

KITCHEN

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— step by step if you can't afford to purchase it all at once."

Whether living on your own for the first time, filling out a bridal registry or looking for a gift for a graduate or newlywed, Litvak, Taylor and Sharon Grubbs, store manager at Sur La Table at Easton Town Center, recommended the following:

- **Pots and pans**

Basic: 8-inch and 10-inch skillets (one or both nonstick); 2-quart and 4-quart saucepans with lids; stockpot (6- to 8-quart)

Suggestions: "For newlyweds, cookware should all be in stainless steel," Grubbs said. "Any kind of finish on the cookware has to be hand-washed. Stainless can go in the dishwasher."

Litvak: "I really like stainless steel with a copper core."

Taylor: A 3- or 4-quart braising pan with a lid as an essential pot.

"It's like a little Dutch oven: You could use it for several things."

Splurge: Enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven such as Le Creuset.

"That can go from the oven to the stovetop," Grubbs said. "It takes longer to heat but holds the temperature really well."

- **Bakeware**

Basic: cookie sheets, 13-by-9-inch baking pan, two 9-inch round cake pans, muffin pan, loaf pan, two cooling racks

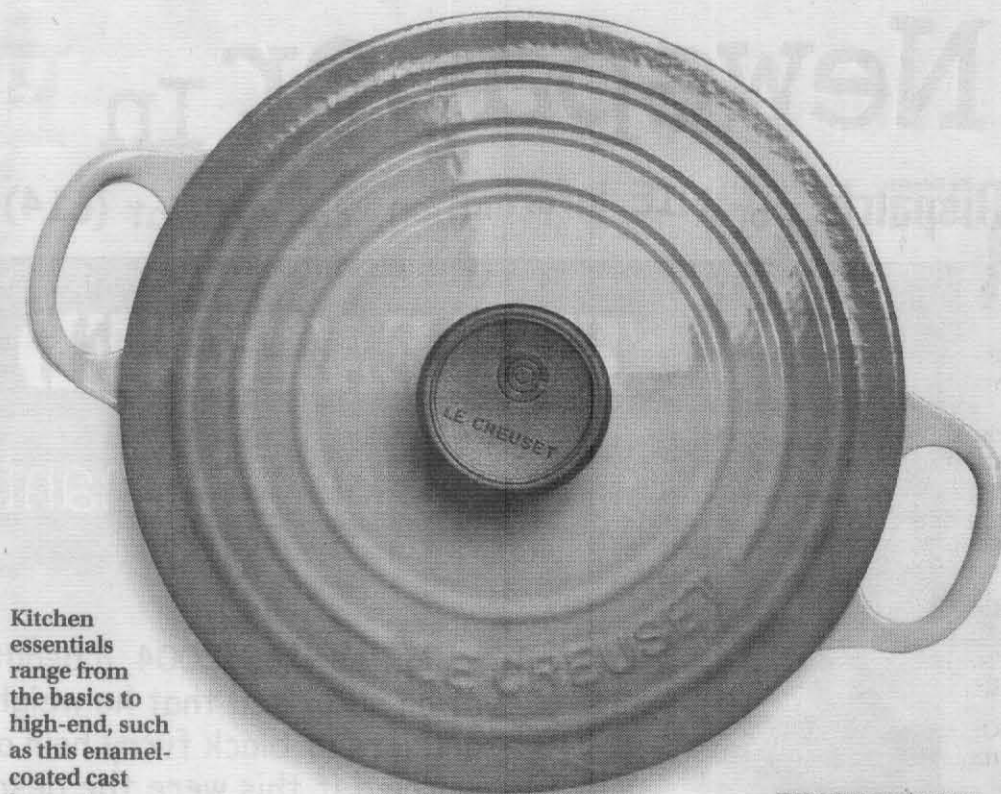
Suggestions: Grubbs said Sur La Table carries a 10-piece nonstick set by Anolon with all of these pieces.

"The Teflon is baked on in layers instead of being sprayed on so it won't scratch off."

Splurge: Litvak recommended silicone baking mats such as Silpat, if the budget allows. These mats keep cookies from sticking and are reusable, she said.

- **Knives**

Basic: 6- or 8-inch chef's



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Kitchen essentials range from the basics to high-end, such as this enamel-coated cast iron pot.

knife, at least one paring knife, serrated knife for cutting bread, honing steel.

Suggestions: "The most important thing is what fits in your hand," Litvak said.

Grubbs: European style knives such as Wusthof are heavier; Asian knives are lighter.

Taylor: "Look for something sharp but not expensive. If they find something they like, keep it away from other family members."

Splurge: "I personally like the new santoku," Grubbs said. "I feel that's replacing the chef knife for a lot of people. It's a combination chef's knife and cleaver."

- **Utensils**

Basic: wooden spoons, slotted stainless-steel spoon, large stainless-steel spoon, whisk, vegetable peeler, tongs, ladle, spatulas (for turning pancakes and burgers), heat-proof silicone or rubber spatulas

Suggestions: Regarding whisks and spoons, Grubbs

recommends silicone-handled ones that are specifically for nonstick pans. They're coated with silicon."

Splurge: A microplane grater, a long narrow grater that's available with different hole sizes and can be used for cheeses and zest.

- **Gadgets**

Basic: colander, dry measuring cups, liquid measuring cups, measuring spoons, can opener, bowls of all sizes, meat thermometer, trivet, spoon holder, dish drainer, cutting board

Suggestions: Regarding bowls, Litvak said, "I love glass to see what's going on. I love having a set of metal bowls. They're good for ice baths. You can get those at Kmart for not very much money."

Splurge: "A kitchen scale if you want to be serious," Litvak said.

Grubbs: "If you enjoy salads, get a salad spinner."

- **Small appliances**

Basic: food processor, mixer, slow-cooker

afford a full mixer, you should have at least a hand mixer," Taylor said.

Splurge: Grubbs recommended the KitchenAid stand mixer.

"It's an investment, but with a little care it will last you for years and years."

- **Books**

Litvak and Grubbs recommend *How To Cook Everything* by Mark Bittman.

"It's today's *Better Homes and Gardens* or *Good Housekeeping*," Litvak said.

Taylor suggested a more traditional option: *The Betty Crocker Cookbook*.

For those who love to bake, Grubbs also recommended *Baking Illustrated*.

- **Other**

Basic: pot holders, dish towels, cooking classes, spices, nonstick cooking spray

Suggestions: "Take some cooking classes to expand your recipe repertoire," Litvak said. "Then buy equipment as you need it for specific recipes."