AUNTIEthesis
A zine created by members of Global Auntie Studies
UCLA Spring 2021
Contents of an auntie purse!

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1. Eyeglasses
2. Mask
3. Keys
4. Pens
5. Wallet
6. Task Pad
7. Kleenex
8. Wipes
9. Lipstick
10. ChapStick
11. Lip Balm
12. Hand Sanitizer
Auntie Bag
Jenna Neumann and Nikki Wolin

1. Bag: Large and spacious, to carry all of the necessary items. Usually in a sensible color like brown or black.

2. Sunglasses: Perfect for many purposes. Of course, they are essential for sun protection all year round - even on cloudy days. They may also be worn indoors in order to make the finishing touch to a perfect outfit.

3. Mask: You always keep several. It is essential that you are always prepared for any occasion so you keep masks with many different patterns and shapes in your purse. If for some reason a family member or friend does not have theirs, they are immediately presented with one by you.

4. Pens: To use in conjunction with the notepad. You always have several rattling around in the bottom in case you need to jot reminders, make lists, or sign checks.

5. Keys: Your keychain is holding so many objects it is about to break. You keep mementos from all of your favorite trips hanging from it. And of course your car and house keys. Anyone can tell when you are coming as they can hear the jingling of keys from the inside of your purse.

6. Notepad: Throughout the day you need some way to catalog your important thoughts. You also have the birthday of everyone you have ever met written in here. Along with all of your secret recipes.

7. Tissues: Always a purse necessity. They may be used as napkins to hand off to your younger nieces and nephews as they messily eat their ice cream. Or perhaps they may be used when a surprise sneeze attack strikes and you need to politely cover your mouth and nose.

8. Makeup remover: In case you need to reapply some smudged mascara or lipstick for an important dinner or date.

9/10. Lipstick and makeup bag: How could you have a purse without lipstick? Whenever a touch up is needed on the go you will be ready. Additionally, the rest of your makeup always resides in your purse to be used at a moment's notice. You are always prepared for any event.

11. Chapstick: For less formal occasions: can’t have cracked lips!
12. Wallet: A staple of any purse. However, yours is filled to the brim with photos of your beloved family members and friends. At a moment's notice, you can show any person you may be conversing with your favorite photo of you with your best friend.
Who is she?

A not so silent figure.

A person that does not hide in the shadows.

A person that knows the chisme

Sometimes family…

Sometimes chosen…

Always the life of the party.
Always there for you.
Always filled with love.

She is your Auntie.

You are raised with your family.
There is mom, dad, your sisters and brothers.
You see them everyday and you love them.
But they do get boring…

Good thing your Tia comes to visit frequently.
La luz del Sol pulsa de ella.
She takes you out shopping for clothes that mom doesn’t like.
Pero tú y tu tía los aman de todos modos.
She is older than mom, yet acts a lot younger than her.
La tía te muestra que no debería preocuparte por lo que los demás piensen de ti.
Tia will start talking to you about your crushes and people she wants for you.
Siempre con chisme, pero las risas también vienen de ello.

At times you are sad and it gets hard to talk to anyone.
Pero tu tía está ahí y puede guardar tu secreto.
She is there to be your rock, your support through everything.

Even though she isn’t related to your mom or dad, she is your Tia.
Ella es la única Auntie en tu vida que necesitas.

-Arden Soto Jr
HOW TO LOOK LIKE AN AUNTIE FROM HEAD TO TOE
Abi Siatkowski

Auntie style – easy to spot, hard to describe.

“Easy to spot” in the most literal sense of the phrase. Aunties are known for their bold and bright choices in color and pattern (Okeowo). Their sense of style stands out in a crowd.

But hard to describe because there’s so much to it.

Luckily, the Global Auntie Studies: Relations of Kindness in Culture and Performance class at UCLA has put together a lookbook to help.

One common trademark of auntie fashion that class members referred to was the large purse, particularly one of a famous designer brand.

Kristal Light, a student in the course, wrote that she looked through her aunt’s Facebook profile for inspiration in designing her auntie look. She found that her aunt frequently showcased her purse in the images she shared online.

Sophia Pulido, another course member, included a bag in her auntie look, writing that it means an auntie is always prepared.

Leana Flores, another student in the course, also highlighted the importance of the designer bag in her look.

“Either way, you will see their designer bag whether you want to or not,” Flores wrote of her outfit.

Flores also wrote that she wanted to explore the duality of the auntie identity through her clothing choices. Aunties always come to parties, dressed up to catch people’s eyes, and head straight for the open bar, she wrote. But, she added, they’re also always ready to worship at mass.

The duality of the auntie fashion was discussed at length during the course meetings. Students pointed out how, through
their clothing, aunties both subvert and perpetuate cultural norms. On the one hand, they dress to stand out in the crowd in a society that dictates older women must blend into the scene and let younger women – particularly eligible bachelorettes – claim the attention. On the other hand, however, auntie fashion rarely, if ever, strays from conventional feminine style norms, and aunties themselves are quick to enforce cultural rules about marriage and homemaking.

But, everyone knows that aunties don’t always obey their own rules. Kelsie Hoj, another student in the course, modeled her look off of that of a Jewish housewife during the 1950s.

“I wanted to showcase the ‘badassery’ of the auntie and therefore I asked her to do things (such as spill wine) that would have seemed improper of a woman during that time period,” Hoj wrote of her look.

Although aunties are frequently dressed to the nines, many students in the course demonstrated how aunties reveal their distinct style while dressing comfortably.

One such student, Jenna Neumann, took inspiration from auntie athletic wear. In the course, students watched videos of Ajumma EXP, a dance troupe of older women who perform flash mobs, typically while wearing brightly colored leggings and vests. Neumann wrote that she was inspired by the group and wanted to embody their fusion of retro and modern styles.

Another student who drew from auntie comfort was Adrian Soto. He photographed his mom, who is an auntie to his cousins. Although she was dressed up to go out, she wore her “casual” flats and pants, Soto wrote, because she prefers to be comfortable when going out.

When he asked if he could take her picture, Soto wrote, his mom smiled with confidence in her apparel.

Of all the different aspects of auntie fashion, confidence is perhaps the most important. Although aunties each have their own individual flare, they’re brought together by the pride they feel in the outfits they are able to put together.
It is this confidence that has caught the attention of some high-end fashion labels, such as MARRKNULL. MARRKNULL uses what they call “auntie models,” or older women, to model their clothing in order to showcase the confidence and open-mindedness of their target customers (Fly). Aunties both embrace cultural traditions and new experiences, Wei Wang, one of the brand's founders said to youth culture magazine Radii China (Fly). That’s why the label believes aunties are the perfect “young” people to model their clothing, Wang added (Fly).

“However, we want to stress that ‘young’ is not defined by age. Rather it's about an attitude and mentality,” Wang said to Radii China (Fly).
Works Cited

Auntie, a word that seems to mean one thing, but really holds so much value and range that it is impossible to describe in a matter of a sentence or two.

The general definition of an auntie is the figure you look up to in your childhood and possibly adulthood respectively who is not necessarily another mother, but works as a mentor and provides judgement on many of your decisions, whether asked or not. While this figure is presented in a more feminine light, that does not limit the auntie to someone who solely identifies as a woman. Even more interesting is that the auntie also does not need to be a relative, it can simply be anyone you characterize as an authority figure who has been a prominent force in your life.

The positive characteristics of the auntie come from their reclamation of their identities, their bold nature through style, the famous cooking and the ability to care for you unlike any other person. However, aunties are not devoid of “negative characteristics” either, some claiming for these figures to be a bit judgemental and simultaneously enforcing the status quo. In other cases, the judgement of the auntie may be coming from the outside where others view these figures as too extravagant and strange for not adhering to the societal social clock.

The complexity of the auntie comes from the mere fact that it is used differently in terms of different cultural standards, social contexts and even in political situations. In every culture, the auntie has a sense of style and distinct role that differ themselves clearly from other kinds of cultural aunties. In different social contexts, the idea of aunties can correlate to the concept of “found family” where we see the most supportive figures come from environments outside of the nuclear family, oftentimes having even stronger knit relationships. Some political figures even get the auntie treatment when they are shown to be outspoken and do not step down to those who wish to see them fail.

One thing that should be understood though is not every person wants to be considered an “auntie”. Sometimes the phrase can harbor negative connotations and has racial undertones that start to confine these figures into a small circle, dictating what they can and cannot do.

Overall, the auntie is someone to be recognized and respected across time and all landscapes.
For many aunties, the kitchen is a place to gossip, to comfort, and/or to enact social change. In honor of our aunties, we are sharing our favorite auntie-approved recipes!

**Snacks & Side Dishes**
- Rice Cakes
- Kettle Corn
- Latkes

**Entrees**
- Curry Chicken
- Albondigas
- Asparagus Tart
- Jambalaya
- Shanghai Bamboo Soup
- Refried Beans with Chorizo

**Desserts**
- Kabak (Smiley Face)
- Matzah Bark
- Frozen Yogurt Cupcakes
- Vegan Apple Cinnamon Muffins
- Ginataang Bilo Bilo
RICE CAKES

Ingredients (you measure this with your soul most of the time, but I’ve got measurements anyway):
16 oz rice flour
1.5-2 cups milk
2 eggs
½ cup sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
1 tsp vanilla extract
½ tsp salt
½ tsp baking soda

Procedure:
Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit
Dump ALL of the ingredients in one GIANT bowl.
Mix until smooth. Should have a liquid-ish consistency similar to normal cake batter
Line a baking tin with parchment paper
Pour it into a @baking pan? Tin. Baking tin.
Chuck it into the oven. Oven is still at 400 degrees.
Leave it there for 40-50 minutes
Bam take the thing out, wait for it to cool, cut it like it’s a brownie, eat.

KETTLE KORN (from Abi Siatkowski)

Background on this recipe: Growing up, I didn’t really have many people in my life who were known for/had a passion for cooking. This recipe is super simple, but I chose it because I have a very distinct memory of my chosen auntie (my nanny growing up, whom I interviewed!) making it for me and my siblings. We had visited this place called the Orr Family Farm a little while prior, which is reminiscent of a cross between a farm and a theme park; there was a pumpkin patch, a miniature train to take you around the farm, horseback riding, as well as concessions – including kettle corn. A few days later, we still wanted more kettle corn, so she made it for us!

Linked here

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ½ cup popcorn kernels

Directions:

- Heat the vegetable oil over the stove in a pot
- Add sugar and popcorn
- Cover and shake the pot
- Remove the lid when the popping is only every 2-3 seconds
- Shake until the popping stops
- Pour into a bowl to let is cool (stir to break up clumps)
In classic auntie style, Nafisa’s family chicken curry recipe has the ingredients, but no further directions:

- Entire Chicken/Chicken with bone
- 2 teaspoons salt
- ½ cup cooking oil
- 1 ½ cups chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 ½ teaspoons minced fresh ginger root
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- 1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 (15 ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup water
- 1 teaspoon garam masala
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice

Lisette Serrano:
Albondigas

Ingredients: (amount needed based on preference)
Ground beef - 2 pounds
Potatoes - 4 to 5
White rice - 1 cup
Carrots - 4
Zucchini - 2
Jalapeno - 1
Tomato Sauce - 1 can

Steps:
Season meat and add rice to the mixture
Roll the ingredients and make meatballs
Put in pot to broil for 30 minutes
Add carrots and jalapeno while it broils
When carrots have softened, add sliced potatoes, sliced zucchini and tomato sauce to pot
Check all vegetables have softened and the meal is complete
Serve with tortillas de maíz

Nikki Wolin: Asparagus tart
[Nikki’s auntie recommended an adapted New York Times recipe.]

Ingredients:
- 1 cup goat cheese, at room temperature (4 ounces)
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten, at room temperature
- 1 large garlic clove, finely grated or minced
- 1 ½ tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon leaves, plus more for serving
- ½ tablespoon finely grated lemon zest
- ½ teaspoon fine sea salt, plus more for sprinkling
- Pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 cup crème fraîche, at room temperature (8 ounces)
- All-purpose flour, for dusting the work surface
- 1 sheet or square all-butter puff pastry, thawed if frozen (about 9 to 14 ounces; brands vary)
- 8 ounces thin asparagus, woody ends trimmed
- Extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan
- Freshly ground black pepper
- Red-pepper flakes (optional)
- 1 ½ ounces Parmesan, shaved with a vegetable peeler (about 1/2 cup)

Steps:
• Heat oven to 425 degrees. In a medium bowl, use a fork or a wooden spoon to mash together the goat cheese, egg, garlic, tarragon, lemon zest, salt and nutmeg until smooth. Switch to a whisk and beat in the crème fraîche until smooth.
• On a lightly floured surface, roll out puff pastry into a 13-by-11-inch rectangle about 1/8-inch thick. Transfer the dough to a parchment-lined cookie sheet. With a sharp knife, lightly score a 1/2-inch border around the edges of the puff pastry.
• Spread the crème fraîche mixture evenly inside the scored border. Line up the asparagus spears on top, and brush them with olive oil. Sprinkle some salt and the grated Parmesan over the asparagus.
• Bake until the pastry is puffed and golden, 25 to 30 minutes. Let it cool on the cookie sheet for at least 15 minutes or up to 4 hours before serving. Then sprinkle black pepper, red-pepper flakes (if using), the shaved Parmesan and tarragon leaves. Drizzle a little oil on top.

Refried Beans with Chorizo (Tia Quela’s Recipe, from Adrian Soto Jr.)

Ingredients:

• 2 tablespoons of olive oil
• A roll and a half of beef chorizo
• 1 onion diced
• 1 chile diced (liberty to choose which one)
• Half a cup of water

- 2-3 garlic cloves
- 4 diced tomatoes
- 1 teaspoon of cumin
- 30ish ounces of boiled pinto beans
- 3 tablespoons of mexican sour cream

Steps:

1. Get a frying pan, add the oil and place the pan on the stove over medium heat.
2. Next, add the onion, tomatoes, chile, garlic, and beef chorizo to the ban. Stir and cook for about 5 minutes.
3. Add the tomato and cumin then stir and cook for another few minutes (2-3).
4. Now toss in the beans and the water. Mash the beans with the chorizo in the pan. Tone down the heat and stir/mash for about 10 minutes. Turn off the stove afterwards.
5. While the beans are still warm, add in and stir the cream.
Both of my grandmothers were pretty bad cooks, but one of them married a Chinese chef and co-owned a restaurant for years, so she solved her problem. The other one only had a small repertoire of stuff that was good. One, when she babysat my brother and I while our parents were at work, was “extra noodle soup” which was just a packet of Lipton’s noodle soup, with the four cups of water, and then a bunch of extra noodles cooked in. We loved that stuff. And her other good recipe was this:

Frozen Yogurt Cupcakes (from Michelle Liu Carriger)

(her old recipe calls it “Frozen Cherry-Pecan Salad”, but “salad” in the mid-20th century seems like it just meant anything minimally cooked. This is definitely more of a summer casual dessert or snack.)

2 cups plain yogurt
¾ cup sugar
2 T lemon juice
1/8tsp salt
¼ cup sliced maraschino cherries
¼ cup chopped pecans
8.5oz can of crushed pineapple (drained)
1 banana, sliced into coins

Combine yogurt, sugar, lemon juice and salt. Blend thoroughly. Fold in remaining ingredients. Pour into individual molds or paper cupcake liners (in a muffin tin). Freeze.

Jambalaya Recipe (from Jenna Neumann)

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon canola oil
- 1½ cups (1/8 inch-thick) slices andouille sausage (8 ounces)
- 1 pound bone-in chicken breast halves, skinned
- 2½ cups water
- 1¼ cups uncooked long-grain brown rice
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme
- ¼ teaspoon ground red pepper
- 3 bay leaves
- 2 teaspoons Old Bay seasoning
- 1 pound jumbo shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes with green pepper, celery, and onion, drained
- Sliced scallions (optional)

Steps

Remove lid from a 6-quart Instant Pot, when the word "Hot" appears, swirl in oil. Add sausage; cook 4 minutes or until browned, stirring frequently. Remove sausage from cooker. Add chicken to drippings in cooker; cook 2 minutes on each side or until lightly browned.

Stir in 2½ cups water and next 8 ingredients (through bay leaves). Close and lock the lid of the Instant Pot. Turn the steam release handle to "Sealing" position. When time is up, turn cooker off. Open the cooker using Quick Pressure Release.

Stir in sausage, Old Bay seasoning, shrimp, and tomatoes. When mixture comes to a boil, turn cooker off. Press Sauté, and use Adjust to select "Normal" mode. Simmer 5 minutes or until shrimp are done, stirring frequently. Turn cooker off. Remove inner pot from cooker; let stand 15 minutes before serving. Divide jambalaya among 8 bowls. Garnish with sliced scallions, if desired.
Shanghai Bamboo Soup

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 6-7 Whole bamboo shoots
- 4 Pork ribs
- 40g of ham
- Sliced ginger
- Green onion, cut in small pieces (around 5cm)

**RECIPE:**

Boil bamboo shoots in saltwater for 7-8 minutes. Then take them out and soak in water for half a day. Cut (Chinese) ham into thin, small pieces. Wash them a few times to get rid of excess salt. Stir-fry the ham pieces. Add pork ribs, ham, ginger, and green onion into the pot and add water. Boil for 1 hour, then add bamboo shoots. Boil for 2 more hours on low heat.
An Ode to The Aunties Who Loved me Before They Knew Me

You loved me before you knew me
And I wondered what it is I did to deserve that
You comforted me before you knew me
And I never knew how to pay you back
The Saris
The Recipes
The Jewelry
All for me?
You'd say to me, “Call me Chotoma”
And It was then, that I learned to love someone who never knew me