maine) and distributes to buyers including Michelin-rated restaurants, specialty retailers, bodegas, senior centers, and soup kitchens. The minimum order is also $250. Their distribution center is located Hunts Point in the Bronx and will be moved into the larger upcoming facility.
If you have recently been accepted into a dietetic internship (DI) program or are hoping to become a dietetic intern in the future, you are probably wondering what it is like. While internship programs vary and every intern's experience is different, I can give you some insight by sharing my experience.

I started the DI at TC last fall. The TC DI spans four semesters. During the fall and spring semesters, interns complete a clinical rotation and a community rotation. I completed my clinical rotation during the fall semester and my community rotation in the spring, whereas some of my classmates completed the community rotation in the fall and the clinical rotation in the spring. These rotations each last about 15 weeks. During the summer, interns complete the food service rotation and then the independent practice rotation, each of which lasts about six weeks.

During my clinical rotation, I spent seven weeks at The New Jewish Home, a long-term care facility, and eight weeks at Hoboken University Medical Center. During this rotation I gained insight into the role of a clinical inpatient dietitian and furthered my knowledge of medical nutrition therapy. Under the supervision of a dietitian, I met with patients and conducted nutrition assessments.

In the spring I completed my community rotation. I spent my first five weeks at Gay Men's Health Clinic (GMHC), an organization that serves individuals living with HIV/AIDS. While there, I conducted nutrition assessments and counseling, organized a cooking demonstration and group education session, and contributed to the nutrition newsletter. Next I spent five weeks at HealthBarn USA, a business that provides children's classes focusing on nutrition, cooking, and gardening in Ridgewood, NJ. Through this experience, I learned how to teach children healthy habits and further developed my cooking skills. Next I spent two weeks interning at John Theurer Cancer Center. I shadowed dietitians as they counseled patients, helped write medical documentation, and conducted a cooking demonstration for patients. Next I spent three weeks at Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE), which provides communities with nutrition education through sessions taught by community educators. During my time at CCE, I developed educational materials, attended trainings, and shadowed community educators.

I am now completing my food service rotation with Flik Hospitality Group, which provides food service to businesses. I have been conducting nutrition education tables for customers and learning about food safety and the role of the dietitian in the food service setting. Last is the independent practice rotation, during which interns can return to a previous site or can seek a new site.

I am truly enjoying my experience as a TC dietetic intern. I have been exposed to many areas of nutrition and have met many amazing dietitians. It's hard work, and through it we learn a great deal and make countless connections. Early on in my DI experience a preceptor gave me advice that really resonated with me: “You have to make yourself uncomfortable to become comfortable.” As you experience the DI for yourself, some experiences may make you uncomfortable. Whether it be public speaking, cooking in front of an audience, conducting a counseling session, or something else, remember that the best way to become a pro is practice. When you enter the DI, keep your mind open to uncomfortable and new experiences, learn as much as you can, and enjoy it! My DI experience has confirmed that I like the areas of nutrition I expected to, and it has also exposed me to different areas of nutrition that I have found I like just as much.
Sometimes in an office or school environment there is lots of food around or lots of celebrations. It’s a well-known fact in my office that I’m a nutrition and exercise physiology master’s student. As such, my colleagues seem to think that this justifies their tendencies to be hypercritical of what I choose (and don’t choose) to eat. The behaviors surrounding “food pushing” in workplaces are quite interesting.

Recently my manager’s daughter, a Girl Scout, was delivering cookies to those who had ordered. I was met with stares of surprise, bordering on disgust, that I had chosen not to place an order. When my colleague offered me a Trefoil from the box she ordered and I accepted, she felt the need to broadcast said information across the floor. Of course, if I had politely declined, as I have in the past to similar offers, she would have made some comment along the lines of, “You’re always so good,” or “I wish I could be as healthy as you.” Comments like these are all too common at the office and provide the basis for an interesting conversation about why we feel the need to comment on or judge other people’s food choices—but that’s a discussion for another time.

It's OK to say no when you're not hungry. It can be done in a really nice way. Here are a few tips for dealing with those mostly well-meaning food pushers at the office:

• **Be polite, but firm.** Don’t feel pressured to take something that you don’t want, but do recognize the generous intentions. A response along the lines of, “That’s so nice of you to offer, but, no, thanks,” will suffice.

• **Show up to the party.** Even if you don’t plan on having a piece of cake at your colleague’s birthday celebration at 3 p.m. in the big conference room, be sure to attend so you don’t isolate yourself from your team. If you think you might be uncomfortable being the only one not eating, grab a cup of coffee or tea to sip while you chat and celebrate.

• **Have an excuse.** Don’t feel the need to explain your reasons for not accepting a few Twizzlers, but if your colleague won’t take no for an answer, offer up an excuse. “Thanks, but I’m so full from lunch,” or “Thanks, this looks great! Can I bring some home to my family/roommate/significant other?” will do. Once the food is in your possession, it’s your call whether or not you decide to bring it home.

• **Don’t deprive yourself of the things you love.** If your colleague just returned from a trip to Belgium and is offering you Belgian chocolate, which happens to be your favorite thing, don’t deny yourself the treat. If it’s something that you really do like and want, don’t feel the need to decline the offer, even if the food pushing method of delivery doesn’t exactly agree with you. Brush off co-workers' comments and focus on you. If you want a Girl Scout cookie, have Girl Scout cookie.
5 Ways Food Is Different for Kids Today Than in the 80’s and 90’s

By Callie Troutman

I am a sucker for any article that says it will take me back to the culinary concoctions of my youth—Squeeze-its, Sprinkle Spangles, Clearly Canadian, tan M&Ms, Fruitopia, Dunkaroos, or Ecto-Cooler. The brightly colored packaging and hyper-flavoring is reminiscent of sports practices, after-school snacks, movie treats, and playing outside in the grass. Nutritionally speaking, these foods are pretty horrific, but my memories tied to them are priceless.

Such time-travel articles got me thinking: how were my childhood food habits different from those of kids today? My conclusions are far from scientific, and were drawn from an “n” of three: my sister, my mom, and me. Nevertheless, I have incorporated my observations and experiences into a list of ways food is different for kids today than it was for me as a child of the 80’s and 90’s.

- **Ingredients are more scrutinized.** The first time I remember my parents referring to specific ingredients in food was when they determined Reese’s Puffs cereal had too much sugar to be a suitable breakfast. Other than that, I don’t recall any reference to what was in our food. Today, kids carry around a mental list of the ingredients they are supposed to avoid, based on their parents’ curated diet. Certainly there are children with severe allergies or intolerances, and I am not referring to them. Kids should be focused on foods, not nutrients, and should be eating whole foods with fewer ingredients. They should be allowed to explore different tastes and textures, but with boundaries.

- **Food is now a tenet of American morality.** Parent shaming has been around for a long time, but the list of offenses a parent can commit grows almost daily. Maybe when I was a child my parents felt pressure to cook every night, but today it isn’t just about cooking; what you feed your family becomes a reflection of your success as parents. Raising small humans is no joke, so we need to have grace for ourselves and everyone else!

- **School lunches are vehicles of social stigma.** As a child, I remember the subtle judgments my classmates’ and I made about kids based on their lunches. If I went through the lunch line, it was to snag competitive foods (i.e., school foods sold outside of and in competition with the federally reimbursable meal programs), never to purchase the federally funded school meals. Of course, looking back I am appalled by my judgments, yet I also fear the judgments are getting worse. New legislation in New Mexico even bans lunch shaming or stigmatization practices like making students do chores to pay off lunch debt. School lunch should be a positive experience, and teachers, food service workers, and other kids should all support a culture of eating healthy school lunches.

- **There are more ways to get food than ever.** Although not one of my favorite activities, going to the grocery store with my mom was fairly straightforward: my mom planned a meal, we picked up the ingredients, and she prepared them in the evening. In addition to grocery stores, today we have meal delivery services, apps that allow you to order food from anywhere within a 10-mile radius, specialty grocery stores, online grocery stores, and so on. Children are bombarded with opportunities to eat when getting a haircut, at the doctor, at birthday parties, at the bank, and so on. Filtering options for our children can be important to making sure they are not overwhelmed, and still feel empowered to listen to their hunger. This might mean leading the charge by offering children non-food entertainment at parties.

- **Mealtime isn’t as protected.** The dinner table at my house growing up got a lot of use. Cringe-worthy though it was at the time, I am grateful for my parents’ questions and prodding over casseroles. Maybe it is a product of busyness, but I don’t know that the kitchen table is as protected as it was when I was a child, and especially not as protected as it was when my mom was a child. It is important for families to make time to eat together, as research shows that everyone benefits from family mealtimes.

I am not advocating for the gimmicky products of my youth or suggesting we give up our emphasis on nutrition, but rather pointing out the deep connection food has to our memories. I would hate to see these memories linked to restriction or shame, instead of comfort and security. Yet one thing hasn’t changed: we all want the best for our kids and we are searching for it the best way we know how.
After watching Michael Pollan’s documentary *Cooked*, my boyfriend Matt was inspired and began cultivating his own sourdough starter. Several months and many light, airy, delicious loaves later, he moved on to the next challenge: bread toppings. After perusing our cookbooks, we decided to make a simple cheese. We started with 2 gallons of milk and a quart of light cream, and ended up with enough crumbly, moist, fresh cheese to feed a small army. What to do with all this amazing cheese and the desire for a new culinary project? We decided to make a lasagna entirely from scratch. Here is our story.

My first attempt at homemade pasta yielded a pile of gummy, verging on goopy, “fettuccine,” which Matt dutifully doused in tomato sauce and choked down. Needless to say, I made a few adjustments this time: I used one-third-part semolina flour, added olive oil for flavor, and resisted the temptation to add water while kneading. (If you want to imagine what pasta kneading is like, picture one of those stress balls, but three times the size and for 15 minutes—not easy.) Two hours of active work, along with resting time (for the dough... and for me) yielded a beautiful stack of wide, sturdy, golden, non-sticky noodles. I started simmering a rustic tomato sauce, and chopped and sautéed an assortment of fresh veggies: broccoli, zucchini, onion, and red peppers. When I was ready to layer, I put sauce in the bottom, topped it with a layer of noodles, sauced again, sprinkled on ricotta and veggies, and repeated, until all the noodles were gone and the lasagna had a total of 5 layers. I then baked the lasagna at 350°F for 45 minutes.

Finally, I pulled it out, cut into it, and dug out the first slice. My prior experience with cutting food out of pans has lead me to believe that it is impossible for the first slice to look acceptable. However, the lasagna gods must have been smiling upon me because, when I lifted out the first slice, the defined layers, dripping cheese, and specks of multicolored veggies were perfection. Maybe it was the tears welling up in my eyes, but I’m pretty sure that slice of lasagna had a bit of a glow. The first bite did not disappoint either.

The experience left me, Matt, and seven hungry friends feeling fulfilled, and there were five servings left over. However, the entire process, including the cheese making, pasta rolling, sauce simmering, veggie prepping, layering, and baking took nearly 10 hours from start to finish, only four of which did not involve prepping food. This is something to tackle if you have a real passion for cooking. For anyone still interested in pursuing the noble art of scratch-lasagna-making, here are my tips.

**Be prepared for a full day.** Between cooking and doing dishes, it is a long, arduous, and messy process.

**Have a partner.** Partially because your hand feels like it’s going to fall off 5 minutes into kneading pasta dough, but also because these projects are always more fun if you have someone to enjoy them with.

**Prepare ahead of time.** The cheese can be made a few days ahead, and the sauce and veggies can be cooked and frozen weeks in advance. Fresh pasta, however, does need to be made... fresh.

**Have high excitement, but low expectations.** If you have never done some of these things before, you may run into issues. That’s OK, because as your lasagna guru, I am here to tell you that lasagna making is about the journey, not the end product. But it’s also about eating delicious lasagna, so if you’re a nervous novice, follow the next tip.

**Do a test-run.** If you’ve never made pasta, try it out before you go to all the trouble of making lasagna. It is a tricky process, and it takes practice. The cheese is significantly easier. Just follow the foolproof instructions on page 12 and you will have creamy, delicious ricotta in less than an hour.
Curcumin as a Treatment for Major Depression
By Julie M. O'Shea

We’ve all probably heard talk of the wonders of turmeric by now—a root used as a traditional remedy for thousands of years in India and China to treat a host of ailments, including fatigue, pain, and inflammation. Thousands of studies have looked at turmeric’s health benefits, yet a doctor has never prescribed it to anyone I know. People are blending it into smoothies, sprinkling it on vegetables, and making turmeric lattes—is there any truth to all the hype?

Having heard that curcumin is a potent anti-inflammatory, and curious about the link between depression and inflammation, I looked at whether there was any scientific evidence to support turmeric’s effect on depression for my final project in Analysis of Current Literature. I hoped to find studies on turmeric itself, but the only randomized control trials (RCTs) with humans used curcumin, considered turmeric’s most beneficial component. A PubMed search turned up four RCTs testing curcumin’s effects on adults with major depression. Three of the studies found significant and clinically meaningful improvements in depressive symptoms in participants with major depressive disorder, and the fourth found a trend toward more rapid relief of depressive symptoms in the turmeric group versus a placebo.

The first study I looked at, Lopresti et al. (2014), was a well-designed, 8-week, double-blinded, RCT from Australia that compared curcumin (500 mg twice daily) with a placebo, each in combination with participants’ current dose of the antidepressant escitalopram. While both groups’ depressive symptoms improved during the first month, only the curcumin group had a significant improvement in symptoms at 8 weeks. There were no differences in adverse events between groups.

Next I looked at Sanmukhani et al. (2014), a well-designed, 6-week, single-blinded, RCT from India that compared curcumin (500 mg twice daily) with the antidepressant fluoxetine and with a combination of curcumin and fluoxetine. There were significant reductions in depressive symptoms in all three groups, with no significant difference between groups. All interventions were well tolerated. Benefits from curcumin alone were similar to those taking the antidepressant, suggesting not only significant, but potentially clinically meaningful effects.

I then looked at Yu et al. (2015), a well-designed, 6-week, double-blinded, RCT from China that compared curcumin (500 mg twice daily) with a placebo, each in combination with participants’ current dose of the antidepressant escitalopram. This study of adult men found that curcumin significantly reduced depressive symptoms, with no significant adverse events.

The only study of the four that didn’t find a significant benefit was Bergman et al. (2013), which was the shortest duration at 5 weeks and the lowest dosage at 500 mg/day (versus 1000 mg/day in the other studies). This well-designed, small, double-blinded, RCT from Israel compared curcumin with a placebo, each in combination with an antidepressant (either escitalopram or venlafaxine XR). Both groups had significant improvement in depressive symptoms, but no significant difference between the groups. Interestingly, patients in the curcumin group demonstrated a trend toward more rapid relief of symptoms as compared to a placebo.

Curcumin has been found to act on many pathways associated with depression—the same pathways on which antidepressants work. It has been found to increase neurotransmitters like serotonin, noradrenaline, and dopamine and to reduce markers of stress and inflammation.

The primary advantage of curcumin in the treatment of depression is its seemingly lower adverse events as compared with antidepressants. Adverse events reported were mild, consisting of nausea, bloating, and other digestive complaints. Curcumin has been shown to be safe in humans even up to 8 g/day for up to 3 months. Considering that common side effects of antidepressants include fatigue, insomnia, drowsiness, anxiety, irritability, and even suicidal thoughts, finding a food-based supplement without significant side effects seems worthy of consideration. However, we must keep in mind that, while there didn’t seem to be any significant side effects for most people, these are short-term studies (up to 2 months) with relatively few participants (n = 40–108) and have limited generalizability (none were conducted in the U.S.), and one study had high attrition. It’s also important to point out that several of these studies looked at the added
The dietetic internship class helped host the Health and Wellness Fair on Thursday, March 23. The intern class divided into groups and set up interactive activities related to nutrition and health. Here are a few snapshots from the packed event.

**References**


**Ricotta Cheese**

**Ingredients**
- 4 cups whole milk
- 2 cups heavy cream (can use more whole milk instead)
- ¼ cup (or more) white vinegar
- ½ tsp salt

**Extra supplies**
- Cheesecloth or a clean dishtowel
- Cooking thermometer

**Directions**
In a large pot, begin heating the milk and cream on low-to-medium heat. Add vinegar and stir thoroughly. Allow the mixture to warm, stirring regularly, and check the temperature frequently. Turn off the heat when the mixture reaches 190°F. There should be a distinct separation of curds (opaque white parts) from whey (yellowish watery liquid) at this point. If they are not separating, turn the heat back on and slowly add up to 2 Tbsp more of vinegar, or until curds form. Remove the pot from the burner and allow to cool for 10 minutes.

Line a colander with cheesecloth, and pour in the curds and whey. Allow to drain for 10 minutes, then gather up the cloth and squeeze gently to release excess whey. This is the trial and error portion: the more whey you squeeze out, the firmer and crumblier your cheese will be. You want the cheese to remain creamy and soft, but not be runny. Turn out the cheese into a bowl and stir in the salt. It is now ready to serve!

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**Lemon Ricotta and Kale Toast**

**Ingredients**
- 1 French baguette
- 1 bunch of kale
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- ½ cup chopped shallots
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper
- 2 cups ricotta cheese
- Juice of ½ lemon
- 2 Tbsp lemon zest
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Directions**
1. Preheat oven to 350°F.
2. Slice baguette and place on a sheet tray. Place in oven until toasted.
3. In a sauté pan, add olive oil and shallots. Cook for 3 minutes.
4. Add crushed red pepper and chopped kale and cook for another 3 minutes.
5. Season with salt and pepper.
6. In a bowl, add the cheese, lemon zest, lemon juice, salt, and pepper.
7. Spread 1 Tbsp of the ricotta mixture on a slice of baguette and top with sautéed kale.

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*This lemon ricotta and kale toast has a bright zesty flavor that is perfect for sharing with friends.*

– **Maeda Qureshi**

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*Try this ricotta in scratch-made lasagna (page 10)!*

– **Isabelle Carren-LeSauter**