

# OV woman's bread pudding wins contest

**A**n Oro Valley woman has won top honors with her caramel apple bread pudding recipe in the Aging Well Bakes! Recipe contest put on by Splendido, a luxury continuing care retirement community in Oro Valley.

Francine Crist, 59, submitted the winning recipe among dozens submitted by adults 55 and better. Crist received a \$500 gift certificate from kitchenware company Williams-Sonoma for her winning recipe.

Dining staff from the Splendido retirement community and parent company Mather LifeWays of Evanston, Ill., reviewed all the submissions and narrowed the list to a few finalists. They recreated those recipes and judged them on overall taste, texture, ease of preparation and "how the recipe celebrates that growing older can be a fun, sweet and positive experience," a release said.

"Our invitation to share people's cherished dessert recipes was met with an outpouring of submissions," said Albert Dileso, executive chef of Splendido. "Throughout Arizona, we received stories of baking experiences, dessert creations and fond memories developing their craft."

Dileso said the finalists' recipes and stories, including the winning submission from Crist, are being

placed on Splendido's Web site ([www.splendidotucson.com](http://www.splendidotucson.com)).

Crist said her bread pudding is an easy recipe she and her husband enjoy at home.

"My husband and I wanted to maintain our same weight, but we didn't want to cut out traditional desserts," Crist said. "My recipe slims down bread pudding with healthier ingredients, while keeping that old-fashioned taste and reassuring us we won't unexpectedly break the scale."

She also believes in using local ingredients for her dishes, as her bread pudding uses pecans from Green Valley and apples from Willcox.

"I'm originally from Ohio and still spend part of my summer in Canton where delicious apples are grown," Crist said. "Our home in Southern Arizona allows us to still use fresh and crisp ingredients straight from the farm."

The Aging Well Bakes! recipe contest marks the second contest created by Mather LifeWays to celebrate the talents of older adults. In 2007, the organization sponsored the Aging Well Rocks! Song Competition, a contest designed to celebrate older adults' musical talent.

"Getting older is not synonymous with giving up on your

dreams," said Sara McVey, vice president and experience director for Mather LifeWays.

## CARAMEL APPLE BREAD PUDDING

By Francine Crist

### Ingredients:

8 cups stale French bread, cubed  
3 ½ cups low-fat or skim milk  
6 tablespoons margarine  
4 eggs or the equivalent egg substitute  
¾ cups brown sugar  
1 teaspoon vanilla  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
4 cups apples – peeled and sliced  
1 small jar, no sugar caramel topping  
½ cup toasted pecans

### Preparation instructions

Preheat oven to 350 degrees  
Spray a 9 x 13" pan or baking dish with non-stick spray  
Heat milk in a sauce pan  
Place bread cubes in baking dish  
Pour milk over bread cubes and mix gently until milk is absorbed. Set aside.  
In a bowl, cream margarine and sugar together  
Add eggs or egg substitute, vanilla and cinnamon  
Beat until fluffy  
Stir in diced apples and add to bread mixture  
Bake 1 hour until golden brown  
Remove from oven and pour caramel sauce on top of pan  
Sprinkle with pecans  
Serve warm with low fat ice cream or whipping cream  
Recipe serves 10-12 people

