

Meal Plan By [            ]

Title: ***A Culinary Celebration***

## 1. Recipes

### ***Appetizers: Stuffed Mushrooms***

- **Ingredients:**
  - i. *Large mushrooms*
  - ii. *Cream cheese*
  - iii. *Garlic cloves*
  - iv. *Fresh parsley*
  - v. *Bread crumbs*
  - vi. *Olive oil*
  - vii. *Salt and pepper to taste*
- **Instructions:**
  - 1) *Set up some parchment paper to line a baking tray and preheat the oven.*
  - 2) *Take off the stems and clean the mushrooms.*
  - 3) *Combine cream cheese, bread crumbs, chopped parsley, minced garlic, salt, and pepper in a bowl.*
  - 4) *Stuff the cream cheese mixture into each mushroom cap.*
  - 5) *Olive oil should be drizzled over the filled mushrooms.*
  - 6) *Bake in the preheated oven until the filling is golden brown and the mushrooms are soft.*
  - 7) *Garnish with fresh parsley and serve hot.*

**Justification:** Stuffed mushrooms are a sophisticated yet simple appetizer that I choose to serve. An earthy mushroom filled with creamy cheese, garlic, and herbs makes a savory bite that sets the tone for the remainder of the dinner. It's a dish that feels spectacular without being too difficult, so I can show off my culinary abilities while still being confident that I can prepare it by myself.

### ***Main Course: Herb-Crusted Roast Chicken***

- **Ingredients:**
  - i. *Whole chicken*
  - ii. *Fresh herb (such as rosemary, thyme, and sage)*
  - iii. *Garlic cloves*
  - iv. *Lemon*
  - v. *Olive oil*
  - vi. *Salt and pepper to taste*
- **Instructions:**
  - 1) *Set a roasting rack inside a roasting pan and preheat the oven.*

- 2) *After thoroughly drying the chicken, liberally season it with salt and pepper.*
- 3) *Add olive oil, chopped herbs, and minced garlic to the chicken and rub it in.*
- 4) *Put slices of lemon inside the chicken's cavity.*
- 5) *Use kitchen twine to secure the legs together.*
- 6) *Preheat the oven and roast the chicken until it is cooked through and brown.*
- 7) *Before slicing and serving, give the chicken time to rest.*

**Justification:** A traditional main meal that is sure to wow is roast chicken. I choose this recipe because it's a classic that suits a variety of palates and is ideal for a family dinner. The delicate chicken gains flavor and perfume from the herb crust, and the easy preparation lets me securely take control of the cooking process.

### ***Dessert: Berry Parfait***

- **Ingredients:**
  - i. *Mixed berries (such as strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries)*
  - ii. *Greek yogurt*
  - iii. *Honey*
  - iv. *Granola*
- **Instructions:**
  - 1) *As required, wash and cut the berries.*
  - 2) *Arrange Greek yoghurt, mixed berries, and honey drizzled over the top in serving glasses or bowls.*
  - 3) *Layers should be repeated until the glasses are full.*
  - 4) *Sprinkle some granola on top of each parfait.*
  - 5) *Serve right away or put in the fridge until you're ready to serve.*

**Justification:** A berry parfait is a light, refreshing, and aesthetically pleasing dessert choice that I made. A delicious contrast of textures and flavors is produced when sweet berries, crunchy granola, and creamy Greek yoghurt are combined. This dessert is a guilt-free treat to round off the dinner because it's not only tasty but healthful as well.

## ***2. Music Selection***

Song: ***“What a Wonderful World”*** by ***Louis Armstrong***

Lyrics:

*I see tress of green, red roses too  
I see them bloom, for me and you  
And I think to myself, what a wonderful world  
I see skies of blue and clouds of white  
The bright blessed day, the dark sacred night*

*And I think to myself, what a wonderful world*

**Justification:** Louis Armstrong's "*What a Wonderful World*" was my choice because of its upbeat melody and positive lyrics, which express thankfulness and admiration for the joy and beauty that may be found in everyday life. This song will inspire my family to treasure the special times we spend with and to find joy in the small things in life, creating a cozy and sincere mood throughout the dinner. This song promotes introspection and serves as a gentle reminder to take in the beauty of the planet, which in turn helps to build a sense of community and thankfulness among us.

### **3. *Prayer of Gratitude***

Dear [Higher Power/Universe/God],

I am really appreciative that my entire family is here with us around this table. I am grateful to my parents for their unfailing love and support, as well as for their patience and wisdom in guiding me through every stage of my journey. Their unwavering commitment and unselfish efforts have molded me into the person I am today, and I will always be appreciative of their influence on my life.

I am grateful to my siblings for the pleasure and happiness they bring into our family. I am reminded of the strength found in unity and the beauty in variety by their distinct personalities and points of view, which enhance the dynamics within our family.

And to everyone present, I express my gratitude for the love and friendship that bind us all together and create a tapestry of treasured moments and recollections. May we always be grateful for these relationships and keep strengthening the ties that unite us as a family?

May this meal nourish our spirits as well as our bodies, bringing us appreciation for the richness we have been given and serving as a reminder of the value of love, compassion, and community.

Indeed.

### **4. *Symbols and Ritual for Family Appreciation***

#### **1) Family Tree Wall Art**

**Symbol:** A large family tree wall hanging next to the dining table provides a concrete illustration of our family's beginnings, development, and unity. Every branch and leaf represents a member of our family, extending into the future while also tracing back through the past. The tree itself is a symbol of resilience, strength, and stability that echoes the strong ties that bind our families together.

**Significance:** We pay tribute to our ancestors, recognize our ancestry, and celebrate the variety of people that comprise our family by putting our family tree on display. It acts as a reminder of the love, support, and direction that our familial ties provide, nourishing and upholding us through the highs and lows of life. The family tree wall painting serves as a reminder of the rich legacy we are creating together and the history we have in common as a group when we sit down to eat.

#### **2) Memory Jar**

**Symbol:** Every member of the family is invited to add treasured memories, significant occasions, or sincere notes written on little pieces of paper to a memory jar that is set on the dinner table. The jar itself is a container of common experiences, encapsulating the essence of the events that have molded our family and our journey together.

**Significance:** The memory jar custom fosters introspection, thankfulness, and camaraderie among relatives. We create a holy place for storytelling and connecting as we alternately share our memories and read the words left by our loved ones. It encourages a feeling of acceptance and gratitude for the distinct viewpoints and experiences that every member of the family contributes. The memory jar turns into a storehouse of affection, chuckles, and tears, cementing family ties and producing priceless memories.

### ***Ritual: Ancestral Blessing***

#### Components of the Ritual:

- i. **Preparation:** To symbolize the presence of our ancestors and the light they continue to shine on our lives, a selected family member lights a candle that is put in the centre of the table before the dinner starts.
- ii. **Invocation:** The family assembles around the table, putting their hands on each other's shoulders or holding hands. During the meal, the selected family member gives a spoken invocation, asking the ancestors' spirits to join us and bless our gathering with knowledge, protection, and direction.
- iii. **Silent Reflection:** After the invocation, there is a silent period during which each family member is free to establish a personal connection with their ancestors through meditation, prayer, or silent contemplation.
- iv. **Commemoration:** Each family member takes a minute to quietly honor and remembers a particular ancestor or loved one who has passed away, thinking back on their legacy and the influence they have had on our lives, while the candle burns.

We honor our ancestors, recognize the bonds that unite us across generations, and give thanks for the teachings of love, resiliency, and wisdom that have been passed down through the decades through this rite. It acts as a potent reminder of our ancestry, our interdependence, and the persistence of our family's history throughout distance and time.

