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# Muffin tins offer fun and cute meal alternative

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Brette Sember's crescent egg cups put a yummy, kid-friendly twist on breakfast. / PHOTO PROVIDED/FRED MINNICK

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Courier-Post Staff

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Time to find the muffin tin, that seldom-used kitchen staple kept on hand for the occasional cupcake-baking frenzy — and not much else.

Turns out, it's a great tool for making breakfast, lunch, dinner and appetizers.

Fresh off the press this month are two cookbooks offering hundreds of recipes based on this humble pan.

Brette Sember's "The Muffin Tin Cookbook: 200 Fast, Delicious Mini-Pies, Pasta Cups, Gourmet Pockets, Veggie Cakes, and More" offers 200 ideas, from Reuben pies to ravioli lasagna.

Matt Kadey's "Muffin Tin Chef: 101 Savory Snacks, Adorable Appetizers, Enticing Entrees and Delicious Desserts" suggests creations such as baked eggs in prosciutto cups and lasagna rolls.

Sember's [book](#) was released two days earlier than Kadey's, and both authors blogged about their experiences with the pan. Both books have credentials to back them up: Sember's co-author, Melinda Boyd, is a registered dietitian, as is Kadey.

Why a muffin tin? Sember was inspired by a Betty Crocker children's cookbook she used as a [child](#), which offered a meat-loaf recipe baked in the 12-cup pan.

"I think it's really a fun way to cook," the Buffalo, N.Y., resident said during a phone interview. "For a lot of people, cooking doesn't feel like fun. I think if you can make it fun and something your [kids](#) think is exciting and interesting, it makes it a lot easier to head into the

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Prosciutto and egg cups, a unique and diminutive breakfast treat, are the creation of Matthew Kadey. / Photo provided/Matthew Kadey

On the Web

'The Muffin Tin Cookbook' by Brette Sember (Adams Media, \$17.95) www.brettesember.com

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Cute and (usually) round, muffin-shaped meals are portable, easy to pack and kid-friendly, she said.

"Kids think that anything made in a muffin tin is going to be fabulous, because they're raised on cupcakes and muffins and those are terrific treats," said Sember. "So kids automatically think it's going to be a special treat."

And, said Sember, the muffin tin offers automatic portion control. Her recipes are accompanied by nutritional information and the calorie counts.

"You know exactly what you're getting," Sember said.

The muffin tin also makes it easy to make a lot of portions all at once, especially handy for the breakfast rush: egg crescent cups, ham-and-egg cups, or French toast for a crowd.

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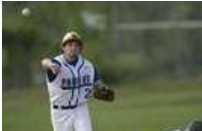
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