The thing is, I'm not a natural cook. I try, I really do, but I just don't have the knack. Still, I think if you keep trying different combinations, eventually you'll come up with something delicious. (After discarding lots of not-so-delicious combinations.) Which is just what happened when I threw together this Apple-Bacon French Toast Casserole. It turned out really delicious, even with the surprise ingredient I threw in! And it looks pretty, too. If you make it, please email me via my website to let me know what you thought.

**Kate Carlisle's Apple-Bacon French Toast Casserole**

1 baguette, torn into 1-inch chunks
2 slices of bacon, cooked and crumbled
1 apple, cut into ¼-inch chunks
4 oz Monterrey Jack cheese, cut into ¼-inch chunks
6 eggs
¼ C maple syrup
¼ C apple cider

Place the chunks of bread, apple, cheese, and bacon in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, syrup, and cider. Pour over the bread mixture. Stir to soak bread thoroughly. Grease an 8-inch square baking pan, add the egg mixture, cover and refrigerate overnight.

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Bake the casserole until cooked through, and bread on top is golden brown, about 25-30 minutes. Serve with additional syrup.