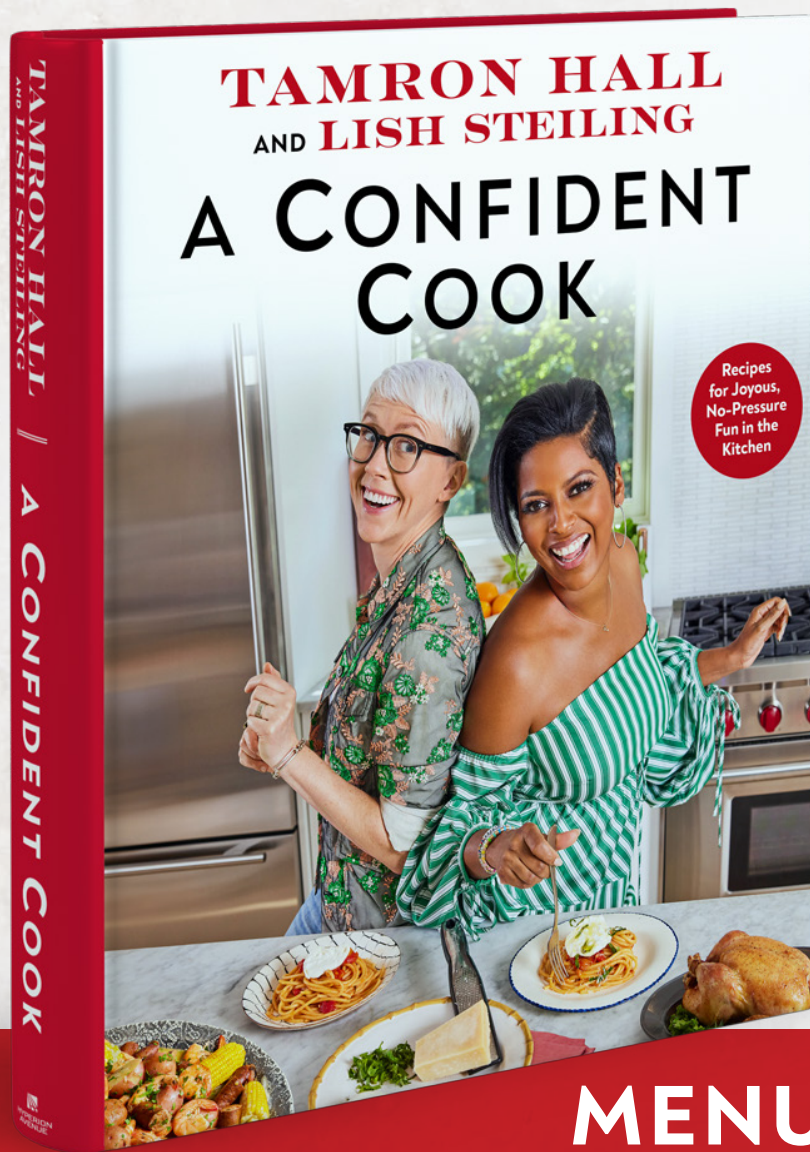


# A CONFIDENT COOK

## Book Club Menu



Meeting new friends, especially as adults, can be tricky. How do you connect? Our answer is simple: it's through food. When we first met each other, working at the *Today* show years ago, we never in our wildest dreams thought that our friendship would lead to endless empowering kitchen possibilities and adventures filled countless laughs, high fives, and even tears of pure joy. In our book, we aim to share that same empowerment and excitement with you! We hope it opens the doors to authentic relationships with unforgettable meals, prepared by none other than you. Enjoy!

## MENU



**APPETIZER**  
The Platter



**DRINK**  
French 75-ish



**MAIN**  
Indoor Shrimp Boil



**DESSERT**  
Blueberry Lime Galette



**TAKE HOME**  
Sweet Life Trail Mix

# THE PLATTER

PREP TIME: ABOUT 30 MINUTES | YIELD: SERVES AS FEW OR AS MANY AS YOU LIKE

**BEHOLD THE ELUSIVE BOARD!** From cheeseboards to butter boards to charcuterie boards to “we are bored,” here we give you the method to the madness. We prefer a board with a balance of ingredients. Both meat and cheese are welcome at the party, along with the usual suspects for blinging out your cheese-and-cracker situation. The rest is up to you. Set up the larger things first, like the cheeses and meats, and then nestle in the rest. A little breathing room is sometimes nice around a few items so it doesn’t look like the second someone removes an item the whole thing will fall apart like a Jenga tower. It should be inviting to guests and make them want to grab something. Depending on what we tuck into it, some nights the platter can be the whole meal.

- 1 soft cheese**
- 1 medium cheese**
- 1 crystallly hard cheese**
- 1 firmish salume**
- 1 fatty salume**
- Olives, marinated or not**
- Nuts of sorts**
- Grapes**
- Dried fruits**
- Crackers and breadsticks**
- Good bread (never a bad idea)**

These cheeses can be any types of cheese that you prefer. Don’t feel obligated to throw in a goat cheese if you don’t enjoy it. The point is to mix up the textures and flavors. That soft cheese can be a Brie, a feta, or Boursin. The medium can be fontina, or dill Havarti. And as for the hard cheeses, anything that has the little crystallized bits for texture has our hearts. Parmesan, aged Gouda, or even a nicely aged cheddar can fill this role. Leave at least one or two in the full form. Maybe start with a few slices or shards cut off, or simply put the knife right into the cheese to make it inviting for folks to dive in. And if you are like Tamron and want all soft cheeses, do it. There is more than enough variety out there.

When it comes to the meats, stick with the one firm, one soft policy, again playing with textures. Love finocchiona? Get that bad boy thinly sliced and pile it high. More of a landjaeger person? No problem. When it comes to

the fatty salumi, you can really do no wrong with thinly sliced mortadella. The melt-in-your-mouth magic is sure to make everyone smile. We are pretty sure mortadella is God’s promise to pigs that when they die, they will come back even better. Yachtwurst is another fabulous option—and what Lish grew up on. Recently, nduja has also gained popularity. The spicy spreadable Italian salumi would be fabulous with a creamy blue cheese and drizzle of honey. Whatever you decide, aside from nduja, be sure to have your deli person thinly slice the meat for you if possible. That way you can “ribbon” it or make it look light and fluffy on the platter. Do this by holding the slice in the center and letting the meat drape down. Stand it on the platter sculpturally so it has movement and is doing something so much more interesting than just lying flat on the platter. You eat with your eyes first, so we like to make it pretty. You can do this, and if you panic,

*(continued on page 164)*





# INDOOR SHRIMP BOIL

PREP TIME: 30 MINUTES | COOK TIME: 30 MINUTES | YIELD: SERVES 8 TO 10

**TALK ABOUT FEEDING A CROWD.** A shrimp boil is a surefire way to bring smiles to the table. Make sure you have a big enough pot and a large bowl to toss everything in at the end. A shrimp boil is an experience that brings people together like no other, as everyone collectively peels and eats shrimp. We've enjoyed this at Tamron's place in the Hamptons and at our apartments in the city. There is no wrong place for it. Don't forget the napkins and damp towels . . . or just point people to the nearest sink.

**4 quarts water**  
**½ cup seafood seasoning, such as Old Bay, plus more to serve**  
**2 tablespoons hot sauce, such as Tabasco, plus more to serve**  
**1 onion, peeled and cut in quarters**  
**1 head garlic, halved across the equator**  
**2 lemons, 1 halved, 1 cut in wedges**  
**15 sprigs thyme**  
**3 bay leaves, Turkish preferred**  
**1 tablespoon kosher salt**  
**1½ pounds small red bliss potatoes**  
**2 12-ounce packages andouille sausage, cut into 2-inch pieces**  
**4 ears of corn, shucked and each cob cut in half**  
**2 pounds large shrimp, in the shell**  
**1 stick (8 tablespoons) unsalted butter, at room temperature**  
**½ cup chopped Italian parsley**  
**Crusty bread, to serve**

Add the water to at least an 8-quart stockpot (or larger if you have it). To the water, add the seasoning, hot sauce, onion, garlic, halved lemons, thyme, bay leaves, and salt. Place over medium-high heat and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to maintain a rapid simmer. Simmer for 5 minutes to allow the flavors to marry.

To the simmering broth, add the potatoes. Cook until just about tender, 12 to 15 minutes. Add the sausage and return to a simmer. Cook until the sausage is warmed through and is flavoring the broth, another 3 minutes. Add the corn and cook until crisp tender, another 3 minutes. Finally stir in the shrimp, cover, and cook until bright pink and opaque all the way through, about 2 minutes.

Place the butter in a large bowl. Using a spider or a large slotted spoon, remove the shrimp, corn, sausage, and potatoes from the broth and add them to the large bowl. Add ½ cup of the broth from the pot and toss everything to combine and coat in the butter. Serve sprinkled with more seafood seasoning, scattered with lemon wedges, and topped with the chopped parsley. Don't forget the bread to sop up the sauce. Feel free to offer more broth for dipping.



# BLUEBERRY-LIME GALETTE

PREP TIME: 45 MINUTES, PLUS 2 HOURS TO CHILL | COOK TIME: 40 MINUTES | YIELD: SERVES 6 TO 8

**WHEN LISH FIRST BROUGHT THIS DISH** over to Tamron's for a brunch, we all snacked on half of the galette before it even got to the table. It quickly became one of Tamron's favorite desserts.

The balance of sweet, tart, and buttery is perfection. Don't be intimidated by making your own pie dough. You can do it. It only takes a little conviction!

## **FOR THE CRUST:**

**2 cups all-purpose flour, such as Farmer Ground Flour**

**1 tablespoon packed light brown sugar**

**¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

**11 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into ¼-inch pieces and chilled**

**¾ cup ice-cold water, plus 1 tablespoon if needed**

**1 tablespoon heavy cream**

**2 teaspoons turbinado sugar**

## **FOR THE FILLING:**

**3 cups blueberries**

**¾ cup packed light brown sugar**

**1 teaspoon lime zest, from 1 lime**

**1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lime juice**

**2 tablespoons cornstarch**

**¼ teaspoon kosher salt**

**Vanilla ice cream, for serving, optional**

In a large bowl, combine the flour, brown sugar, and salt. Add the butter and with your hands begin quickly working in the butter slightly, smearing it into the flour. Leave the butter in large streaks. Really try to mash the butter into a smear versus a cube. Add the water and mix until a very rough dough forms. The shaggy dough should hold together when squeezed. If it doesn't, add 1 more tablespoon cold water. Pour the mixture out onto a flat surface and knead 4 or 5 times to bring the dough together. Flatten into a 1-inch-thick disk and wrap tightly with plastic wrap. You should be able to see visible smears of butter in the dough. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper and set aside.

In a medium bowl, mix together the blueberries, brown sugar, lime zest, lime juice, cornstarch, and salt. Place the pie dough on

a lightly floured surface. Lightly flour the pie dough as well. Roll the dough out to a 14-inch round. Transfer the dough onto the prepared pan by folding it in half and then unfolding it on the tray. If any cracks form, simply patch them by pressing the dough together. Spoon the filling into the center of the dough, leaving a 2- to 3-inch border around the edge. Bring the edges of the dough up and around the filling by approximately 2 inches, making 7 or 8 creases or folds along the edge. There should be about 8 inches of visible filling exposed. Brush the edges of the dough with the heavy cream and sprinkle with the turbinado sugar. Bake until the crust is golden brown and cooked all the way through and the filling is thick and bubbly, 35 to 40 minutes. Cool slightly, at least 20 minutes, on the tray on a wire rack before carefully transferring the galette to a platter. Serve wedges topped with vanilla ice cream if desired.

# FRENCH 75-ISH

PREP TIME: 40 MIN, MOSTLY UNATTENDED | COOK TIME: 4 MINUTES  
YIELD: MAKES 1 COCKTAIL, SIMPLE SYRUP FOR APPROXIMATELY 16 COCKTAILS

**WHEN WE FIRST MET**, the only cocktail Lish ever knew Tamron to order was the French 75. Her admiration of the cocktail inspired this smooth and refreshing update to the classic. The extra infusion of the lemon and juniper in the simple syrup really amps up the freshness of this bubbly cocktail.

## FOR THE SYRUP:

- ½ cup granulated sugar
- ½ cup water
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 6 strips lemon zest
- 8 juniper berries, lightly crushed or torn

## FOR THE COCKTAIL:

- 1 ounce gin
- ¼ ounce freshly squeezed lemon juice
- ¼ ounce infused simple syrup
- ½ cup (8 ounces) sparkling wine such as prosecco or cava
- 1 lemon twist

For the syrup, in a small pan combine the sugar, water, salt,

lemon zest, and juniper berries. Bring to a simmer, stirring often, until the sugar is fully dissolved, about 4 minutes. Allow the syrup to infuse for 30 minutes. Strain into an airtight container and refrigerate until ready to use.

In a champagne flute, combine the gin, lemon juice, simple syrup, and sparkling wine. Stir, and garnish with the lemon twist.



# SWEET LIFE TRAIL MIX

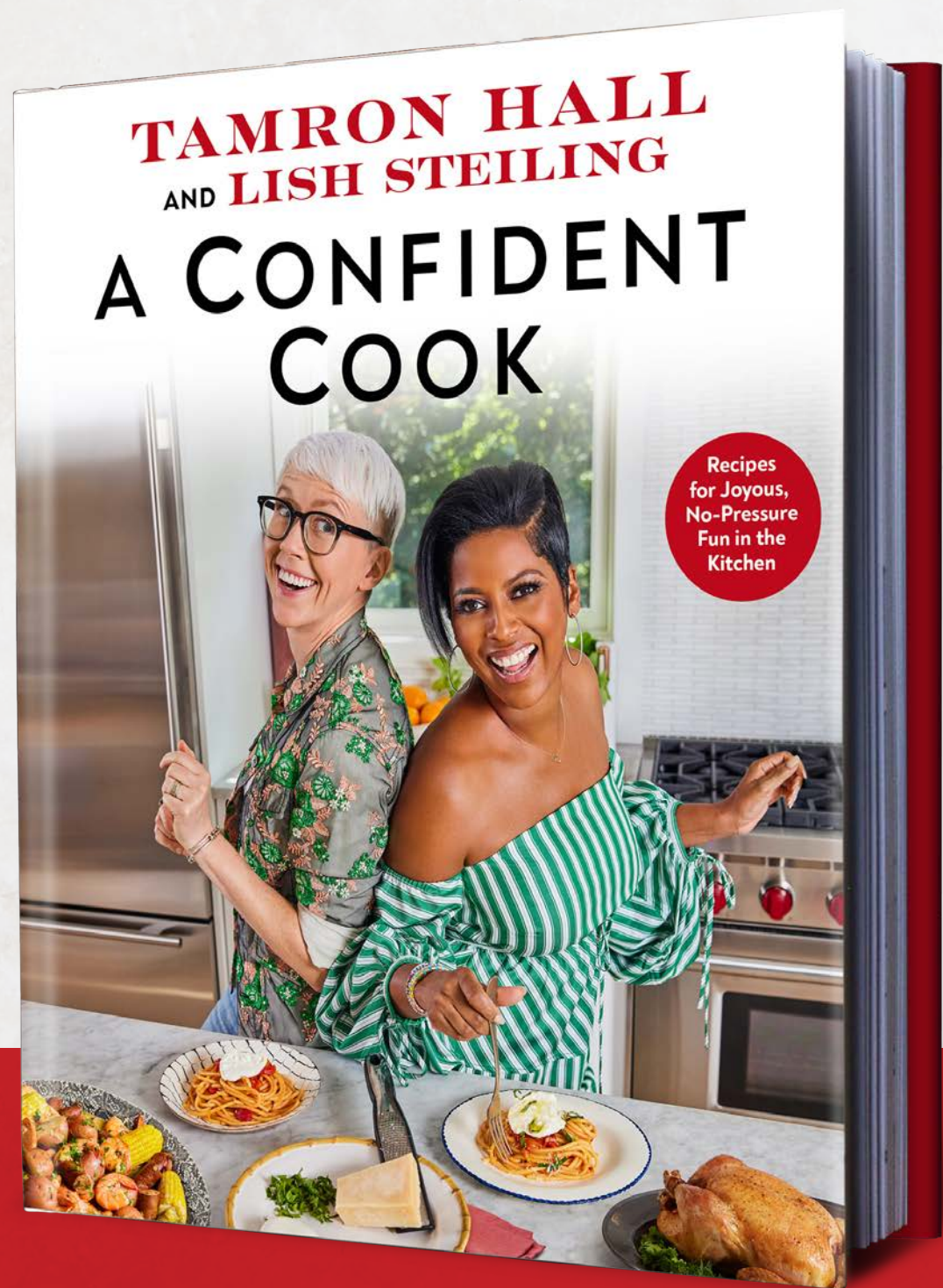
PREP TIME: 5 MINUTES | YIELD: MAKES 6 CUPS

**WE'LL KEEP THIS SHORT TO FINISH.** This is inspired by the sweet life we are both grateful to live and the food that brings us all together. The night may have to come to an end, but the good memories of family and friends should always stick with us, just like this divine end-of-the-night treat.

- 2 (3.1-ounce) boxes candy-coated milk chocolates, such as M&M's
- 1 (5-ounce) box milk chocolate-covered caramels, such as Milk Duds
- 1 cup roasted salted peanuts
- 1 cup sesame sticks
- ½ cup dried cherries

In a medium bowl, mix together all of the ingredients. Sit back, relax, and enjoy all the different sweet, salty, tangy flavor combinations your palate can imagine. Let's be honest, the chocolate is the best part.





**AVAILABLE NOW  
WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD**