One of the most cherished gifts you can give someone you love is a gift that keeps on giving. A most thoughtful gift is a personal cookbook authored by you and containing family recipes which were handed down from generation to generation, or favorite traditional holiday recipes invented in your own kitchen.

Do you have a child, going off to college or starting life on his own? Do you have a son or daughter who was recently married or is about to get married? Do you know someone who would love to have Grandma's recipe for chicken soup with knaidlach or Aunt Bessie's luscious chocolate cake? Or how about your own recipe for Passover tzimes? Have we got an idea for you...WRITE YOUR OWN COOKBOOK.

Here is how to go about it:

1. Purchase a blank book with or without lines, depending on your preference.

3. Cut polyester batting to the size of the book (front cover, spine, back cover) and with Elmer's glue attach to the book cover.

3. Make a cover to go over the batting in any medium you like or prefer.

**EXAMPLES:**

a) strip piecing or quilting  
b) canvas work (needlepoint)  
c) fabric padded picture frame  
d) crewel embroidery  
e) cross-stitch  
f) shadow work, etc.

**NOTE:** If you cannot design your own cover, there are many resources in craft stores, book stores and Women's League mailings.
The cover should be worked in one piece (front, spine and back). An additional 1½" should be added to front and back when cutting, to allow for folding under.

4. Decide what sections you would like in your cookbook and divide the pages, leaving blank pages at the front for the title and dedication, for an index, for measurements and abbreviations. Also leave a few blank pages for notes in the back. (ALL THIS IS DOABLE ON YOUR COMPUTER USING PUBLISHING SOFTWARE.) Examples of Sections include: Index, Appetizers, Soups & Breads, Main Courses, Desserts, Cakes & Cookies.

5. Collect pictures from magazines to use as illustrations and dividers. (USING COMPUTER CLIP ART IS ANOTHER OPTION.) For a more personal touch, you can illustrate the book yourself and do the recipes in calligraphy. On the recipe pages, illustrations may be glued on, either to the top or bottom corner. Do not use illustrations that are too large or they will leave you with inadequate recipe space. Handwrite all recipes with a magic marker for a personal look. Make sure your handwriting is neat and legible. You may also find it fun to tell stories behind some of the recipes or the about the people who gave them to you.

NOTE: Number all recipe pages to make it easier to find a particular recipe and note the page numbers in the index.

You may use full page illustrations on the divider pages:

6. You may use a decorative recipe card for your dedication page, which should be the second page in the book. Example of Dedication:

PRESENTED TO MY DAUGHTER ON THE OCCASION OF HER MARRIAGE SO SHE CAN SHARE WITH OTHERS THE TRADITIONS OF HER HERITAGE AND THE PLEASURES OF GOOD EATING. April, 1996.
7. To make the cover, measure the width of the cover, multiply by two and add the width of the binding and 3" for fold-back (1½ for back and 1½ for front.) The height of the cover should be the height of the book plus 1" at the top and 1" at the bottom (for fold-back).

8. To finish, lay the book on the inside of the finished cover. Put a few drops of Elmer’s glue on the batting and glue the cover down. Turn the 1½" fold-back to the inside of the book. Glue down the inside flaps and glue ¼” grosgrain ribbon over the edge to give it a finished look.

9. Book Mark: Cut ¼” grosgrain ribbon twice the height of the book plus 3”. Trim the end on a diagonal or V shape.

Place half the ribbon in the book between the pages and let the other half fold over.

**Note:** The same basic idea may be used to make a Birthday Date Book for Grandma or Grandpa, a family tree book, a family memory book, etc.

(Recommended for Hanukkah and general simchas as a gift.)