

# SHE'S FACING FREEDOM

Review: The Invisible Chef

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Less than fifteen minutes after jumping the broom, my oldest brother told my husband that he wants nieces and nephews.

I know for sure that I want to be a hands-on mom. The one who practices vocabulary words with her kids to ensure they ace their tests. The one who excitedly gets on the floor to color Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles or Disney princesses. The mom who organizes weekly game and taco nights just like my aunt did for me and my siblings. I know for a fact I'll be the mom who sings to get her baby to sleep.

You want to know something else?

I recently told Tracey that if we have a girl, I'd like him to set up daddy-daughter dates with her. I envision he takes her to brunch or afternoon tea for Valentine's Day. He'll buy her a small box of chocolate and a single rose treating her just how he would me on a date. That way she knows how she is supposed to be treated.

But more than anything, I want to be the type of mom who passes on her love of food to her kids. Some of my best memories involved helping my aunt in the kitchen. By the age of 10, I was already making apple pies with candied walnuts topped with caramel sauce from scratch for family events. I especially remember breaks when my cousins and I would try to end Donkey Kong, but being led downstairs by the sweet scent of homemade butter pecan cookies. Those are memories I will always cherish.

That's the type of mom I want to be. I suppose that's what every woman wants.

Jill McCauley and Terry Howard knows all too well what it's like to want to be that mom, but just not having enough time in the day. To give busy moms a hand, they created [The Invisible Chef](#), a boutique line of gourmet breakfast mixes, quick bread, muffins and desserts. The line features more than 50 mixes allowing bakers of all skill levels to whip up fresh baked treats by simply preheating the oven and adding a couple of ingredients before serving.

"I remember nights when one of my kids would spring on me 'oh by the way, I need to bring a snack to school tomorrow" said McCauley. "Not wanting to be the mom who sent store-bought baked goods, I would dig into the pantry to see what I could put together at the last minute and I wasn't always successful."

In addition to simple instructions and minimal ingredients, each of The Invisible Chef's baking mixes are made with wholesome all-natural ingredients.

"Since we are a small company, we wanted to produce premium products," said Howard. "I grew up in California and my degree is in Food Science & Nutrition so I have always wanted to eat healthy. It just seemed like a given that we would produce products with the best ingredients we could. Given that even the big food companies are now realizing this and are following the lead of smaller boutique companies, I think we are on the right track."

Recently, I tried The Invisible Chef's Cinnamon and Ancho Chile Cake Mix and the Spinach Parmesan Beer Bread Mix. These are my thoughts:

### Cinnamon and Ancho Chile Cake Mix



This chocolate brownie bakes as a loaf, which originally confused me. And if you've ever made brownies, you know if you mix it too much, these things will be as hard as a rock. Trust me, I've been there. But these were so simple to make. The box called for just 1.5 cups of sour cream, 1 egg and 4 tablespoons of melted unsalted butter, but I opted for coconut oil. And that's it.



After baking and cooling for a total of 70 minutes, the top had a noticeable crunch that excited me and worried me at the same time. But as soon as I cut into it, my knife easily sank into the moist center exposing the spice from the ancho chilies into the air. At first bite, the brownie was semi-sweet and then as you worked it in your mouth a little longer, you felt the heat. While I was a bit apprehensive about the combination, I liked that it gave my taste buds a little punch. But just in case the mixture was too hot for me, I whipped up some vegan cinnamon ice cream sandwiching it between two brownie chunks. The ice cream served as a buffer adding a subtle sweetness and creaminess while enhancing the cinnamon taste from the cake mix.

## Spinach Parmesan Beer Bread Mix



I'm not even going to lie. I was feeling myself at the thought that in just less than an hour, I had a loaf of bread. It was my first time making bread and it felt like something I should know how to make. I loved the buttery taste so much that I kept picking at the top during the photoshoot. I was surprisingly pleased by the subtle herbiness of the bread. It was not only soft, but flaky. Because I ate my bread for breakfast, I smeared it with a touch of pesto, added a slice of mozzarella cheese and topped it with parsley scrambled eggs. I already have plans to use this in a breakfast casserole.



Aside from The Invisible Chef products being absolutely delicious, what I loved the most is how easy they were to make. I simply mixed the ingredients and popped them in the oven ensuring I set the timer so I could do other things.

I'm sure that's something everyone can appreciate especially busy moms.

This Mother's Day, give the gift of a personal assistant with The Invisible Chef products. The line can be purchased at Macy's Herald Square, Wegmans, T.J. Maxx and other retailers. Products can also be purchased at the online store [here](#).

*p.s. If you are a mom, Happy Mother's Day!*