

SPLENDIDO'S RECIPE FOR AGING WELL

Celebrating Arizona's Active, Older Adults and Their Baking Talents

By Mark Blazer

Some of us have lived in the Old Pueblo since birth, while others are transplants. Still, all of our rich and colorful backgrounds make up the state's history and can directly affect our cultural traditions, such as cooking and baking. Using local produce and continuing classic recipes creates new and tasty treats to eat and furthers our heritage.

This inspired us at Splendido to honor our local baking history with our first-ever recipe contest, Aging Well Bakes!, aimed at celebrating Arizona's active, older adults and their baking talents.

Adults 55 years of age and better who are Arizona residents are invited to share an original baked dessert recipe with no more than 10 ingredients that brings up fond

memories and inspires others to be creative in the kitchen. Splendido will feature finalists' entries on the contest Web site, SplendidoTucson.com/agingwellbakes, and a grand prize winner will receive a \$500 gift certificate to Williams-Sonoma. We will announce the winners on May 4, 2009.

Our community believes that baking and growing older have very similar characteristics — they can both be a fun, sweet, and positive experience. The recipes learned throughout life should be shared and rewarded. Since everybody has specific ways that they make their cookies, brownies, pies, scones, and other baked goods, this is an exciting way to highlight our state's bright heritage.



Another reason why Splendido decided to create this contest is to honor our community and the people who love to be involved in the kitchen. Residents who consistently participate in their hobbies and passions, such as baking, tend to be happier and sometimes healthier than

other adults who do not dedicate time to their most loved activities. We wanted to share that mindset for Arizona's active, older adult bakers, and those with any beloved hobby.

Some of Arizona's well-known and leading bakers and culinary artists will be participating as judges in the Aging Well Bakes! recipe contest and will recreate the submitted recipes to determine the winning entry. One noted judge is Chef Albert Dileso, Splendido's executive chef. He has overseen some of the state's finest resorts and restaurants, and says he is excited to work with the judging committee to choose Arizona's top-baked good.

To help Chef Al and the Aging Well Bakes! judging committee choose the winning recipe, entrants are asked to send a full-color photograph of their baked dessert and submit a brief narrative — 50 words or less — explaining why the dessert represents an appropriate treat for aging well.

Splendido will close submission opportunities for Aging Well Bakes! on Mar. 27, 2009, so get those mixing bowls moving and send in your sweet experiences! ■

Mark Blazer is the executive director at Splendido, a Continuing Care Retirement Community in Oro Valley that offers upscale resort-style living for adults 55 years and better. For more information on the Aging Well Bakes! recipe contest, visit www.splendidotucson.com/agingwellbakes or call (520) 878.2612.