

The Green Notebook

Is a Dinner Co-op Right for You?

Here's an idea to chew on: a dinner co-op. The sound of it is intriguing to me, basically because it involves food—one of my favorite things. While reading through my absolutely favorite cookbook, *Simply in Season* by Mary Beth Lind and Cathleen Hockman-Wert (which I got at Global Village Collection here in town), I happened upon a little sidebar about dinner co-ops, a way to feed your family while not doing all the cooking yourself.

While dinner cooperatives can take on many forms, the basic idea is this: you gather about two or three of your closest friends, relatives and/or neighbors to join and you assign everyone a week. When it is your week, while cooking one of your many evening meals that week, you triple the recipe and make more and deliver it to the other two families—no need to worry about desserts if you so choose, just the basic meal with or without sides (your group can decide its own rules).

Then, for two weeks after that, one night a week you will receive a meal from each of the other two families. Not a bad idea! Again, the co-op concept can be massaged to meet the needs of your group. Maybe you all gather together at each other's houses weekly or monthly to share the meal. Maybe you cook on Sunday all together and split the results among your three or four families—weekly or monthly. The idea is to share resources, share the labor and create wonderful memories, delicious and most decidedly different meals (especially if any of your participants have an ethnic cooking flair) and have fun.

Let me know if there are any dinner co-ops or even supper clubs out there and what the key to your success has been. Email me through the *Gazette* at _____ and I'll share your stories in a future column.

Thanks and happy dining!

Tuesday Trippier lives in Delaware, is a writer and mother of three who loves to eat!