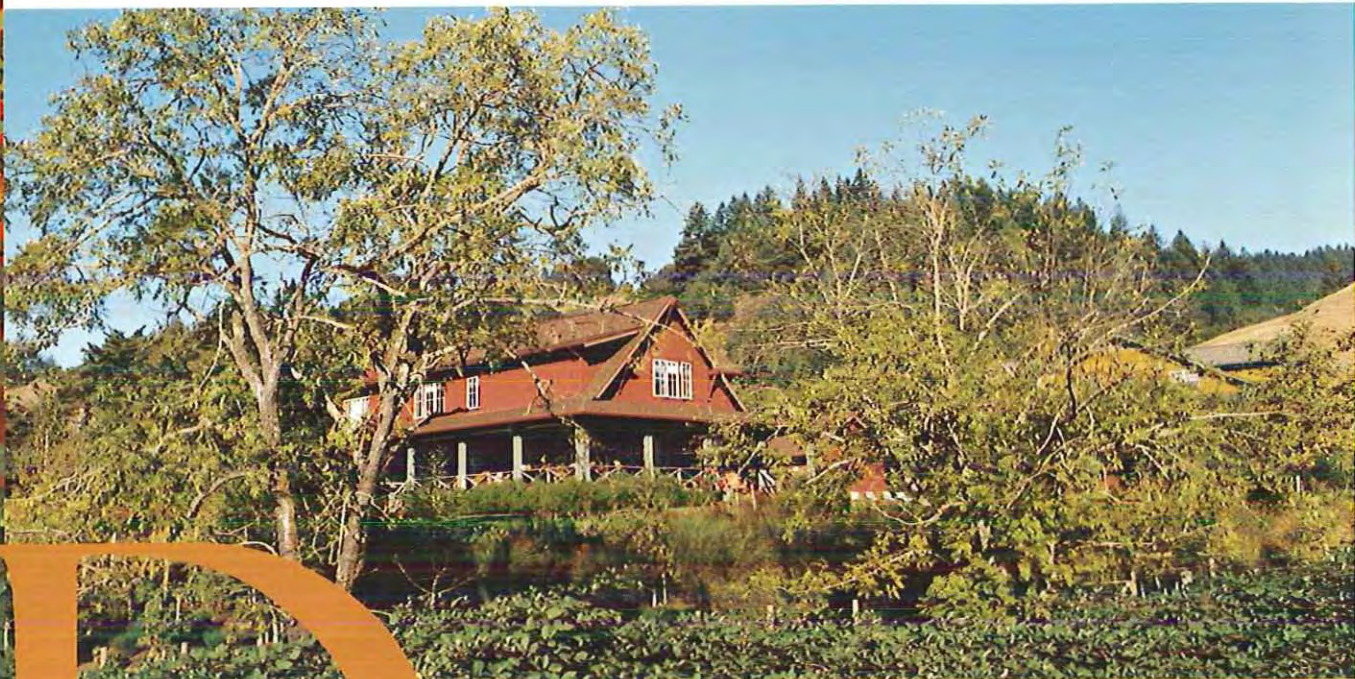


gathering at the  
**PUMPKIN  
PATCH**

A San Francisco mom brings together friends and family for a day of creative decorating and caps it off with an autumn-inspired dinner.

BY RICHARD SWEARINGER PHOTOGRAPHS BY JAMES CARRIER STYLED BY AARON HOM FOOD STYLING BY POUKÉ

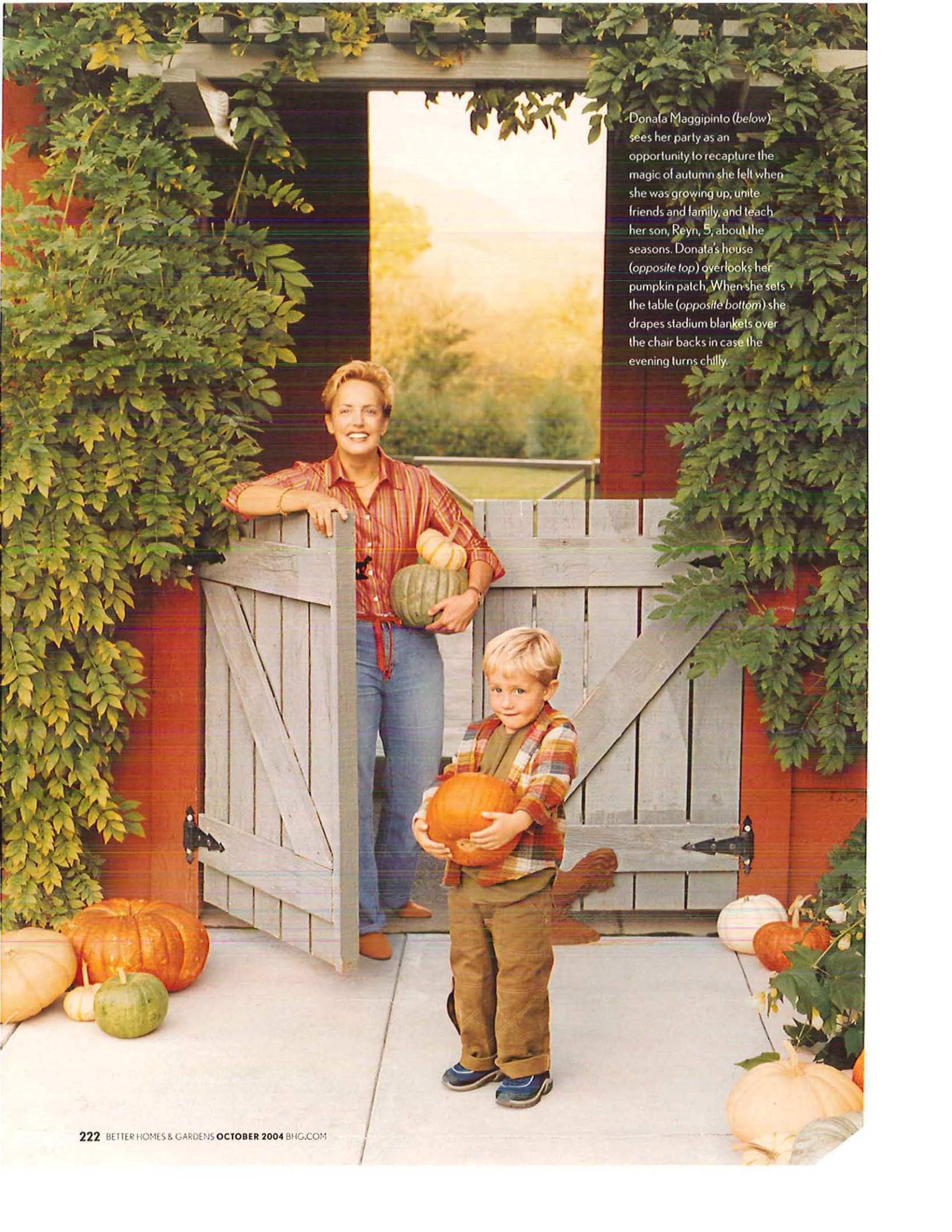


**D**onata Maggipinto gets her family in the act to decorate for her annual pumpkin pageant. She sends husband Courtney Reeser and 5-year-old son Reyn to the garden, market, and forest to hunt and gather. With the wildflowers, orchard fruits, autumn leaves, and other natural bric-a-brac they bring back, Donata sets the stage for a celebration of her favorite season.

"It's these simple things in nature that can bring us the most pleasure," she says. Donata invites eight best friends plus their kids (her ideal number of guests) for an afternoon of pumpkin decorating, leisurely lunching, and a ghost story or two.

Jack-o'-lantern making is the main attraction of the day. When guests arrive at the house nestled on a hill a few miles north of the Golden Gate Bridge, they fortify themselves with hot mugs of Cranberry-Apple Crush and apple wedges spread with Blue Cheese-Ricotta Dip. Then they meander down to the family pumpkin patch where the long tawny grass is shaded by 100-year-old walnut trees. A wagon waits to be filled with orange 'Jack Be Littles,' bulbous white 'Cinderellas,' creamy 'Luminas,' and 'Fairytale' pumpkins.





Donata Maggipinto (*below*) sees her party as an opportunity to recapture the magic of autumn she felt when she was growing up, unite friends and family, and teach her son, Reyn, 5, about the seasons. Donata's house (*opposite top*) overlooks her pumpkin patch. When she sets the table (*opposite bottom*) she drapes stadium blankets over the chair backs in case the evening turns chilly.



This gives us an opportunity to talk to our kids about the rhythm of the seasons and gives them something to look forward to every year.

DONATA MAGGIPIINTO



Back at the house, a kitchen table moved onto the porch and covered with burlap serves as the decorating station. Because so many kids are involved, Donata makes the project no-carve. Guests use glue guns to attach seed-pods, moss, vegetables, whole spices and flowers, ribbons, trim, and buttons to their pumpkins.

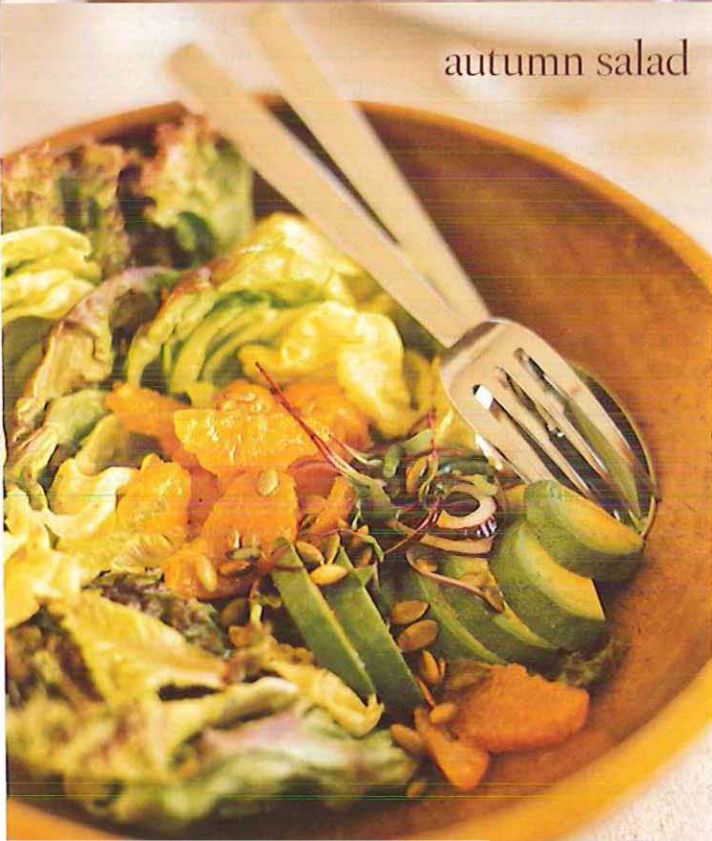
For Donata, watching heads huddled together over tables and busy hands helping one another glue seeds and spices onto pumpkins re-creates the warm feelings she remembers growing up with her close-knit Italian family in Connecticut. And she likes that it's an opportunity for Reyn and Courtney's son, Chance, 19, to build memories of their own.

"As a transplanted New England girl, I miss the colors and the aromas and the sounds—leaves crunching,

The decorating station can be made from any sturdy table. Strawberry baskets are pressed into service to hold the natural materials that Donata sets out for decorating. She prefers gluing to the traditional carving, especially when children are involved. "That way, no knives are used, and you can go for a walk and find things and use them to decorate. We collect shells, twigs with a great shape, almost anything really."



mashed sweet potatoes  
with caramelized onions



autumn salad



wind blowing, shutters creaking—that Halloween ushers into New England. Maybe I’m trying to re-create my own childhood.”

And why pumpkins? “You can only get pumpkins in the autumn, no going to the frozen food section in April and purchasing one. I love that! Their impermanence reminds us of our connection to the natural world.”

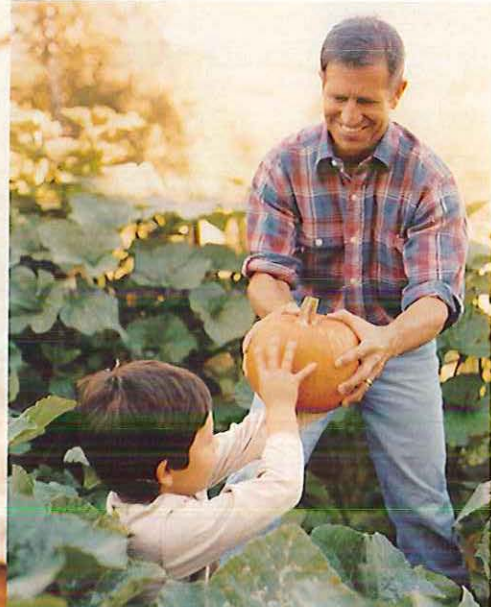
Both the setting and the foods take cues from the season. The 19th-century Quaker meetinghouse table (with its original green-painted legs) is set with white ironstone and Donata’s collection of leaf plates. A pumpkinlike centerpiece fashioned from marigolds (see *Flower Pumpkin*, page 246) sits on a pressed-glass pedestal cake stand. A casual display of apples, pears, plump figs, and leaves plucked from trees on the property forms a natural runner. Some touches are practical as well as decorative. Plaid stadium blankets decorate the chairs, and they are ready to shelter knees from the evening chill. Donata makes it a point to line up decorated pumpkins on the porch railing next to the dinner table.

Donata doesn’t want to rush guests to the table, so foods that keep well on the stove or in the fridge, such as the Pork Roast, Autumn Salad (left), and Mashed Sweet Potatoes (above left), help her keep a relaxed mood at the party.

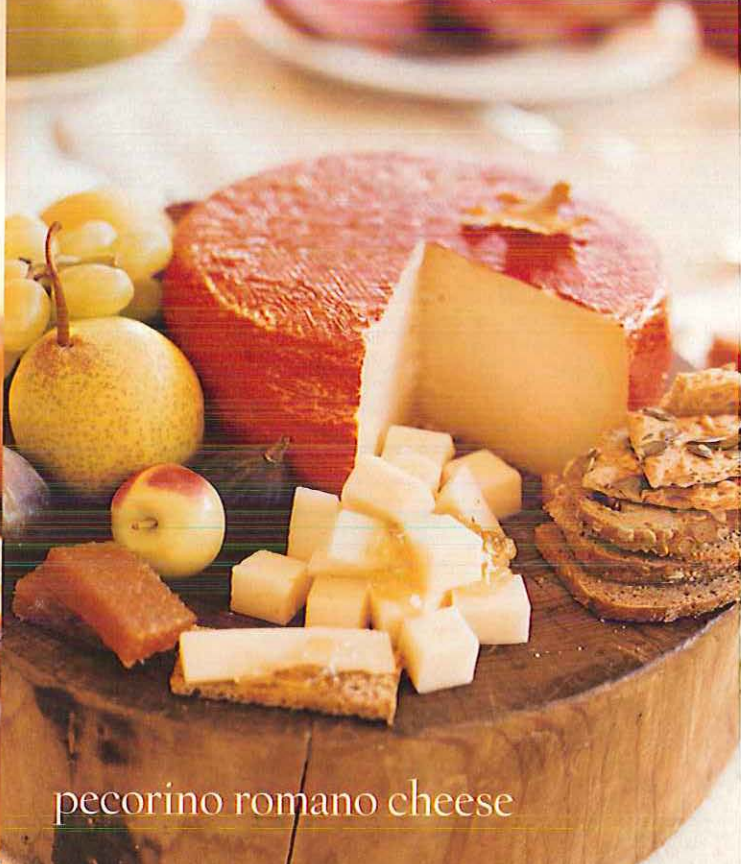


cranberry-apple crush

Courtney, Donata's husband, helps with the pumpkin picking (below), a highlight of the day for many participants. As an alternative, Donata suggests asking guests to bring their own pumpkins and letting the host supply the decorating materials. A wheel of Pecorino Romano cheese (bottom) anchors the dinner table.



blue cheese-ricotta dip  
Recipes begin on page 235



pecorino romano cheese



## in-the-patch varieties

From top left, Donata's favorite pumpkin varieties include 'Cinderella,' 'Lumina,' 'Cheese,' 'New Zealand Blue,' 'Field' pumpkins, 'Peek-A-Boo,' and 'Mini.' To prepare for pies, cut 6 pounds of pumpkins into 5-inch-square pieces (or halve small pumpkins). Remove seeds and fibrous strings. Arrange in a single layer, skin side up, in a shallow baking pan. Cover with foil; roast in a 375° F oven for 1-1/2 hours or until tender. Scoop pulp from rind. Puree in a blender or food processor; place in a cheesecloth-lined strainer and press out liquid. Makes 2 cups.



pork roast  
with harvest fruits  
Recipes begin on page 235

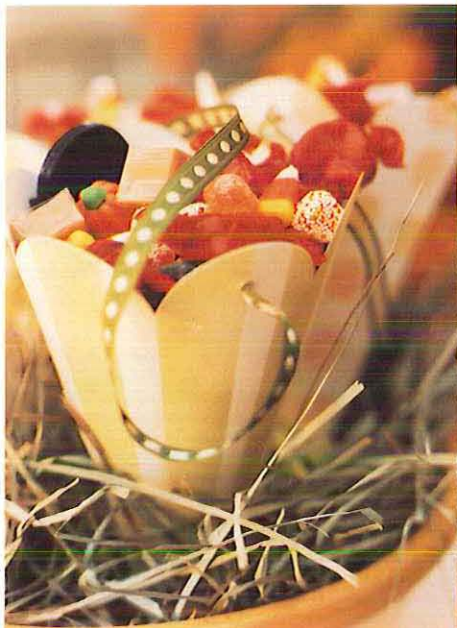




## flower centerpiece

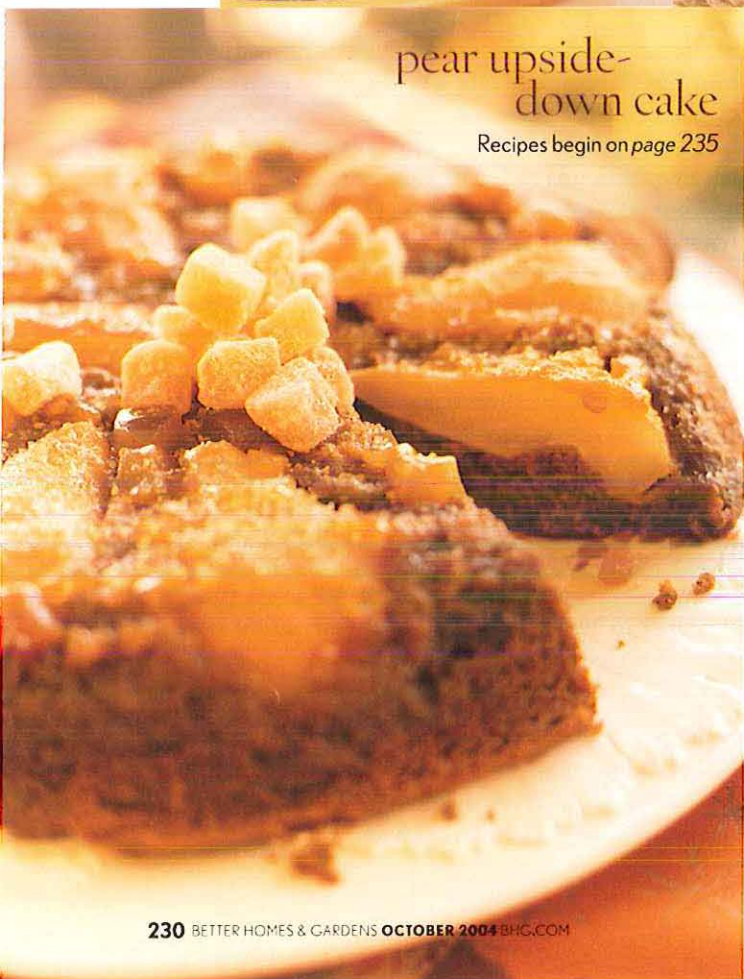
Many of Donata's decorating ideas are incorporated into this centerpiece fashioned from marigolds and blackberries that grow in a thicket in her backyard. "I love to do just one flower in an arrangement and accent with just one other flower or fruit. It's so unexpected, it's completely seasonal, and I like having the food element in there when it's a centerpiece on the table," she says.

Searching for empty quail eggs, colored rocks, and other "kid treasures" along the creek and in the meadow behind the house is a favorite after-lunch activity (right). In addition to the pumpkins, guests leave with their pick of Halloween candy (below).



## pear upside-down cake

Recipes begin on page 235



To maximize her own enjoyment of the party, Donata preps some of the food the day before, and the meal is served family-style. Avocados, tangerines, and pumpkin seeds enrich a refreshing salad of autumn greens dressed with a sherry vinaigrette. Mashed Sweet Potatoes with Caramelized Onions provide ample pockets and crevices for absorbing the delicious juices from the Pork Roast with Harvest Fruits. A round of sharp Pecorino Romano cheese with pumpernickel bread is served on a weathered wooden board at each end of the table.

After throwing various versions of the party for the past several years, the family has worked out a division of labor. "I can always rely on Courtney to take my out-of-this-world ideas and systematically make them a reality. I am Lucy. He is Ricky." Reyn says his job is "making scarily beautiful pumpkins and helping mommy set the table."

Despite its casual setting, Donata says the event relies on three elements: planning, a simple menu, and a timetable that takes cues from the guests as well as the clock.

"I always plan for my own sanity," says Donata, who gained her expertise during years as an author, lifestyle correspondent for NBC's *Today* show, and former creative director for the Williams-Sonoma specialty cookware retailer. "I give the decorating about an hour. Then the kids are bored, and the adults want to eat and have adult



A party like this engages your senses: the sound of people laughing, the smell of spices, the sight of a great frosty ice cream cone filled with the flavors of a pumpkin pie.

DONATA MAGGIPINTO

pumpkin ice cream  
with chocolate-dipped cone

Recipes begin on page 235

time.” After lunch, she gives the kids time to go back and finish their pumpkins, which provides the adults time to talk and clear the table. “The kids start to get cranky after awhile, and that’s the signal for the final phase.”

As twilight falls, Donata switches on the strings of orange lights hung along the porch beams to illuminate the day’s creations and she tells a ghost story or two to accompany dessert. Her favorite is “The Man with the Golden Arm” (for the story, see *How to Tell a Ghost Story*,

page 244). For dessert, homey Pear Upside-Down Cake is served, complemented by Pumpkin Ice Cream—on the side or in a chocolate-dipped cone.

Guests fill paper party-favor cones with penny candy from the cauldron, a black cast-iron pot. Equipped with party favors and freshly decorated pumpkins, guests amble down the porch steps and into the night. 🍂

**MORE ABOUT** WAYS TO COOK WITH PUMPKINS.  
[www.bhg.com/recipes](http://www.bhg.com/recipes)

## Cranberry Apple Crush

This versatile sipper can be served warm on a chilly autumn day or cold on a balmy summer afternoon.

**START TO FINISH:** 15 MINUTES

- 5 cups apple cider or apple juice
- 5 cups cranberry juice
- 1½ cups guava juice or mango nectar
- ¼ cup lime juice
- 1 tsp. ground ginger
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp. ground allspice
- Honey (optional)
- Kumquats (optional)
- Lime slices (optional)

- In a 4-quart Dutch oven combine apple cider, cranberry juice, guava juice, lime juice, ginger, cinnamon, and allspice. Bring to boiling; reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. If desired, sweeten to taste with honey.
- To serve, pour into mugs. Garnish with lime slices and kumquats. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

**EACH SERVING:** 182 cal., 0 g total fat (0 g sat. fat), 0 mg chol., 28 mg sodium, 46 g carbo., 0 g fiber, 0 g pro. Daily Values: 88% vit. C, 1% calcium, 4% iron.

## CHEESE, PLEASE

Try these two helpful items for your cheese courses (see

"Pumpkin Patch", page 225). The practical Cheese Slicer Set (above, right) features a durable beechwood 9½ x 6-inch cutting board with stainless-steel inlay; a bright chrome arm; and a stainless-steel cutting wire. Rubber feet stabilize board and protect surfaces. Specify Cheese Slicer Set, AAG802942 (\$24.95). The Cheese Knives and Stand Set (below, left) includes four styles of stainless-steel cheese knives for cutting and spreading a variety of favorites. Each knife has a polished beechwood handle and stores on a solid-beechwood stand. Specify



Cheeses Knives, AAG802934 (\$19.95).

**CALL** toll free 800/881-4066 to order or visit [bhgcatalog.com](http://bhgcatalog.com) on the Web. Shipping, handling, and applicable sales tax will be added to the prices shown.



## BLUE CHEESE-RICOTTA DIP



## Blue Cheese-Ricotta Dip

Simple and sumptuous, Donata likes to serve this spread alongside green apple slices, crackers, and breadsticks. For children who might find the blue cheese too strong, serve wedges of cheddar with the apple.

**PREP:** 10 MINUTES **STAND:** 1 HOUR

- 1 15-oz. container ricotta cheese
- 8 oz. blue cheese, such as Gorgonzola or Maytag, crumbled (2 cups)
- 2 Tbsp. apple cider or milk
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Snipped fresh chives or your favorite herb
- Green and/or red apple slices
- Breadsticks or crackers

- Allow ricotta and blue cheese to stand at room temperature for 1 hour. In a medium bowl stir together the cheeses, mashing with a fork until well combined. Stir in the apple cider. Add pepper to taste. Spoon into a serving bowl. Sprinkle with chives. Serve with apple slices. Makes 8 servings.

**EACH SERVING WITHOUT APPLES:** 195 cal., 15 g total fat (10 g sat. fat), 48 mg chol., 440 mg sodium, 3 g carbo., 0 g fiber, 12 g pro. Daily Values: 9% vit. A, 26% calcium, 2% iron. >> on 236

**Pork Roast with Harvest Fruits**

Pork shoulder is an ideal cut of meat for slow cooking because it retains its moistness and delivers a lot of flavor. Here, it's braised in balsamic vinegar and red wine, both of which balance the sweetness of the fruit and contribute a delectable kick to the sauce.

**PREP:** 30 MINUTES **ROAST:** 3 HOURS **OVEN:** 325°F

- 1 5- to 6-lb. boneless pork shoulder roast, trimmed and tied to retain its shape
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil
- Salt and freshly ground pepper
- 1 large yellow onion, finely chopped (1 cup)
- 3 bay leaves
- 2 Tbsp. snipped fresh rosemary
- 1 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 1½ cups pitted dried plums and/or dried apricots
- 1½ cups dried figs, halved
- 1 quince, peeled, cored, and coarsely chopped (optional)
- 4 medium apples, such as Granny Smith, peeled, cored and quartered

1. Preheat oven to 325° F. In a 6- to 8-quart oval roasting pan brown meat on all sides in hot oil. Remove the meat from the pan and pour off all but 2 tablespoons of the fat. Sprinkle meat lightly with salt and pepper; set aside. Reduce the heat to medium.
2. Add the onions to pan and cook about 5 minutes or until tender. Add the bay leaves, rosemary, vinegar, wine, dried plums and/or apricots, figs, and quince. Bring to boiling and cook for 1 minute. Remove pan from heat.
3. Return the meat to the pan. Cover pan and place in oven for 2¾ hours. Add apples. Cover and cook 15 minutes more or until meat and apples are tender. Remove meat and fruit from the pan, using a slotted spoon; cover meat and fruit loosely with foil to keep warm. Remove and discard bay leaves from pan.
4. For sauce, place pan on range top and cook, uncovered, over medium-high heat about 15 minutes or until the liquid is reduced to 1¼ cups, stirring and scraping the bottom of the pan to release any brown bits.
5. To serve, slice the pork and arrange it on a platter with the fruit. Spoon some of the sauce over the pork. Pass remaining sauce. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

**EACH SERVING:** 724 cal., 22 g total fat (7 g sat. fat), 183 mg chol., 394 mg sodium, 67 g carbo., 8 g fiber, 59 g pro. Daily Values: 14% vit. A, 16% vit. C, 11% calcium, 31% iron.

**Mashed Sweet Potatoes with Caramelized Onions**

Cutting the potatoes into small cubes before boiling prevents them from becoming waterlogged and results in a lighter, fluffier result.

**PREP:** 30 MINUTES **COOK:** 30 MINUTES

- ½ cup unsalted butter or butter
- 2 lb. yellow onions, peeled, halved, and thinly sliced (7 cups)
- ½ tsp. salt
- ½ tsp. freshly ground black pepper

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## PUMPKIN PATCH >> from 236

- 4 lb. sweet potatoes or white potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes (about 10 cups)
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/3 cup dairy sour cream
- Salt and ground black pepper

1. To caramelize the onions, in a large skillet heat 1/4 cup of the butter. Add the onions and cook, stirring frequently, about 30 minutes or until golden brown. Season with the 1/2 teaspoon salt and 1/2 teaspoon pepper. Remove from the heat; set aside.
2. Meanwhile, cook the potatoes in a large pot, covered, in lightly salted boiling water for 12 minutes or until tender; drain.
3. Add the remaining 1/4 cup butter to the pot potatoes were cooked in and let melt. Return potatoes to the pot and mash with a potato masher until smooth. Stir in the milk, sour cream, and salt and pepper to taste. Stir in caramelized onions, reserving a few onions for garnish. Cook and stir over low heat until heated through. Transfer to a serving dish. Top with reserved onions. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

**EACH SERVING:** 299 cal., 14 g total fat (9 g sat. fat), 37 mg chol., 182 mg sodium, 40 g carbo., 6 g fiber, 4 g pro. Daily Values: 413% vit. A, 56% vit. C, 10% calcium, 7% iron.

**MAKE-AHEAD:** Prepare potatoes through step 3 stirring in the caramelized onions, but do not heat through. Transfer to a 2 1/2- to 3-quart casserole. Cover and chill in the refrigerator up to 24 hours or until ready to serve. Before serving, bake potato-onion mixture in a 325° F oven for 55 to 60 minutes or until heated through.

### Autumn Salad

A cumin-scented sherry vinaigrette enhances a harmony of flavors and textures in this colorful autumn salad.

**PREP:** 35 MINUTES

- 4 tsp. sherry wine vinegar or red wine vinegar
- 3/4 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/8 tsp. salt
- 1/8 tsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 2 medium heads red leaf lettuce, torn (about 12 cups)
- 3 medium seedless tangerines, peeled and sectioned
- 1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 medium avocados, halved, seeded, peeled, and cut into chunks
- 8 Tbsp. Cumin-Toasted Pumpkin Seeds (see recipe, right)

1. For dressing, in a large salad bowl, whisk together the vinegar and cumin. Gradually whisk in olive oil in a slow, steady stream. Add the salt and pepper.



2. Add lettuce, tangerines, onion, avocados, and 6 tablespoons of the pumpkin seeds to the salad bowl. Toss lightly to coat with dressing. Sprinkle with the remaining 2 tablespoons pumpkin seeds. Serve at once. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

**EACH SERVING:** 244 cal., 20 g total fat (3 g sat. fat), 0 mg chol., 140 mg sodium, 13 g carbo., 6 g fiber, 7 g pro. Daily Values: 131% vit. A, 50% vit. C, 5% calcium, 18% iron.

### Cumin-Toasted Pumpkin Seeds

A 10- to 14-pound pumpkin will yield about 1 cup raw seeds. Pumpkin seeds may also be purchased in healthfood stores, Hispanic grocery stores, and some supermarkets.

**PREP:** 15 MINUTES **BAKE:** 70 MINUTES **OVEN:** 325°F

- 1 cup raw pumpkin seeds or shelled sunflower seeds
- 2 tsp. cooking oil
- 1/2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp. salt

1. Preheat oven to 325° F. Rinse pumpkin seeds in water until pulp and strings are washed off; drain.
  2. Spread seeds in a parchment paper-lined 8x8x2-inch baking pan. Bake, uncovered, for 1 hour. Remove parchment paper. Add oil, cumin, and salt; stir to coat.
  3. Bake, uncovered, 10 to 15 minutes more or until toasted, stirring once. Transfer seeds to paper towels to cool. Makes 1 cup.
- EACH 2-TABLESPOON SERVING:** 104 cal., 11 g total fat (2 g sat. fat), 0 mg chol., 148 mg sodium, 2 g carbo., 0 g fiber, 4 g pro. Daily Values: 1% vit. C, 1% calcium, 9% iron. >> on 240

## Pear Upside-Down Cake

This cake is traditionally made in a cast-iron skillet—the ideal pan for caramelizing the pears into the lush sweetness that complements the spicy cake so well. Kids love the fact that the cake is turned upside down for serving. Don't you?

**PREP:** 40 MINUTES **BAKE:** 45 MINUTES **COOL:** 5 MINUTES **OVEN:** 350° F

- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 4 medium fresh pears, peeled, halved, and cored
- 1/4 cup chopped crystallized ginger
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. ground ginger
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. baking soda
- 3/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 3/4 tsp. ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2/3 cup butter, softened
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup full-flavored molasses
- 2 Tbsp. grated fresh ginger
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- Chopped crystallized ginger (optional)

1. Preheat the oven to 350° F. In a 10-inch cast-iron or oven-going skillet melt the 1/4 cup butter over medium heat.\* Stir in the 1/2 cup brown sugar, stirring until sugar is no longer grainy; remove from heat. Arrange the pear halve, cut side up, in the skillet. Sprinkle with the 1/4 cup crystallized ginger; set aside.
2. In a medium bowl combine the flour, ground ginger, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, and salt; set aside.
3. In a large mixing bowl beat the 2/3 cup butter with an electric mixer on medium to high speed for 30 seconds. Beat in 1/2 cup >> on 242

## CAST-IRON BAKING

Make Pear Upside-Down Cake (recipe, above) in a Cast-Iron Skillet. Ours is 10 inches in diameter by 2 inches deep and features a helper handle. The price is \$21.95, plus shipping, handling, and applicable sales tax. Specify 10-Inch Cast-Iron Skillet, AAG802215. CALL 800/881-4066 or visit [bhgcatalog.com](http://bhgcatalog.com) to order.





Because the batter is quite thick, use a rubber spatula or spoon to cover pears with the mixture.

pour over pears. Bake in 350° F oven for 45 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool in baking dish on wire rack for 5 minutes. Loosen cake from dish and invert onto serving plate. Serve as above.

**EACH SERVING:** 567 cal, 24 g total fat (12 g sat. fat), 113 mg chol, 483 mg sodium, 85 g carbo., 4 g fiber, 6 g pro. Daily Values: 16% vit. A, 7% vit. C, 13% calcium, 19% iron.

>> on 244

brown sugar until well combined. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating after each addition. Beat in molasses and fresh ginger. Alternately add flour mixture and buttermilk to molasses mixture, beating on low speed after each addition just until combined. Spread the batter evenly over pears in the skillet.

4. Bake about 40 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool in pan on wire rack for 5 minutes. Loosen cake from pan; invert onto a large serving plate. Serve warm or at room temperature. Top with chopped crystallized ginger. Makes 8 to 10 servings.

**\*NOTE:** If you don't have a cast-iron or oven-going skillet, prepare brown sugar-butter mixture in a small saucepan; pour into a 2-quart rectangular glass baking dish, spreading evenly. Arrange pears, cut side up, in dish. Prepare cake batter as above and

## ICE CREAM MAKER

No salt, no ice, no electricity! Make Pumpkin-Spice Ice Cream (recipe, page 244), and frozen yogurt in 20 minutes or less! The secret to the Donvier Premiere Ice Cream maker is its 1-quart cylinder. A nontoxic refrigerant is permanently sealed between its walls.

When prechilled as directed in the instruction booklet, the cylinder is cold enough to freeze whatever

flavored mixture is poured into it. *Please note: The Pumpkin-Spice Ice Cream recipe must be frozen in batches.* The price is \$52.95, plus shipping, handling, and applicable sales tax. Specify Ice Cream Maker, AAG800920.



CALL 800/881-4066 or visit  
bhgcatalog.com to order.



## Pumpkin Ice Cream

The spices that infuse this ice cream are the same ones found in the best pumpkin pies. Splendid with the Pear Upside-Down Cake, this ice cream is spectacular on its own too.

**PREP:** 20 MINUTES **CHILL:** 3 HOURS **FREEZE:** 3 ½ HOURS

- 2 cups whipping cream
- ¾ cup packed dark brown sugar
- 5 egg yolks
- ½ tsp. ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp. ground nutmeg
- ¼ tsp. ground allspice
- ¼ tsp. ground cloves
- ¼ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. vanilla
- 1 Tbsp. cognac or brandy (optional)
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- Plain Ice Cream Cones or  
Chocolate Dipped Ice Cream Cones\*  
(see directions, below)

1. In a medium saucepan, combine the whipping cream and brown sugar. Cook over medium heat about 5 minutes until bubbles form around the edges of the pan, stirring to dissolve sugar.
2. In a small bowl beat the egg yolks, cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice, clove, and salt. Gradually whisk about ½ cup of the hot cream mixture into the egg mixture and continue to whisk until smooth. Pour the egg mixture into the cream mixture in the pan. Cook and stir over medium heat until the mixture coats >> on 246

## GHOSTLY CUTTERS

Make the Ghosts on Toast shown in "Grab That Ghost", pages 148 to 156 and lots of other Halloween treats with this set of nine cookie cutters. The tinplate cutter set includes the large ghost (4 inches wide x 3¾ inches tall) designed *exclusively* for the readers of *Better Homes and Gardens*® magazine; the large pumpkin (4¾ x 4¾ inches); and 7 additional cutters (owl, bat, crescent moon, ghost, pumpkin, witch on broom, and black cat), each measuring approximately 3 inches tall. The price for the set is \$19.95, plus shipping, handling, and applicable sales tax. Specify Ghostly Cutters, AAG804732.



CALL 800/881-4066 or visit [bhgcatalog.com](http://bhgcatalog.com) to order.

## HOW TO TELL A GHOST STORY

When the sun's gone down, gather everyone, pour one last round of cider, and announce it's time for ghost stories.

"You have to turn off all the lights and sit on blankets on the floor," says Donata. "The little ones get to bring flashlights."

"Say it in your own words, and embellish it with details from your neighborhood that are familiar. It makes it way scarier if it's set in your house or your town." Before you start, pick out a person whom you think will be game for becoming the focus of the story. "Usually I go for the biggest kid," Donata says.

Once there was a man whose wife had a golden arm. She was very proud of it. She told her husband, "If I die, promise to bury me with my golden arm." When the wife died, the man buried her and her golden arm right along with her, just as he had promised.

After a while he began to think about what he could do with all that gold. It seemed a shame for it just to lie there in the ground. He wanted the golden arm. So one dark night he went to the graveyard and dug up the golden arm.

He tucked it under his long dark coat and began to walk back home. On the way it started to rain, hail, snow, and blow. When he got home he didn't know where to hide the golden arm, so he put it under his bedcovers with him. But he couldn't get warm because the golden arm was as cold as ice. He shivered and shook.

The winds rose outside. Then the man thought he heard a voice way, way off in the distance. It sounded like this, At this point switch to your spookiest voice; the first time you say the phrase, whisper it. As you go along, increase the volume.

"W-H-E-R-E'-S-M-Y-G-O-L-D-E-N-A-R-M?"

The man pulled the covers up around his ears so he wouldn't hear it. But, he heard it coming down the road. It was crying: "W-H-E-R-E'-S-M-Y-G-O-L-D-E-N-A-R-M?"

Then he heard it on the porch: "W-H-E-R-E'-S-M-Y-G-O-L-D-E-N-A-R-M?"

The wind howled as the front door flew open. The man shook under the covers. He could hear it coming up the stairs. Then the door to his room opened and he peeked out from his covers. There it was, tall and white. And he could see right through it.

"I-M-M-I-N-N-T-H-E-R-O-O-O-M..."

He was scared. Then it was by the bed.

"I-M-M-S-T-A-N-D-I-N'-B-Y-Y-T-H-E-B-E-D-D..."

He pulled the covers up over his head.

"I-M-M-P-U-L-L-I-N'-D-O-W-N-T-H-E-Q-U-I-L-T..."

"I-M-M-G-E-T-T-I-N'-I-N-N-T-H-E-B-E-D-D..."

The man was so scared he couldn't speak. And...

Get ready to reach out and get your "victim."

It grabbed him!



The pumpkin mixture is ready to pull off the heat when it's thick enough when your finger leaves a clear trail on the back of the spoon as you draw your finger through it.

a metal spoon (see photo, left), 4 to 6 minutes. Do not boil. Strain through a fine mesh sieve into a bowl. Stir in the vanilla and the cognac. Whisk the pumpkin into the egg mixture. Cover surface with plastic wrap to prevent a skin from forming; refrigerate until chilled, at least 3 hours or overnight.

3. Pour the pumpkin custard into a 1½- or 2-quart ice cream maker and freeze according to the manufacturer's directions. Remove and pack the ice cream into a freezer-safe container. Cover and freeze until firm, at least 3 hours or up to 3 days, before serving. Makes 1¼ quarts (ten, ½-cup servings).

**CHOCOLATE DIPPED ICE CREAM CONES:** Place ½ cup semisweet chocolate pieces (or 3 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped) in a small microwave-safe bowl or ramekin. Microwave, uncovered, on 70 percent power (medium-high) for 1 minute; stir. Microwave for 1½ to 3 minutes more, stirring after every 15 seconds,

until chocolate is melted and smooth. Spoon chocolate over open end of cone to cover about one-quarter of sides. (If chocolate is too thick to spread, stir in 1 teaspoon shortening). Transfer to a wax-paper-lined baking sheet until set, about 1 hour at room temperature or 15 minutes in the refrigerator.

**EACH SERVING (WITHOUT CONE):** 269 cal., 20 g total fat (12 g sat. fat), 168 mg chol., 89 mg sodium, 21 g carbo., 1 g fiber, 3 g pro. Daily Values: 93% vit. A, 2% vit. C, 7% calcium, 5% iron. ♾

## FLOWER PUMPKIN

To create the pumpkin centerpiece in our story, you'll need a 6- or 8-inch-diameter floral foam ball; approximately 60 to 75 marigolds, orange carnations, or button mums (carnations are

the most readily available); the stem of a pumpkin; and a long blackberry cane or other vine. Slice off the bottom of the foam sphere to make a firm base; trim top to ensure finished result will look like a pumpkin. Soak the sphere in cold water until completely soaked. Make holes in the foam about 1 inch apart with a skewer or length of wire before inserting stems (depending on size of blooms, you may have to adjust spacing between the flowers for complete coverage).

Leave space to insert the pumpkin stem at the top of the arrangement. When the entire surface of the sphere is covered with flowers, arrange blackberry cane around the top. Place on a cake stand or platter with a lip that will hold water to keep flowers fresh. Add water to base.

