

MONTHLY MESSAGGERO

Conveying the most important messages between the DIY, fashion and independent arts communities and yours

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CRAFTY CHICA

Kathy Cano-Murillo, the Crafty Chica, shares some favorite memories and sage advice. Pt II

ASK MA FIOSA

The cooking is mostly Ma M's area, but this month Ma F shares with you the art of crafting Panettone

MADAME CRAFTINA

It's in the stars. Madame Craftina give astrologically inspired ideas sure to please!

UPCOMING EVENTS

The holidays are here so join the mob for a cornucopia of fun events and give the best gifts ever!

MA MANGIA

Italian Christmas treats good enough to please all this diverse holiday season.

TOP REASONS TO SHOP LOCALLY AND HANDMADE

In this and all seasons, the reasons to support your local economy and buy from local artisans abound!

La Chica del Craft, Defender of Glitter and Artiste Extraordinaire, Part II

CM: Can you tell us what attracted you crafting and design?

It just happened naturally! My biggest rush was when I made a batch of jewelry, set up at an event to sell and watched people oooh and ahhh over my designs. I got goose bumps at every sale. I think it is like when actors are on stage for the first time and they get a rush. That is what it felt like. I had the fever and wanted more in bigger doses. I knew I wanted to somehow, someday build a career off of art. Another aspect is that I could never find cool Latino-centric home décor items at the store. I ended up making my own and learned there are many other people like me!

CM: You mention on your website that, very early in your career, your first reaction when asked to write a piece on crafting, was skepticism because of your perception of what the term meant. It goes on to say that your husband and a web search convinced you differently. Do you think that DIY ethics and crafting have taken on new meaning in the last few years? How do you feel about being part of that change?

It changed as soon as I researched "cool crafts" online and found the web site, GetCrafty.com. It was in 2000, and there was a whole new scene of crafters sprouting up who made very hip things. It didn't take long for me to embrace the term! These days, I don't bother with labels at all because I feel that we are all a mish mash of everything. There are so many wonderful things and artists to be inspired by. Art, craft, whatever. I just focus on being creative and letting it ooze out in the form of words, pictures, paint, glitter, thread, whatever pops out at the time.

Kathy Cano-Murillo, aka the **Crafty Chica**, describes herself like this: "I'm a mommy, wifey, artist, author & left-handed middle-child binge crafter Sagittarian. I love chocolate, coffee, and I collect Chihuahua stuff (we have 4 live ones). I have my own product line coming out this summer. I write a weekly nationally syndicated craft column for The Arizona Republic. My 7th craft book comes out next year, as well as my first novel. I make a line of Chicano Pop Art with my hubby and we have sold it all over the country since 1990. I am doing my best to live in the moment and savor it all!" A look at any of her many products will prove both her creativity and success. More information can be found at:



www.craftychica.com

CM: It is so great seeing you so frequently in print and on TV, but it begs at least one question. What do you watch and read to relax?

I am a hardcore TV watcher! I record a stack of shows so that I can watch them while I work. Oprah, all the haunting reality shows, Project Runway, Top Design, Ellen DeGeneres, Heroes, America's Next Top Model. I read Entertainment Weekly every week, and various writing magazines. I read one novel a month. Right now I'm reading *The Secret Lives of Bees*, I'm trying to finish it before the movie comes out! I also listen to a lot of music.

CM: What are you been listening to lately? Do you have favorite tunes to create to?

I'm a Rasta girl at heart. Reggae is my thing.... it empowers me. I'm listening the new Pato Banton and the new Morgan Heritage

CM: What is your favorite craft tool?

It changes week by week. This week it is a pencil and paper for sketching.

CM: What is your favorite word? Artful.

CM: What piece of clothing can't you live without?

My paint clothes. As I am typing this, I can feel the wet paint seeping through to my skin because I just finished making a batch of Christmas ornaments. I think I have more paint clothes than I do regular clothes. I love them, they are so comfy! They are covered with so much paint that I can even wear them out for errands because I assume people will automatically know I'm doing something artsy.

CM: Funniest craft related mishap or injury?

I once had a horrifying experience in my beloved paint clothes. I was shopping at Home Depot and ran into my boss. He looked at my outfit and giggled. I said, "Oh, I know, my crazy paint clothes!" and he says, "Not that. Your pants are on inside out."

CM: Favorite movie?

I used to review movies for a living, so that is a tough one! I love crafty cinema flicks – like *How to Make an American Quilt*, *White Oleander* and *Edward Scissorhands*.

CM: What is your favorite thing to make from your new book?

I had these vintage tourist silk scarves from Mexico. They had glitter embossed on them. I attached them to a tube top and made a beautiful dress!

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Dear Ma-

The holidays are always so stressful for me. This season is all the more stressful with my pocketbook thinner than it has been in a long time. I know I am not alone in this and am hoping you can suggest some ways to express my creativity and talent while also minimizing stress on both my nerves and my pocketbook.

Ho Ho Ho and a little Bah Humbug too,
Chris Mess

Cara Chris-

Ma, too, has felt the pains of this holiday season. While at first blush a little cooking in at the time of year where we seem to have less time than things to do and where the waistline frequently undergoes a slight expansion, it may just be the best therapy around. There is the truest type of art and craft in cooking and the holiday season is overflowing with recipes that demonstrate your skills and make the tummy happy. In my world, Panatonne is a favorite of the season. Try making some for your friends and loved ones. Wrap it up with some wax paper and bright bow for a special holiday gift. They are guaranteed to love it *and* be impressed by your skills. Buon Natale, Auguri Per Hanukkah etc. *I wish you all the best of holiday seasons.*

La Ma

PANATONNE

- 5 Cups of Pastry Flour
- 1 Package of Dry Yeast
- 1/2 Cup of Lukewarm Water
- 1/4 Teaspoon of Salt
- 3/4 Cup of Melted Butter
- 4 Egg Yolks
- 2 Whole Eggs
- 1 Cup of Sugar
- 2/3 Cup Seedless Raisins
- 1/2 Cup of Candied Citron, Diced



**ASK
MA
FIOSA**

Mamma Fiosa, known more widely as Ma Fiosa, has served as consigliere to the North Park Craft Mafia in all our crafty needs. Lucky for you, now you don't have to be made to get counsel.

Blend with yeast and water. Let stand for 10 minutes until yeast has activated and the mixture is bubbly.

Sift flour and mix it in a large bowl with sugar, salt, butter and eggs. On low, use the electric mixer with the hook attachment. Slowly add the yeast mixture. Once all the ingredients are well incorporated, increase mixer speed to medium for 7 to 8 minutes. This process should form a soft, pliable and shiny ball.

If you prefer to make the dough by hand, combine all ingredients in a large bowl then put the dough on a lightly floured board and knead for 10 to 12 minutes. During this process, slap the dough hard 10 to 15 times until it is shiny and pliable. Add extra flour to the board if the dough begins to stick to the work surface.

Place dough into a large bowl and cover with either a towel or plastic wrap. Leave in a draft free area for 2 to 2.5 hours or until dough has doubled in size. Punch dough down and let it rise again for 2 to 2.5 hours until it has again doubled in size.

After the second rising, flatten the dough on a floured surface and sprinkle with raisins and citron. Fold the dough over the filling and knead until everything is well incorporated. Be sure to knead back in any fruit that has fallen away from the mixture.

Divide the dough in half and butter two 1.5 quart soufflé dishes. Shape both halves into a ball and place one in each of the two soufflé dishes. Using a sharp knife, mark a cross in each loaf. Cover and let rise for another hour.

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees and bake for 15 minutes. Lower temperature to 375 degrees and continue baking for 30 to 45 minutes or until loaves are golden brown. Remove the loaves from the pan and cool on a wire rack. This cake has a long shelf life and is good served with coffee or wine. You can sprinkle with sugar or chocolate for an extra treat

No question is too stupid or too complicated— Ma loves giving crafty counsel. Write her today at AskMa@sandiegonorthernparkcraftmafia.com or see the back of this newsletter for further methods of contact.

MADAME CRAFTINA

The Perfect Gift Is In The Stars

Trying to figure out what to get your friends for the holidays? Madame Craftina loves the holidays as much as she loves the stars, so be assured that she searched far and wide to help you in the arduous task of pleasing your posse while enjoying yourself without stress. Below you will find gift ideas dictated by the astrology. With these suggestions, it looks like happy times are in the stars for all of us!

Sagittarius – Nov 22 – Dec 21: Sagittarians love both the outdoors and spending time with their pets. Gifts centered around these attributes are sure to bring smiles instead of snide comments.

Capricorn - Dec 22 – Jan 19: Career focused gifts and luxurious presents they would never purchase themselves are winning bets for these hard working & hard playing goats.

Aquarius – Jan 20 – Feb 18: Unpredictable and life loving Aquarians will appreciate your thoughtfulness in giving them presents with both practical and sentimental mementos of your cherished time together. Don't hesitate to present them with something quirky as well.

Pisces – Feb 19 – Mar 20: Gift loving at heart, these fishy people enjoy gifts that take them to a pleasant fantasy world. Mystical items and spa treats are sure to elicit smiles.

Aries – Mar 21 – Apr 19: Aries will always appreciate something to help them stay athletic. For a different rule in gift giving (and this is for buying for Aries only)—pick something you dislike, they are sure to love it!

Taurus – Apr 20 – May 20: Sensual and linen loving, the Taurus' appreciate being spoiled with a splurge purchase. Quality over quantity gifts will win them over every time.

Gemini – May 21 – Jun 20: These witty twins love gifts that keep giving. Something to stimulate their intellectual side or a new techno gadget will be a shining star under the tree this year.

Cancer – Jun 21 – Jul 22: The domesticated cancers are much better gift givers than receivers, so a thoughtful handmade gift or something for the kitchen is a great way to please the sentimental crab.

Leo – Jul 23 – Aug 22: The king of the zodiacs like gifts that make them look fabulous. Shower them with drama and flair items that are sure to keep the attention on them. With a competitive nature, a board game or gifts of chance are sure to tussle their mane. Be sure to let them win!

Virgo – Aug 23 – Sep 22: Virgos do not want dust collectors for the holidays; instead choose practical gifts that are centered around their health consciousness and organized ways. Those are better choices for these meticulous virgins.

Libra – Sep 23 – Oct 22: Think of two when choosing a gift for your Libra friends. They like things in pairs and require balance in everything around them. Gifts around music will keep the Libran's rocking and smiling all year long.

Scorpio – Oct 23 – Nov 21: Scorpios being mysterious and appreciative of going incognito will cherish gifts that allow them to be just that. With an incredible sexual appetite, you can't go wrong with something that gets their stinger stinging.

KATHY CANO-MURILLO, The Crafty Chica (continued from page one)

CM: What is the favorite piece of furniture you have in your home?
 My bed, because that is where the family and dogs always seem to end up. We'll lie there, joke and grill each other about work and school. Second is my computer work area. It is surrounded by sparkling saris, strands of mini-mirrors and a wall partition of pictures of my kids. I have a little trophy that an editor gave me once. It is a spray painted light bulb on a piece of wood, and it says "Best Brainstormer: Kathy Murillo". A little goes along way with me!

CM: We recognize that your time in the public eye probably makes you crave privacy but we're curious, is there something that you wish more people recognized about you?
 I have my debut novel coming out in 2010. When that happens, I hope to be recognized for my writing talents as well as my crafty ones. I really want to write more novels! I feel the urge to reinvent myself and show people that there is more here than what they see. That is true for ALL of us. I feel like we should spend time honing in on a different talents, just to experience the thrill!

CM: What other projects do you have com-

ing up and when can we expect to see them?
 I have a new sewing book, *Crafty Chica's Guide to Artful Sewing*, coming in February of 2009.
 My husband and I just opened our first museum exhibit that runs through August 09. It is called *La Casa Murillo* (<http://www.lacasamurillo.com>).
 My *3rd Annual Crafty Chica Cruise* sets sail in **March** (we still have slots left!)
 My Crafty Chica product line is now on sale.
 As I mentioned, my novel comes out in March 2010.

CRAFTY BLACK BOOK:

SOUTH PARK WALKABOUT AND CRAFTABOUT
 The South Park Walkabout provides an opportunity to explore the great shops, enjoy live entertainment and special treats from South Park, one of San Diego's oldest & coolest neighborhoods. Great food, art, music, unique gifts and interesting services provide a flavor to the neighborhood that is unlike any other. South Park is located just east of Balboa Park and is known for its beautifully restored craftsman homes. Join members of the Mafia on **December 6th** from **4-9 PM** at and around the **Whistle Stop Bar** at 2236 Fern Street.

HOLIDAY HIT LIST
 Santa and other thoughtful and creative gift givers will LOVE this opportunity. This year's **San Diego North Park Craft Mafia's Holiday Hit List** will take place on **December 7** and feature over 65 vendors, music, crafty demos, raffle items and much more. The success of the Mafia's Spring Line-Up prompted the need for a larger venue. We heard your pleas, so the HHL will take place at the **NTC Promenade's Corky McMillin Event Center located at 2875 Dewey Rd.** in Point Loma. Visit holidayhitlist.com for more info. & updates!



MA MANGIA

BOW TIE COOKIES AND ALMONDS WITH A CHRISTMAS TWIST

The holidays are in full swing and few things are more associated with the holidays than a little weight gain. Ma sympathizes but still feels the need to share a little something to satisfy the sweet tooth. We all deserve a treat once in a while. Plus remember, the tradition of the holidays is to share, so you definitely don't need to eat them all yourself! Find some cute tins or bags and give them to those who have touched your life and made you happy over the last year. Once again Ma M has gone straight to the Famiglia De Palo for the most delicious of authentic Italian recipes. Like all De Palo recipes, this one has been passed down from generation to generation of De Palos, making stops along the way on tables from southern Italy to Brooklyn to North Park. *Mangia!*

For *Christmas Bow Ties* you will need:

- 2 Cups of Flour
- 3 Eggs
- 1 Tablespoon of Baking Powder
- 1/2 Teaspoon of Vanilla
- 1/2 Teaspoon of Almond Extract
- 2 Tablespoons of Sugar

Mix all the ingredients and kneed well. Roll out as fine as possible then cut into strips about 1 inch by three inches. Loosely tie those strips into knots. Place them in a deep fryer and cook until golden. Remove with a slotted spoon and drain on a paper towel. Serve with syrup or powdered sugar.



For *Christmas Sugared Almonds* you will need: (called *Torrone*, this treat is of Sicilian origin)

- 1 Pound of Whole Raw Almonds
- 2 Cups of Sugar
- 1 Tablespoon of Anisette
- 1 Tablespoon of Vanilla
- 1 Tablespoon of Orange Flavoring
- Confetti Candy (Sprinkles)

On medium heat, mix all the ingredients together in a heavy aluminum pot. Keep stirring until sugar has melted. The almonds will roast concurrently. Continue for 30 minutes until sugar forms a dark candy. Pour almonds a few at a time onto a cookie sheet and sprinkle with confetti candy while still hot. Once cooled, they are ready to be stored.

****These and other delicious and authentic recipes can be found in *Ricetti de la Famiglia De Palo: Sharing An Italian Family's Traditions From the Kitchen*.



WHO IS KEEPING SAN DIEGO CRAFTY?

Teresa Salazar of *Velvet Klaw*
www.velvetklaw.com

Svea Komori-Ang of *Belle Pepper Couture*
www.bellepeppercouture.com

Penni Hawkins of *p-starr products*
www.p-starr.com

Sarah Sweeney of *PYP Arts and Designs*
www.pypdesigns.com

Amy Smock of *Designs de Luna*
www.designsdeluna.com

Meagan Rae Longtin of *Meagan Rae Designs*
www.meaganraedesigns.com

Karen Jorgenson of *Altered Provisions*
www.alteredprovisions.com

Stefanie Histed of *Made with Luv*
www.madewithluv.com

THE SAN DIEGO NORTH PARK CRAFT MAFIA WAS FOUNDED IN SEPTEMBER 2007 AND IS DEDICATED TO CRAFTING, FASHIONING, STYLING AND CREATING THEIR SAN DIEGO.

www.SanDiegoNorthParkCraftMafia.com
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Top 5 Reasons to Buy Locally Handmade Gifts This Holiday Season

By Stefanie Histed

One-of-a-Kind Items. Handmade items are unique. You aren't going to find the exact same thing in a super store and you can be assured that the recipient of the gift will be not be getting anything else like it.

It's About the Economy. When you buy locally handmade products, you can be assured that your money is going to a local artist and not some factory owner who pays the assembler 10 cents an hour. By supporting your neighborhood crafts person you are contributing both to your local arts & cultural community and to the local economy.

Details, Details, Details—It is all in the Details. Handmade items are fabricated by hand, with more attention to detail than any mass-production machine can give. While you may spend more for a personally made craft than you would at your local super store, when the product doesn't fall apart after a few uses and you don't have to buy another replace it, you end up saving in the end.

These Are Products With Soul. Artists put a lot of thought, time and love into designing and creating their work. When you support them, you are buying something that was created with meaning rather than a copy-cat product.

Personalized Products and Service. A lot of artists are open to making you a custom design- love those earrings but want them a little shorter? Just ask and more often than not they will make them for you just the way you want!

Come to the Holiday Hit List and buy handmade products from local artists! Visit holidayhitlist.com for more info!

