

make **INA** **GARTEN'S** favorite fall meal

America's beloved food personality dishes about her new cookbook and shares recipes for her perfect autumn dinner—juicy short ribs, creamy grits and a spectacular chocolate cake.

By Alison Ashton • Cover photography by Melanie Dunea

Ina Garten is one of America's best-loved food celebrities, with millions of viewers on the Food Network, a shelf full of best-selling cookbooks (just joined by her latest, *Cook Like a Pro*) and a legion of fans, including Jennifer Garner, Taylor Swift and Katie Couric.

That adoration is well earned. Garten has serious kitchen chops, thanks to years running her Barefoot Contessa catering business. But at heart, she's a passionate home cook who understands the challenges the rest of us face. "Cooking is hard," says Garten. "The irony is that I never went to cooking school, so I'm not a professional chef. I've just been cooking for 40 years. I've learned things that I think people can use at home that make it easier or give them confidence to cook more."

Cook Like a Pro distills that knowledge into tried-and-true recipes that will ensure you'll have more confidence—and fun—in the kitchen. You'll also be able to serve up delicious comfort food like the meal Garten shares here.

RED WINE-BRAISED SHORT RIBS

"This may be my favorite recipe ever," says Garten. "When it's really cold, a hearty stew of beef short ribs simmered with a whole bottle of wine, a bottle of Guinness and lots of vegetables, served over Creamy Blue Cheese Grits, is the most comforting dinner you can imagine."

Preheat oven to 425°F. Place 5 lb meaty **bone-in beef short ribs**, cut into 2-inch chunks, on a sheet pan; brush tops with **olive oil**. Sprinkle with 1½ Tbsp **kosher salt** and 1½ tsp freshly ground **black pepper**. Roast 20 minutes; remove from oven. Reduce temperature to 325°F. Meanwhile, heat ¼ cup olive oil in a large (12-inch) Dutch oven over medium. Add 3 cups chopped **leeks**, white and light green parts, 3 cups chopped **celery**, 2 cups chopped **yellow onions** and 2 cups chopped unpeeled **carrots**. Cook over medium until tender, about 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add 1½ Tbsp minced **garlic**; cook 1 minute. Add 1 (750-ml) bottle **dry red wine** (such as Burgundy, Côtes du Rhône or Chianti), bring to a boil, reduce heat to medium and simmer 10 minutes, until liquid is reduced. Add 1 quart **unsalted beef stock** (Garten likes College Inn if she's not making her own stock), 1 cup canned **crushed tomatoes** (such as San Marzano),



1 (11.2-oz) bottle **Guinness Draught Stout**, 6 **thyme sprigs** tied with kitchen string, 1 Tbsp salt and 1½ tsp black pepper. Add ribs to pot, along with juices and seasonings from sheet pan. Bring to a boil, cover and cook in oven 1 hour. Uncover and cook for 1 more hour, until meat is tender.

Transfer short ribs to a plate with a slotted spoon; discard thyme bundle and any bones that have separated from meat. Simmer sauce on stove for 20 minutes. Skim some of fat off top; discard. Return ribs to pot, heat 5 minutes, and taste for seasonings. Serve hot in shallow bowls spooned over **Creamy Blue Cheese Grits**, with extra sauce on the side. **Serves 6.**

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CREAMY BLUE CHEESE GRITS

"For this recipe I cook the grits for 50 minutes, until they're smooth and creamy," says Garten. "Of course, adding half-and-half, butter and Roquefort cheese will make anything taste better!"

Bring 6 cups water to a full boil in a heavy 4-quart saucepan. Add 1 Tbsp **kosher salt**; slowly add 1½ cups quick-cooking (5-minute) **grits** (such as Quaker), pouring them in a thin, steady stream, whisking constantly. Reduce heat to low; simmer, stirring occasionally, 5–7 minutes, until grits have thickened.

Stir in 2 cups **half-and-half** and 3 Tbsp **unsalted butter**. (It will seem very thin, but grits will thicken again as they cook.) Bring to a boil over medium. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 45 minutes or until smooth and creamy, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Stir in 3 oz **Roquefort**, crumbled, **kosher salt** and freshly ground **black pepper** to taste. Serve hot. **Serves 6.**



CHOCOLATE CHEVRON CAKE

Here's a cake that looks impressive without a lot of extra effort. Garten's secret: "I add a touch of coffee in my chocolate dishes," she says. "It makes the chocolate taste better."

Preheat oven to 325°F. **Butter** an 8-by-2-inch round cake pan. Line bottom with parchment paper, then butter and flour pan, tapping out excess flour.

Cream 8 Tbsp (1 stick) **unsalted butter** (at room temperature) and 1 cup **granulated sugar** in bowl of electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment until light and fluffy. With mixer on low, add 4 **extra-large eggs** (at room temperature), 1 at a time. Mix in 1 (16-oz) can **chocolate syrup** (like Hershey's) and 1 Tbsp **vanilla extract**. Add 1 cup **all-purpose flour**; mix until just

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6 Things You Didn't Know About **INA**

1 Her husband, Jeffrey, is her No. 1 fan. "He's the reason I cook—he appreciates it so much. It's a wonderful feeling when someone appreciates it."

2 Jeffrey is not her guinea pig. "If I'm making dinner, I want it to be delicious, so I'll test it over and over. If a recipe makes it into the book, then I'll make it for dinner. Jeffrey's not there to be my taste tester."



3 Jeffrey doesn't cook. "He makes really good coffee. And he gets me my newspaper in the morning. That's all I need!"

4 She always follows a recipe. As a newlywed 50 years ago, Garten taught herself to cook from cookbooks and appreciates the power of a well-written recipe. To this day, she always follows recipes—even her own. "I'm very scientific," says Garten, who previously worked as a White House nuclear energy policy analyst. "I measure everything. I spent so much time perfecting the recipe, why would I want to take a chance?"

5 She's inspired to help home cooks. Garten receives (and answers!) up to 200 emails every week. She sometimes trails friends through the grocery store to find out what they don't know. That information often winds up in a recipe one way or another, such as the best way to cut up a head of cauliflower. (Turn it upside down, cut out the core and pull apart the florets.)

6 Her go-to comfort food is super simple. "A bowl of oatmeal with maple syrup and butter."

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combined. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake 40–45 minutes, until just set in middle. Cool in pan 30 minutes. Turn cake upside down on a wire rack set over a sheet pan and remove pan. Cool completely.

To make icing, whisk together 1 cup **powdered sugar** and 1 Tbsp water until smooth, thick and just barely pourable. When you lift icing from the bowl with the whisk, it should slowly fall back on itself in a ribbon. (You may need to add a few more drops water.) Fit a pastry bag with a small, round pastry tip and fill it with icing. Set aside.

Go to Parade.com/garten to find out what's always in Garten's pantry, her favorite kitchen tools and for her recipe for Autumn Sangria.



To make ganache, place ½ cup **heavy cream**, 8 oz **semisweet chocolate chips** and 1 tsp **instant coffee** granules in a bowl set over a pan of simmering water. Heat mixture until smooth, stirring occasionally. Pour ganache evenly over top and sides of cake; tilt rack until ganache is smooth all over. Immediately, before ganache sets, pipe parallel lines of icing 1 inch apart on entire cake, stopping just short of edge of cake. Lightly drag the back of a small paring knife through ganache perpendicular to white lines also 1 inch apart, alternating directions (first left to right, then right to left, and so on) and covering the whole cake. Allow the ganache and icing to set. Cut in wedges; serve at room temperature. **Makes 1 (8-inch) cake.**