



Janice Leary *St. Francis Inn/Casa de Sueños*

Growing up in Midwest corn country surrounded by a family of creative artisans with a genuine enjoyment of cooking together for large homespun gatherings, Janice Leary has been feeding guests at the historic St. Francis Inn for more than fifteen years. After childhood summers spent in St. Augustine Beach at her grandparent's beach house, Janice enrolled in Flagler College for an art education that prepared her to be 'crafty, not artistic'. She worked for six years at San Sebastian Winery, creating floral arrangements and planning banquets until she was invited to be Innkeeper at the famed historic bed and breakfast.

Looking back at happy years as a teenager decorating cakes in a supermarket bakery, being organized and multi-tasking are her super talents that prepared Janice to be selected as Food & Beverage Manager by owner Joe Finnegan in 2010. Leading the busy culinary team that creates breakfast, happy hour hors d'oeuvres and nightly desserts for the St. Francis Inn AND Casa de Suenos, Janice's hearty buffet breakfasts bring Inn guests back season after season. Often, they call to make sure that their favorite casseroles and baked treats are on the menu and served on the same days of the week that they fondly remember. It's not surprising that Janice's 'home-style American cookbook recipes' are her secret weapon.

In a 10' x 12' kitchen that was once an inn bedroom, what is always in Janice's pantry? A tiny space that produces breakfast and not dinner, it's of course butter, cream cheese, eggs, tasty breakfast sausage and music! Janice's world revolves around her Kitchen Aid mixer and favorite spatulas. With a meticulously organized kitchen and staff, she works in the tidiest space when she delves into favorite menus created for a distinctive guest list.

There are days when Janice's heart is wrapped around themed celebrations like National Wine Day when she's baking merlot cupcakes – or National Root Beer Float Day when guests return early to the Inn and enjoy their late-night float! From holiday fruit cakes and apple pie cookies to pecan rum cake and banana pudding bars, Janice's dessert repertoire has no limit. The breakfast casseroles command attention when she's up before the sun and preparing Hash Brown Pie or Farmer's Market Veggie Strata. Her career as a bed and breakfast 'chef' never gets boring. Janice doesn't feel that it's overly repetitive like working in a restaurant with a nightly set menu. In her beautiful little kitchen, Janice manages inventory, baking, preparing breakfast, occasionally decorating the inn dining room and generously feeding her guests with casserole-to-plate specialties.

An over-planner who travels the world to eat great food, Janice's favorite dish during a recent trip to Ireland was Spicy Indian Curry. She daydreams about going to every new restaurant and is known for planning large family vacations as travel coordinator, guide and restaurant critic. Combining two passions of food & travel, we need to check into the St. Francis Inn for a getaway and wake up to her Cheesy Eggs and Baked Oatmeal Casserole!

Leigh Cort



*Janice Leary's Oatmeal Cookies.
We dare you to eat just one. – We double dare you.*