

Bessie Ringer's Pinwheels

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
2 cups light brown sugar, packed
3 large eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 cups all-purpose flour
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
2½ cups raisins
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup water
1 cup finely chopped pecans

Cream butter and brown sugar in a mixing bowl until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla.

Combine flour, salt and baking soda in another bowl. Combine with creamed mixture.

Divide dough into 4 balls. Cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate until chilled.

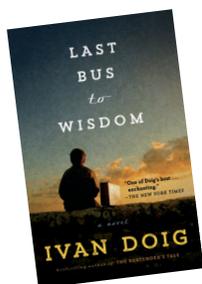
Bring raisins, sugar and water to a boil in a saucepan. Reduce heat. Cook until mixture is thickened, about 15 minutes. Purée to a jamlike consistency. Cool. Stir in the pecans.

Roll the chilled dough balls between sheets of waxed paper into 12 x 9-inch rectangles. Refrigerate 30 minutes.

Remove top paper. Spread each dough rectangle with a quarter of the raisin-pecan mixture. Tightly roll each rectangle, starting with a long side. Wrap in plastic. Refrigerate for 2 hours, or overnight.

Heat oven to 350 F. Grease 2 baking sheets. Unwrap the logs, and cut into ¼-inch slices. Place the slices 1 inch apart on the baking sheets. Bake 10 to 12 minutes, until edges are golden. Cool 3 minutes. Transfer pinwheels to a rack to cool. Makes about 16 dozen (192) cookies.

Recipe courtesy of Bessie Ringer



On the road

Ivan Doig populated his works with vibrant, working-class characters

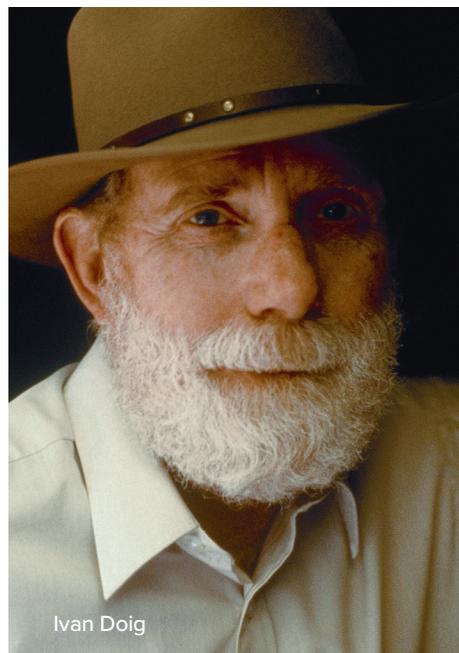
by JUDY GELMAN AND VICKI LEVY KRUPP

Costco's suggested Book Club read provides insight into a selected novel, as well as an appropriate recipe (or two) to accompany your own book club's discussion.

Author Ivan Doig's *Last Bus to Wisdom* begins with 11-year-old Donny Cameron being raised by his grandmother on a cattle ranch in the Montana Rockies. When Gram has surgery, she puts Donny on a Greyhound bus to her sister in Wisconsin. Donny meets colorful characters along the way who open his eyes to life in the 1950s American West. But his tyrannical Aunt Kate can't abide Donny's antics and ships him back home on the bus. Kate's husband, Herman the German, joins him, and the pair embark on a spirited road trip with adventures—and misadventures—along the way.

In *Last Bus to Wisdom*, Doig's 16th and final book, Donny meets rodeo riders and fry cooks, sheriffs and soldiers. The author, who passed away in 2015, had an affinity for plain folks, says his widow, Carol Doig. "I come from the lariat proletariat, the working-class point of view," he once said.

Gram is the cook at the Double W Ranch, and Donny is accustomed to her simple, hearty meals and rules about food. Without Gram around, Donny finds himself adrift on his journey. Finding unappealing food options at the first stop of his journey, he stocks up on Mounds bars. Later, he is unable to find "chicken-fried steak or anything remotely like it," and grabs a chocolate milkshake and a slice of cherry pie, "in direct violation of Gram's orders."



Ivan Doig

CAROL DOIG

COSTCO CONNECTION

Last Bus to Wisdom (Item #1259178) is available now in most Costco warehouses.

Last Bus to Wisdom is perhaps Doig's most autobiographical novel. Gram was based on Doig's grandmother Bessie Ringer, who raised him on a Montana ranch where she was a cook. Bessie's meals were as plain as their lives, says Carol Doig: hearty breakfasts of eggs, bacon and pancakes; sandwiches eaten outdoors with jugs of lemonade for lunch; and simple dinners of fried chicken or pan-fried steak with lots of gravy, potatoes and vegetables. She was a good baker, too, according to Carol, and kept the kitchen stocked with pie—blueberry, huckleberry or "anything that can be made into a pie."

Bessie's talent for working with ingredients at hand was evident in her handwritten cookie recipe that we located in the Montana State University Archives. Although the original recipe called for dates, Bessie used raisins—making use of what was available. Her raisin pinwheel cookies would be a perfect accompaniment to a discussion of *Last Bus to Wisdom*, or any of Ivan Doig's writings. ■

Judy Gelman and Vicki Levy Krupp are behind the cookbook and website *The Book Club Cookbook* (bookclubcookbook.com).