

BATTER UP

THE MAGAZINE

Baking is no longer just for women. Bring the manliness into deliciousness.

Real Men Bake

Plus

Poached Pears

Jack Daniel's Dark Chocolate Cupcakes

Apple Crisp

Beeramisu



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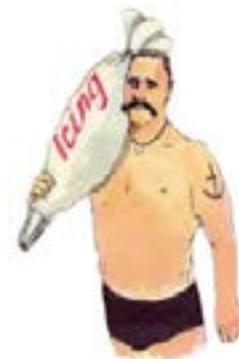
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Real Men Bake



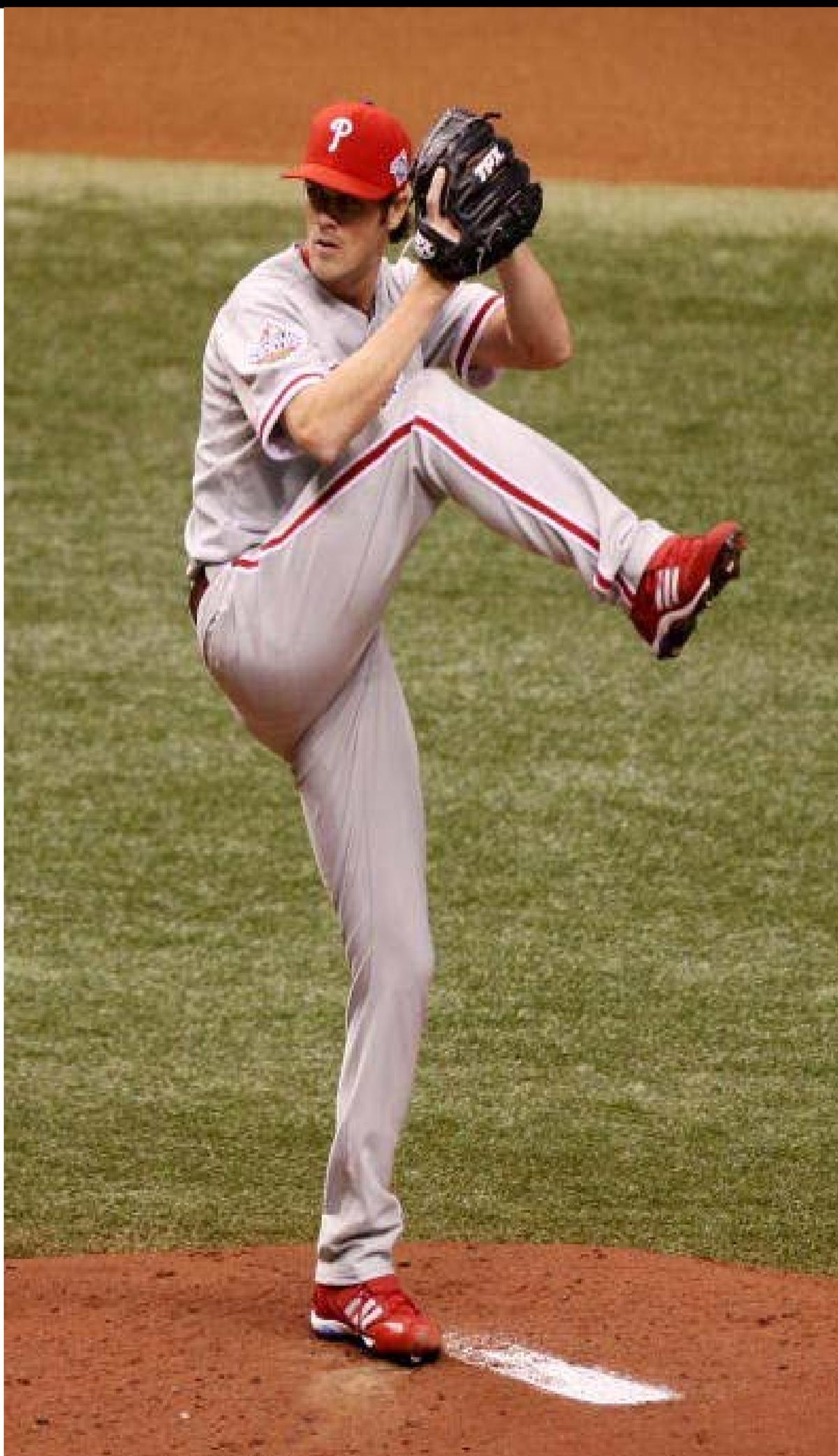
By **JOSH GONDELMAN**

I don't know much about being a man. I do not fix things well. I don't know how cars work. If I didn't grow hair out of my face, I could probably be mistaken for a startlingly bald lady the way I fawn over babies in public. Once, I assembled a headboard for my girlfriend, and when I finished, I realized I had installed one of the shelves so backwardly that it would have taken an hour to fix. But I do have one piece of advice for dudes. A simple and practical maxim that will make your lives easier. Every guy should learn how to bake one thing really well.

"Wha-wha-what?" you may ask. "Shouldn't every man know how to change his own oil or throw a curveball or wrassle a gator?" Maybe. But in my experience, none of those accomplishments will earn you the kind of instantaneous admiration that whipping up a pie or a cobbler from scratch will generate. Besides, how long into your life are you going to be playing competitive baseball? Fastballs fade. Cookies are forever.

Baking isn't easy, but it pays dividends. First of all, if you're a guy and you're not wearing a puffy white hat and an apron streaked with flour, no one will expect your prowess with a double-boiler. People love to be surprised. And there's no more delightful surprise than a tray of homemade baked goods. They're delicious, and they show that you put in time and effort to do something nice. You'll be a hit at your office potluck or family reunion. Anyone can throw together a salad, but it takes motivation, dedication, and practice to engineer a platter of seven-layer bars. Your hard work will not go unappreciated.

Plus, if you spontaneously bake for a girl you're dating, she will probably lose her mind with excitement.



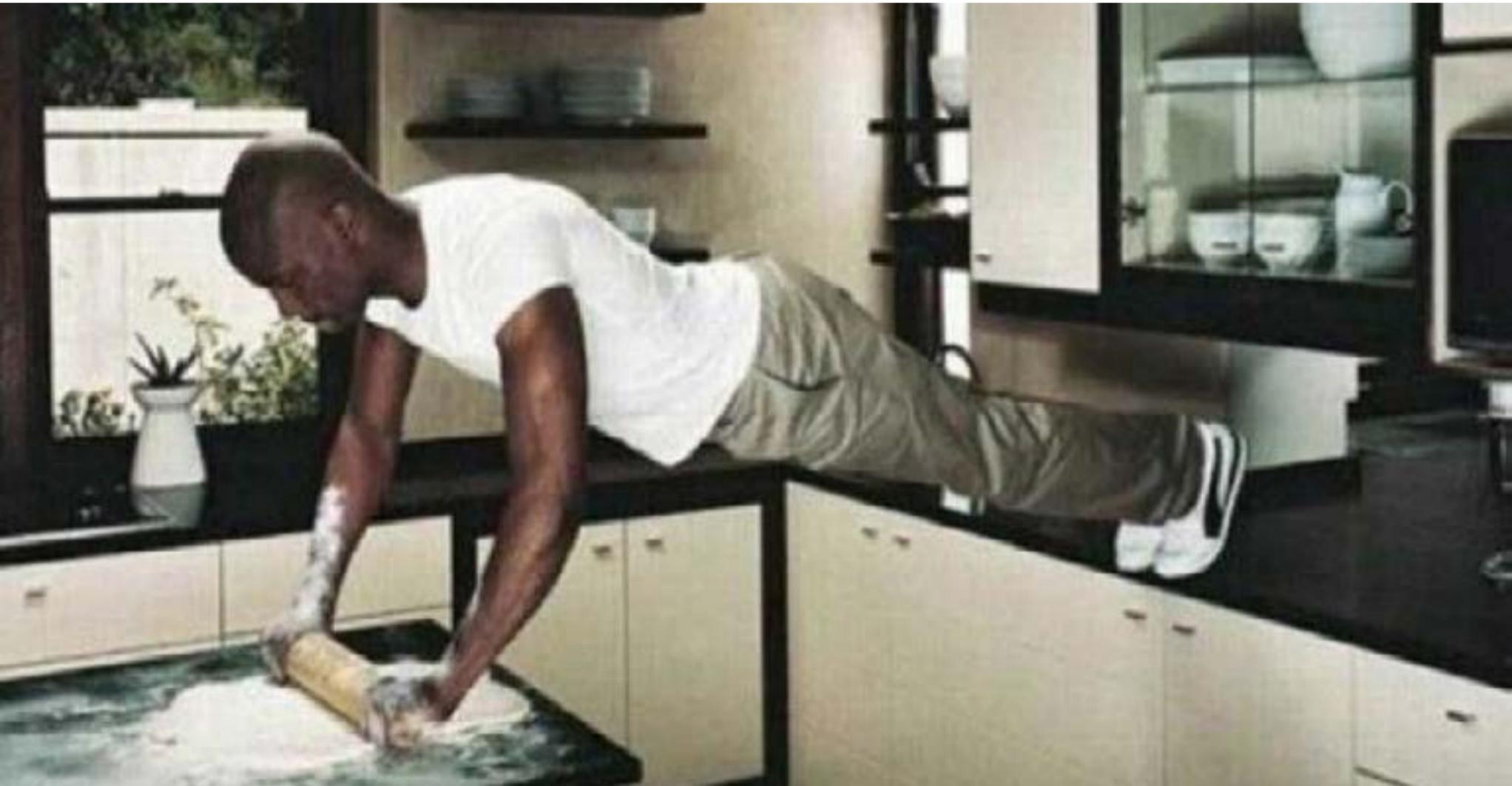
Most girls (according to my limited research) have never had a guy bake for them out of the blue. You will get major brownie points (pun intended and knocked out of the park) for all that legwork. If the baked goods stink, you still get credit for trying, and it's a charming story for the grandkids. If they taste good, then even better!

"But Josh," you're asking now, "why not just learn how to cook? Baking is for girls, right? And cooking is manly. Like on a grill, with an open flame and sword-like skewers."

random barbecue or two throughout the year. One or two close relatives' birthdays, tops. If you show even remedial cooking prowess (and by this I mean the ability to combine foods without setting a house on fire) you will be enlisted for any family gathering, friendly get-together, and office party.

More importantly, the joy of baked goods last longer. If you put in three hours roasting a chicken, sautéing onions, steaming broccoli, and boiling water for rice, you get one great meal and then a week of lunches. A batch of brownies or a pie gives you several

**Fastballs
fade.
Cookies
are
forever.**



Well, intensely sexist yet weirdly phallo-centric devil's advocate that I invented, baking has it all over cooking. If you learn how to cook one thing, that's a good start, but if you can make lasagna, people are going to assume you can make meatloaf or tuna casserole. In short, when people see you cook, they think you can cook. If you bake one thing, that's usually good enough. No one looks a gift croissant in the mouth the way they do with a steak or a soup. Plus, you won't get called upon to bake nearly as often as you would to cook. You'll have to bake for Thanksgiving, probably. Maybe a

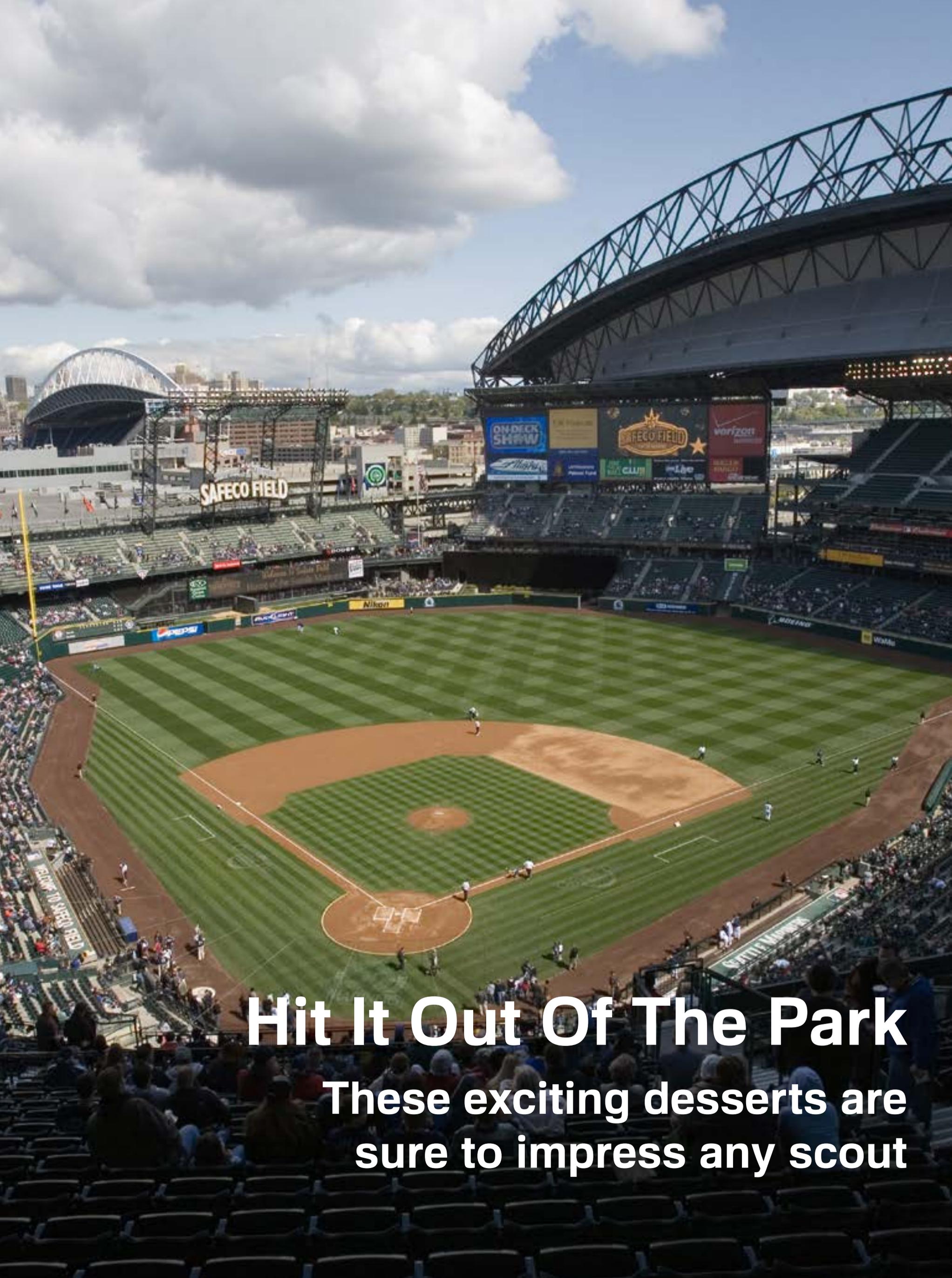
treats to look forward to when you get home from work (or before you leave for work if you're a grownup who LIVES LIFE TO THE FULLEST). Baking is a better use of your time.

Which brings me to my most crucial point: When you know how to bake, you can have pastry whenever you want! You can make it happen with your own two hands. It's like magic. I imagine the same satisfaction a burlier guy gets from disassembling an engine block or hollowing out a canoe (I don't know what actual men do) is the same sense of purpose I feel when I pull a key lime

pie out of the oven. In fact, my pride at baking brownies is often so intense, I feel no need to ever father a child.

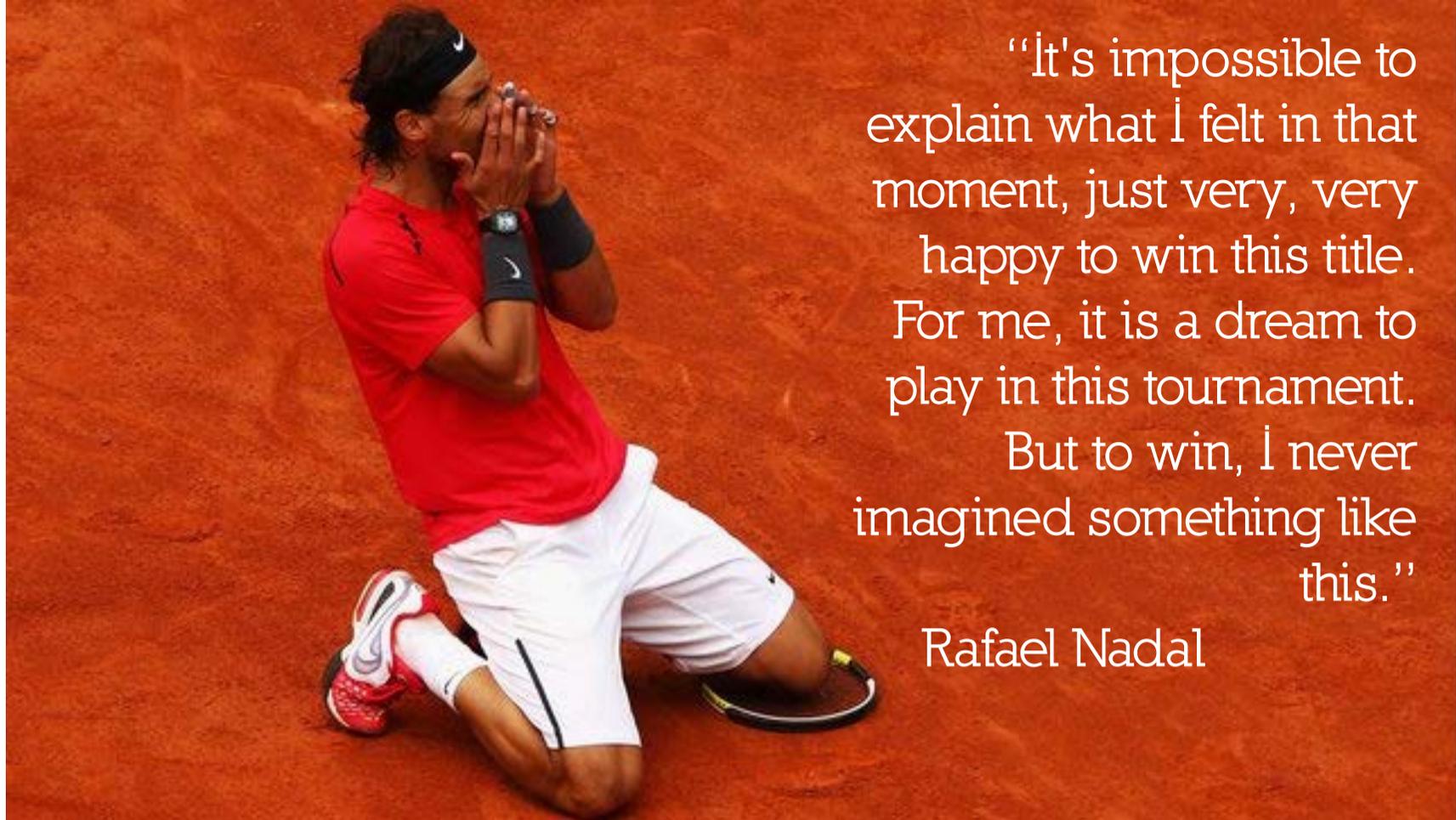
Maybe that makes me a wimp, but all I know is that baking has enhanced my romantic, familial, and professional relationships. I'm leaving my mark on the world by creating things that bring people joy and excitement. Isn't that what being a guy is all about?

So bro, put down the wrench and pick up the whisk... if you're man enough.



Hit It Out Of The Park

These exciting desserts are
sure to impress any scout



“It's impossible to explain what I felt in that moment, just very, very happy to win this title. For me, it is a dream to play in this tournament. But to win, I never imagined something like this.”

Rafael Nadal

Jack Daniel's Dark Chocolate Cupcakes

Ingredients

- 2 Cups all purpose flour
- 3/4 cup coco powder
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 tsp. baking soda
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup super strong coffee
- 1/2 cup Jack Daniels Whiskey
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil

Instructions

- 1** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large bowl, stir the flour, cocoa powder, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, and salt.
- 2** In separate bowl (I use a 4 or 8 cup measuring vessel) combine the eggs, coffee, whiskey, buttermilk and oil.
- 3** Pour the egg mixture into the flour mixture and whisk until smooth. Spoon the mixture into prepared cupcake cups.
- 4** Bake in preheated oven about 18-20 minutes until the tops spring back when lightly pressed. Cool completely.



Men Don't Bake

Baking is about everything that cooking is not — quantifying, keeping clean, preening, staying pure. But what the hell.

By Tom Junod

Most people are hungry, therefore they eat. I am hungry, therefore I cook. Since my senior year in college, when I moved into an apartment with a bunch of friends, I have cooked almost every day of my life. Cooking is, to me, the perfect fusion of generosity and selfishness, indeed the resolution of generosity and selfishness, the answer to my torn nature. I don't love to cook — I cook. It's what I do, and by this time, it's who I am.

There is something, however, I have never done as a cook. I have never baked. I have cooked thousands of meals big and small, but I have never cooked a cookie. I have never roasted a cake, or a pie. I have absented myself from the pleasures of baking bread, perhaps because baking

bread is always presented in terms of pleasure — because people who bake bread never fail to get all poetic about its satisfactions (“the smell of baking bread in the morning”), and I don't want that kind of pressure. You don't need a cookbook to cook, but you can't bake without one, so there's something sort of sex-manual-y about baking, a doggedness to the rapture that is unhappily reminiscent of the seventies and trying to have sex to a Joni Mitchell album. I mean, sometimes you just want to do it, but you can't just bake a cake. You have to measure. You have to take as much time as it takes, with no shortcuts. You don't have to love cooking to cook, but you have to do more than love baking to bake. You



have to bake out of love.

Which is why I found myself recently in the pastry kitchen of a New York restaurant that turns out something like four hundred desserts — four hundred expressions of love and pureheartedness — a day. You see, my daughter loves cookies. I love my daughter. And yet I have never so much as sliced through a sludgy and eternal bar of premade dough so that she could have the experience of eating chocolate-chip cookies “fresh out of the oven.” I'm fine with Chips Ahoy!, as long as they come with a glass of milk. Still, I knew that eating homemade chocolate-chip cookies would make my daughter happy, and so I visited the eminent pastry chef at Gramercy Tavern to find out not only how to make them but also why I was averse to making them.

I got my answer right away. “There are two kinds of people,” Nancy Olson told me as soon as I showed up in her kitchen. “There are cooks, and there are bakers.” Upstairs, there were cooks barking orders around rings of open flame that might have caused Vulcan to break a sweat; downstairs in Nancy's kitchen, there was just cozy warmth and flour-perfumed bakers working in silent accord. The cooks, of course, had something in common. So did the bakers. Indeed, when Nancy told me that everybody was either a cook or a baker, she might as well have said that everybody was either a man or a woman. You can cook like a man. But you can't bake like a man, because men don't bake. Nancy said that because baking is easy, it's hard; that because



Nestle Toll House Chocolate Chip Cookies

anyone can, a lot of men can't, or won't. "Theoretically anybody with a recipe should be able to do it. All you have to do is follow instructions. But if you don't, it doesn't work. So you have to enjoy following instructions. You have to enjoy precision."

If cooking represents control, baking represents surrender. I wasn't going to learn how to make chocolate-chip cookies from Nancy; I was going to learn how to follow the recipe to make chocolate-chip cookies. In fact, no one knows how to make chocolate-chip cookies, not even Nancy, who found a big binder with her recipe for Gramercy Tavern Chocolate-Chip Cookies, opened it on one of her immaculate stainless-steel prep areas, and studied it like a monk with an illuminated manuscript. And that was the main difference between cooking and baking, it seemed to me: Humans have always known how to cook and have been able to pass their knowledge along, but nobody really knows how to bake, and so baking didn't exist until knowledge could be codified and written down — it didn't exist until the dawn of civilization. And that's what made me wary of it. I never want to feel particularly civilized when I cook, any more than I want to feel civilized when I write; indeed, refinement is the enemy of both.

And yet I baked with Nancy Olson. And I learned a few things about baking: Baking soda is what flattens cookies out, and so Nancy, who likes cookies to have "that nice domed shape," goes easy on it. Egg yolks are what give cookies that "fatty goodness, that rich gooeyness inside," and so she adds extra. And when breaking a lot of eggs, even professional bakers get bits of eggshell

in the mixing bowl. But here's what they do to get them out: "Dip the large shell in the bowl. For some reason eggshells attract eggshells, and you can scoop them right out."

But I couldn't actually do anything with my newfound knowledge when I got home until Nancy sent me the recipe. I was something I haven't been in a kitchen in a long time — freaking helpless — and my helplessness continued even when Nancy started sending me encouraging e-mails and asking if I was having fun yet. Because I wasn't having fun. I was worried that I was making mistakes, and when my daughter pitched in, I started worrying that she was making mistakes. She's eight and makes eggs most every morning according to her own whims, dressing them with Japanese rice seasoning and soy sauce. But now when she asked, "Hey, Dad, what would happen if I squeezed some lemon juice in the batter?" I heard myself uttering the soul-crushing reply: "You'd ruin it."

The cookies were what Nancy wanted them to be, dome-shaped, crispy on the outside, moist on the inside, dense without being cakey, and revelatory of new textures with each bite. My daughter and I had succeeded in making the best chocolate-chip cookies either of us had ever eaten, and I think what we were supposed to feel — the feeling that bakers are entitled to feel — was pride. But I hadn't cooked the cookies like a baker or baked the cookies like a cook; no, I had made the cookies like a father, and so what I felt were a father's emotions, sadness and relief, because I realized that I would never make them again.

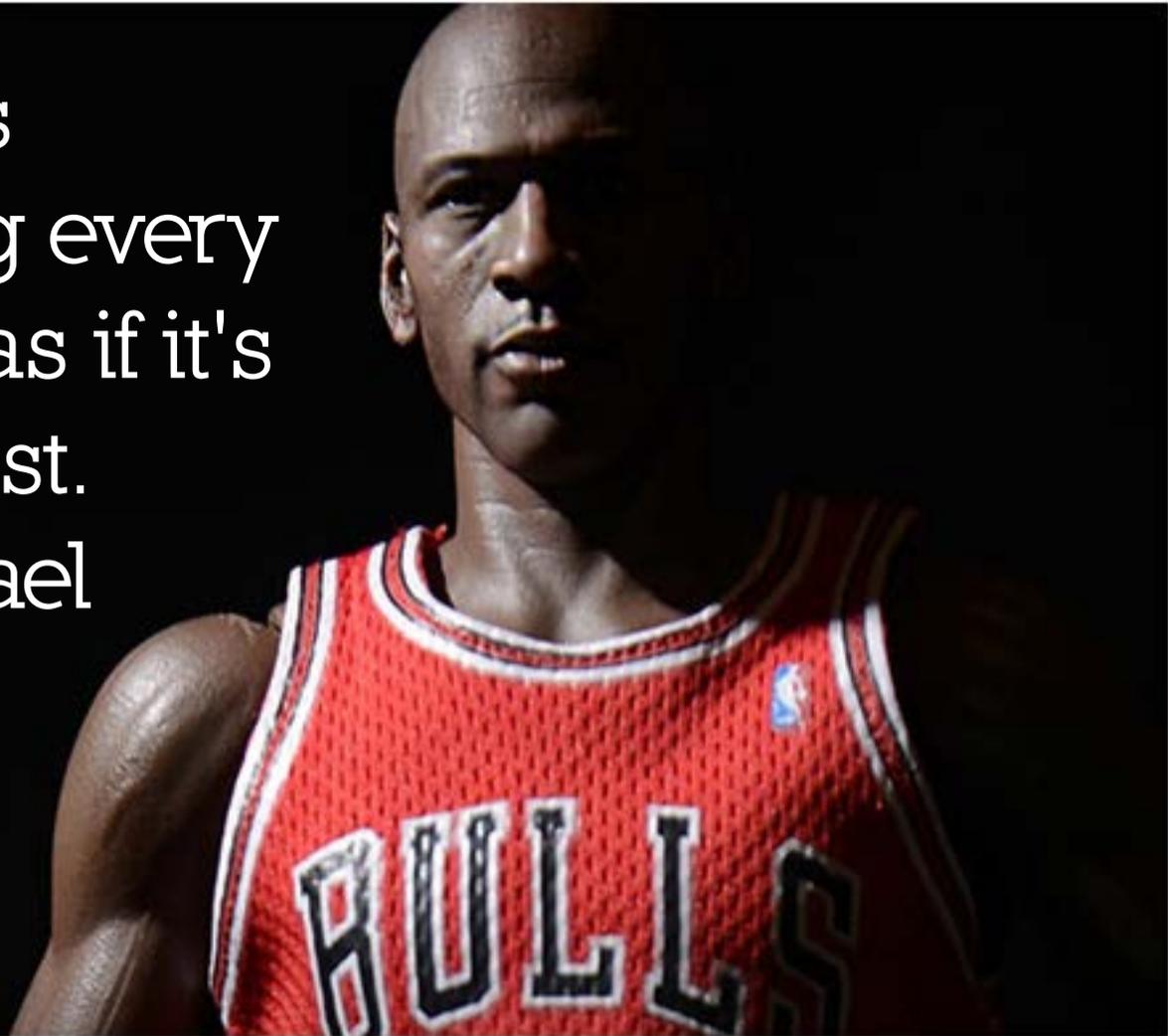
Ingredients

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 2 large eggs
- 2 cups Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels
- 1 cup chopped nuts

Instructions

- 1 Preheat oven to 375°F. Combine flour, baking soda and salt in small bowl. Beat butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract in large mixer bowl until creamy.
- 2 Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Gradually beat in flour mixture. Stir in morsels and nuts.
- 3 Drop by rounded tablespoon onto ungreased baking sheets.
- 4 Bake for 9 to 11 minutes or until golden brown. Cool on baking sheets for 2 minutes; remove to wire racks to cool completely.

Love is
playing every
game as if it's
your last.
- Michael
Jordan



Poached Pears

Ingredients

Pears:

- 6 peeled Bosc pears
- 3 cups water
- 2 cups orange juice
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 6 black peppercorns
- 1 (2-inch) piece vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 1 (1.5-liter) bottle Asti Spumante or other sweet sparkling wine

Cream:

- 1 1/2 cups vanilla ice cream
- 2 cardamom pods, crushed
- Mint sprigs (optional)
- Ground cardamom (optional)

Instructions

- 1 To prepare pears, working with 1 pear at a time, hold pear, stem side down, in 1 hand. Make 3 or 4 quick cuts into pear from the bottom, using a melon baller. If necessary, cut about 1/4 inch from base of each pear so they will sit flat when served.
- 2 Combine 3 cups water and next 5 ingredients in a large stockpot over medium heat; bring to a simmer. Cook 6 minutes or until sugar dissolves, stirring occasionally.
- 3 Add pears. Using tongs, place a small clean plate on top of pears to weigh them down. Return to a simmer; cook 15 minutes or until tender.
- 4 Remove pot from heat; cool mixture to room temperature. Cover and chill 4 hours or up to overnight (do not remove plate).

5 Melt ice cream in a small heavy saucepan over medium-low heat. Remove from heat. Heat a small skillet over medium-high heat. Add cardamom; cook 2 minutes or until fragrant, shaking pan frequently.

6 Stir cardamom into melted ice cream; cook over medium-low heat 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

7 Remove from heat. Strain mixture through a fine sieve over a bowl; discard solids. Cool cream to room temperature; cover and chill.

8 Remove the plate from chilled pears. Remove pears from liquid with a slotted spoon; discard liquid. Spoon about 2 1/2 tablespoons cream onto bottom of each of 6 small dessert plates or shallow bowls; top each serving with 1 pear. Garnish with mint sprigs and ground cardamom, if desired.

