

# A CONVERSATION WITH THE 'QUEEN OF AIR FRYERS,' CATHY YODER

BY MERILEE KERN

Widely regarded as the *"Queen of Air Fryers,"* Cathy Yoder—a mother of eight—wanted to prove that air fryers could do more than reheat frozen foods and leftovers. So, she documented her journey on YouTube. Now—with nearly 730,000 subscribers, over 6 million video views and 35,000 cookbooks sold—her channel and thought leadership platform draws over a million monthly visitors, fuels speaking engagements, attracts marquee sponsors, and drives significant affiliate revenue.

As an influencer in the digital marketing world, she has also utilized her experience and knowledge to guide other aspiring bloggers and marketers. She frequently shares valuable insights and strategies that have proven to be instrumental in her own success. With remarkable ingenuity, tenacity, and an uncanny knack for anticipating trends, her viral YouTube videos and influential status within the digital marketing community continue to make her a force to be reckoned with in the world of online content creation.

However, most important to her air fryer empire is that Cathy empowers hundreds of thousands of people to dust off their air fryers and embrace using them to make simple, delicious meals in minutes. With this in mind, and the holiday cooking and gifting season on fast approach, we caught up with Cathy to discuss how she can help make celebratory meals quicker, easier and healthier by using an air fryer as well as the profound success realized through her entrepreneurship, digital marketing and social media influencer endeavors.

**Q:** You are a mother of eight, and it's been said that you don't like to cook? Is that what made using the air fryer appealing to you?

**CY:** Yes, that's true. I don't like to cook. But, as a busy mom of eight kids, I needed a way to put food on the table fast—several times a day. I tried meal prep, delivery services, eating out (not good), and more. Nothing worked. Meal prep required too much time in the kitchen. And the other options were too pricey for my deal-seeking nature. That's when I started experimenting with an air fryer—which also appealed to my penchant for new technology. Soon, I discovered I could make simple, delicious, and mostly nutritious meals in minutes. When my kids ate those first dinners without complaining, I had an "aha moment" that dramatically changed how I cook and the trajectory of my business.



In 2020 during the pandemic, with a house full of family members needing to eat, I used my phone to record videos of the food I cooked in the air fryer. The kids tried and rated each recipe. Some even pitched in to help chop, mix, and measure. I posted the videos and recipes on YouTube, and here we are.

I now have a family full of air fryer enthusiasts. The recipe portion of Fabulessly Frugal, which is my original business started to help families save money while enjoying delicious meals, has grown so much that we spun off the cooking content into a site called Empowered Cooks. As a complement to that, I also launched Pine & Pepper, which is a physical product line of cooking accessories. Ironically, my reluctance to cook was an essential ingredient for building this thriving culinary business that helps people (like me) feel more confident in the kitchen.

**Q:** I understand your Empowered Cooks multimedia platform is designed to guide everyday home cooks on the use of air fryers. What will folks find there?



CY: At Empowered Cooks online, my *"Air Fryer Recipes"* cookbook filled with over 150 recipes is available. To date, it has sold over 35,000 copies worldwide, giving folks the confidence and inspiration to enjoy all that an air fryer has to offer. Other resources on the EmpoweredCooks.com platform include access to an air fryer cooking catalog with over 300 video recipes, accessories, a transformative video course, and interactive cooking class sessions where new and experienced air fryer enthusiasts gather with me to cook and chat as we air fry foods in real time! Overall, this platform motivated home cooks to learn the basics of air frying and feel empowered to experiment with more recipes as they progress with the appliance.

Q: Also a prolific social media influencer, your YouTube channel, itself, boasts over 730,000 subscribers. What resources to you provide there?

CY: On my YouTube channel users will find endless air fryer inspiration! I share easy, delicious ways to make the most of your air fryer. With it, I'm on a mission to empower everyday cooks like me to feel more confident in the kitchen. With simple ingredients and easy-to-follow instructions, every air fryer recipe on this channel will help you make delicious, and mostly nutritious, air fryer meals in minutes. We make recipes ranging from amazing air fryer chicken to salmon, steak, veggies, baked goods, and desserts in a fraction of the time it normally takes.

Some of my most popular videos include *"4 of THE BEST Air Fryers in 2023--And What to AVOID,"* 15 Things You DIDN'T KNOW the Air Fryer Could Make, *"Top 12 AIR FRYER MISTAKES,"* and *"These 15 Recipes Will MAKE YOU WANT an Air Fryer."*

Q: To what do you attribute your book, *"Easy Air Fryer Recipe Book: Best Airfryer Cookbook Recipes for Beginners to Advanced,"* having realized such tremendous success?

CY: Yes, the book project has been such a joy. Inside, readers find more than 150 easy and delicious recipes complete with gorgeous photos. This includes delicious, healthy and effortless meals conveniently organized into six sections: Breakfast, Main Dishes (grouped by protein), Veggies & Sides, Snack & Sandwiches, and Desserts. At the end of the book, you'll find additional quick tips, cheat sheets, conversion charts, and other resources.

Overall, this book is written to transform your air fryer into your all-time favorite kitchen appliance, and teach you how to use your air fryer to create recipes everyone will love. *Yummy Air Fryer Recipes* isn't full of complicated recipes or crazy ingredients. Each recipe is simple enough for anyone to make, and includes pictures. Plus, the index is arranged to help you quickly find recipes in different categories and ingredients so that you can easily use items you already have on hand in your fridge or your pantry.

If you want to up-level what you make in your air fryer, *Yummy Air Fryer Recipes* is the cookbook recipe book providing simple-to-follow recipe guidelines getting you top notch results every single time.

Q: You mentioned that you also offer kitchen accessories and resources—what's available for sale?

CY: Through our Pine & Pepper online eCommerce store that's linked with Empowered Cooks, we offer nearly 30 helpful tools, books and recipe resources—some available for as little as 99 cents—to help users make air frying simple, accessible and to get food on the table fast. One of my favorites is a handy magnetic air fryer cheat sheet, which is designed to help prevent overcooked food, helping users cook over 85 foods to perfection. There are also gadgets like the Mistifi 6-ounce Oil Spray Bottle; Premium Air Fryer Liners Premium Air Fryer Liners and an Instant Read Food Thermometer.

And, of course, there is the paperback cookbook as well as a wide range of general and specialized digital recipes books—all under \$8—available for immediate download. From protein-focused, dessert, kid-friendly, pizza pleasers and meals for two, to diabetic, gluten-free, vegetarian and dairy-free recipe books, we have something for everyone.

For those who really want to dig in, there's also my *"Air Fryers Unleashed! Digital Course"* as well as the *"Cooking with Cathy"* 6-month subscription.

Q: What does the *"Cooking with Cathy"* 6-month subscription entail?

CY: This is a really exciting, immersive option that provides 6-Months of live online cooking classes designed to help participants make fast, delicious, and easy air fryer meals in the comfort of their own kitchen. It's about so much more than just following a recipe; it's about having a group of people to share it with.

Our "Cooking with Cathy Community" allows users to actively participate, learn, ask questions and get premium support when needed. The format is an online Zoom class with recipe cards to print at home. The subscription provides a monthly live cooking show plus access to past recorded shows.

Q: I believe Fabulessly Frugal has an app as well. Tell us about that.

CY: Yes, shopping smart has never been easier. The Fabulessly Frugal app is a mobile database of the best online deals available. Users get deal alerts when you select your favorite brands, shopping categories, or products. And you get access to a price comparison tool that ensures you never fall for "marketing math tricks" again.

Q: You had published findings from a survey you conducted unveiling insights into air fryer enthusiasts' preferences—what did you glean from that?

CY: The insights gained from that survey, conducted among our audience of nearly 650,000 subscribers, were compelling, with participants representing a diverse audience demographic. This ranged from empty nesters to a growing cohort of younger enthusiasts between their teens and mid-20s. Among the findings, the survey revealed that owning an air fryer led to faster and more efficient cooking for well over half (67.8%) of users, a shift towards healthier cooking for 44.5%, and increased culinary experimentation for 43%. The usage pattern indicated that 39.7% utilize the air fryer several times a week, 36% use it daily or almost daily, and 9.6% use it once a week. It's been amazing to get these survey results. The insights are opening up new ways for us to support our air fryer community. It's pretty cool to think that air fryers, once just a gadget for zapping frozen foods, have become a kitchen game-changer. We're here to keep bringing everyday cooks the best tips, recipes, and advice, whether they're just starting with an air fryer or have been experimenting with it for a while. It's awesome to be part of the journey with this fantastic kitchen innovation.

In all, Cathy and her multi-faceted Empowered Cooks and Pine & Pepper platforms are bringing the delight of air frying to countless kitchens—and her overarching business insights are inspiring other aspiring entrepreneurs. She's thoughtfully curated a collection of high-quality kitchen tools and recipe books designed to help you prepare air fryer meals quickly and easily, without sacrificing flavor or quality.

In all, Cathy's endeavors are making every day air fryer cooking fun and accessible for everyone, transforming kitchens in a place of joy and creativity.

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### ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Merilee Kern, MBA is an internationally-regarded brand strategist and analyst who reports on noteworthy industry change makers, movers, shakers and innovators across all B2B and B2C categories. This includes field experts and thought leaders, brands, products, services, destinations and events. Merilee is Founder, Executive Editor and Producer of "The Luxe List." As a prolific business and consumer trends, lifestyle and leisure industry voice of authority and tastemaker, she keeps her finger on the pulse of the marketplace in search of new and innovative must-haves and exemplary experiences at all price points, from the affordable to the extreme—also delving into the minds behind the brands. Her work reaches multi-millions worldwide via broadcast TV (her own shows and copious others on which she appears) as well as a myriad of print and online publications. Some or all of the accommodations(s), experience(s), item(s) and/or service(s) detailed above may have been provided or arranged at no cost to accommodate if this is review editorial, but all opinions expressed are entirely those of Merilee Kern and have not been influenced in any way.