

Personal Archive Prompt: Recipe

This prompt asks you to identify a recipe to include in your Personal Archive (PA). No matter what recipe you choose, the recipe should be important to *you*. It could be a recipe you make, a recipe someone you know or love makes especially for you, or a recipe that evokes a memory or idea that is some way important to you.

The physical form of the recipe could take many shapes: it could be a classic, hand-written recipe card, a transcript of a verbal transmission of a recipe, a video of someone cooking through a recipe, or some other form. **Mark for yourself (and your viewer/reader): how do food and cooking communicate to others who I am and how I sustain myself?**

[Be sure to scan/take a photograph of the item to include as the item in your papers.]

Why a Recipe?

Food - and often times, making food - is central to our lived experience. Food sustains us, providing us with nutrients, fuel, and comfort. What we eat, when we eat it, how we eat it, and how it is prepared, can confirm for us who we are, where we are, and what we value. It can also communicate to others this same information.

Making and eating food can be a communal event. Sometimes, friends, family, and chosen family gather specifically to cook and eat together (think how many people in the United States gather for Thanksgiving). Other times, because people are already gathered together, others work to cook and supply food (for example, initiatives like [Fuel the People](#) were created to feed and support those participating in Black Lives Matter marches and protests).

With these ideas in mind, think carefully about a recipe that reveals who you are - as an individual or as a member of a community (or both!). Consider the following to help you choose and describe your item:

- What does this recipe tell me about myself and my identity/ies?
- How did I come to know or acquire this recipe? What is my relationship to the person or people who shared the recipe with me?
- What is the form of the recipe as it was given to me (written, verbal, video, etc.)? What does this say about the recipe?
- Is this recipe typically made to commemorate a particular day/event/holiday/celebration?
- Does this recipe require any specific ingredients, utensils, or cooking techniques? If so, what are they and how does the one making the recipe acquire them?

The answers to these questions should help you compose the description of the item.

After you create/identify your image, follow the directions under the heading [How to Complete Personal Archive Prompts] in the document [Introduction for Students: The Personal Archive Assignment].



Example from the Archives

Instructor's Choice: insert an example from an institutionally affiliated archive or archive of your choice. Alternately, use the example below.

The Wisconsin Historical Society holds the [Lizzie Black Kander Papers](#).

- In the collection is her [Cooking Lesson Notebook from 1898](#), which formed the basis of The Settlement House Cookbook.
 - The notebook linked above contains many recipes as well as notes and directions on housekeeping, cooking for the holidays, Kosher cooking, and general kitchen knowledge.
 - I **highly** recommend browsing this digitized notebook; beware, though, that it's handwritten in cursive.

Examples below are broadly from the [UWM Libraries Digital Collections](#) and can be found under the subject 'Food.' Unfortunately, the UWM Digital Collection contains no explicit recipes! However, let these be a guide to creatively interpreting this prompt:

- ["My Two Best Pals" in Milwaukee](#) (while certainly not a traditional recipe, this postcard is a visual recipe for a Milwaukee afternoon!)
- [A protester hands a police officer a meal / Un manifestante da una cena a una policía](#)
- [A traveler's guide to America's dairyland / Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board, Inc.](#)
- [Moscow 1934 \[Motion Picture Film\]](#)
 - Description: Moscow 1934 film shows wedding reception toast at marriage feast and tea time concluding the feast.

