



FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

SEAFOOD

FISH (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

ENTRÉES

Trout Praline

[Stuffed Flounder Fillets with Chive Cream Sauce](#)

[Poached Salmon with Chive Potato Sauce](#)

[Casserole of Seafood and Potato Florentine](#)

[Zatarain's Creole Mustard Battered Catfish](#)

[Keftes de Pescado \(Salmon Croquettes in Tomato Sauce\)](#)

[Salmon Gefilte Fish with Horseradish-Dill Sauce](#)

[Tomato and Basil Flounder](#)

[Trout Rex](#)

[Trout St. Charles](#)

[Fish and Potato Boulettes](#)

[Open Hearth Grilled Fish](#)

[Roasted Trout with Thyme](#)

[Pan Sautéed Filet of Trout in Shrimp Chive Cream](#)

[Herb & Rice Flour Encrusted Snapper on Yam & Chive Cream](#)

[Nathaniel Burton's Stuffed Flounder](#)

[Pan Sautéed Filet of Troup with Tomato Niçoise & Capper Jus](#)

[Louisiana Catfish Terrine](#)

[Grilled Filet of Fish in Fine Herbs](#)

[Garlic and Tarragon Shrimp with Seashell Pasta](#)

[Pan Sautéed Trout](#)

[Catfish Paella](#)

[Casserole of Fish Filets with Potatoes and Pesto](#)

[Cajun Catfish Beignets](#)

[Terrine of Smoked Catfish](#)

[Seafood Stuffed Turban of Trout](#)

[Low-Fat Parmesan Catfish with Tomato and Green Olive Sauce](#)

[Valentine's Creole Fish en Papillote](#)

[Seafood Sauce Piquante](#)

[Salmon Creoleaise](#)

[Door County Fish Boil](#)

[Crawfish Bisque Stuffed Turban of Catfish](#)

[Catfish Cacciatore](#)

[Italian Catfish Salad](#)

SOUPS & STEWS

[Judge Porter's Cane River Fish Soup](#)

[Redfish Courtbouillon \(Something New\)](#)

[Redfish Courtbouillon \(Something Old\)](#)
[Catfish Sauce Piquant, Gueydan-Style](#)
[Seafood Sauce Piquant St. James](#)
[Fricassee of Shellfish](#)
[Catfish Courtbouillon](#)
[Shrimp and Catfish Fricassee](#)
[Hot Pot Seafood Sauce Piquant](#)

SANDWICHES

[Nice and Spicy Catfish Po'boy](#)

SALADS & PASTAS

[Mango's Grilled Grouper with Orange Beach Fruit Salsa](#)
[Grilled Delta Pride Catfish Salad](#)
[Herb Encrusted Salmon Salad](#)
[Spicy Grilled Tuna Salad with Ponchatoula Strawberry Vinaigrette](#)

EXTRAS

[Kenny Frederic's Fish Fry](#)

CRAWFISH ([click on a link below to see the entire recipe](#))

ENTRÉES

[Boiled Crawfish](#)
[Crawfish au Gratin](#)
[Risotto with Crawfish, Oyster Mushrooms, Morels and Asparagus](#)
[Crawfish Casserole](#)
[Crawfish Pie](#)
[Crawfish Boulettes](#)
[Crawfish á la Greg](#)
[Seafood Paella](#)
[Crawfish Omelette](#)
[Spicy Crawfish and Tasso Pizza](#)
[Crawfish and Asparagus Cakes](#)
[Crawfish Stuffed Artichokes](#)
[Crawfish Cardinale in Patty Shells](#)

SOUPS & STEWS

[Crawfish Bisque](#)
[Louisiana Crawfish and Sea Scallop Bouillabaisse](#)
[Front Porch Carrot and Crawfish Bisque](#)
[Louisiana Crawfish Etouffee](#)
[River Road Crawfish Stew](#)
[Velouté of Boiled Crawfish, Corn and Potatoes](#)
[Mr. Royley's Crawfish Stew](#)

PASTA & SALADS

[Crawfish Michaela](#)
[Crawfish Stuffed Pasta Shells](#)
[Crawfish Pasta Salad](#)
[Marinated Crawfish, Zucchini and Summer Squash Salad](#)
[Crawfish Carboneaux](#)
[Crawfish Andouille Fettuccini](#)
[Old-Fashioned Mac and Cheese Cups with Crawfish](#)

SANDWICHES

[Crawfish Burger](#)
[Crawfish Bread](#)
[Triple Seafood and Tasso Stuffed French Bread](#)

SHRIMP (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

ENTRÉES

[Shrimp Stuffed Summer Squash](#)
[Mississippi River Shrimp Stuffed Bell Peppers](#)
[Mike Graham's Deep Fried Oysters and Shrimp](#)
[Japanese Fried Rice with Shrimp](#)
[Shrimp and Crawfish Cake Sandwich](#)
[Coconut Shrimp with Satsuma Sweet and Sour Sauce](#)
[Seafood Paella](#)
[Stuffed Eggplant with River Shrimp](#)
[Shrimp and Grits](#)
[Shrimp Stuffed Mirliton](#)
[Louisiana Seafood Sausage](#)
[Shrimp Picatta](#)
[Shrimp Scampi](#)
[Black-eyed Pea Battered Shrimp](#)
[Barbecued Shrimp Longman](#)
[Shrimp Diablo](#)
["Stirrin' It Up" Shrimp Viala](#)
[Shrimp and Potato Pancakes](#)
[Mama's Shrimp Spaghetti \(Something Old, Something New\)](#)
[Curry Shrimp with Broccoli](#)
[Cajun Drunken Shrimp](#)
[Boiled Shrimp](#)
[Jacks Bar-B-Que Shrimp](#)
[Shrimp Viala in Crawfish Tasso Butter](#)
[Creamy Shrimp and Vegetable Casserole](#)
[Spanish-Style Rice with Chicken and Shrimp](#)
[Shrimp Noel](#)
[Barbecued Shrimp Tangipahoa](#)
[Shrimp and Feta with Fresh Tomatoes](#)

SOUPS & STEWS

["Joos-Tain's" Shrimp á la Creole](#)
[Shrimp Creole](#)
[Sweet Corn and Shrimp Soup](#)
[Shrimp and Catfish Fricassee](#)

[Carnival-Style Shrimp Creole](#)

SALADS & PASTAS

[Tuscan Shrimp Pasta](#)
[South Louisiana Shrimp Remoulade](#)
[Shrimp Mousse](#)
[Layered Fruit & Shrimp Salad](#)
[Seafood Jambalaya Rice Salad](#)

SANDWICHES

[Deep-Fried Shrimp Po-Boy](#)
[Triple Seafood and Tasso Stuffed French Bread](#)

APPETIZERS

[Shrimp Bread](#)
[First-and-Ten Shrimp Fritters](#)
[Christmas Seafood Terrine](#)

OYSTER ([click on a link below to see the entire recipe](#))

ENTRÉES

[Mike Graham's Deep Fried Oysters and Shrimp](#)
[Fried Oyster Dressing](#)
[Deep-Fried Oysters](#)
[Oysters Dunbar](#)
[Steak and Oyster Pie](#)
[Deviled Oysters](#)
[Oysters Bienville](#)
[Oysters Belle Helene](#)
[Linguine With Spicy Oyster Sauce](#)

SOUPS & STEWS

[Oyster and Artichoke Bisque](#)
[Cajun Oyster Stew in Patty Shells](#)
[Bisque of Wild Mushroom with Fried Oyster Crouton](#)

SANDWICHES

[Oyster Po-Boy](#)

APPETIZERS

[Spicy Gingered Oysters](#)
[Fire-Roasted Oysters](#)
[Oyster-Stuffed Artichoke Bottoms](#)
[Oyster and Artichoke Pie](#)
[Oysters Marie Laveau](#)

CRAB ([click on a link below to see the entire recipe](#))

ENTRÉES

[Crab and Asparagus Quiche](#)
[Lump Crab and Creole Tomato Linguine](#)
[Crabmeat & Shrimp Stuffed Summer Squash](#)
[Deep-Fried hardshell Crabs](#)
[Crab Newburg](#)
[Lump Crabmeat St. Martin](#)
[Crabmeat and Shrimp Stuffed Mirliton](#)
[Crab Cakes Rex](#)
[Fried Softshell Crab](#)
[Crab and Artichoke Casserole](#)
[Vietnamese Stuffed Crabs \(Cua Farci\)](#)
[Lake des Allemande Crab Cakes](#)
[Crab Backs \(Crabmeat-stuffed Shells\)](#)
[Oven-Baked Garlic Crabs](#)
[Pan-Fried Soft-Shell Crabs](#)

SOUPS & STEWS

[Corney's Low-Fat Crab Bisque](#)

SANDWICHES

[Triple Seafood and Tasso Stuffed French Bread](#)
[Louisiana Crab and Twin Cheese Panini](#)

APPETIZERS

[Lump Crabmeat and Crawfish Dip](#)
[Lump Crab and Artichoke Dip](#)
[Crab Stuffed Artichoke Bottoms](#)
[Spicy Crabmeat Guacamole](#)
[Creole Quesadillas](#)
[Crabmeat au Gratin](#)
[Marinated Crab Claws](#)

FROG (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[French-fried Frog Legs](#)
[Osso Buco of Frog Legs](#)
[Frog Legs Provencal](#)

LOBSTER (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Lobster Cooking Tips](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#) | [Contact](#) |
[Site Map](#)



FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

APPETIZERS

SEAFOOD (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Shrimp Bread](#)
- [Shrimp Malarcher](#)
- [French Fried Crab Claws](#)
- [Crawfish Cheesecake](#)
- [Marinated Crab Claws](#)
- [Lump Crabmeat and Crawfish Dip](#)
- [Lump Crab and Artichoke Dip](#)
- [Stuffed Mushroom Dominque Youx](#)
- [South Louisiana Shrimp Rémoulade](#)
- [Shrimp Mousse](#)
- [Terrine of Smoked Catfish](#)
- [Lump Crabmeat St. Martin](#)
- [Spicy Gingered Oysters](#)
- [Oyster Shooters](#)
- [Crab-Stuffed Artichoke Bottoms](#)
- [Spicy Crabmeat Guacamole](#)
- [Creole Quesadillas](#)
- [Grilled Bacon-Wrapped Shrimp with Bourbon Citrus Glaze](#)
- [Oyster-Stuffed Artichoke Bottoms](#)
- [Skewered Rosemary Shrimp with Louisiana Pesto](#)
- [Crawfish Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms](#)
- [Crawfish and Green Onion Sausage Cabbage Rolls](#)
- [Cajun Spicy Shrimp and Avocado Dip](#)
- [Hot Crab, Artichoke and Jalapeño Dip](#)

VEGETABLE (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [50-Yard Line Florentine Artichoke Dip](#)
- [Panzanella](#)
- [Quick and Spicy Black-eyed Pea Dip](#)
- [Spinach Madeleine](#)
- [Spinach, Lump Crab and Artichoke Dip](#)
- [Spear Elegance](#)
- [Roasted Onion and Eggplant Pâté](#)
- [Cheese and Onion Beignets](#)
- [Spanish Olive Tapenade](#)
- [Poke Salad Dip](#)
- [Eggplant Belle Rose](#)
- [Hot Turnip Green and Tasso Dip](#)
- [Baked Pumpkin Seeds](#)
- [Spinach and Andouille Soufflé](#)
- [Spicy Cajun Caviar](#)
- [Italian Stuffed Artichokes](#)
- [Quachita Stuffed Peppers](#)
- [Pickled Mirliton Sticks](#)

[Pickled Asparagus Spears](#)
[Cinco de Mayo Salsa](#)
[Guacamole Puebla](#)

MEAT (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Jalapeño Cheese & Sausage Dip](#)
[Stuffed Pistolettes](#)
[Sausage-Stuffed Jalapeños](#)
[Spicy Meatballs](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#) | [Contact](#) |
[Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

SOUPS

POULTRY (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Chicken Soup with Matzo Balls](#)
- [Chicken, Oyster and Andouille Gumbo](#)
- [Grilled Chicken and Andouille Sausage Pasta Sauce](#)
- [The Queen's Soup](#)
- [Brunswick Stew](#)
- [Prairie Chicken & Dumpling Stew](#)
- [Chicken Soup for the Soul](#)
- [Cajun Chicken Gumbo](#)
- [Cock-A-Leekie Soup](#)
- [Chicken and Andouille Gumbo](#)
- [The Queen's Soup](#)
- [Smoked Turkey Neck, Shrimp and Okra Soup](#)
- [Duck, Oyster and Andouille Gumbo](#)
- [Kristi Liffman's Got the Flu for the Holidays Chicken Soup](#)
- [Rooster Stew](#)
- [Cream of Chicken and Artichoke Soup](#)
- [Chicken and Sausage Gumbo](#)

SEAFOOD (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Cream of Louisiana Oyster and Fleur-de-Lis Soup](#)
- [Shrimp and Corn Soup](#)
- [Veloute of Crawfish, Corn and Potatoes](#)
- [Judge Porter's Cane River Seafood Soup](#)
- [River Road Shrimp Stew](#)
- [Brown Oyster Stew](#)
- [Oyster Rockefeller Soup](#)
- [Crawfish and Mirliton Bisque](#)
- [New England Clam Chowder](#)
- [Crawfish Bisque](#)
- [Louisiana Crawfish and Sea Scallop Bouillabaisse](#)
- [Bisque of Wild Mushroom with French Fried Oyster](#)
- [Crouton](#)
- [Fricot](#)
- [Louisiana Seafood Gumbo](#)
- [Creole Bouillabaisse](#)
- [She-Crab Soup](#)
- [Bouillon de Poisson](#)
- [Oyster and Artichoke Bisque](#)
- [Smoked Duck, Oyster and Andouille Gumbo](#)
- [Shrimp and Okra Gumbo](#)
- [Frogmore Stew](#)
- [Leontine Callais' Oyster Soup](#)
- [Cioppino](#)
- [Front Porch Carrot and Crawfish Bisque](#)

Sweet Corn and Shrimp Soup Corney's Low-Fat Crab Bisque

VEGETABLE (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Mike Graham's Lentil Soup](#)
[Red Bean and Sausage Soup](#)
[Navy Bean Soup](#)
[Red Beans and Rice Gumbo](#)
[Tomato Bisque](#)
[Potato and Cabbage Soup](#)
[Yam, Thyme and Lump Crab Bisque](#)
[Austin Leslie's Black-eyed Pea and Okra Soup](#)
[Cabbage Patch Soup](#)
[French Onion Soup](#)
[Jerry's Five Bean Award Soup](#)
[Bisque of Three Lettuces](#)
[Gumbo des Herbes](#)
[Vegetable Chili Soup](#)
[Spinach and Sweet Potato Soup](#)
[Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato Sandwich Soup](#)
[Great Lakes Potato Soup](#)
[Callaloo Soup \(Caribbean Greens\)](#)
[Lillian James' Dumpling Squash Soup](#)
[Trail of Tears Red Beans, Rice and Smoked Sausage Gumbo](#)
[Cuban Black Bean and Ham Soup](#)
[Irish Colcannon Soup with Shrimp](#)
[Chilled Carrot Soup](#)
[Mirliton Succotash Chowder](#)
[Caramelized Onion and Portabella Mushroom Soup with Goat Cheese Croutons](#)

MEAT (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Tuscan Sausage and Cannellini Bean Soup](#)
- [Smoked Duck, Oyster and Andouille Gumbo](#)
- [Stern's Cincinnati-style Five-way Chili](#)
- [SEC Championship Chili](#)
- [Vegetable Chili Soup](#)
- [13 Vegetable and Beef Soup](#)
- [White Chili](#)
- [Black Bean Chili](#)
- [Mild Hot Dog Chili](#)
- [Bisque of Duck and Cauliflower](#)
- [Mamere's Old Fashioned Vegetable Soup](#)
- [Bratwurst and Potato Stew](#)
- [Irish Stew](#)

FRUIT (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Luscious Lemon Soup](#)
- [Sweet and Sassy Strawberry Soup](#)
- [Golden Gazpacho](#)
- [Chilled Melon Soup](#)

- [Chilled Watermelon Soup](#)
- [Chilled Peach Soup - Boscobel Cottage](#)
- [Chilled Strawberry and Green Cherry Soup](#)

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[Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

SALADS

VEGETABLE SALADS (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Marinated Tomato Salad](#)
- [Mediterranean Orzo Salad Stuffed Tomatoes](#)
- [Mike Graham's Spinach Salad with Hot Bacon Dressing](#)
- [Mixed Greens with Warm Ponchatula Strawberry Vinaigrette](#)
- [Remoulade Slaw](#)
- [Tomato Salad](#)
- [1910 Rice Salad](#)
- [Poke Salad Dip](#)
- [Sliced Green Tomato and Onion Salad](#)
- [Warm German Potato Salad](#)
- [Tiger Slaw](#)
- [Balsamic Vinaigrette with Pear/Roquefort Spring Green Salad](#)
- [Stacked Heirloom Tomato and Kashkaval Salad](#)
- [Traditional Potato Salad with Bacon](#)

FRUIT SALADS (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Layered Fruit & Shrimp Salad](#)
- ["Rum"ba Melon Salad](#)
- [Pecan Ambrosia](#)
- [Lettuce and Strawberry Salad Ponchatoula](#)

MEAT AND SEAFOOD SALADS SALADS

(click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Spicy Grilled Tuna Salad with Ponchatoula Strawberry Vinaigrette](#)
- [Layered Fruit & Shrimp Salad](#)
- [Marinated Crawfish, Zucchini and Summer Squash Salad](#)
- [Seafood Jambalaya Rice Salad](#)
- [Warm Duck Breast Salad with Asian Spices and Hazelnut Vinaigrette](#)
- [Spicy Fried Chicken Pasta Salad](#)
- [Grilled Delta Pride Catfish Salad](#)
- [Herb Encrusted Salmon Salad](#)
- [Crawfish Pasta Salad](#)
- [Fillet of Catfish Salad with Apple-Andouille Vinaigrette](#)
- [Shrimp and Avocado Salad with Orange Vinaigrette](#)

DRESSINGS and TOPPINGS (click a link below to see entire recipe)

- [Fruity Yogurt Dressing](#)

[Orange-Basil Vinaigrette](#)
[Cane Syrup Vinaigrette](#)
[Classic Caesar Dressing](#)
[Spicy Shrimp Topping for Caesar Salad](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#) | [Contact](#) |
[Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

GAME

ALLIGATOR (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Alligator Chili](#)

DOVE (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Wild Dove in Madeira Wine](#)

DUCK (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Breast of Duck with Caramelized Strawberries](#)
[Roasted Cane River Mallards](#)
[Breast of Duck w/ Blackberry Demi-Glace](#)
[Cajun Fried Duck Breast](#)
[Smoked Duck Ham](#)
[Kumquat Roasted Duck](#)

QUAIL (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Braised Quail in Juniper Berry Sauce](#)
[Lemon Butter Quail](#)

RABBIT (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Rabbit and Squirrel Sauce Piquante](#)
[Fricassee of Rabbit with Yellow Corn Biscuits](#)
[Rabbit and Oyster Mushroom Sauce Piquante](#)

VENISON (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Cassoulet of Venison](#)
[Venison Backstrap á la Cobb](#)
[Pecan Smoked Leg of Venison](#)
[Salmi of Venison](#)
[Venison Marinade](#)
[Venison Jerky](#)
[Roasted Leg of Venison Bayou Blue](#)
[Venison Sausage](#)
[Roast of Venison with Cajun Sausage](#)
[Rosemary-Stuffed Leg of Venison](#)
[Matt's Hot Pot Venison Roast](#)

BOAR (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Roast of Wild Boar](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#) | [Contact](#) |
[Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

MEATS

ALLIGATOR (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Alligator Chili](#)

LAMB (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Mike Graham's Leg of Lamb](#)
- [Herb-Encrusted Lamb Lollipops](#)
- [Spicy Lamb Stew on Rigatoni Pasta](#)
- [Chef John Folse's Easter Leg of Lamb](#)
- [Bonnie's Favorite Herb and Garlic Stuffed Leg of Lamb](#)
- [Smoked Loin of Lamb](#)
- [Crawfish Stuffed Rack of Lamb](#)
- [Lafitte's Grilled Lamb Chops](#)
- [Shepherd's Pie](#)
- [Herb-Crusted Leg of Lamb](#)
- [Citrus Lamb Kebabs](#)
- [Sicilian-Style Lamb Chops](#)
- [Lamburgers with Tomato Chutney](#)

PORK (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [German Pork Chops in Onion Sauce](#)
- [Slow Cooker Barbecued Pork](#)
- [Pork Chop and Potato Gratin](#)
- [Braciolini-Style Loin of Pork](#)
- [Momma Link's Braised Chops](#)
- [Choucroute Garnie](#)
- [Joe Ionadi's Sweet Italian Sausage](#)
- [Poppa Link's Pot of Pork](#)
- [Creole Pork & Rice Casserole](#)
- [Grilled Pork Tenderloin with Blackberry BBQ Sauce](#)
- [Pork, Chicken and Andouille Jambalaya](#)
- [Strawberry-Glazed Pork Loin](#)
- [Stuffed Easter Ham](#)
- [Pepper-Laced Pork Roast](#)
- [Loin of Pork Braised in Cream](#)
- [Crown Roast of Pork with Shoepeg Cornbread Dressing](#)
- [Braised Pork Chops with Persimmons](#)
- [A Duo of Sausages Smothered in Apples](#)
- [End of Summer Island Luau](#)
- [Joseph Ionadi's Hot Italian Sausage](#)
- [John's "Guaranteed to be Tender" Baby Back Ribs](#)
- [Garlic Rosemary Pork Tenderloin Served with Sweet Potatoes, Asparagus Tips, Mustard Greens and a Prune Gastrique](#)

[Porche's Famous Hog Crackling](#)
[Chef John Folse's "Nuttin' But Kickin'" Boudin](#)
[Fried Boudin Balls](#)
[Hazel's Cajun Boudin](#)
[Hogs Head Cheese](#)
[Grillades](#)
[Smothered Pork Sausage in Apple Cider](#)
[Grandma Blizek's Lithuanian Sausage](#)
[Chaurice Sausage](#)
[Smoked Sausage](#)
[Platines](#)
[Root Beer Glazed Ham](#)
[Root Beer and Kumquat Glazed Ham](#)
[Chopin's Polish Sausage](#)
[Ham, Roast & Turkey Supreme](#)
[Smoked Tasso](#)
[Andouille Sausage](#)
[Peach Glazed Pork Kabobs](#)
[Smothered Pork Chops Ruston-style](#)
[Black-eyed Pea Jambalaya \(Hopping John\)](#)
[Creole Jambalaya](#)
[Soul Pork Roast](#)
[Cajun Stuffed Chaudin](#)
[Bayou Teche Pork and Yam Breakfast Sausage](#)
[Pork and Sausage Jambalaya](#)
[Vivaldi's Eggplant and Sausage Casserole](#)
[Bayou Teche Pork and Yam Breakfast Sausage](#)
[Rosemary Stuffed Leg of Pork](#)
[Pork Tenderloin with Creole Mustard Cream Sauce](#)
[New Year's Day Jambalaya](#)
[Cochon de Lait Sandwiches](#)
[Slow Cooker Barbecue Country Ribs](#)
[Father's Day Baby Back Ribs](#)
[Seasoned Ground Beef and Pork](#)
[Pan Fried Pork Chops and Wild Pears](#)
[Seasoned Meatloaf](#)
[Triple Sausage Pirogues](#)
[Slow Cooker Barbeque Pork Roast Quesadillas](#)
[Tailgaters Creole Boulette Po'boy](#)
[Skillet Pork Chop, Turnip and Sweet Potato Casserole](#)
[After Mardi Gras Spicy Pork Roast](#)
[Braised Shrimp and Sausage Stuffed Pork Chops](#)
[After the Barbecue Pulled Pork Po'Boys](#)
[Smoked Acadian Bacon with Cajun Glaze](#)
[Rockin' Rollin' Meatloaf Sandwich](#)

BEEF (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Bacon Cheeseburger Meatloaf](#)
[The Perfect Grilled Steak](#)
[Sauerbraten, Louisiana-Style](#)
[Lafitte's Landing 25th Anniversary Veal Forestière](#)
[Beef Tenderloin with Pinot Noir Shallot Sauce](#)
[Confederate Soldier's Beef Stew](#)
[Mike Graham's Pepper Laced Beef Rib Roast](#)
[Ole South Country Fried Steak](#)

Bleu Cheese Burgers
Grilled Veal Chop with Morel Sauce
Wood-Grilled Sirloin
Stuffed Crown Roast of Beef
Rolled Vegetable and Potato Meat Loaf
Corned Beef and Cabbage
Tournedos of Beef Marchand de Vin
Braised Beef Short Ribs
Mama Fresina's Lasagna
Pecan Rice Dressing
Boiled Brisket with Vegetables
Cowboy Steak with Chipotle Sauce
Smothered Seven Steaks
Twice-cooked Beef Short Ribs
Traditional Southern Burger
Steak and Oyster Pie
Wiener Schnitzel
Jimmy Johnson's Killer Hot Tamales
Twice-Cooked Barbecue Beef Brisket
Cajun Muffaletta
Michaela's Leaning Tower of Pizza
Fricassee of Veal with Ham & Artichoke
Veal Daube
Daube Glace
Finger-Licking Honey Rib
Prime Rib of Beef
Yorkshire Pudding
Natchitoches Meat Pies
Fricot
SEC Championship Chili
Chili con Carne
Stern's Cincinnati-Style Five-Way Chili
Breast of Veal with Potato Spinach Stuffing
Beef in Barbeque Sauce
Beef in Oyster Sauce
Beef with Spinach
Grilled Steak Oriental
Black Pepper Beef
Creole Dirty Rice
Beef Short Ribs with Ale and Vegetables
Chisholm Trail Spoon Steak Chili
Cincinnati Style Chili
Joe Cahn's Jambalaya
Ouachita Stuffed Peppers
Old-Fashioned Beefy Vegetable Stew
Doc's Primo Chili (Something Old)
Doc's Primo Chili (Something New)
Flavored Ground Meat for Meatloaf, Meatballs,
Hamburger Steak, Hamburger Patties, Lasagna or Rice
Rice Dressing
Paella del Caribe
World-Champion Brisket
Black and Blue Sugar Steak
Ray's Cajun Hot Brisket
Jeff's Oven Smoked Bones
John's "Tender & Juicy" Spaghetti and Meatballs

[The Great American Hamburger](#)
[Beef and Pork Bourguignon](#)
[Spicy Baked Beef Brisket](#)
[Beef Tamales](#)
[Bourbon Street London Broil](#)
[Seasoned Ground Beef and Pork](#)
[Carpetbagger Tournedos](#)
[Braciolini](#)
[Seasoned Meatloaf](#)
[Triple Sausage Pirogues](#)
[Tailgaters Creole Boulette Po'boy](#)
[Scarecrow Chili](#)
[Beef Bourguignonne à la Bacchus](#)
[Steak From Hell](#)
[Pimiento Cheese Burgers](#)
[Rockin' Rollin' Meatloaf Sandwich](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

VEGETABLES

Entrée Vegetables (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Oktoberfest Cabbage and Bratwurst](#)
- [Summer Vegetable Frittata](#)
- [Petit Marché Veggie Panini](#)
- [Mississippi River Shrimp Stuffed Bell Peppers](#)
- [Eggplant-stuffed Bell Peppers](#)
- [Black-eyed Pea Jambalaya \(Hopping John\)](#)
- [Creole Tomato Basil Pie](#)
- [Giant Mushrooms Stuffed with Crawfish and Tasso Cardinal](#)
- [Eggplant Casserole](#)
- [Smothered Cabbage and Andouille](#)
- [Mirliton Pie](#)
- [Mirliton and Shrimp Casserole](#)
- [Crabmeat and Shrimp Stuffed Mirliton](#)
- [Creole Culture Casserole](#)
- [Aubergines á la Biterproise](#)
- [Undefeated Red Beans and Sausage](#)
- [Undefeated Red Beans, Rice and Sausage Casserole](#)
- [Calabrian White Beans with Smoked Ham Sausage](#)
- [Vivaldi's Eggplant and Sausage Casserole](#)
- [Chef John Folse's All-time Favorite Sandwich](#)
- [Spring Rolls](#)
- [Shrimp Stuffed Mirliton](#)
- [Stuffed Red Cabbage Leaves](#)
- [Scalloped Potato and Turkey Casserole](#)
- [Spicy Creole Tomato Grits](#)
- [Crawfish Stuffed Artichokes](#)
- [Portabella Mushroom Panini with Fleur-de-Lis](#)
- [Eggplant with Cayenne Beer Batter and Spicy Roasted Bell Pepper Dip](#)
- [White Squash with Shrimp](#)
- [Baked Beans Abita Root Beer Style](#)

Side Dish Vegetables (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [German Potato Dumplings](#)
- [Mike Graham's Potato Latkes](#)
- [Mike Graham's Steamed Asparagus with Hollandaise Sauce](#)
- [Crawfish Corn Maque Choux](#)
- [Cajun Ratatouille](#)
- [Choucroute Garni](#)
- [Spinach Madeleine](#)
- [Latkes](#)
- [Savory Leek and Apple Wood Bacon Tart](#)

Baked Corn Casserole
Simple and Delicious Holiday Yams
Broccoli and Cauliflower Casserole
Holiday Carrot Soufflé
Beet Marmalade
Slammin' Sauerkraut
Butter Beans with Ham
Quick and Smokey Cajun Baked Beans
Charlie's Creole Connection Carrots
Corn Macque Choux
Fried Green Tomatoes
Braised Savoy Cabbage
Wild Mushroom Stew
Grilled Herb Potatoes
Boiled Corn
Eggplant Parmesan
Polenta Laced with Truffle
Cajun Black-eyed Peas
Leah Chase's Old-style Greens and "Pot Likker"
Onion Cake
John Folse's Honey and Bacon-glazed Barbecue Beans
Onion Phyllo Pie
Squash Pudding
Baked Cushaw Squares
Honey Mint Glazed Carrots
Baked Pumpkin Lafourche
Brandied Sweet Potatoes
White Rice
Spicy Grilled Corn on the Cob
Grilled Corn with Spicy Cilantro Butter
String Bean Bundle
Fried Eggplant
Eggplant Casserole Bilello
Mamere's Favorite Candied Yams
Cajun Baked Beans
Sweet Potato Pones
Louisiana Candied Sweet Potatoes
Sweet 'n' Sassy Beans
Canned Whole Tomatoes with Basil and Garlic
Cheese Garlic Grits Soufflé
Double Fried French Fries
Sour Cream, Bacon and Chive Stuffed Baked Potato
Mock Oyster Fries
Chinese Fried Rice
Fall Squash Succotash
David Dawson's Asparagus Soufflé
Maple Ginger Sweet Potatoes
Mashed Potatoes With Leeks
Broccoli, Cheese and Bacon Rice
Golden Home Fries
Oven-Roasted New Potatoes
Lemon-Butter Roasted Asparagus
Asparagus au Gratin
Dauphinoise Potatoes
Shrimp-Sauced Cauliflower
Rice Pilaf

[Spinach-Herb Creole Cream Cheese Quiche](#)
[Sauerkraut River Road Style](#)
[Cauliflower Macque Choux](#)
[Quick and Smoky Cajun Baked Beans](#)

Salads (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Cole Slaw Burger Topper](#)
[Cabbage Casserole](#)
[Low-Fat Cream Coleslaw](#)
[Vinegar and Oil Quick Pepper Slaw](#)
[Mardi Gras Slaw](#)
[Caponata](#)
[Hot German Potato Salad](#)
[Easter Egg Potato Salad](#)
[Nice and Spicy Coleslaw](#)
[Asparagus with Olive Oil and Lemon](#)

Vegetable Appetizers (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Pickled Asparagus Spears](#)
[Sweet Potato Pecan Balls](#)
[Spinach Marguerite](#)
[Gerite's Bread and Butter Pickles](#)
[Sugar and Spicy Pickle Relish](#)
[Pansanella](#)
[Lump Crab and Artichoke Dip](#)
[Stuffed Mushroom Dominique Youx](#)
[Quick and Spicy Black-eyed Pea Dip](#)
[Spinach Madeleine](#)
[Roasted Onion and Eggplant Pâté](#)
[Cheese and Onion Beignets](#)
[Spanish Olive Tapenade](#)
[Poke Salad Dip](#)
[Eggplant Belle Rose](#)
[Hot Turnip Green and Tasso Dip](#)
[Spinach and Andouille Soufflé](#)
[Spicy Cajun Caviar](#)
[Italian Stuffed Artichokes](#)
[Ouachita Stuffed Peppers](#)
[Pickled Mirliton Sticks](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

- [Dutch Oven Italian Sausage & Chicken Pasta](#)
- [Linguini Forestière](#)
- [Mike Graham's Shrimp, Crawfish and Lump Crabmeat Pasta](#)
- [Mediterranean Orzo Salad](#)
- [Seafood Pasta Salad](#)
- [Spicy Lamb Stew on Rigatoni Pasta](#)
- [Angel Hair with Avocado Corn Cream](#)
- [Grilled Shrimp, Sausage & Creole Tomato Pasta](#)
- [Sun-Dried Tomato and Prosciutto Pasta with Clams](#)
- [Fleur-de-Lis Seafood Pastalaya](#)
- [Guy DiSalvo's Premier Marinara Sauce](#)
- [Black and White Eggplant Pasta](#)
- [Poke Salad Lasagna](#)
- [Spaghetti alla Puttanesca alla Napoletana](#)
- [Homemade Semolina Pasta and Salsa Pomodoro Basilico](#)
- [John's "Tender & Juicy" Spaghetti and Meatballs](#)
- [Fettucine Alfredo](#)
- [Crawfish Michaela](#)
- [Crawfish Stuffed Pasta Shells](#)
- [Crawfish Pasta Salad](#)
- [Tuscan Shrimp Pasta](#)
- [Spicy Fried Chicken Pasta Salad](#)
- [Mama Fresina's Lasagna](#)
- [Penne with Pumpkin Cream Sauce](#)
- [Low Fat Chicken Pasta "Creamavera"](#)
- [Linguine With Spicy Oyster Sauce](#)
- [Crawfish Andouille Fettuccini](#)
- [Old-Fashioned Mac and Cheese Cups with Crawfish](#)
- [Leftover Turkey Tetrazzini](#)
- [Best Ever Lenten Lasagna](#)

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- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

POULTRY

CHICKEN (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Rustic Chicken and Fleur-de-Lis Tart](#)
- [Quick and Easy Pesto-Rubbed Roasted Chicken](#)
- [Lemonade Glazed Chicken](#)
- [Chick on a Stick with Sweet n' Spicy Orange Marinade](#)
- [Jollof Rice of Nigeria](#)
- [Chicken Biryani](#)
- [Cajun-style Chicken and Eggplant Casserole](#)
- [Christmas Capon](#)
- [Smothered Chicken Macque Choux Casserole](#)
- ["Backfield in Motion" Buffalo Wings](#)
- [1st and 10 Chicken and Sausage Jambalaya](#)
- [Bricks and Mortar Chicken](#)
- [Creole Chicken and Biscuits](#)
- [Tailgater's Smoked Chicken](#)
- [Ratatouille Stuffed Chicken](#)
- [Coq au Vin](#)
- [Spicy Fried Chicken Pasta Salad](#)
- [Cassoulet](#)
- [Southern Fried Chicken](#)
- [Chicken Macque Choux](#)
- [Chicken Stew Cabanocey](#)
- [Spicy Honey Drummettes](#)
- [Mama's Chicken Fricassee](#)
- [Chicken & Sausage Jambalaya](#)
- [Oven-fried Chicken](#)
- [Ellie Mathews' Salsa Couscous Chicken \(Winner of the 1998 Pillsbury Bake Off\)](#)
- [Chicken Bayou Lafourche with Andouille Tarragon Cream](#)
- [Sauteed Chicken Livers Orleans](#)
- [Prairie Chicken & Dumpling Stew](#)
- [Six-Spice Encrusted Breast Of Chicken](#)
- [Rum Jerk Chicken](#)
- [French-Roasted Chicken Sandwich](#)
- [Ballistic Chick](#)
- [Chicken Piccata](#)
- [Oodles of Noodles Casserole](#)
- [Warm Duck Breast Salad with Asian Spices and Hazelnut Vinaigrette](#)
- [Chicken in Hoisin Sauce](#)
- [Chicken Sauce Piquante](#)
- [Creole Chicken & Grits](#)
- [Low Carb Lemon-Rosemary Chicken with Marsala Sauce](#)
- [Low Fat Chicken Pasta "Creamavera"](#)
- [Stuffed Tomato with French-Roasted Chicken Salad](#)
- [Spanish-Style Rice with Chicken and Shrimp](#)

[Honey Glazed Chicken Breast Sandwich](#)
[Pati a la Rapure-Rappe Pie](#)
[Hot Pot Garlic and Rosemary Chicken](#)
[Irish Eyes Chicken Pot Pie](#)
[Chicken and Sausage Grits Casserole](#)
[Lemonade-Glazed Chicken](#)
[Tandoori Baked Chicken](#)
[Brined Southern Deep-Fried Chicken](#)
[Pampy's Fried Chicken](#)
[Oven-Barbecued Chicken](#)

TURKEY (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Turkey Club Salad Wrap](#)
[Hail Caesar Turkey Salad](#)
[Day After Thanksgiving Turkey Gumbo](#)
[Roasted Turkey Sandwich](#)
[Turkey Turnovers](#)
[Turkey Hash in Puff Pastry](#)
[Deep-Fried Turkey](#)
[John's Roasted Turkey](#)
[Smothered Turkey Necks in Onion Gravy](#)
[Turkey and Ham Glace](#)
[Smoked Turkey, Spinach and Roasted Red Pepper Panini](#)
[Brine Method for Turkey, Duck, Goose or Chicken](#)
[Turkey Hash on Creole Tomato Grits](#)
[Scalloped Potato and Turkey Casserole](#)
[Leftover Turkey Tetrazzini](#)

DUCK (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Smoked Duck Ham](#)
[Breast Of Duck With Gingered Orange Marinade](#)
[Cajun Fried Duck Breast](#)
[Wild Duck In Orange Cane Syrup Marinade](#)
[Roasted Cane River Mallards](#)
[Smoked Breast Of Mallard](#)
[Fresh Spinach Pasta With Smoked Duck, Olives And Porcini Mushrooms](#)
[Stuffed Duck Breast](#)
[Cajun Duck Fajitas](#)

GOOSE (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Roasted Christmas Goose](#)

OTHER (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Blueberry Cornbread Stuffed Game Hen](#)
[Fig and Mustard Glazed Cornish Hen on Spinach Salad](#)
[Baked Game Hens Vacherie](#)
[Grilled Cornish Hens with Spicy Tangipahoa Strawberry BBQ Glaze](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

- [Bavarian Apple Walnut Bread](#)
- [Hardtack](#)
- [Basic Quick Bread Batter](#)
- [Blueberry-Zucchini Bread](#)
- [Chef John Folse's Light and Airy Cornbread](#)
- [Banana Walnut Bread in a Jar](#)
- [Chef John Folse's Shoepeg Cornbread Stuffing](#)
- [Persimmon Nut Bread](#)
- [Creole Cornbread](#)
- [Traditional Sally Lunn](#)
- [Beer, Sun-dried Tomato and Olive Quick Bread](#)
- [Herbal Beer Bread](#)
- [Blueberry-Orange-Pecan Quick Bread](#)
- [Basic Quick Bread](#)
- [Hot Cross Buns](#)
- [Southern Style Cornbread](#)
- [Chef John Folse's Holiday Cornbread Dressing](#)
- [Cornbread Muffins - Caspiana Plantation](#)
- [Hushpuppies](#)
- [Banana Zucchini Bread](#)
- [Southern Style Pumpkin and Pecan Bread](#)
- [Sweet Potato Pumpkin Bread](#)
- [A French Cake](#)
- [Cracklin' Biscuits](#)
- [Fry Bread](#)
- [Maw-Maw Coniglio's Fry Breads](#)
- [Gloria Maxie's Corn Bread Dressing](#)
- [Yorkshire Pudding](#)
- [Mississippi Corn Bread Dressing](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- **Stuffings & Dressings**
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STUFFINGS & DRESSINGS

- [Thanksgiving Fruit and Nut Stuffing](#)
- [Sweet Farre Dressing](#)
- [Ruth Fertel's Plaquemines Parish Oyster Dressing](#)
- [Mississippi Corn Bread Dressing](#)

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- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

DESSERTS

CAKES (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Persimmon Creole Cream Cheese Cheesecake](#)
- [Spiced Pear Cake](#)
- [Creole Cream Cheese Pecan Pound Cake](#)
- [Fourth of July Margarita Cheesecake](#)
- [Chocolate Lava Cakes with Spiced Ruston Peaches](#)
- [Biskvitnyi Abrikosovyi Tort](#)
- [\(Apricot Sponge Cake with Lemon Butter Cream Icing and Rum Syrup\)](#)
- [Chef John Folse's Easter Carrot Cake](#)
- [Low Fat Turtle Custard Cake](#)
- [Praline Bread Pudding Cake](#)
- [Blueberry-Lemon Pound Cake](#)
- [Raspberry-Chocolate Truffle Cake](#)
- [Easter Lemon Pound Cake With Lemon Curd](#)
- [Spiced Apple And Pecan Cake In A Jar](#)
- [Summer Lemon Pound Cake](#)
- [Chocolate Decadence Cake With Raspberry Sauce](#)
- [Cassata Alla Siciliana](#)
- [Fruitcake In A Jar](#)
- [Lebkuchen](#)
- [Touchdown Red Velvet Cake](#)
- [Mardi Gras King Cake](#)
- [Bread Pudding Cake](#)
- [Gateau De Figue \(Fig Cake\)](#)
- [Mandarin Orange Cheesecake](#)
- [Pumpkin Streusel Coffeecake](#)
- [Super Moist Carrot Cake](#)
- [Super-Moist Fruitcake](#)
- [Krumkake](#)
- [Moist & Yummy Yam Cake](#)
- [Gateau De Sirop, Syrup Cake Or Masse Pain](#)
- [Creole Cream Cheese Cheesecake](#)
- [Scary Spider Cake](#)
- [Pam Lemoine's Brownie Chocolate Chip Cheesecake](#)
- [Heart-Healthy Apple Coffee Cake](#)
- [Chocolate Creole Cream Cheese Cheesecake](#)
- [Sunken Peach Cake](#)
- [Mama Brown's Orange Date Nut Cake](#)
- [Devil's Own Zulu Cake](#)
- [Old-Fashioned Root Beer Float Cake](#)

CHOCOLATE (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

- [Chocolate Mocha Pots de Crème](#)
- [Bouche Noire](#)

[Chocolate Soup](#)
[White Chocolate, Mint And Pecan Fudge](#)
[Chocolate Java Mousse](#)
[Triple Chocolate Valentine Brownies](#)
[Fabulous Chocolate Fondue Or Fudge Sauce](#)
[Good Lovin' Brownies](#)
[Summer Afternoon Brownies](#)
[The Ultimate Cheesecake Brownie](#)
[Cupid's Super Chocolate Brownies with Dipped Strawberries](#)
[Triple Chocolate Truffle Cake](#)
[Chocolate Pecan Icing](#)

COOKIES (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Chef Guy's Homemade Biscotti](#)
[Biscotti Di Mandorle Con Cioccolato \(Almond Cookies With Chocolate\)](#)
[Neapolitan Confetti Cookies](#)
[Italian Fig Cookies](#)
[Persimmon Cookies](#)
[Cuccidata-Sicilian Fig Cookies](#)
[Chocolate Chunk, Orange and Pecan Cookies](#)
[Citrus Honey Bars](#)
[Petit Gateaux \(Christmas Tea Cookies\)](#)

FRUITS (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Louisiana Quince and Pear Chutney](#)
[Spiced Pears for Canning](#)
[French Market Fruit Pizza](#)
[Deep Dish Mixed Berry Pie](#)
[Four Berry Fruit Cobbler](#)
[Berries and Creole Cream Cheese Crêpes](#)
[Mixed Berries Bathed in Bay Leaf Custard](#)
[Sweet Fruit Chutney](#)
[Creole Cream Cheese Strawberry Shortcake](#)
[Rustic Pear and Apple Tart](#)
[Strawberry Crepes Romanoff](#)
[Sauteed Apples Calvados](#)
[Honeyed Apple Rings](#)
[Granny's Fig Preserves](#)
[Spiced Ruston Peaches](#)
[Individual Meringues With Sliced Strawberries And Chocolate Sauce](#)
[Strawberry Shortcake](#)
[Apple Crêpe Tatin](#)
[French Market Fruit Pizza](#)
[Louisiana Fig Ice Cream](#)
[Wild Blackberry Crêpes](#)
[Marinated Ponchatoula Strawberries](#)
[Crepes Estelle](#)
[Mama's Apple Dumplings](#)
[Strawberry Dipping](#)
[Campfire Biscuit Cobbler](#)

[Purple Plum Torte](#)
[Strawberry Parfait St. Valentine](#)
[Louisiana Strawberry and Creole Cream Cheese Crêpes](#)
[Apple and Mixed Berry Crumble](#)
[Watermelon Rind Chutney](#)
[Blueberry and Raspberry Trifle](#)
[Baked Pumpkin and Apple Casserole](#)
[Peach Cobbler](#)
[Blueberry Buckle](#)

ICE CREAM (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Cool Ruston Peach Sorbet](#)
[Double Chocolate Peach Creole Cream Cheese Ice Cream](#)
[White Chocolate Pecan Ice Cream Sandwiches](#)
[Mike Graham's Golden 25 Ice Cream](#)
[Sweet Fruit Chutney](#)
[Strawberry Creole Cream Cheese Ice Cream](#)
[Louisiana Fig Ice Cream](#)
[Spiced Ruston Peach Topping For Ice Cream](#)
[White Chocolate Strawberry Ice Cream](#)
[Creole Cream Cheese Ice Cream](#)
[Creole Country Basic Vanilla Ice Cream](#)
[Chocolate & Clover Honey Ice Cream](#)
[Jack Daniels Chocolate Ice Cream](#)
[French Vanilla Ice Cream](#)
[Watermelon & Black Pepper Sorbet](#)
[Praline And Peach Ice Cream](#)
[Candied Yam And White Chocolate Ice Cream](#)
[Louisiana Ponchatoula Strawberry Sorbet](#)
[Ponchatoula Strawberry Sherbet](#)
[Peach Creole Cream Cheese Ice Cream](#)
[Louisiana Fig and Frozen Yogurt Ice Cream](#)
[Caramelized Banana Split Sundaes](#)

PIES (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Satsuma Cane Syrup Pecan Pie](#)
[Bananas Foster Cream Pie](#)
[No-Bake Coconut Cream Pie](#)
[Key Lime Pie](#)
[Creole Christmas Pear Tart](#)
[Blueberry Pie](#)
[Ponchatoula Strawberry And Lemon Pie](#)
[Cajun Skillet Apple Pie](#)
[Honey Pecan Pie](#)
[Classic Apple Pie](#)
[Mamere's Country-Style Lemon Pie](#)
[Sacred Heart Chocolate Pecan Pie](#)
[Bouche Noire, Pie](#)
[Lemon-Ice-Box-Pie](#)
[Fig & Pecan Pie](#)
[Classic American Pie Crust](#)
[Orange Cane Syrup Pecan Pie](#)
[Pumpkin Eggnog Pie](#)

[Mincemeat Pie](#)
[Mason Dixon Pecan Pie](#)
[Juirdmon \(Cushaw Pumpkin Pie Filling\)](#)
[Peach Custard Pie](#)
[Meringues W/ Strawberries & Chocolate Sauce](#)
[Oeufs Aux Lait \(Egg Custard\)](#)
[Cajun Chocolate Pecan Pie](#)
[Creamy Coconut Cream Pie](#)
[Old-Fashion Creole Coconut Pie](#)
[Mason Dixon Pecan Pie](#)
[Tarte A` La Bouie](#)
[Cranberry and Candied Yam Cheesecake Tart](#)
[Algie Petrere's Top Gun Bourbon and Sweet Potato Pie](#)
[Lemon Buttermilk Pie with Golden Raisins](#)
[Coconut Cream Pie](#)
[Peach and Praline Pie](#)
[Lemon Creme Brulee Tart](#)
[Cranberry Bourbon Pecan Pie](#)
[Lemon Buttermilk Pie with Strawberry Topping](#)
[Tender Pie Crust](#)

PUDDINGS (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Bread Pudding with Rum Sauce](#)
[Feliciana Summer Pudding](#)
[Oeufs Aux Lait \(Egg Custard\)](#)
[White Chocolate Bread Pudding](#)
[Bread And Butter Pudding](#)
[Summer Pudding](#)
[Persimmon Buttermilk Pudding](#)
[Rum Raisin Rice Pudding](#)
[Brown Sugar Bread And Butter Pudding - With Cane Syrup Glaze](#)
[King Zulu's Bread Pudding](#)
[Watermelon Pudding](#)

OTHER (click on a link below to see the entire recipe)

[Creole Cream Cheese Cannoli](#)
[Bavarian Apple Walnut Bread](#)
[Raspberry Creole Cream Cheese Panna Cotta](#)
[Sufganyiot](#)
[Creole Country Ambrosia with Twin Chocolate Shavings](#)
[Louisiana Fruit Trifle](#)
[Skillet Peach Cobbler](#)
[Praline Pecan Fudge](#)
[Praline Au Bene](#)
[Pumpkin And Praline Cheesecake](#)
[Pumpkin Flan](#)
[Sugared Bourbon Pecans](#)
[Cajun, Pralines](#)
[Mother's Cream Puffs](#)
[Honey Roasted Nuts](#)
[Caramel Custard](#)
[Marbled Cheesecake Hearts](#)

[Floating Island](#)
[Creole Cream Cheese Tiramisu](#)
[Tirami Su And Pan Di Spagna](#)
[The Perfect Lemon Bars](#)
[Bananas Foster](#)
[Pumpkin Cheesecake Roll](#)
[Pumpkin Soufflé](#)
[Sooo Good Sweet Potato Casserole](#)
[Cinco de Mayo Orange Flan](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
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- Seafood
- Vegetables
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- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

- [Blackberry Beverages](#)
- [Warm Christmas Cider](#)
- [Blood Orange and Rosemary Daiquiri](#)
- [Mulled Cider With Aromatic Spices](#)
- [Uncle Herman's Blackberry Bounce](#)
- [Muscadine or Other Wild Berry Wine](#)
- [Breakfast Cheer](#)
- [Spiked Eggnog Cabanocey](#)
- [Mulled Wine](#)
- [Wild Dove In Madeira Wine](#)
- [Cafe Brulot](#)
- [Creole Cafe Noir](#)
- [Homemade Blackberry Wine](#)
- [Mint Lemonade](#)
- [Pim Pom Punch](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

- [Chef John Folse's Persimmon Jam](#)
- [Sausage and Bacon Breakfast Omelette](#)
- [The Best Blueberry Pancakes](#)
- [Berries and Creole Cream Cheese Crêpes](#)
- [Brunch or Afternoon Tea Cream Biscuits](#)
- [Waffles Papa Noel](#)
- [Creole Home Fries](#)
- [Baked Eggs with Crawfish and Mushrooms in Ham Baskets](#)
- [Strawberry Beignets](#)
- [Breakfast Muffins en Surprise](#)
- [Creole Country Cornmeal Pecan Waffles](#)
- [Crepes Estelle](#)
- [Grillades and Gravy - Spanish Style](#)
- [Pan Perdu Count Pontchartrain](#)
- [Michigan Man's Apple Pancake](#)
- [Buttermilk Pancakes with Orange Honey Butter](#)
- [Granny's Fig Preserves](#)
- [Madame Begue Liver & Onions](#)
- [Upside Down Orange Biscuits](#)
- [Fairfield Egg Casserole](#)
- [Stuffed Eggs Italian Style](#)
- [Cheese Garlic Grits Soufflé](#)
- [Eggs á la Crème](#)
- [Basic Buttermilk Biscuits](#)
- [Rollin Feliciano Bran Muffins](#)
- [Crème Brûlée Lost Bread](#)
- [Low-Carbohydrate Pancakes](#)
- [Flora's Granola](#)
- [Bayou Teche Pork and Yam Breakfast Sausage](#)
- [Spinach and Three Cheese Grits Soufflé](#)
- [Angel Robertson's Homemade Eggnog Pancakes](#)
- [Low-Fat Grillades & Gravy Spanish-Style](#)
- [Eggs Sardou](#)
- [Shrimp and Tomato Grits](#)
- [Cabbage, Bacon and Tasso Frittata](#)
- [Captain John's Cathead Biscuits](#)
- [Very Strawberry Butter](#)
- [Cream Biscuits](#)



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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

ROUXS

"What I love about cooking is that after a hard day, there is something comforting about the fact that if you melt butter and add flour and then hot stock, it will get thick! It's a sure thing in a world where nothing else is sure, it's a certainty, the stock will thicken!"

Nora Ephron

Stocks may be thickened by means of reductions, eggs, butter, vegetable purees, cream, foie gras, various starches and even blood. In classical French cuisine, the roux is the primary thickening agent. Equal parts of butter and flour are well blended over heat to create a roux. This process may produce rouxs of different colors and thickening capabilities depending on the cook's need. In Cajun and Creole cuisine, the roux has been raised to a new dimension never before experienced in other forms of cooking.

Butter, lard, peanut oil, bacon fat and even duck fat have been used in combination with flour to produce as many taste and color variations as there are cooks in South Louisiana. In classical cuisine, the brown roux is used for brown sauce, the blonde roux for veloutes and the white roux is used for bechamels. In Creole cuisine, a brown roux is made from butter or bacon fat and is used to thicken gumbos and stews requiring a light touch. The Cajuns, on the other hand, are the originators of the most unique rouxs in modern cookery.

The Cajun dark brown roux is best made with vegetable oil, although in the past, it was thought imperative that only animal fat be used. The flour and oil are cooked together until the roux reaches a caramel color. This roux has less thickening power. Thus, the thickening capabilities of the dark roux are diminished. The dark brown roux is the secret to traditional Cajun food because of the richness and depth it adds to the dish. Butter is used in classical and Creole rouxs, however, the Cajuns use only vegetable oil or lard to produce their lighter colored roux. Tan in appearance, these light rouxs are used primarily with vegetables and light meat dishes.

Nothing in Cajun country has a greater aroma than a light brown roux simmering with onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. On many occasions growing up in South Louisiana, my hunger was satisfied with a touch of this vegetable seasoned roux spread on a piece of French Bread. Certain gumbos are further thickened, in Bayou country, with either okra or file powder.

Considering the variations in cooking time and fats or oils, the number of different roux possibilities are infinite. I will attempt to delineate six such rouxs, three used in classical cuisine, one used in Creole cooking and two that are strictly Cajun.

Oil-Less Roux

2 cups all purpose flour

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Spread flour evenly across the bottom of a 15-inch cast iron skillet. Bake, stirring occasionally, for approximately 1 hour. Make sure to stir well around the edges of the skillet so flour does not scorch. Cook flour until light or dark color is achieved, depending on use. The roux will become darker when liquid is added. When desired color is reached, cool on a large cookie sheet, stirring occasionally. Store in a sealed jar for future use. 1 cup of oil-less roux will thicken 1 ½ quarts of stock to a proper gumbo consistency.

NOTE: I recommend oil-less roux manufactured and sold by Bruce Foods and Savoie's. Bruce Foods is located in New Iberia, Louisiana (318) 365-8101 and Savoie's is located in Opelousas, Louisiana (318) 942-7241.

8 Servings
Calories: 114
Total Fat: 0
Saturated Fat: 0
% Calories from Fat: 0%
Cholesterol: 0
Sodium: 1mg
Carbohydrate: 24mg
Fiber: 1gm
Protein: 3 gm

THE BROWN ROUX

1/2 cup butter
1/2 cup flour

In a heavy bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Using a wooden roux spoon, add flour, stirring constantly until flour becomes light brown. You must continue stirring during the cooking process, as flour will tend to scorch as browning process proceeds. Should black specks appear in the roux, discard and begin again. This volume of roux will thicken three cups of stock to sauce consistency.

THE BLONDE BUTTER ROUX

1/2 cup butter
1/2 cup flour

In a heavy bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Proceed exactly as in the brown roux recipe, however, only cook to the pale gold state. This roux is popular in Creole cooking and will thicken three cups of stock to a sauce consistency.

THE WHITE BUTTER ROUX

1/2 cup butter
1/2 cup flour

In a heavy bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Proceed exactly as in the blonde roux recipe, however, only cook until the flour and butter are well blended and bubbly. Do not brown. This classical style roux is popular in Creole cooking and will thicken three cups of stock to a sauce consistency.

THE CREOLE ROUX

The Creole roux can be made with lightly salted butter, bacon drippings or lard. As with everything regarding food in Louisiana, whenever someone attempts to reduce this wealth of food lore to written material, an argument breaks out. Let's just say that Creole rouxs vary in color the same as Classical and Cajun ones. The Creoles, however, did have in their pantry, butter for the roux, whereas any butter a Cajun had would be saved for a biscuit or cornbread and never put in the black iron pot for a roux.

If a comparison statement can be made, it would be that generally speaking, Creole roux is darker in color than the classical French brown roux it descended from but not as dark as the Cajun dark roux.

THE LIGHT BROWN CAJUN ROUX

1/2 cup oil
1/2 cup flour

In a black iron pot or skillet, heat the oil over medium high heat to approximately 300 degrees F. Using a wooden roux spoon, slowly add the flour, stirring constantly until the roux is peanut butter in color, approximately two minutes. This roux is normally used to thicken vegetable dishes such as corn maque choux (shrimp, corn and tomato stew) or butter beans with ham. If using this roux to thicken an etouffee, it will thicken approximately two quarts of liquid. If used to thicken seafood gumbo, it will thicken approximately two and a half quarts of stock.

THE DARK BROWN CAJUN ROUX

1 cup oil
1/2 cup flour

Proceed as you would in the light brown Cajun roux recipe but continue cooking until the roux is the color of a light caramel. This roux should almost be twice as dark as the light brown roux but not as dark as chocolate. You should remember that the darker the roux gets, the less thickening power it holds and the roux tends to become bitter. This roux is used most often in sauce piquantes, crawfish bisques and gumbos. However, it is perfectly normal to use the dark brown roux in any dish in Cajun cooking.

This roux gives food such a rich character that I sometimes make shrimp and corn bisque with it, as well as a river road seafood gumbo that will knock your socks off. Slow cooking is essential to achieve that dark, rich color.

Some time ago, I was discussing the origin of the dark roux with my good friend, Angus McIntosh, a chef and aspiring Cajun. I've always contended that because the Cajuns cooked in black iron pots over open fires using lard as a base, the dark roux was discovered by accident when the fire got too hot and the flour over-browned. With their lean pantries in mind, the Cajuns kept the roux instead of discarding it. They enjoyed the flavor and kept doing it that way. Classical cookbooks written as far back as the mid-1500s state that roux is derived from the French word "rouge" meaning "red" or "reddish" in color. Thus, the origin of the name. Angus felt that it developed during the Cajun's less affluent years as a means of

enriching a soup or stew with flavor when the pantry was not as full but the number of chairs at the table were many. Either way, if properly done, the dark Cajun roux enriches food with color and flavor that is so fantastic it could only be Cajun.

Table of Sauce and Soup Consistencies Using The Roux of Cajun and Creole Cooking

THE BUTTER BASE ROUXS

(The Classical and Creole Rouxs)

1 cup butter 1 cup flour

This recipe will thicken the following:

6 cups stock to a thick white sauce consistency.
8 cups stock to a concentrated soup consistency.
10 cups stock to a thick soup consistency.
12 cups stock to a perfect Louisiana gumbo consistency.
14 cups stock to a light gumbo consistency.

THE OIL BASE ROUXS

(The Cajun Rouxs)

1 cup vegetable oil 1 cup flour

Cooked at 300 degrees F. for three to five minutes, this recipe will thicken the following:

6 cups stock to a thick brown sauce consistency.
8 cups stock to a thick gumbo consistency.
10 cups stock to a perfect Louisiana gumbo consistency.
12 cups stock to a light gumbo consistency.

It should be noted that the butter or oil base rouxs may be made well in advance, cooled, separated into half cup portions and placed in the refrigerator or freezer. The roux will keep well for months and always be available to you should an emergency arise.

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- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

- Beurre Creole
- Homemade Tomato Sauce
- Quick and Easy Tomato Sauce Forestière
- Classic Bolognese Sauce
- Raspberry Jalapeno Glaze
- Blackberry Bar-B-Q Sauce
- Salsa Pomodoro (Tomato Basil Sauce)
- Chef John Folse's Pure Vanilla Extract
- Spiced Cranberry and Kumquat Sauce with Zinfandel
- Ms. Murphy's Cranberry Syrup
- Freezer Persimmon Jam
- Persimmon Jelly
- Red Rémoulade Sauce
- Hot Red Pepper Sauce
- Sweet Red Pepper Sauce
- Root Beer Barbecue Sauce
- Southern Style Green Tomato Relish
- Chef John Folse's Creole Tomato Sauce
- Chef John Folse's Vinegar Sauce
- Ginger Plum Barbecue Sauce
- Cajun Roux Peas
- Guy Disalvo's Premier Marinara Sauce
- Louis' Sauce Basquaise
- Steen's Basic Barbecue Sauce
- Texas-Style Honey Barbecue Rub
- Peach Barbecue Sauce
- Calypso's Rum Glaze
- Spicy, Orange Mayonnaise
- Spicy, Scallion Garlic Butter
- Brown Meuniere Sauce
- Blender Hollandaise Sauce
- Oysters Rockefeller Sauce
- Beurre Cajun
- Grilled Corn Salsa
- Honey Creole Mustard Glaze
- Watermelon & Sweet Vidalia Onion Salsa
- Beef, Veal or Game Stock
- Cane Syrup Vinaigrette
- Demi-Glace
- Fried Chicken Gravy
- Duck Stock
- Sweet Bar-B-Q Sauce
- Louisiana Seafood Cocktail Sauce
- Louisiana Tartar Sauce
- South Louisiana Remoulade
- Creole Tomato Smash
- Creole Tomato Ketchup

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[All-Purpose Marinade](#)
[Strawberry Glaze](#)
[Spicy Tangipahoa Strawberry BBQ Glaze](#)
[Tuscan-Style Meaty Marinara Sauce](#)
[Fish/Shellfish Stock](#)
[White Rémoulade Sauce](#)
[Guy Disalvo's Premier Marinara Sauce](#)

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEASONING CAST IRON

HOW TO SEASON A NEW BLACK POT

For many people, the only cast iron they own is a favorite skillet or treasured pan that has been passed down from one generation to the next. These wonderfully aged pieces already have the smooth black patina that gives cast iron its unique cooking surface. But cast iron doesn't come with that look, and new users need to know how to "season" their new pieces.

Seasoning, the process whereby the pores in cast iron absorb oil and create a natural non-stick finish, is not complicated and shouldn't discourage first-time cast iron users.

1. In order to start the process, wash, rinse and thoroughly dry the new skillet or dutch oven to remove the protective wax coating. I recommend drying the utensil over a low flame to remove all moisture from the porous metal, 2-3 minutes.
2. Put two tablespoons of liquid vegetable oil in the utensil. Do not use saturated fat, such as butter or bacon fat, because this fat will become rancid during storage. Use a paper towel to coat the entire surface of the utensil with the oil, inside and out -- including all corners, edges and lids.
3. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees F for 30 minutes. Line a large baking pan or cookie sheet with aluminum foil and turn the utensils upside down, including the lid, to prevent the oil building up on the inside of the pan.
4. Bake the utensils for 1 hour, turn off the heat and allow the skillet or dutch oven to cool completely in the oven with the door closed, 4-6 hours.
5. Remove from oven and wipe with a paper towel. This completes the seasoning process, and you are ready to use your nicely seasoned cast iron skillet.

GENERAL CARE

In addition to seasoning, the general care of cast iron is also important. By following these easy steps, you can ensure your cast iron pieces will be around to serve you for a long time to come.

1. Always wash with a mild detergent, rinse and dry thoroughly. I recommend placing a thoroughly rinsed utensil over heat or flame, 2-3 minutes, to remove any moisture from the porous metal. Never scour or use a dishwasher. (You may use a plastic bun to remove stubborn food particles).
2. Cook food with little water content the first few times. Avoid cooking acidic foods such as tomatoes, unless combined with other food. Uncover hot food as you remove from the heat, because steam may remove the protective coating.
3. Rust, a metallic taste or discolored foods are signs of improper or inadequate seasoning. If this occurs, wash thoroughly and re-season.

4. Since cast iron heats evenly, it is not necessary to use extremely high cooking temperatures. Best results are obtained with medium to medium-to-high temperature settings. Do not overheat or leave empty utensil on the burner. Never place the utensil on an already heated burner; rather, allow the utensil to heat as the burner does.
5. Always store cast iron utensils with tops or lids off so moisture won't collect inside. Store in a warm, dry place. A paper towel placed inside the utensil will absorb any moisture and prevent rust.

That black finish that good cooks covet will develop over time, providing years of good cooking and creating a new heirloom for future generations.

HOW TO CLEAN AN OLD BLACK POT

Extensive use of a cast iron pot will cause a crust to build up on the inside and outside of the pot. No amount of washing will prevent this build-up.

To clean follow this procedure:

Wash pot as normal.

Place empty pot in an open fire, fireplace, wood heater or in campfire.

Allow pot to cook until the residue is burned away.

HANDLE CAREFULLY - remove from the fire and set aside, allowing slow cooling until the pot is cool enough to hold.

Use moist sand and cloth to scrub the inside and outside of the pot.

Season as you would a new pot.

Your 20-year-old pot will look the same as when it was new.

Follow the same general care procedures.

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- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

- [Herb Butter for Grilled Steaks](#)
- [Creole Cream Cheese](#)
- [Quick Homemade Chili Powder](#)
- [Mild Seasoning Mix](#)
- [Louisiana Cooking Pears](#)
- [Pecan Ginger Butter for Vegetables](#)
- [Dyeing Eggs The Old Fashioned Way](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Trout Praline

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 6 Servings

COMMENT:

During the first weekend of November each year since 1969, Louisianans and visitors from around the country have gathered in central Louisiana in the small town of Colfax to celebrate the Louisiana Pecan Festival. One of the state's veteran festivals, the Pecan Festival began as part of the centennial anniversary celebration of Grant Parish to promote the ever-growing pecan industry. This recipe will get you ready for the celebration a little early, as pecans are just beginning to appear at your local farmer's market.

INGREDIENTS:

6 (5-8 ounce) trout fillets
 ¾ cup vegetable oil
 egg wash (1 egg, ½ cup water, ½ cup milk, blended)
 1 cup pecan flour
 ¾ cup flour
 1 tbsp diced garlic
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ¾ cup chopped pecans
 1½ ounces Frangelico liqueur
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 4 pats cold butter
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 salt and pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce

METHOD:

You may purchase pecan flour from any specialty bake shop. Combine pecan flour and flour in a small mixing bowl. Season with salt and pepper. In a 10-inch cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Dip fillets in egg wash and coat generously with flour. Sauté fillets in hot oil until golden brown, 3-5 minutes on each side. Once done remove from skillet and keep warm. In same skillet, sauté garlic, green onions and pecans 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Deglaze with Frangelico and add heavy whipping cream. Bring to a low boil and simmer until cream is reduced by ½ volume. Add cold butter, 2 pats at a time, swirling pan constantly until all is incorporated. Butter will finish sauce to a nice sheen. Add parsley and season with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Place sauce in the center of a serving plate and top with trout fillet.

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Stuffed Flounder Fillets with Chive Cream Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

In this recipe, we have cut the fat by using a flavored vegetable spray instead of oil and egg substitute and evaporated skim milk, which still gives us the taste of real eggs and heavy cream without all of the fat.

INGREDIENTS FOR STUFFED FLOUNDER:

- 4 (5-7 ounce) flounder fillets, skin off
- olive oil flavored Pam spray
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup chopped onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped green onion
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped celery
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tsps chopped parsley
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp thyme
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp basil
- 1 tsp salt substitute
- 1 tsp black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup breadcrumbs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup egg substitute
- $\frac{1}{3}$ pound jumbo lump crabmeat, cartilage removed
- paprika to taste
- Mrs. Dash original flavor salt-free seasoning to taste
- salt substitute and pepper to taste
- 2 ounces dry white wine
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp fresh lemon juice
- 4 thin slices of lemon

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Spray a medium skillet with Pam and sauté the onion, green onion, celery, bell pepper, garlic, parsley and thyme over medium heat, stirring for 4 minutes or until vegetables begin to brown slightly. Remove from heat, place in a mixing bowl and add salt substitute and pepper. Blend in the egg substitute. Fold in the crabmeat gently. Gently fold in the breadcrumbs, being careful not to break up the crabmeat. Divide the stuffing into four equal amounts and shape into balls with your hands. Wrap a flounder fillet around each ball and secure with a toothpick, or tie with a string to hold the fillet in place during cooking. Place the fillets seam side up in a baking dish with the wine and lemon juice and sprinkle them with paprika, Mrs. Dash and salt and pepper. Place a thin slice of lemon on top of each fish and bake for 30 minutes. When fish is browned well and cooked through, carefully transfer the fish to warm plates.

INGREDIENTS FOR CHIVE CREAM SAUCE:

1 (12 ounce) can evaporated skim milk
1 tbsp chopped chives
¼ tsp Mrs. Dash original flavor salt-free seasoning
freshly ground black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Into a medium skillet, add the cooking liquid from the fish, the evaporated skim milk, lemon and the chives. Simmer, stirring constantly, until sauce is thickened slightly, about 3-5 minutes. Season with pepper and salt substitute if desired. Spoon the sauce over the fish to serve.

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Poached Salmon with Chive Potato Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT: We have created a recipe that will allow you to celebrate St. Patrick's Day all weekend long, even on Friday. Salmon is a revered fish in Ireland, thought to bring the consumer the gift of knowledge. Have a great St. Patrick's Day!

INGREDIENTS FOR COURTOUILLON:

16 ounces dry white wine
 2 cups water
 1 cup carrots, peeled and diced
 ½ cup white of leek, diced
 ½ cup onions, diced
 1/4 cup celery, diced
 1 clove
 5 sprigs parsley
 1 sprig thyme
 ½ bay leaf
 5 white peppercorns, crushed
 3 coriander seeds
 salt to taste

METHOD:

In a large saucepan, bring the white wine and water to a boil. Add all remaining ingredients, except for salt and allow to simmer for 10 minutes. Season with salt and strain through a fine sieve.

INGREDIENTS FOR POACHED SALMON:

6 (4-ounce) salmon filets
 Courtbouillon liquid
 Chive potato sauce (see recipe)

METHOD:

Bring liquid to a rolling boil. Place salmon in a 9" x 13" baking pan. When ready to serve, pour boiling liquid over the fish. Cover quickly with clear wrap and allow to set 5-7 minutes or until done. Place poached filet in center of plate and top with warm chive potato sauce.

INGREDIENTS FOR CHIVE POTATO SAUCE:

1 potato cut in ½-inch cubes
 5 ounce hot chicken stock
 2 tbsps chives, sliced
 salt and pepper

METHOD:

Boil potatoes in lightly salted water until tender. Strain and place potato in food processor. Add stock in 2 additions. Make sure to purée completely before adding second addition. Do not overmix. Add chives, salt and pepper. Serve under poached salmon.

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Casserole of Seafood and Potato Florentine

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Casseroles were made famous in the 1950s when women started entering the workforce. They combined leftover meats and vegetables to make a quick, one-dish meal that could feed a large family. We have combined seafood, potatoes and spinach with a rich cream sauce to make the perfect Lenten dinner.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound catfish, cut into bite-sized pieces
- ½ pound small shrimp (70-90 count), peeled and deveined
- 1 pound crawfish tails, drained
- 3 medium potatoes, peeled and boiled just until fork tender
- 1 bag baby spinach leaves, rinsed and stems removed
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¾ cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup fresh grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- salt and pepper to taste
- Zatarain's Creole seasoning
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a mixing bowl, combine fish, shrimp and crawfish, season lightly with Zatarain's Creole seasoning and Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce and mix well. Spray a 2½-quart casserole dish with vegetable spray. Slice the cooked potatoes very thinly. Layer sliced potatoes in the bottom of the baking dish. Season with salt and pepper. In a medium skillet, heat olive oil over medium heat. Sauté onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic and cook until tender, about 2-3 minutes. Add spinach and toss until wilted, about 1-2 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover the potatoes with the spinach mixture. Gently pour cream over the potatoes and spinach mixture. Sprinkle with half of the Parmesan cheese and half of the breadcrumbs. Spread the seafood mixture evenly over the cheese and breadcrumbs. In a small bowl, combine remaining cheese and breadcrumbs and sprinkle evenly over the seafood. Bake for 50-60 minutes or until golden brown and the center of the dish reaches 160 degrees. You MUST allow the casserole to sit for 15 minutes so

that the sauce is absorbed completely.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Zatarain's Creole Mustard Battered Catfish

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The catfish of Toledo Bend Lake in North Louisiana is not only a local favorite, but is also revered as the best eating fish around. It is often fried filleted, but it is preferred deep-fried, whole.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 (6-8 ounce) catfish fillets
- pepper to taste
- hot pepper sauce to taste
- 1 gallon ice water
- oil for deep frying
- 1 cup milk
- 3 tbsps Zatarain's Creole Mustard
- juice of one lemon
- Zatarain's Seasoned Fish Fry

METHOD:

Season ice water generously with salt, pepper and pepper sauce. Place fillets in ice water and allow to marinate for 30 minutes. In a large dutch oven or Fry Daddy, place enough oil to deep fry fish. The oil should cover the fish by approximately 1-2 inches. Preheat oil to 375 degrees F. In a mixing bowl, blend milk, Zatarain's Creole mustard and lemon juice. Season to taste with salt, pepper and pepper sauce. Remove fish from ice water, drain quickly and place in the mustard batter. Immediately dip into Zatarain's seasoned fish fry or another of your local favorite blends. Deep fry until golden brown. Normally, a good guideline is, don't overcrowd the fryer because the temperature of the oil will be reduced dramatically and the breading will fall from the fish. Remember to give the fish enough room to "swim". Also, remove the fish from the hot oil when they begin floating to the surface. Don't over-cook, as fish is best when crisp on the outside but tender and juicy inside. Drain on paper towels and serve hot with tartar or cocktail sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Keftes de Pescado - "Salmon Croquettes" in Tomato Sauce

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Fried fish patties, or croquettes, are served as a main course in most cultures. The Turkish and Greek Jews often serve the salmon version on Shabbat night and for Pesach Saders. A light tomato sauce is often added as an accompaniment. If using canned salmon, it is not necessary to remove the skin and bones from the fish when making these croquettes. In fact, both are good, healthy additions to the dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (2-pound) salmon fillet, chopped or 2 (15 1/2-ounce) cans salmon
- 2 large eggs
- 1/2 cup onion, minced
- 1/4 cup celery, minced
- 1/4 cup bell pepper, minced
- 1 tbsp garlic
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- salt and pepper to taste
- 3/4 cup matzah meal
- 1/4 cup canola oil
- 1/2 cup onion, minced
- 1/2 cup celery, minced
- 1 tsp garlic, chopped
- 2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 1/2 cup fresh parsley, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, place finely chopped salmon, eggs, onion, celery, bell pepper, garlic, parsley, and lemon juice and blend well to incorporate all ingredients. Season generously with salt and pepper. Add matzah meal, incorporate well and form into approximately 20 (2 1/2-inch) croquettes. Set aside. In a sauce pot, heat canola oil over medium high heat. Add remaining onion, celery and garlic and sauté 2-3 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato sauce and parsley, bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 15-20 minutes stirring occasionally. Season to taste using salt and pepper. A little water may be necessary to retain sauce-like consistency. When ready to serve, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat and sauté croquettes until lightly browned on all sides, approximately 3-5 minutes. You may wish to keep them warm in a pre-heated 300 degree oven or place the croquettes in the tomato sauce and simmer 5-10 minutes. The tomato sauce may be used as a topping to the

fried croquettes by simply serving 1 spoon of sauce on top of each croquette.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Salmon Gefilte Fish With Horseradish-Dill Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 ½ Hours

MAKES: 44 Dumplings

COMMENT:

If you can't find a whole salmon, buy 4½ pounds of skinless salmon fillets and 2½ pounds of salmon heads and bones. Refrigerated leftover gefilte fish will keep up to five days.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (7¼-7½ pound) whole salmon, cleaned, filleted, skinned; head, skin and bones reserved
- 6 medium onions, peeled and quartered
- 2½ tbsps coarse salt
- 1½ tsps ground white pepper
- 5 large eggs
- ¼ cup matzah meal
- 4½ quarts cold water
- 5 carrots, peeled, coarsely chopped
- 1 tbsp sugar
- sliced carrots, cucumbers and radishes (optional)
- horseradish-dill Sauce (see recipe)

METHOD:

Line 2 baking sheets with plastic wrap. Cut salmon into 1-inch pieces. Working in batches, grind salmon finely in processor, occasionally scraping sides and bottom of work bowl. Transfer fish to large bowl. Add 3 onions, 1½ teaspoons salt and pepper to processor. Using pulse switch, finely mince the onions. Add onion mixture, along with the eggs and matzah meal to the chopped salmon. Stir gently until mixture is well blended. Using moistened hands and working with ¼ cupful at a time, shape fish mixture into oval dumplings, each about 2½ inches long by 1½ inches wide. Arrange dumplings on prepared sheets. Cover and chill while preparing stock. Place reserved salmon head, skin and bones in large pot. Add 4½ quarts cold water, chopped carrots, sugar, remaining 3 onions and remaining 1 tablespoon salt. Bring to a rolling boil over high heat. Reduce heat to simmer, cover pot and cook 30-40 minutes. Strain the stock, discarding solids and return to a low simmer. Gently drop half of the fish dumplings into stock. Cover pot. Simmer until dumplings are tender and cooked through, about 30 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer dumplings to 13x9x2-inch dish and arrange in single layer. Repeat cooking with remaining dumplings, transferring to another shallow dish. Strain stock over dumplings. Refrigerate stock and dumplings until cold, about 3 hours. (Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover, keep refrigerated.) Arrange 2 fish dumplings on each plate. Spoon just enough chilled stock over to moisten. Garnish with sliced carrots, cucumbers and radishes, if desired. Serve with Horseradish-Dill Sauce.

Horseradish-Dill Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

MAKES: 5 cups

COMMENT:

Similar to a Thousand Island dressing, this zesty sauce is perfect with fish and excellent with Gefilte fish at a Passover meal.

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups mayonnaise
1 ¼ cups ketchup
¾ cup prepared white horseradish
½ cup chopped fresh dill

METHOD:

Combine mayonnaise, ketchup, horseradish and dill in large bowl. Stir to blend well. Season to taste with salt and pepper. (Can be prepared 5 days ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Tomato and Basil Flounder

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

No herb compliments tomato better than basil and the two come together perfectly as a sauce on this sautéed flounder dish. Try other herbs such as tarragon and chives in the place of the basil for an interesting twist.

INGREDIENTS:

6 Roma tomatoes, diced
 2-3 leaves fresh basil
 4 (1/4-pound) flounder fillets
 olive oil, for sautéing
 seasoned flour
 1/2 cup onion, julienned
 3 cloves garlic, sliced
 1 red bell pepper, julienned
 1 green bell pepper, julienned
 2 tbsps fresh oregano
 12 asparagus stalks
 salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 chopped parsley for garnish

METHOD:

Coat a large sauté pan with oil and heat over medium-high heat. Rinse fish in cold water and season with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Lightly dust fillets in seasoned flour. Add fish to pan and sauté over medium heat. When done, remove fillets and keep warm. In the same pan, add onion and garlic and sauté until onions are translucent. Add peppers and cook an additional 2 minutes. Add tomatoes, oregano and basil and season to taste with salt and pepper to taste. Cook for 10 minutes and add asparagus. A small amount of water or chicken stock may be needed to retain moisture. Cook another 5 minutes and serve. For a nice plate presentation, place two fillets on a plate and top with vegetable mixture, chopped parsley and a sprig of fresh basil.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Trout Rex

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This is another of my favorite trout recipes to serve at Carnival as either a dinner entrée or for brunch. Notice that the vegetable accompaniments are the colors of Mardi Gras.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 (5-8 ounce) trout fillets
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 cups seasoned flour
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
- 2 tbsps shallots, chopped
- 1/4 cup green onions, chopped
- 1/2 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 2 cups zucchini skins, julienned
- 2 cups yellow squash skins, jullienned
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp basil, chopped
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 cups purple cabbage, julienned

METHOD:

In a 10-inch heavy-bottom sauté pan, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Season trout fillets using salt and pepper and coat lightly in the seasoned flour. Shake off all excess and sauté fillets, 2 at a time, in hot oil until golden brown, 3-5 minutes on each side. When done, remove and keep warm in 300 degrees oven. In the same sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add garlic, shallots and green onions and sauté 2-3 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add jumbo lump crabmeat, zucchini and squash. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add 1/2 cup chicken stock and season with thyme, basil, salt and pepper. Bring mixture to a high simmer and cook until vegetables are al dente. Add purple cabbage just prior to serving and wilt, approximately 3-5 minutes. This last-minute addition will prevent the purple coloring of the cabbage from discoloring the dish. When ready to serve, place an equal amount of the Mardi Gras medley in the center of a serving plate and top with a cooked trout fillet. You may wish to further garnish with additional crabmeat and a spoon of Hollandaise sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Trout St. Charles

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I doubt that you will find a dish such as this one in any city other than New Orleans. Many feel this breakfast entree originated at the Pontchartrain Hotel on St. Charles Avenue in the Crescent City. I had never had fish with poached eggs until I tasted this recipe and believe me, I've served it often at brunches ever since.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 (5-8 ounce) trout fillets
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 cups seasoned flour
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup Creole shallots, sliced
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 2 cups tomatoes, diced
- 1 cup tomato juice
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp sugar
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 12 poached eggs

METHOD:

In a 10-inch heavy-bottom sauté, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Season trout fillets using salt and pepper and coat in the seasoned flour. Shake off all excess and sauté fillets in hot oil until golden brown, 3-5 minutes on each side. When done, remove and keep warm. In the same sauté pan, place olive oil. Add garlic, shallots and celery. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes, tomato juice and sauce and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Add chicken stock and season with thyme, basil, sugar, salt and pepper. Bring sauce to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cook 10-12 minutes, stirring occasionally. When ready to serve, place 2-3 ounces of the Creole sauce in the center of a serving plate. Top with the cooked trout fillet and two poached eggs. You may wish to further garnish with Hollandaise sauce and a pinch of paprika.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Fish and Potato Boulettes

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 8-10 Boulettes

COMMENT:

Combining poached fish with potatoes is a technique normally considered English and most often using cod or salmon as the main ingredient. However, the Germans of Louisiana had a similar dish and preferred catfish as a regional replacement to other varieties. Try this simple method of preparing fish and try substituting shrimp or crab in place of the fish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 (8-ounce) catfish fillets
- 1 pound potatoes, diced and peeled
- 1/2 cup onions, minced
- 1/4 cup celery, minced
- 1/4 cup red bell peppers, minced
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 tbsp plus 1 tsp basil, chopped
- 2 tsps tarragon, chopped
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 2 eggs
- salt and pepper
- 1 cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- oil for pan frying

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 325 degrees F. In a 2-gallon stock pot, poach fish until tender enough to mash, approximately 3 minutes. Remove fish from water and cool. In the same pot, boil potatoes until tender enough to mash. Remove and cool. Combine fish, potatoes and all remaining ingredients except for breadcrumbs and oil. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Form mixture into patties, approximately the size of a hamburger. Coat each patty lightly in seasoned Italian breadcrumbs. In a 10-inch skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Pan fry patties until golden brown on each side. Remove to a cookie sheet and cool. When ready to serve reheat in oven for 10-15 minutes. These patties may be made in advance, pan fried and frozen for later use.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Open Hearth Grilled Fish

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

There was only one way to roast a fish in the open hearth prior to the reflector oven. The cook would place a seasoned, whole fish on an oak, pecan or cedar plank. Then the plank would be placed standing upright on the side wall of the hearth. The reflective heat from the coals cooked the fish. This dish works equally well in the home fireplace.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3 to 4-pound) large mouth bass
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup thyme, chopped
- 1/4 cup basil, chopped
- 1/4 cup tarragon, chopped
- 1/4 cup dill, chopped
- 1 bunch whole mixed herbs
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

Have the local lumber company cut a piece of oak, pecan or cedar 8 inches wide and 20 inches long. Be sure to measure your hearth height and width before cutting the plank. Oil the plank thoroughly with olive oil, rubbing well into the pores of the wood. To season, place in a 200 degree F oven for 30 minutes. Remove and allow to cool. Build a roaring fire in your fireplace using 4-5 pieces of firewood, so a large coal bed will be achieved. Remember that you cook on reflective heat in a fireplace, not the fire itself, so coals are important. Once a coal bed has been established, keep one log burning on the back of the fireplace to sustain the coals. Completely scale the fish, leaving the head and tail intact. Remove the gills and rinse the inside cavity. Using a sharp paring knife, cut 3 slits on each side of the fish to the bone. These slits will be used for seasoning, but also to ensure proper cooking. Rub the fish with olive oil and season inside and out with salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Place the chopped herbs in a small mixing bowl and blend thoroughly. Rub the herb mixture in each of the 6 slits and completely over the fish as well. Fill the belly cavity with the whole mixed herbs. Place the fish on the plank and hammer a 3-inch nail through the eye of the fish. Hammer another nail 2-inches from the bottom of the tail. Hammer in 2 nails, opposite each other, at 3-inch intervals down each side of the fish. Using heavy butcher's twine, tie a knot on the nail through the eye of the fish and lace the twine around each nail, shoe-lace style, criss-crossing the fish. Tie in a knot on the nail at the bottom of the board. The twine will guarantee that the fish stays in place, flat against the board, during the baking process. Using a fireplace shovel, remove

the hot coals from the right or left side of the fireplace approximately 1-foot from the edge. Place the fish head-side up against the side of the fireplace, so as to be heated by the reflective coals. Be careful that the plank does not get near an open flame as the board will ignite. Turn the fish every thirty minutes, first head up and then tail down. The fish will cook about 1 hour, depending on your heat, and will pick up the wonderful smoke flavor of the hearth. You can test the flesh for doneness with a kitchen fork. The underside of the fish will cook at the same rate since the plank is picking up the heat of the hearth. Remove and serve on the plank for a unique presentation.

IN A CONVENTIONAL OVEN:

Pre-heat oven to 275 degrees F. Have the local lumber company cut a piece of oak, pecan or cedar 8 inches wide and 20 inches long. Oil the plank thoroughly with olive oil, rubbing well into the pores of the wood. To season, place in a 200 degree F oven for 30 minutes. Remove and allow to cool. (Prepare as instructed above.) Place the fish lengthwise on the hot plank and put the plank on a cookie sheet to catch any drippings that may run off during cooking. Bake on the center rack of the oven for approximately 20 minutes or until fish is flaky. There is no need to turn the fish during the cooking process. Remove and serve on the plank for a unique presentation.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Roasted Trout with Thyme

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

"I think trout is a really enjoyable thing to eat, especially when you have it whole. I remember going fishing with grandfather when I was about seven years old – we used to catch trout, take it home and cook it immediately. There is nothing like a plainly cooked piece of trout, but the addition of thyme makes for a subtle and refreshing combination. The last time I cooked this I used lemon thyme from my window box and it was gorgeous – the thyme complements the flavor of trout, which, as far as fish goes, has quite an earthy, gamey taste. In the supermarkets you can only get farmed fresh-water trout, which isn't bad and is a very good value. Supermarkets also sell some very nicely filleted trout, which are completely boneless, very easy and quick to prepare and good for home use. The best place to buy fish must always be your local fishmonger. Alternatively, go fishing and catch your own." – Jamie Oliver, The Naked Chef

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 (1-pound) trout, scaled and gutted
- 2 good handfuls of fresh thyme
- sea salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tbsps olive oil
- 2 lemons
- 4 fresh bay leaves

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 475 degrees F. Wash the trout inside and out and pat dry with paper towels. Using a mortar and pestle, smash the thyme (or finely chop) with 1 tsp salt, pepper and the olive oil. Rub this mixture into the trout, covering the belly cavity and the skin. Cut lemons in half and remove the ends so they have a flat edge. With the point of a knife, make an incision into the flesh of each lemon half and stick a bay leaf into it. Place trout and lemons on a roasting tray and bake, approximately 10 minutes. The trout is cooked properly when the meat is easily pulled away from the bone at the thickest part of the fish. The skin should be crispy and the roasted lemons should be beautifully sweet and slightly jammy in flavor. Serve the trout with the lemon, which you can squeeze on to the fish. I like to serve this dish with pan-fried potatoes and a crisp green salad.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Pan Sauteed Filet of Trout in Shrimp Chive Cream

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

6 (5-8 ounce) speckled trout filets
 24 (21-25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 3/4 cup vegetable oil
 1 cup eggwash (1 egg, 1/2 cup water, 1/2 cup skim milk, blended)
 1 1/2 cups seasoned flour
 1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1/2 cup green onions, chopped
 1/4 cup red bell peppers, diced
 1 tbsp garlic, diced
 1/4 cup dry white wine
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 1/2 cup chives, finely chopped
 salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 10-inch heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Dip filets in eggwash and coat generously with seasoned flour. Saute filets, 3 at a time, until golden brown, approximately 3 to 5 minutes on each side. Once cooked, remove and keep warm. In the same saute pan cook mushrooms, green onions, bell peppers and garlic until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add shrimp and saute until shrimp are pink and curled. Deglaze with white wine, add heavy whipping cream, bring to a low boil and cook until sauce is thickened. Add chopped chives and season to taste using salt and pepper. Place serving of chive cream sauce in the center of a serving plate, top with fish filet and garnish with four jumbo shrimp.

NOTE: The fryer used in today's segment is a Bravetti (Platinum Pro) EP67, which can be ordered for approximately \$100 from Chef's Ingenuity Smart Solutions (order no. 2721). Please call (888) 944-9888 for more information.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Herb and Rice Flour Encrusted Snapper On Yam and Chive Cream

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Rice is a staple of Cajun Country and rice flour is often used as a coating on seafood. The simple yam and chive cream sauce makes this recipe even more unique.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 (5 - 8oz) snapper filets
- 1/4 cup fresh herbs (tarragon, thyme, basil), mixed and chopped
- 1 1/2 cups rice flour
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup onions, minced
- 1tbsp Creole shallots, chopped
- 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
- 1/2 cup yams, poached and mashed
- 1 cup crab stock
- 1/2 cup cream
- 1tbsp chives, chopped
- pinch of nutmeg
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 275 degrees F. Yams should be poached until tender enough to mash. Drain well and keep warm. In a 10-inch heavy-bottom saute pan, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Season the fillets using salt and pepper then coat evenly with herb mixture. Coat well in the rice flour, shaking off the excess. Saute the fillets, 2 at a time, until golden brown and crispy, approximately 3 to 5 minutes on each side. When the fish are cooked, place on a large cookie sheet and continue until all are done. Place cookie sheet in oven to keep hot. Pour off the excess oil from the saute pan, add butter and melt over medium-high heat. Add onions, shallots and garlic and saute 3 to 5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add poached yams, crab stock and cream. Bring to a rolling boil, remove from heat and place into a food processor or blender and puree until smooth. Add chives and season to taste with nutmeg, salt and pepper. Place a ladle of sauce into the center of a 10-inch plate and top with the sauteed snapper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Nathaniel Burton's Stuffed Flounder

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Nathaniel Burton was born in McComb, Mississippi in 1914. Starting as a busboy at the Hotel New Orleans, he has worked at many fine places including Hotel Pontchartrain. He has taught apprentice cooks at the Culinary Institute at Hyde Park and has lectured and done demonstrations at Cornell University Hotel School.

INGREDIENTS:

6 (1 lb) flounder, deboned
 1/4 cup melted butter
 1 cup onion, minced
 1 cup celery, minced
 1/2 cup each red and green bell pepper, minced
 1/4 cup garlic, minced
 1/2 cup white wine
 1 cup cream
 1 lb lump crabmeat
 seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
 1/2 cup white wine
 1 cup water
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Have your seafood supplier scale, dehead and thoroughly clean 6 flounder. Using a sharp paring knife, cut a slit down the center of the dark side of the flounder from head to tail. Following the rib bone, form a pocket with the knife blade down each side to the fins. This pocket will serve as the receptacle for the stuffing. Season the flounder well, inside and out, using salt and pepper. In a large saute pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and saute 2 to 3 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Deglaze with wine and reduce to 1/2 volume. Add cream, bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add crabmeat, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Sprinkle in breadcrumbs one cup at a time until stuffing consistency is achieved. The more breadcrumbs added, the more "bread-like" the stuffing becomes. I prefer as little breadcrumbs as possible to hold the product together. Remove from heat and fold in Parmesan cheese and adjust seasonings if necessary. Place the 6 flounder on a large cookie sheet and divide stuffing equally between each fish. You may wish to add a slice of lemon and a sprinkle of Paprika on top of the stuffing in each pocket. Add the remaining wine and water to the bottom of the sheet and bake for 25 minutes or until stuffing is heated throughout. Serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Pan Sautéed Filet of Trout With Roasted Tomato, Niçoise Olive and Caper Jus

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Although this dish is of Mediterranean origin, it could just as well be Creole. Using ripe Creole tomatoes with black olives and capers, could fit into any Creole kitchen of the late 1800s. Any filleted Gulf fish can be substituted for the trout.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 (6-ounce) trout filets
- 1/2 cup seasoned flour
- 1/4 cup olive oil

FOR SAUCE:

- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
- 1 cup diced, seeded and peeled Creole tomatoes
- 2 tbsp. basil, chopped
- 1/4 cup niçoise olives
- 2 tbsp caper with juice
- 1 cup dry white wine or chicken stock
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

It is always best to prepare the sauce prior to sautéing the fish. In this fashion, the sauce and fish will be cooked at approximately the same time and served directly from the skillet. To create the sauce, place extra virgin olive oil in a heavy-bottomed sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add sliced garlic and sauté until edges are slightly browned. Add tomatoes, basil, and olives and roast the tomatoes over high heat for 5 minutes. Add caper and white wine, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cook stirring occasionally for 10-12 minutes, adding a little liquid as necessary. Season to taste using salt and pepper. While sauce is reducing, place a second skillet over medium-high heat. Dust filets in seasoned flour and set aside. Add the olive oil to the skillet and as olive oil begins to smoke slightly, add the fish skin side down. Cook fish 2-3 minutes on each side or until crispy and golden brown. Do not overcook. The sauce should be fully reduced by this point. The sauce is perfectly done when the flavors have married well and there is a slight presence of liquid in the pan. Adjust seasonings as necessary. Place a generous serving of the tomato sauce in the center of a 12 inch serving plate and top with the fish filet, garnish with a sprig of basil.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Louisiana Catfish Terrine

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 20

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 5-8 catfish fillets, poached
- 1 cup HELLMANN'S mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 ounce sherry
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- salt to taste
- 2 pkg unflavored gelatin dissolved in 1/4 cup cold water

METHOD:

Coarsely chop poached catfish. In a two quart mixing bowl, add all remaining ingredients, blending well to incorporate seasonings into the mixture. Adjust salt and pepper if necessary, and pour mixture into a terrine mold. Cover and place in refrigerator overnight. When serving, remove from mold and garnish with French bread or garlic croutons. To enhance the presentation of the terrine, you may wish to color two cups of mayonnaise, one with red food coloring and one with green. Using a pastry bag with a star tip, pipe colored mayonnaise around the base of the terrine. You may also wish to garnish the top of the terrine with a small amount of the colored mayonnaise and a fresh tomato rose.

NOTE: You may wish to substitute shrimp, lobster or crab for the catfish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Salmon Filets in Fine Herbs

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENTS:

There's an old saying in Jazz music "more ain't' better." This 'truism' can be carried over to food and certainly to fish. The simpler the cooking technique the more robust the flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 (6-ounce) salmon filets
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1 tbsp grated lemon peel
- 1 tbsp fresh minced tarragon
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- 1/2 tbsp fresh chopped chervil
- 1 tbsp chopped dill
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- fresh ground black pepper to taste
- kosher salt to taste

METHOD:

In a mixing bowl, combine oil and all herbs other than salt and pepper. Wisk thoroughly to create marinade. Remove 6 teaspoon of marinade and set aside for later. Place the fish on a large cooking sheet and coat with the marinade. Allow to sit at room temperature 15 minutes. While fish is marinating, prepare grill according to manufacturer's directions. A small amount of smoke wood may be added for flavor. When ready to serve, place fish on grill and cook 2-3 minutes on each side for medium. Place the cooked fish onto the serving plate and top each with 1 teaspoon of remaining marinade.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Garlic and Tarragon Shrimp With Seashell Pasta

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENTS:

One thing you must be careful of when cooking shrimp ... do not overcook. I love to make this dish leaving the shrimp head on for an interesting plate presentation.

INGREDIENTS:

24 jumbo shrimp, head on
 6 cups cooked seashell pasta
 1/4 cup melted butter
 1/4 extra virgin olive oil
 4 cloves garlic, sliced
 1/2 cup minced red onion
 2 tbsp minced tarragon
 4 tbsp minced basil
 2 tbsp minced thyme
 1/4 cup chopped green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 1/4 cup sliced black olives
 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
 salt, pepper and Zatarain's Creole Seasoning to taste
 1/2 cup Chardonnay

METHOD:

Peel the shell from the tail of the shrimp, being extremely careful not to break off the head, then de-vein. In a large sauté pan, heat butter and olive oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic and red onions and sauté until wilted, 2-3 minutes. Add tarragon, basil, thyme, green onions, parsley, black olives and tomatoes. Continue to sauté an additional 3-5 minutes. Add Worcestershire sauce and season to taste using salt, pepper and Creole seasonings. Add shrimp and white wine and cook until shrimp are pink and curled, 2 minutes. While shrimp is cooking, heat pasta thoroughly in a colander under hot water. Drain well and place in center of a large serving platter. When shrimp are done, pour contents of skillet over the pasta and fold gently. Serve immediately.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Pan Sautéed Trout

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

6 (7) ounce filets trout
 ½ cup oil
 2 cups rice flour
 1 cup egg wash (1 egg, ½ cup milk, ½ cup - blended)
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom sauté pan, heat oil over medium high heat. Season flour and trout to taste using salt and pepper. Dip trout fillets in egg wash and then in flour and sauté in hot oil three to five minutes on each side until golden brown. Remove and keep warm.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Catfish Paella

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 (5-8 ounce) catfish fillets (cubed)
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1 cup tomato, diced
- 1 tbsp garlic, diced
- 1/2 cup andouille sausage, diced
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 4 1/2 cups fish stock
- 3 cups raw rice
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a paella pan or other ovenproof baking dish, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper, tomato, garlic and andouille until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add frozen peas and blend well into mixture. Add fish stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add cubed catfish, stirring once. Add rice and season to taste using salt and pepper. Blend in sliced green onions. Cover pan with aluminum foil and bake 45 minutes to 1 hour. Remove from oven, stir and allow to set 30 minutes before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Casserole of Fish Fillets with Potatoes and Pesto

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

1½ lbs small red new potatoes, scrubbed
 1½ lbs white-fish fillet, such as catfish or mahi-mahi
 1 tsp olive oil
 salt to taste
 Freshly ground black pepper to taste
 2 tbsps lemon juice, divided
 1 cup commercial or homemade basil pesto
 1 small, ripe tomato or medium plum
 tomato, diced
 Lemon wedges

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Put the potatoes into a steamer basket set over simmering water, cover and steam about 20 minutes, or until tender. Remove the potatoes from the pan. When cool enough to handle cut into 1/2-inch slices. Cut the fish on the diagonal into 1/2-inch thick slices. Brush a shallow 2-quart casserole dish with the olive oil. Spread the potatoes in the bottom of the pan. Sprinkle lightly with salt and black pepper and 1 tablespoon lemon juice. Lay the slices of fish on top of the potatoes. Spread the pesto on top and sprinkle with salt, pepper, 1 tablespoon lemon juice and the diced tomato. Bake uncovered oven 20 minutes, or until the fish is cooked through. Serve with lemon wedges.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Cajun Catfish Beignets

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

MAKES: 50 Beignets

INGREDIENTS FOR BATTER:

- 5 5-8 ounce fillets
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup Hellmann's mayonnaise
- 1 egg
- 1/4 cup Creole mustard
- 1 tsp granulated garlic
- 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tsp salt

METHOD:

Cut catfish fillets into one and one half inch cubes. In a one quart mixing bowl, combine all remaining ingredients, whisking well to incorporate seasonings. Add catfish cubes and allow to set at room temperature for fifteen minutes.

INGREDIENTS FOR BREADING:

- 3 cups yellow corn flour
- 1 1/2 tsps salt
- 2 tsps granulated garlic
- 1 1/2 tsps cracked black pepper
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp dry thyme

In a two quart mixing bowl, combine all breading ingredients. Mix well to ensure proper blending of spices. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR DEEP FRYING:

- 5 5-8 ounce fillets, cubed
- 1 1/2 quarts vegetable oil

METHOD:

In a home style deep fryer, such as a Fry Daddy or Fry Baby, preheat oil according to manufacturer's instruction or to 375 degrees F. Remove catfish cubes from batter mixture and place in yellow corn flour. Coat beignets well on all sides and shake off excess breading. Deep fry a few at a time until golden brown or until catfish floats to top of fryer. Remove to drain board or paper towels and place beignets in a hot chafing dish. Serve with cocktail or tartar sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Terrine of Smoked Catfish

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 20

COMMENT:

This recipe has become one of our most popular hors d'oeuvre items, as we bring Louisiana cooking around the world. Companies such as Delta Pride Catfish in Indianola, Mississippi, are making farm-raised catfish a household term.

INGREDIENTS FOR SMOKING:

- 4 5-8 ounce fillets
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp dry thyme
- 1 tsp dry basil
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Preheat home style smoking unit according to manufacturer's instructions. Pre-soak any wood chips such pecan or hickory in root beer for a unique flavor. Combine all the above ingredients, blend well and pour over catfish fillets. Allow to set at room temperature approximately thirty minutes. Smoke fillets for approximately thirty-five minutes or until flaky. Remove and allow to cool.

INGREDIENTS FOR TERRINE:

- 4 5-8 ounce smoked fillets
- 1 cup heavy duty mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 ounce sherry wine
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- salt to taste
- 2 pkg unflavored gelatin dissolved in 1/4 cup cold water
- 2 tsp cracked black pepper

METHOD:

Coarsely chop smoked catfish. In a two quart mixing bowl, add all remaining ingredients, blending well to incorporate seasonings into the mixture. Adjust salt and pepper if necessary, and pour mixture into a terrine mold. Place in refrigerator covered overnight. When

serving, remove from mold and garnish with French bread or garlic croutons. To enhance the presentation of the smoked terrine, you may wish to color two cups of mayonnaise, one with red food coloring and one with green. Using a pastry bag with a star tip, pipe colored mayonnaise around the base of the terrine. You may also wish to garnish the top of the terrine with a small amount of the colored mayonnaise and a fresh tomato rose.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Seafood Stuffed Turban of Trout

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

6 5-7 ounce trout or other white fish fillets
 2 cups seasoned Italian bread crumbs
 2 lbs white or claw crabmeat
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 3/4 cup melted butter
 1 tbsp paprika
 1 cup chopped onions
 3/4 cup water
 1 cup chopped celery
 3/4 cup white wine
 1 cup chopped green bell pepper
 3/4 cup melted butter
 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a heavy bottom saute pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, and garlic. Saute until vegetables are wilted, approximately three to five minutes. Add crabmeat and blend well into vegetable mixture. Continue to cook until juices are rendered from vegetables and crabmeat. Season to taste, using salt and pepper. Remove from heat and sprinkle in bread crumbs, a little at a time, until proper consistency is achieved. Stuffing should not be too dry. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Place an equal amount of stuffing in each catfish fillet. Roll fillets into turban shape and secure with toothpicks. In another saute pan melt butter over medium high heat. Place fish in baking pan then add water and wine. Sprinkle with paprika, and season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Bake for fifteen minutes or until golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Low-Fat Parmesan Catfish with Tomato and Green Olive Sauce

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

There is considerable evidence that fish and fish oils are beneficial to heart and mental health and reduce the risk of cancer. Tomatoes contain Lycopene, which have been found to reduce the risk of and help prevent certain types of cancer. This dish is not only lower in fat (21g per serving) than its red meat counterpart (45g per serving), but it is also extremely healthy for you.



Ingredients:

- 1½ pounds catfish fillets
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ cup seasoned breadcrumbs
- ½ cup flour
- salt and pepper to taste
- ½ cup low-fat buttermilk
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup diced onions
- 2 tbsps diced celery
- 2 tbsps diced bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1½ cups crushed tomatoes
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- 8 stuffed jumbo olives, sliced

Method:

In a small mixing bowl, combine Parmesan, breadcrumbs and flour. Season mixture with salt and pepper. Season fish fillets with salt and pepper then dredge in buttermilk, allowing excess to run-off. Dredge coated fillets in breadcrumb mixture. In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat and sauté fish about 4 minutes on each side until golden brown and cooked through. In a separate skillet, heat 1 tablespoon of oil used to sauté the fish over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic 3-5 minutes or until softened. Add tomatoes, thyme and olives and simmer for 5-7 minutes or until slightly thickened. Season sauce with salt and pepper and serve over fish. Garnish dish with a sprig of thyme and a couple of slices of fresh tomato if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Valentine's Creole Fish en Papillote

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 2 Servings

Comment:

This classic dish is perfect for a romantic Valentine's Day dinner and can be prepared by even the most novice cook. The cooking method gives the fish a wonderful flavor and provides a very dramatic presentation. We've given the dish a Louisiana twist by cooking the fish in a rich Creole sauce with shrimp and crawfish.

Ingredients:

- 2 (8-ounce) tilapia fillets (other fish may be used, such as trout, redfish, drum, etc.)
- ½ cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1-2 tbsp olive oil
- ½ pound (26-30 count) shrimp
- 4 ounces Louisiana crawfish tails
- 1 medium can diced tomatoes, drained
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp each chopped basil, thyme or oregano (optional)
- salt and black pepper to taste



Method:

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a small saucepan, sauté onions, celery, bell peppers, and garlic in olive oil over medium heat for about 5 minutes. Add shrimp and crawfish and continue to cook for about 5 minutes or until shrimp turn opaque. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce and sugar. Stir in herbs if desired. You may use any combination of basil, thyme and oregano. Simmer for about 5 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper and set aside. Cut 2 pieces of parchment or waxed paper into 12-inch squares. Fold in half and cut into a semi-circle so that when unfolded it is shaped like a heart. Brush entire paper with olive or vegetable oil. Season fish with salt and black pepper and place on one half of paper. Top each piece of fish with half the sauce, making sure each piece gets an equal amount of seafood. Fold paper over and starting at one end, make small folds overlapping each other, forming a completely sealed pouch. Brush outside of paper with oil and bake about 20 minutes or until paper is golden brown. Cut bag open right before serving, taking care not to burn anyone with steam.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Seafood Sauce Piquante

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6-8 Servings

Comment:

The foundation of sauce piquante definitely came from the early Spanish. Since then, the popular dish has been altered by the Cajuns of bayou country and is often made with seafood.

Ingredients:

1 pound (21-25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
 1 pint select oysters in liquid
 1 pound redfish, cubed
 ½ cup oil
 ½ cup flour
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced bell peppers
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
 1 cup diced tomatoes
 1 tbsp minced jalapeños
 2 whole bay leaves
 ½ tsp thyme
 ½ tsp basil
 1 ½ quarts fish stock
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1 cup chopped parsley
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

In a 1-gallon heavy-bottomed saucepot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Stir in diced tomatoes and jalapeños. Blend well then add bay leaves, thyme and basil. Slowly add fish stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Add additional fish stock if necessary to retain volume. Add fish, shrimp, oysters and oyster liquid and continue to cook 5-10 additional minutes. Add green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. When shrimp are pink and curled, carefully fold in lump crabmeat. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve over hot white rice or pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Salmon Creoleaise

Prep Time: 40 Minutes

Yields: 4 Fillets

Ingredients:

- 4 (4-ounce) salmon fillets, skinned
- 1 tbsp Creole mustard
- 1½ cups dry white wine
- ¼ cup bottled clam juice
- ½ cup thinly sliced shallots
- 2 sprigs fresh tarragon
- 1 clove garlic, smashed
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ tsp black peppercorns
- ¼ tsp kosher salt
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 4 tbsps cold butter, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp chopped tarragon



Method:

In a large saucepan, combine white wine, clam juice, shallots, tarragon sprigs, garlic, bay leaf, black peppercorns and salt. Bring to a boil, reduce to simmer and cook 5 minutes. Add salmon and poach for 5 minutes or until done. Remove the salmon from the pan and keep warm. Boil poaching liquid for 5 minutes, or until reduced by half. Add cream and boil 3 additional minutes or until thick bubbles appear. Reduce heat to low. Whisk in butter, one piece at a time, stirring constantly, until all has been added. Strain the sauce into a medium-mixing bowl discard vegetables. Stir in chopped tarragon and Creole mustard. Place salmon over Golden Home Fries and top with sauce.

NOTE: Other fish, such as catfish can be used in place of salmon if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

DOOR COUNTY FISH BOIL

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 10 Serving

Comment:

Door County is a Wisconsin peninsula formed by Green Bay on the west and Lake Michigan on the east. It was a landing point for French trappers and traders crossing the lake, but once so wild that it became known as "Death's Door."

Ingredients:

8 pounds freshwater fish, cut into 1½ steaks
 10 quarts water
 ½ cup salt
 3-4 pounds small red new potatoes, skin on
 3 pounds small white onions
 1 pound butter, melted
 12 lemons, quartered
 1 cup chopped parsley

Method:

In a large stockpot, lightly salt water and bring to boil. NOTE: You should cut a cross in the bottom of each onion so they cook faster. Add potatoes and onions, and cook 8-10 minutes or until half done. Place fish steaks in a wire basket, colander or steamer top, or wrap them in cheesecloth and tie the top with heavy string. Lower fish into pot, making sure they are entirely covered. Return to a boil then cover pot. Boil 8-10 minutes or until fish are firm but fork tender. Remove fish and vegetables and drain both thoroughly. Arrange fish on a platter surrounded by potatoes and onions. Pour melted butter over fish and vegetables. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve with lemon quarters.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

CRAWFISH BISQUE STUFFED TURBAN OF CATFISH

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Although crawfish bisque is normally ground crawfish tails and seasonings stuffed into crawfish heads and cooked into a rich stew, there seems to always be a complaint from guests at the table. They seem to think that it takes too much time to get the delectable stuffing from those little heads as they eat. Well, here I have solved the problem by filling a single portion of catfish with an ample supply of stuffing. I recommend topping this dish with a 6-ounce ladle of Mr. Royley's Crawfish Stew. This recipe can be found on my Web site or on WAFB's seafood recipe page.

Ingredients:

6 (5–7 ounce) catfish fillets
 1 pound crawfish tails, chopped
 ¾ cup butter
 ½ cup minced onions
 ½ cup minced celery
 ½ cup minced green bell peppers
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 1 egg, beaten
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 ¾ cup Italian bread crumbs
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 ¾ cup water
 ½ cup white wine
 ¾ cup melted butter
 1 tbsp paprika
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt ¾ cup butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Remove from heat and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, blend chopped crawfish tails and egg. Add cooked vegetables and mix well. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle in approximately ½ of bread crumbs, blending well. Add remaining bread crumbs if necessary. Stuffing should not be too dry, however, it should hold together well when pressed between your fingers. Stir in parsley and blend well. NOTE: I suggest frying a small patty of stuffing in a skillet with 1 tablespoon vegetable oil to sample the flavor. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Place an equal amount of stuffing in center of each fillet, roll into a turban shape and secure with a toothpick. Place fish in baking pan then add water and wine. Drizzle turbans with melted butter then sprinkle with paprika,

parsley, salt, pepper and hot sauce. Bake 20 minutes or until stuffing reaches 160°F.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

CATFISH CACCIATORE

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Cacciatore is a dish that usually takes hours to create. In the city of New Orleans, the Italians created this recipe in order to speed up the process while retaining the great flavor.

Ingredients:

6 (6–8 ounce) catfish fillets
 ¾ cup olive oil
 ¾ cup flour
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced bell peppers
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
 2 (16-ounce) cans stewed tomatoes
 2 bay leaves
 1 tsp chopped thyme
 1 tbsp chopped basil
 1 tsp chopped oregano
 2 quarts water or fish stock
 2 cups sliced mushrooms
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 6 cups cooked spaghetti

Method:

If using fresh fish, you may wish to bone the fillets and use the bones to create a rich fish stock. (See stock recipes on our Web site.) Cut 2 fillets into 1-inch cubes. Cut remaining fillets in 3 equal pieces. Set aside and keep cool. In a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and whisk until a golden brown roux is achieved. Sauté onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic in Dutch oven 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add catfish cubes, tomato sauce and stewed tomatoes with liquid. Blend well into roux mixture. Add bay leaves, thyme, basil and oregano. Stir well then add water or fish stock. Bring to a rolling boil, stirring occasionally until roux is dissolved. Reduce heat to simmer, add mushrooms and season lightly with salt and pepper. Simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. While sauce is cooking, boil spaghetti according to package directions and keep hot. Stir in green onions and parsley. Adjust seasonings if necessary with salt and pepper. Add fish fillets and allow them to poach 10–12 minutes, being careful not to stir aggressively, as this will break fish. Serve over hot spaghetti.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

ITALIAN CATFISH SALAD

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

If the Godfather lived on the bayou, this is how he'd cook his catfish. Served over salad greens, it makes a wonderful lunch or light summer meal.

Ingredients for Salad:

6 (6–8 ounce) catfish fillets
 2/3 cup loosely-packed basil leaves
 ? cup pecans
 ½ cup freshly-grated Parmesan cheese
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 mixed greens
 Italian dressing

Method:

Place fillets in a single layer in an ungreased baking pan. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside. In a food processor, combine pecans, Parmesan cheese, 1 tablespoon minced garlic and basil leaves. Pulse 1–2 minutes or until mixture is well chopped and blended. With processor running, add olive oil in a slow, steady stream until mixture resembles paste. Do not over-process or basil will darken and appear unappetizing. Season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

Ingredients for Marinara Sauce:

12 Roma tomatoes, peeled and seeded
 2 tbsps extra virgin olive oil
 2 tbsps cup vegetable oil
 5 cloves garlic, sliced
 ½ cup chicken stock (see recipe)
 6 large basil leaves, chopped
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a stainless steel saucepot, heat oils over medium-high heat. Sauté garlic slices in oil until very lightly browned around edges. Add tomatoes and blend well. Bring to a low simmer, stirring in chicken stock to retain moisture as needed. Cook 5–7 minutes then stir in basil. Season with salt and pepper. Continue to cook 5–10 minutes, adding stock as needed. Once marinara is cooked, take fish and top each fillet with 1 tablespoon of pesto. Spread evenly to cover whole fillet then top each with ¼ cup of marinara. Bake 12–15 minutes. Remove from oven and place on mixed greens as a salad topping. If desired, add a few tablespoons of Italian dressing.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Judge Porter's Cane River Fish Soup

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Typical fish soups in this part of the country often begin with a brown roux and are flavored with tomatoes and spices such as our redfish courtbouillon. This recipe is a much needed twist from the original because it's easier to make and definitely unique in flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 (21-25 count) shrimp, head-on
- 2 pounds redfish, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 dozen clams
- 1 dozen mussels
- 1 dozen oysters
- 6 whole crawfish
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 3 tbsps flour
- 2 quarts (8-8 ounce bottles) clam juice
- 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tsp fresh tarragon, chopped
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a cast iron Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and carrots. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until white roux is achieved (see roux techniques). Add clam juice, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cook soup 10-12 minutes or until carrots are al dente. Add tomatoes, mushrooms, tomato sauce, bay leaf, thyme and tarragon. Continue to cook 5 additional minutes, stirring occasionally. Add shrimp and cook for 2 minutes then add fish. Take care when stirring the soup since the tender fish will break apart easily. Add clams, mussels, oysters and crawfish. Cook an additional 2 minutes or until clams and mussels open. Add green onions and parsley and season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. To serve, place an equal portion of the seafood

in each bowl and top with broth. Serve with French bread or garlic croutons. I recommend serving a Pinot Noir or Beaujolais wine with this soup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Redfish Courtbouillon - (Something New)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Courtbouillon in classical cooking refers to a poaching liquid flavored with onions, carrots, etc. The courtbouillon of Cajun and Creole country is a rich tomato sauce dish revered here for many centuries.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds redfish, filets
- 1 cup oil-less roux
- 1 quart water
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 (16-ounce) can diced tomatoes in liquid, no salt added
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce, no salt added
- 2 quarts water
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 1/2 tsp salt
- black pepper
- 3 lemon slices

METHOD:

Dissolve oil-less roux in 1 quart of the water. Set aside. If you are lucky enough to have the bones of the fish, you should make a stock by boiling the fish bones with 1-2 quarts of water, 1 diced onion, 1 bay leaf and 1 tbsp of black peppercorns. Simmer the fish stock for 30 minutes, strain and use it in place of water in this recipe. Slice the fish filets into 1 1/2-inch thick pieces. In a 7-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes and tomato sauce and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Add roux/water mixture and Worcestershire. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook for 30 minutes. Add remaining water, a little at a time, to maintain a soup-like consistency. Add green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add the fish filets and lemon slices, being careful not to break the fish as they simmer in the stock. Cook 5-10 minutes. When fish is done, adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve the rich sauce over bowls of steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Redfish Courtbouillon - (Something Old)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This recipe was contributed by L. R. Stagg of Lafayette, LA. It can be found in my Something Old Something New cookbook. The most interesting thing about the book is that it features a new, reduced-fat version of each recipe next to the original. It's a great way to cut fat without losing flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds redfish, filets
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 1/2 cup flour
 1 cup onion, diced
 1 cup celery, diced
 1 cup bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, minced
 1 (16-ounce) can diced tomatoes in liquid
 2 quarts water
 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 1 tsp salt
 black pepper
 3 lemon slices

METHOD:

If you are lucky enough to have the bones of the fish, you should make a stock by boiling the fish bones with 1-2 quarts of water, 1 diced onion, 1 bay leaf and 1 tbsp of black peppercorns. Simmer the fish stock for 30 minutes, strain and use it in place of water in this recipe. Fish bouillon cubes, available at your local grocery store, are also a good substitute. Slice the fish filets into 1 1/2-inch thick pieces. In a 7-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes and blend well into the roux mixture. Add water or fish stock and Worcestershire. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook for 30 minutes, adding water or stock as necessary to retain volume and consistency. Add green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add the fish filets and lemon slices, being careful not to break the fish as they simmer in the stock. Cook 5-10 minutes. When fish is done, adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve the rich sauce over bowls of steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Catfish Sauce Piquant, Gueydan-Style

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Growing up near Gueydan, Louisiana, our greatest hobby had to be cooking. We had large family cookouts and the pots were always filled with whatever wild game or seafood was in season. The vegetables that accompanied the main ingredients in the pot came from our garden. With ingredients this fresh, the final results had to be great. This seafood sauce piquant is a family favorite and today our three daughters, Kristi, Andrea and Jada, enjoy making the dish along with us. Greg and Darlene Dupree, Gueydan, LA.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds catfish fillets, cubed
 3/4 cup vegetable oil
 1 cup flour
 2 cups onions, diced
 2 cups celery, diced
 1 cup bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, minced
 1 (10-ounce) can Rotel tomatoes
 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
 2 1/2 quarts hot water
 1 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and black pepper to taste
 hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

Place all the catfish in a large bowl and season with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Allow to sit in the refrigerator 4-6 hours or overnight prior to using. In a large cast iron dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, whip constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce and tomato paste, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Cook 5 minutes and then add water. Bring mixture to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add 1/4 pound of catfish and cook for 30 minutes. Add green onions and parsley, blending well into the stew mixture. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add remaining catfish, blend well and cook for 10-15 additional minutes. Serve over steamed white rice or pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Seafood Sauce Piquante St. James

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Seafood sauce piquante is a great example of the development of Creole cooking. Piquante, meaning hot or spicy, gets its flavor from the hot, Spanish peppers that came to Louisiana from South America. The French, brown roux gives it a good flavor and color. A variety of ingredients from seafood to wild game may be added to this dish here in Bayou Country.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 fresh fish fillets, cubed
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 1 pound claw crab meat
- 3 pounds (50-60 count) shrimp
- 1 1/2 cups oil
- 1 12 cups flour
- 3 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup garlic, minced
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 2 (10-ounce) cans Rotel tomatoes
- 1 gallon hot seafood stock or water
- 2 cups green onions, sliced
- 1 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and black pepper to taste
- hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

You may make a shellfish stock by adding the shells of the shrimp and crawfish to 1 1/2 gallons of water flavored with 2 diced onions, 1 stalk diced celery, 1/4 cup minced garlic and 2 bay leaves. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 1 hour. Strain and retain 1 gallon of the liquid. Water may be used in the place of this stock. In a 12-quart Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery and bell pepper. Cook 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add garlic and tomato sauce and cook an additional 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add Rotel tomatoes and hot stock or water, 1 cup at a time, until stew-like consistency is achieved. DO NOT use all of the stock at once. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add 1/4 of each of the seafoods. This will allow the sauce to gain a seafood flavor. Cook 30-40 minutes, adding stock as necessary to retain a stew-like consistency. Season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. Add all of the remaining seafood, sliced green onions and parsley. Bring to a boil, stirring occasionally, then reduce to simmer and cook until seafoods are well done but not overcooked. The

finished stew should be the consistency of a heavy whipping cream. Correct seasonings if necessary. Pepper may be added to attain a spice level desirable to your taste. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Fricassee of Shellfish

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/4 lb mussels
- 32 littleneck clams
- 32 Manila clams
- 12 bay scallops in the shell
- 12 oysters
- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter at room temperature
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 shallots, minced
- 3 tbsps fresh parsley, minced
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 12 tomatoes, cored and chopped
- 1 - 2 cups water
- 1 1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
- juice of 1 lemon
- salt to taste
- black pepper to taste, freshly ground
- fresh parsley to taste, minced

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Wash the shellfish in salted water and clean the beards from the mussels. Set aside in the refrigerator. In a medium bowl, cream the butter until it is fluffy. Beat in the garlic, shallots, parsley, white wine and pepper. Mix until completely smooth and set aside. In a blender or food processor, puree the tomatoes. Force the puree through the fine screen of a food mill or a fine-meshed sieve. You should have about 3 cups of tomato puree. Set aside. Just before serving, add water to a large pot and bring to a boil. Add all shellfish except for oysters. Cover and steam just until the shellfish open. At the same time, in a large saucepan, bring the tomato puree to a boil, then stir in the heavy cream. Reduce the heat to low and simmer for 4 minutes. Add the garlic-herb butter to the tomato mixture. Raise heat to high and boil until the mixture has emulsified; set aside and keep warm. To shuck oysters, place 1 oyster, curved side down, on a work surface with the hinge end of the oyster facing you. Insert an oyster knife or beer can opener into the gap at the hinge. Press down on the handle while holding the oyster with your other hand, and the hinge will pop open. Insert a small knife inside the top shell where the muscle is attached and scrape through the muscle to release the oyster. Lift up the front of the top shell and bend it toward the hinge to snap it free. Place the oysters in a baking dish and bake in the preheated oven for 1 minute. Divide the shellfish and oysters equally among 4 large, deep plates. Strain the cooking juices from the shellfish into the butter sauce. Season with salt and a good amount of pepper. Add lemon juice and minced parsley. Spoon the sauce over the hot shellfish and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Catfish Courtbouillon

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

The courtbouillon of South Louisiana differs greatly from that of its forefather, the courtbouillon of the Mediterranean region of France. Here, we begin with the dark brown roux of the Cajuns, whereas in the South of France, the soup begins with olive oil and layers of vegetables and shellfish. I do believe the Cajun version is far superior.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-5 pound) catfish
- 1 cup oil
- 1 cup flour
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped yellow bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 2 tbsps chopped garlic
- 1/2 cup chopped fish pieces
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 can Rotel tomatoes
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 3 quarts fish stock
- juice of one lemon
- 3 bay leaves
- pinch of thyme
- pinch of dill
- 1 cup chopped green onions
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Fillet the catfish and cut into two inch square cubes. Place the bones and head in a pot with one gallon of water, one cubed onion, one stalk of celery, 2 bay leaves and a tablespoon of peppercorns. Bring to a rolling boil and cook 30 minutes, skimming the impurities that rise to the surface. Strain and reserve 3 quarts for the courtbouillon. In a large dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and using a wire whip stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add fish, tomatoes, tomato sauce and continue to sauté until fish is cooked into the roux mixture. Add fish stock, one ladle at a time, until all is incorporated. Add lemon juice, bay leaves, thyme and dill. Bring to a rolling boil, then reduce to simmer. Allow to cook approximately 30 minutes. Add green onions and season to taste using salt and pepper. Drop cubed catfish fillets into the sauce, allow to cook 3 minutes then remove from heat. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp and Catfish Fricassee

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6-8 Servings

Comment:

A fricassee, or stew, can be made with any mixture of available ingredients. There are many combinations in Louisiana fricassees from seafood and meat to vegetables and game. In the city of Chalmette, the hunters and trappers combine blue channel catfish with river shrimp to create an incomparable fricassee.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound peeled river or gulf shrimp
- 3 pounds cubed catfish
- 1 cup oil
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 1 tbsp minced cayenne peppers
- 4 bay leaves
- pinch of thyme
- pinch of basil
- 3 quarts fish stock (see recipe)
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 6 eggs
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

In a 2-gallon heavy-bottomed stockpot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sprinkle in flour and whisk constantly until dark brown roux is achieved (see roux techniques). Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in cayenne peppers, bay leaves, thyme and basil. Stir approximately 2 cups of cubed fish into roux. Slowly add fish stock, one ladle at a time, until a rich stew consistency is achieved. Reserve remaining stock for later use. Remember, the remaining fish are 90% water and will thin the stew considerably when added. You may wish to keep the stew a little thicker until the remaining fish are added. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook approximately 30 minutes. Stir in remaining fish, shrimp, parsley and green onions and continue to cook 10-15 minutes or until fish is tender. Crack the eggs into the simmering stew and allow to poach for 10 minutes. Season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. Serve over steamed rice or pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Hot Pot Seafood Sauce Piquant

Prep Time: 8 Hours

Yields: 4–6 Servings

Comment:

Seafood sauce piquant is a great example of the combination of different influences in Creole cooking. The sauce piquant, meaning hot or spicy, gets its flavor from the hot Spanish peppers that came to Louisiana from South America. Here, we have taken a traditional sauce piquant recipe and adapted it to be cooked in a crockpot for a few hours.

Ingredients:

6 (4-ounce) fresh catfish fillets, thick
 1 pound claw crabmeat
 1 pound crawfish tails
 1 cup (50–60 count) small shrimp
 12 (21–25 count) peeled and deveined shrimp, tail on
 2 cups chicken stock or water
 1 cup oil-less roux
 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
 2 (10-ounce) cans Ro*Tel® tomatoes
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ½ cup chopped parsley
 2 bay leaves
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, blend ½ pound crabmeat, ½ pound crawfish, small shrimp, chicken stock, roux, tomato sauce and Ro*Tel®. In a 3½–5 quart crockpot, add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic, green onions, parsley and bay leaves. Pour seafood and tomato sauce mixture on top. Cook on low 6–8 hours. Add all remaining seafood, salt, pepper and hot sauce. Cover and cook 1 additional hour or until seafood is done. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Nice and Spicy Catfish Po'boy

Prep Time: 2½ Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

The Blue Channel catfish of Louisiana is not only a favorite of the Cajuns and Creoles, but it is also revered as the best fish in the South. Catfish can be deep-fried in fillets or whole with its skin and head on. In this recipe, the catfish is served po'boy-style on French bread and topped with coleslaw.

Ingredients for Slaw:

4 cups shredded cabbage
 1 small onion, grated
 1 carrot, peeled and grated
 1 tbsp minced parsley
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 3 tbsps cider vinegar
 ¼ cup mayonnaise
 1 tbsp sugar
 ¼ tsp dry mustard
 1/8 tsp granulated garlic
 ½ tsp celery seed
 cayenne pepper to taste

Method:

Toss cabbage, onions, carrots and parsley until well mixed. In a small bowl, combine oil, vinegar, mayonnaise, sugar and seasonings. Stir well. Pour dressing over cabbage mixture and toss gently. Refrigerate 2 hours while frying catfish.

Ingredients for Catfish:

6 (6–8 ounce) catfish fillets
 1 cup milk
 1 egg
 ½ cup water
 3 tbsps Creole mustard
 juice of 1 lemon
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 seasoned corn flour
 6 (6-inch) po'boy loafs
 1 red onion, thinly sliced

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Submerge fish in a bowl of ice water 30 minutes prior to frying. This process will help to firm fish and keep it moist during cooking. In a large Dutch oven or FryDaddy, place

enough oil to cover fish by 1–2 inches. Preheat oil to 365°F. In a mixing bowl, whisk together milk, egg, water, mustard, lemon juice and hot sauce. Remove fish from ice water and place in Creole mustard batter then in corn flour. Fry until golden brown and beginning to float to surface. Do not overcook. Fish are best when crisp on outside but tender and juicy inside. Drain on paper towels. Slice po'boy loaves in half and place on a cookie sheet. Toast lightly in oven. When bread is lightly browned, place 1 catfish filet on ½ of toasted loaf. Top with sliced red onions and a generous portion of coleslaw. Top with remaining half of po'boy loaf and press firmly.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Mango's Grilled Grouper with Orange Beach Fruit Salsa

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This is a summertime dish. It is light, spicy, and cooling on hot evenings.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 papaya, seeds and skin removed, cut into small dice
- 1 mango, seeds and skin removed, cut into small dice
- 1/4 pineapple, core, outside skin, and eyes removed, cut into small dice
- 1/2 tomato, concassee
- 2 jalapenos or serrano chilies, stems, seeds, and ribs discarded and cut into small dice
- 1/3 cup Spanish wine vinegar
- 1/2 red onion, peeled and diced small
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1/4 cup roughly chopped cilantro or mint leaves

METHOD:

Take four 8-ounce grouper fillets, cut on an extreme bias. Prepare the salsa: Gently combine all of the ingredients and keep at room temperature. Prepare a hot grill and oil it. Grill the fish until just cooked through. Place the fish on warm plates and top with the desired amount of salsa. (The salsa will keep in the refrigerator for about a day.)

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Grilled Delta Pride Catfish Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS FOR MARINADE:

3 5-8 ounce Delta Pride Catfish fillets
 1/4 cup melted butter
 1/4 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
 1 tbsp dried thyme
 1 tbsp dried basil
 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
 salt to taste

METHOD:

In a mixing bowl combine all of the above ingredients and mix well to ensure that spices are well blended. Allow fillets to set in marinade approximately thirty minutes. Charbroil the fillets on a hot barbecue grill three to five minutes on each side or until fish is cooked to desired doneness. Remove and keep warm.

INGREDIENTS FOR SALAD:

6 leaves red leaf lettuce
 6 leaves romaine lettuce
 6 leaves mache lettuce
 6 leaves curly endive
 1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese
 1 cup high quality blue cheese dressing
 6 cherry tomatoes sliced
 cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

On a six inch salad plate, place one piece of red leaf lettuce as a base. In a large mixing bowl, combine the other three lettuces and break into appropriate size serving pieces. Place one handful of mixed lettuces on top of red leaf lettuce. Using a sharp knife, cut grilled catfish into one inch slices. Place an equal number of slices on top of each salad, sprinkle with blue cheese crumbles and top with salad dressing. Garnish each salad with tomato circles and cracked pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Herb Encrusted Salmon Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Hot weather calls for cool dishes and this one gives you the satisfaction of hearty salmon and chilled salad greens. Top with a light vinaigrette and you have a perfect meal for a summer dinner. Fresh-squeezed lemonade or iced tea are perfect beverages to serve with this meal.

INGREDIENTS:

6 (5 - 8oz) salmon filets
 1/4 cup fresh herbs (tarragon, thyme, basil, chervil), mixed and chopped
 Mixed baby salad greens
 Pear and current tomatoes
 1 1/2 cups rice flour
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 1 tbsp chives, chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 275 degrees F. In a 10-inch heavy-bottom sauté pan, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Season the filets using salt and pepper then coat evenly with herb mixture. Coat well in the rice flour, shaking off the excess. Sauté the filets, 2 at a time, until golden brown and crispy, approximately 3 to 5 minutes on each side. When the fish are cooked, place on a large cookie sheet and continue until all are done. Place cookie sheet in oven to keep hot.

Wash salad greens and tomatoes and dry well. Divide greens into 6 bowls. Slice salmon filets to 1 inch thickness and place on top of greens. Serve with orange-basil vinaigrette or cane syrup vinaigrette.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Spicy Grilled Tuna Salad with Ponchatoula Strawberry Vinaigrette

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Over the past few years, tuna has become the fish of choice for grilling. During the early spring, Louisiana strawberries are in season and no others can compare to their taste and flavor. This recipe incorporates the best of those two ingredients.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (1-inch thick) tuna steaks
- 2 (5-ounce) bags mixed salad greens or greens of choice
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbsp onions, minced
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 tsp basil, chopped
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tsp Creole mustard
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 4 tbsps orange-strawberry juice blend
- 2 tbsps Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup Louisiana strawberries, chopped
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Begin by creating the salad dressing. Place egg yolk in the bowl of a blender. Add onion, garlic, basil, thyme, black pepper, mustard, vinegar, orange-strawberry juice and cane syrup. Pulse 2-3 times to blend ingredients well. With blender running, remove the small, plastic center cap from the lid and pour oils in a slow, steady stream. The creamy-style vinaigrette will form immediately. Add strawberries and continue to blend until well incorporated and dressing becomes light pink in color. Additional chopped strawberries may be added to the salad after the dressing is incorporated. If you wish to thin the dressing out, additional fruit juice or water may be added. Adjust seasonings if necessary. This dressing should be slightly sweet and have a hint of strawberry flavor. Remove from blender and refrigerate for later use. The dressing may be kept covered and refrigerated for up to a week. When ready to assemble salad, heat grill according to manufacturer's directions. Season tuna generously with cracked black pepper and a sprinkling of salt. Grill to desired doneness. (NOTE: Tuna is best served medium-rare.) While tuna is grilling, place the greens in a large mixing bowl and toss with a desired amount of dressing. You may further enhance the salad with tomatoes, cheese, cucumbers, etc. Remove the tuna from the grill, cut into bite-sized

portions and toss into the finished salad. This salad is wonderful for a spring or summer entrée or served on a brunch buffet.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Kenny Frederic's Fish Fry

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 10-15

COMMENT:

You will notice that there is no pre-measured amounts for any of the seasonings used in this recipe. The reason, there is no accounting for taste, and in South Louisiana everybody seasons according to their own preference. So add a bit more spice, season the cornmeal if you wish, but much more importantly, make it your own creation.

INGREDIENTS:

5 pounds of catfish
 black pepper to taste
 1 cup yellow mustard
 Tony Chachere's to taste
 Louisiana Hot Sauce to taste
 unseasoned Zatarain's Fish Fry
 salt to taste
 yellow cornmeal

METHOD:

Filet a catfish. Cut meat into small strips and place fish in large bowl. Dump mustard and Louisiana Hot sauce over fish and mix well. In a separate bowl blend salt, pepper and Tony Chachere's, then cover fish with the seasonings. In another bowl mix equal parts unseasoned Zatarain's Fish Fry and yellow cornmeal. Add a little salt, pepper and Tony Chachere's to this mix. Dip the fish in the fish fry and cornmeal combination. Fry the fish in peanut oil at 365 degrees. Remove from oil when the fish begins to float.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Boiled Crawfish

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

The crawfish boil is the premier social event in the spring time here in Louisiana. Friends and family gather for an afternoon under the shade of an oak tree to enjoy a delicacy unequaled in the Southland.



INGREDIENTS:

- 30 quarts cold water
- 12 medium onions, quartered
- 6 heads of garlic, split in half exposing pods
- 6 lemons, quartered
- 1 cup cooking oil
- 4 pounds salt
- 1/2 pounds cayenne pepper
- 4 (3-ounce) bags Zatarain's crab boil
- 6 tbs celery salt
- 24 medium red potatoes
- 12 ears of corn
- 50 pounds cleaned crawfish

METHOD:

Live crawfish may be purchased already washed from your seafood supplier. However, a second rinsing in cold water would not hurt. The purging of crawfish, or washing the crawfish in cold salted water, has been found to be useless other than to place the crustacean under unnecessary stress. So forget the purging - rinsing in cold water will suffice. In a 60-quart stock pot, bring water to a rolling boil. Add onions, garlic, lemons, cooking oil, salt, pepper, Zatarain's crab boil and continue to boil for 30 minutes. This boiling of the vegetables will ensure a good flavor in the boiling liquid. Add red potatoes and cook approximately 10-12 minutes. Add corn and cook 10 minutes before adding the crawfish. Once the water returns to a boil, cook crawfish 7-10 minutes, turn off heat and allow to set in boiling liquid 12 additional minutes. Crawfish should be served hot with potatoes and corn and pitchers of ice cold beer.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Au Gratin

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Au gratins of many types are found on menus throughout Louisiana. The dish is most commonly made with jumbo lump crabmeat. Although, normally served casserole-style, I have also seen it served as the perfect topping over a sauteed filet of fish. Additionally, au gratins make excellent hors d'oeuvres and can be served with garlic croutons or crackers.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1/4 cup onions, diced
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1 tbsp garlic, diced
- 2 tbsps flour
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- dash of hot sauce
- 3/4 cup grated cheddar cheese
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a heavy-bottomed 2-quart sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, red and yellow bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Be careful not to brown vegetables. Add 1/2 pound crawfish tails and saute 3 additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour, blending well into the mixture. Using a wire whip, whisk cream into sauce pan stirring constantly until thick cream sauce is achieved. Reduce heat to simmer, add white wine, lemon juice and hot sauce. Sprinkle in half of the cheddar cheese stirring the mixture constantly. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add green onions and parsley for color. If mixture becomes too thick, add a small amount of hot water or whipping cream. Place equal parts of remaining crawfish tails in the bottom of six au gratin dishes, top with sauce and sprinkle with remaining cheddar cheese. Bake for 15 minutes or until cheese is bubbly.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Risotto with Crawfish, Oyster Mushrooms, Morels and Asparagus

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb crawfish tails
 10 asparagus spears
 6 cups chicken stock
 10 tbsps plus 4 tps extra-virgin olive oil
 8 - 10 morels, sliced crosswise
 4 shallots, minced
 2 cups (6 oz) oyster mushrooms, stemmed
 2 cups Arborio rice
 1/2 cup dry white wine
 2 garlic cloves, minced
 2 tbsps unsalted butter
 1 jalapeño chili, seeded and finely chopped
 1/2 cup fresh, flat-leaf Italian parsley, minced
 1 tbsp Parmesan cheese, grated
 kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Peel the asparagus spears and trim 1 inch from the ends. In a saucepan, simmer the asparagus ends in chicken stock for 30 minutes. Set aside. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil and cook the asparagus spears for 2 - 3 minutes, or until crisp-tender. Drain and chop into 1/4-inch-thick slices, saving the tips for garnish. Set aside. In a saucepan heat 4 tbsps of the olive oil over high heat. Add morels and sauté. Add 1/2 the shallots and sauté for about 2 minutes. Add the oyster mushrooms and sauté 2 - 3 minutes. Season with kosher salt and a pinch of pepper. Set aside. In a medium saucepan, heat 6 tbsps of olive oil over medium high heat and sauté the remaining chopped shallots until translucent, about 3 minutes. Add rice to the pan and stir until it is opaque. Add wine, garlic, 1/2 cup stock and kosher salt to taste and stir until the stock is absorbed. Continue pouring in the stock in 1/2 cup increments and stirring until all of it has been absorbed, about 15 minutes. In a medium saucepan over low heat, combine the remaining 4 tps of olive oil, butter, risotto, jalapeño and salt to taste. Add the oyster mushrooms, morels and shallots and stir until heated through. Add parsley and asparagus slices last or the vegetables will lose their flavor. Add crawfish tails and Parmesan cheese and remove from heat immediately. Serve the risotto in shallow soup bowls, leveling the mound on each plate with a wooden spoon. Garnish with asparagus tips.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Casserole

PREP TIME: 40 Minutes

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsps unsalted margarine
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 (10 ¾ oz can) cream of celery soup
- 1 lb fresh crawfish tails
- 2½ cups cooked rice
- ½ cup chopped green onion tops
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

METHOD:

Melt margarine in a two-quart microwave safe dish. Add celery, bell pepper and onion. Cover and microwave on high until vegetables are tender. Blend in soup, rice, green onions, parsley and season with salt and pepper. Add crawfish and remaining ingredients. Put in a lightly greased 9-inch X 2-inch skillet. Bake at 375 degrees F for 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Pie

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Crawfish etouffee is a simple dish and one that may be served in a variety of ways. Often it is placed on pasta instead of rice, in crepes or in patty shells. A simple but elegant presentation is in a pie shell. With the availability of frozen pie shells, you don't even need to make the crust.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 1 cup oil
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup tasso ham, diced
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- 1 1/2 quarts shellfish stock
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 (9-inch) pie shells

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. In a 10-inch saute pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and tasso ham. Saute 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add crawfish and saute an additional 5 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and using a wire whisk, stir constantly until white roux is achieved. Add tomato sauce and slowly add stock, a little at a time, until sauce consistency is achieved. (NOTE: You may not use all of the stock.) Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Remove from heat and allow to cool, preferably overnight. In a small mixing bowl, combine egg, milk and water. Using a wire whisk, stir until all ingredients are well blended. Cut pie shells in half and place a generous serving of the crawfish sauce in the center of each half. Brush the edges of pastry with eggwash and fold over in a triangle shape. Crimp the edges closed with a fork and pierce the top of the pie to create vents for steam to escape during cooking. Brush eggwash over pies and bake until golden brown, approximately 20 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Boulettes

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10 Boulettes

COMMENT:

In Louisiana, one of the most economical and tastiest dishes you can serve to your family is a platter of fish boulettes. Actually, folk elsewhere around the world call them fish cakes or fish patties. But, here in bayou country, we roll them into balls which is what boulette means in French. Here, we substituted crawfish in the place of fish for an interesting twist.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pound chopped crawfish tails
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 2 cups white potatoes
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 1/2 cup minced onions
 1 egg, whipped
 1/4 cup minced celery
 1 cup flour
 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
 salt and black pepper to taste
 2 tbsps diced garlic
 oil for sautéing

METHOD:

Place cubed potatoes in lightly salted water and poach until fork-tender. Drain and cool. In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients other than flour and oil. Using your hands or a large mixing spoon, blend until all ingredients are incorporated. Since the crawfish are cooked, you should taste the mixture and adjust seasonings if necessary. Preheat oil in a ten inch skillet over medium-high heat. Sprinkle in approximately half of the flour or more as needed to hold the mixture together. Form the mixture into hamburger-style patties approximately 3/4-inch thick. Dust the patties with remaining flour and saute until golden brown on each side. Patties may be eaten as an appetizer, as a sandwich or cooked in a crawfish stew.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish á la Greg

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

COMMENT:

Former LSU football player, Greg Lafleur passed on this recipe to me. Greg Lafleur is now the Assistant Athletic Director at LSU.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb. Crawfish
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup green onion, sliced
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 tbsp Worcestershire
- 4 ounces Velveeta Cheese
- Season to taste with Zatarain's Creole Seasoning

METHOD:

Melt butter. Sauté crawfish, onion, bell pepper, celery, green onion, mushroom, parsley and garlic until very soft, almost mushy. Add 32 ounces of water and let cook for 45 minutes. Add Worcestershire and cheese and stir until melted. Season to taste with Zatarain's Creole Seasoning. Serve over multi-colored cooked pasta in a deep dish.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Seafood Paella

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Crawfish tails and shrimp can be used by heart-conscious chefs. They are higher in cholesterol than most meats and seafood, yet are low in fat content, especially low in saturated fat; therefore, they do not affect your blood cholesterol level as much when eaten in moderate portions.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (170-190 count) shrimp, peeled and de-veined.
- 1 cup crawfish tails, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup lump crabmeat 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1 cup diced tomato
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1/3 cup diced andouille sausage
- 4 ½ cups seafood stock or clam juice
- 3 cups raw rice
- salt, cracked black pepper and red pepper to taste
- 2 tbsps minced fresh parsley
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 ½ tsps chili powder
- ½ cup sliced green onions

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Using a vegetable oil cooking spray, spray a paella pan or other oven-proof baking dish. Heat olive oil over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and tomatoes. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add frozen peas and blend well. In a separate non-stick skillet, sauté andouille until light brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove to paper towels and blot off surface fat. Return sausage to paella pan, add seafood stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add rice and season to taste using salt and pepper. Blend in parsley, cumin, chili powder, green onions, shrimp, crawfish and crabmeat. Cover pan with aluminum foil and bake 45 minutes to 1 hour. Remove from oven, stir and allow to set 30 minutes before serving. The seafood stock may be made by simmering the shrimp and crab peelings and the lightly rinsed crawfish peelings for 20 minutes or more. Strain and discard the peelings, chill and skim off any fat.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Omelette

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Nothing is more appropriate for a breakfast or brunch buffet than a full-flavored omelette. The Cajuns have their own version of this dish and it normally includes fresh seasonal seafood. When combined with colored peppers and a touch of garlic, crawfish makes the best of the Cajun omelettes, in my opinion.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lb cooked crawfish tails
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup minced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp chopped garlic
- ½ cup sliced mushrooms
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley
- 8 eggs
- ½ cup milk
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- ½ tsp Worcestershire sauce

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat butter over medium high heat. Add bell pepper, garlic, mushrooms and green onions. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add crawfish, green onions and parsley. Continue to sauté an additional five minutes. In a small mixing bowl, place eggs and milk. Using a wire whisk, beat until well blended. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Worcestershire. Pour egg / milk mixture over crawfish and stir gently. When eggs are set, turn omelette onto a platter. Garnish with fresh parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Spicy Crawfish and Tasso Pizza

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 1 (10"–14") Pizza

Comment:

No matter what the occasion, you will love this unique and spicy twist to the traditional pizza. The taste of crawfish and spicy tasso are sure to please.

Ingredients:

- 1 (10"–14") pizza crust
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- ½ cup diced tasso
- 2 tbsps extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp jalapeños, seeded and diced
- 3 cloves garlic, sliced
- ¼ tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Creole seasoning to taste
- 1 (14-ounce) jar pizza sauce
- 2 cups shredded Mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

Method:

Place a pizza stone on the lowest rack of your oven. Preheat oven to 550° F. Dust a pizza peel with cornmeal or flour. Lay pizza dough on peel. In a skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Sauté tasso, jalapeños, garlic and crushed red pepper flakes in oil for 1 minute. Add crawfish tails and cook until heated through. Season with salt, black pepper and Creole seasoning. Remove skillet from heat. Spread pizza sauce on crust. Sprinkle half of Mozzarella over the sauce, and spoon crawfish topping over entire surface. Cover with Mozzarella and Parmesan cheeses. Drizzle with additional olive oil. Place pizza on preheated pizza stone. Bake 8 minutes or until edges and cheeses are golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish and Asparagus Cakes

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

During crawfish season, many Louisianians substitute crawfish in their crab cakes. For Easter, this dish can be fancied up by adding fresh asparagus spears to the mixture.

Ingredients:

1 pound crawfish tails, chopped
 6 pencil asparagus spears, chopped ¼-inch
 4 tbsps butter
 ½ cup diced onions
 ½ cup diced celery
 ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 ¾ cup Italian bread crumbs
 ¼ cup thinly sliced green onions
 ¼ cup mayonnaise
 1 egg
 2 tbsps minced parsley
 2 tsps Worcestershire sauce
 2 tsps lemon juice
 1 tbsp Creole seasoning
 1 tbsp Creole mustard
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 ½ cup Italian bread crumbs
 ¼ cup vegetable oil

Method:

In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add asparagus and cook 2 additional minutes. Remove and cool slightly. In a large mixing bowl, combine sautéed vegetables and all remaining ingredients except crawfish, ½ cup bread crumbs and oil. Use hands to gently fold in crawfish. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Gently form crawfish mixture into 1" x 2½" patties, dust lightly with bread crumbs then place on a cookie sheet. Chill in refrigerator at least 1 hour. In a sauté pan, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Sauté crawfish cakes 2–3 minutes on each side, turning each cake over gently to avoid breaking. Place crawfish cake in center of dinner plate and top with White or Red Rémoulade Sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Crawfish Stuffed Artichokes

Prep Time: 2 Hours**Yields:** 6 Servings**Comment:**

There are as many recipes for stuffed artichokes as there are Italian families in New Orleans. This is one of those traditional favorites. There are many flavor variations to this dish, especially those using fresh herbs such as basil, rosemary and oregano.

Ingredients:

6 whole artichokes
 1 pound crawfish tails, drained and chopped
 6 lemon slices
 ½ pound smoked bacon, sliced
 6 cups Italian bread crumbs
 1½ cups freshly grated Romano cheese
 1½ cups freshly grated Parmesan cheese
 1 cup thinly sliced green onions
 ½ cup minced parsley
 ½ cup minced garlic
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 cayenne pepper to taste
 2 tbsps chopped basil
 3 cups extra virgin olive oil

Method:

Clean artichokes by clipping tips of leaves with sharp scissors. Cut large stems from bottom so artichokes will sit flat. Rinse artichokes well. Rub lemon on cut ends to prevent browning. Reserve lemon for cooking process. Fry bacon until crisp, drain. Crumble bacon into a large mixing bowl. Add all remaining ingredients, but reserve ½ cups olive oil for later use. Using your hands, blend ingredients well. Press firmly down on artichokes to spread open leaves, so there will be plenty of room to stuff. Place 1 artichoke at a time into a bowl with stuffing mixture. To stuff, start with bottom leaves and work your way up to fill center, pushing as much into leaves as possible. Tap each artichoke gently to let any loose stuffing fall off. Continue until all 6 artichokes have been stuffed. Stand stuffed artichokes in a large roasting pan with lid. NOTE: Artichokes should be on a rack 1 inch above water. Pour 1 inch of water in bottom. Slowly drizzle ¼ cup olive oil over each artichoke to coat well. Top with lemon slices. Cover, bring water to a boil then reduce to simmer. Allow artichokes to steam 1–1½ hours. Check water level, and add more if necessary. Serve 1 whole artichoke hot or warm as an entrée or split in half and serve as an appetizer. NOTE: It is always best to grate fresh cheese for this recipe. The pre-grated variety loses a lot of flavor on the shelf, so it should be avoided. If desired, top each artichoke with grated cheese and place under a broiler until cheese melts and begins to brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

CRAWFISH CARDINALE IN PATTY SHELLS

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

No run-of-the-mill crawfish pie here. Serve these crisp patty shells topped with a deliciously rich crawfish filling at your next dinner party. You'll get rave reviews.

Ingredients:

1 pound crawfish tails
 6 frozen Pillsbury® patty shells, baked
 4 tbsps unsalted butter
 ½ cup minced shallots
 ¼ cup minced onions
 ¼ cup minced celery
 ¼ cup minced red bell peppers
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 2 tbsps tomato paste
 2 tbsps flour
 3 cups heavy cream
 2 tbsps Cognac
 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
 1 tbsp chopped basil
 sliced green onions
 finely chopped parsley
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste
 paprika for garnish
 parsley for garnish

Method:

Cook patty shells according to package directions. Remove from oven, and use a paring knife to scoop center out of each. Set center aside. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté shallots, onions, celery, red bell peppers and garlic 3–5 minutes or until translucent. Stir in tomato paste and cook 1 minute. Add flour and cook 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Add cream, Cognac, lemon juice, basil, green onions, parsley, salt and cayenne pepper. Whisk well. Cook 3–5 minutes or until sauce-like consistency is achieved, stirring constantly. Add crawfish and cook 2–3 minutes. Remove from heat and adjust seasonings. Top each patty shell with Crawfish Cardinale. Garnish with paprika and parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

John's Bulk Crawfish Bisque

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 20

COMMENT:

Crawfish bisque is a tradition in south Louisiana and is normally served as a main dish on Easter Sunday. I consider this dish a family event because it is best made when a minimum of four can get together to stuff the heads and make the stew. This is also a great batch-size recipe for the freezer.

INGREDIENTS FOR STUFFED HEADS:

- 9 pounds cleaned crawfish tails
- 200 cleaned crawfish heads
- 2 jumbo onions, peeled and quartered
- 2 large bell peppers, cleaned and quartered
- 1/2 bunch celery, cleaned
- 1/2 cup garlic, minced
- 1 bunch fresh parsley
- 2 bunches fresh green onions
- 5 whole eggs
- 1/4 cup basil, chopped
- 1/4 cup thyme leaves, chopped
- 22 ounces seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Zatarain's Creole seasoning to taste

METHOD:

Here in Cajun country you may purchase the heads of the crawfish fully cleaned, frozen and ready for stuffing. If you are using cleaned crawfish heads, rinse them thoroughly and place them in a bowl of extremely hot water for 30 minutes. This will make the heads pliable and ready for filling. If they are not available in your area, you may simply roll the stuffing into small meatballs and add to the sauce later. Using a home-style meat grinder, grind 5 pounds of crawfish tails alternating with the onions, bell peppers, celery, garlic, parsley and green onions. It is important to grind these in an alternating fashion to incorporate the seasonings and tail meat completely. Place the ground ingredients in a large mixing bowl and add eggs, basil, thyme and Italian breadcrumbs. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. Here, I suggest you form a small patty of stuffing and pan-fry to check for seasonings and flavor. Adjust seasonings if necessary. I suggest using a pastry bag and fill each head to its maximum. If a pastry bag is unavailable, open the heads as wide as possible, without breaking, and hand stuff. Place the stuffed heads on a cookie sheet and bake in a preheated 400 degree F oven for 20 minutes. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

2 1/2 cups vegetable oil
2 1/2 cups flour
4 cups onions, diced
2 cups celery, diced
2 cups bell pepper, diced
1/4 cup garlic, minced
16 ounces tomato sauce
5 quarts water
1 cup green onions, sliced
3/4 cup parsley, chopped
1/4 cup basil, chopped
1/4 cup thyme leaves, chopped
salt and black pepper to taste
Zatarain's Creole seasoning to taste

METHOD:

In a 3-gallon Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir until a dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Cook 3-5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato sauce and remaining 4 pounds of crawfish tails. Cook 10-15 minutes and add water, 1 quart at a time, blending well into the mixture. Continue to add liquid until stew-like consistency is achieved. Add green onions, parsley, basil and thyme. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes, adding additional liquid as necessary to retain consistency. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. Add cooked, stuffed heads to the stew, stirring gently into the gravy. Continue to simmer for 30 additional minutes. During this process, stuffing from the heads will settle to the bottom of the pot, making scorching a high possibility. You must stir fairly often at this point and keep the stew on a low simmer to prevent scorching. Adjust seasonings if necessary. When ready to serve, place 8-10 stuffed heads along with ample gravy over steamed white rice.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Louisiana Crawfish and Sea Scallop Bouillabaisse

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 10

INGREDIENTS:

2 lbs. live crawfish
 1 lb. cooked crawfish tails
 20 giant sea scallops
 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
 2 cups onions, diced
 2 cups carrots, diced
 6 cloves garlic, mashed
 2 whole bay leaves
 1 tbsp. fresh thyme leaves
 4 parsley stems
 1/4 cup brandy
 1/2 cup white wine
 1/4 cup tomato paste
 1/2 tsp. saffron blended in 1/4 cup warm water
 salt & pepper to taste
 2 tbsp. Herbsaint
 1 oz. olive oil
 1/2 cup carrots, finely diced
 1/2 cup onions, finely diced
 1/2 cup celery, finely diced
 1/2 cup tomatoes, finely diced
 1/4 cup basil, finely chopped

METHOD:

In a 2 gallon stock pot, heat 1/4 cup olive oil over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, carrots and garlic stirring constantly until light brown, about 10 minutes. Add bay leaves, thyme and parsley and blend into vegetable seasoning. Add live crawfish and cover until crawfish are slightly steamed, about 2 to 5 minutes. Remove lid and add brandy and white wine. Be careful as brandy may flame as it hits the pot. Bring wine to a low simmer and reduce by 1/2 the volume. Add tomato paste, blending well into liquid. Add 3 quarts cold water and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook stock until nice crawfish flavor is achieved, about 30 minutes. During this process, it is best to pull the heads from the tails of the crawfish to heighten the flavor. Add saffron & season to taste with salt and pepper. Allow stock to continue to simmer until desired rich flavor is achieved. When stock is done, strain and remove 2 quarts. Discard flavoring ingredients and return to stock pot. Return to low simmer and add Herbsaint. Stir well and taste for proper seasoning.

In a sauté pan, heat remaining olive oil over medium-high heat. Season scallops lightly with salt and pepper. When olive oil reaches smoke point, sauté 10 scallops until golden brown around the edges, about 2 minutes on each side. Continue until all scallops are cooked.

Remove and keep warm.

In same pan add carrots, onions, celery, and tomatoes. Sauté until wilted, about 3 to 5 minutes. Move seasoning to one side of pan and add cooked crawfish tails to warm completely. Season lightly with salt and pepper. When ready to serve, place 1 to 2 tbsp. of heated vegetable seasoning into bottom of a soup bowl. Add 2 scallops and an even portion of crawfish tails. Ladle hot crawfish stock over top of ingredients and garnish with basil. Serve with hot French bread.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Front Porch Carrot and Crawfish Bisque

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The first thing you'll notice as you drive into the camellia-lined driveway of Elliott House is the massive front gallery of the house. This carrot soup is best when served in coffee cups either hot or cold and enjoyed while swaying in one of those comfortable rockers at Elliott House or on your own patio.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 2 medium-sized potatoes, peeled and sliced
- 7 cups chicken stock (see recipe)
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- Creole seasoning to taste
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a cast iron dutch oven, combine carrots, potatoes, chicken stock, onions, celery, bell pepper and Worcestershire sauce. Bring mixture to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cover. Cook soup until potatoes and carrots are tender, approximately 15-20 minutes. Season to taste using Creole seasonings, salt and pepper. Place the solid ingredients into the bowl of a blender or food processor. Slowly pour the soup in through a strainer. Do not overfill the bowl, because hot liquid will expand and the steam will cause the top to pop up during blending. Place just enough of the hot liquid to cover the vegetables by 1 inch. Take caution. Puree soup until smooth and creamy. Return pureed soup to the dutch oven and bring mixture to a low boil. Add heavy whipping cream, crawfish, nutmeg and parsley. Adjust seasonings if necessary. The soup may be served hot or cold, garnished with fresh chives and sour cream optional.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Louisiana Style Crawfish Etouffee

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The French word "etouffee" means to stew, smother or braise. This technique is found in dishes using shrimp, crab, crawfish and, in some cases, meat or game. Though more Creole in origin, etouffees are found throughout Cajun country.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds cleaned crawfish tails
 1/4 pound butter
 1 cup onion, chopped
 1/2 cup celery, chopped
 1/2 cup green bell pepper, chopped
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
 1/2 cup tomatoes, diced
 2 tbsps garlic, diced
 2 bay leaves
 1/2 cup tomato sauce
 1 cup flour
 2 quarts crawfish stock or water
 1 ounce sherry
 1 cup green onions, chopped
 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 2 cups white rice, steamed

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, bell peppers, tomatoes, garlic and bay leaves. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add crawfish tails and tomato sauce and blend well into mixture. Using a wire whip, blend flour into the vegetable mixture to form a white roux. Slowly add crawfish stock or water, a little at a time, until sauce consistency is achieved. Continue adding more stock as necessary to retain consistency. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add sherry, green onions and parsley and cook an additional 5 minutes. Season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Serve over steamed white rice using a few dashes of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

River Road Crawfish Stew

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This is the most popular of all crawfish dishes cooked in Bayou country. It is easy to prepare and although similar to crawfish bisque, this dish may be completed in half the time.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 lbs. cleaned crawfish tails
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup flour
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell pepper
- 2 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 1 1/2 quarts crawfish stock or water
- 1 cup chopped green onions
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- 4 tsps salt
- 2 tsps black pepper
- Dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

A rich crawfish stock will certainly make this dish a winner. Any shellfish stock or fish stock may be substituted, but the dish will be good even if water is used. In a twelve-quart dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Add flour and using a wire whip, stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. When brown, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately five to seven minutes. Add one-pound crawfish tails and cook five additional minutes. Stir in tomato sauce blend into roux and cook three to five minutes. Slowly add crawfish stock or water stirring constantly until stew-like consistency is achieved. Bring to a boil, reduce to simmer and cook thirty minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the remaining two-pounds crawfish tails, green onions and parsley. Season using salt and pepper. Cook for twenty-minutes longer adding additional water if necessary. When done, serve over white rice with a few dashes of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Veloute of Boiled Crawfish, Corn and Potatoes

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

One Saturday afternoon immediately following a crawfish boil, I noticed a table still piled with boiled crawfish, corn and potatoes. With the help of a few friends, we peeled the crawfish and, using the shells, made a boiled crawfish stock. I guess the rest of the story is obvious. This wonderful soup was created!

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds boiled crawfish tails
 1 cup shoepeg corn
 6 small potatoes, cubed
 1 cup melted butter
 1 cup onions, chopped
 1 cup celery, chopped
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
 1/4 cup garlic, chopped
 1 cup flour
 2 1/2 quarts crawfish stock
 1 pint heavy whipping cream
 1 cup green onions, sliced
 1 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and white pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a 1-gallon stock pot, place the shells of the boiled crawfish along with any remaining onions, lemons, etc. Add 3 quarts of cold water, bring to a low boil and cook for 30 minutes. This will impart a concentrated boiled crawfish flavor into the water. If you do not have boiled crawfish, simply boil the corn and potatoes in water lightly seasoned with crab boil for the same effect, or use chicken stock. Once stock is flavorful, strain and reserve 3 quarts of liquid. Once the stock pot has been cleaned, place over medium-high heat, add butter and sauté the onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic until wilted. Add the corn and continue to cook another 3-5 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and stir until well blended. Slowly pour in the crawfish stock, stirring constantly until the consistency of a creamy soup is achieved. Bring to a low boil then add 1/2 of the crawfish and all the potatoes. Cook until potatoes are tender, but not mushy. Add remaining crawfish, heavy whipping cream, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. You may wish to add a bit more of the crawfish stock to retain the desired consistency of the soup.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Mr. Royley's Crawfish Stew

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 10 Servings

Comment:

This great recipe comes from my dad, the late Antoine "Royley" Folse Sr. Daddy passed away Saturday, February 26, 2005, at the age of 90. I don't think anybody ever made a better crawfish stew. When we were kids, we would often spend Sundays at the old Zeringue camp in St. James, La., where he would cook this fabulous dish. I am so thankful for those moments Daddy and I shared, and it is my duty to share with you one his best recipes.



Ingredients:

- 5 pounds crawfish tails
- 1 cup crawfish fat (optional)
- 2 cups crawfish claws (optional)
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 1½ cups vegetable oil
- 1½ cups flour
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 3 quarts water
- 2 bay leaves
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 1 cup chopped parsley

Method:

In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, heat ¼ cup vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Drain crawfish tails in a colander, reserving fat and natural juices. Sauté tails 5–10 minutes or until curled and heated thoroughly but not overcooked. Season with salt and pepper then set aside. In a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven, heat remaining oil over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are well caramelized. Stir occasionally to prevent vegetables from scorching. Pour in tomato sauce and cook 3

minutes. NOTE: Daddy always reminded me that this is no spaghetti sauce. The tomato sauce is used to turn the sauce a nice, rusty color. Slowly add water, 1 quart at a time, until thick stew consistency is achieved. You may not need to add all of water at once. Add crawfish fat, reserved drippings and bay leaves. Season liquid lightly with salt and pepper. Bring stock to a rolling boil then reduce to simmer and add sautéed crawfish, including pan drippings. Simmer stew approximately 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Do not boil. Additional water may be needed during cooking process to retain volume and consistency. Once stew is full-flavored, adjust seasonings with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Add green onions, parsley and optional crawfish claws. Cook 15–20 minutes or until desired richness is achieved. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Michaela

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

1/4 pound butter
 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
 1/4 cup green onions, chopped
 1/4 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1/2 cup tomatoes, diced
 1/2 cup andouille, diced
 1 pound cooked crawfish tails
 1 tbsp flour
 1 ounce dry white wine
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1/4 cup tomato sauce
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1 tbsp parsley, chopped
 1 tsp basil, chopped
 1 tsp tarragon, chopped
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 4 cups cooked rotini pasta

METHOD:

In a 2-quart heavy sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add garlic, green onions, mushrooms, tomatoes and andouille. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add 1/2 of the crawfish and cook for 2 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend well into the mixture. Deglaze pan with white wine and lemon juice. Add tomato sauce, stirring well to incorporate. Add heavy whipping cream, stirring constantly. Cook until cream is thick and of a sauce-like consistency, approximately 5 minutes. Add bell pepper, parsley, basil, tarragon and remaining crawfish. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Gently fold in cooked rotini pasta and serve. May be chilled and served as a cold pasta salad.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Stuffed Pasta Shells

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Here is yet another example of the innovative Creoles stuffing crawfish into an ingredient to create an entrée. Normally this was done in either chicken or in turbans of trout. In this recipe we see the crawfish stuffed into pasta shells and baked.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds crawfish tails, chopped
- 1 box jumbo pasta shells
- 8 tbsps butter
- 1 cup onion, minced
- 1/2 cup green bell pepper, minced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, minced
- 6 tsps garlic, minced
- 4 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsps hot sauce
- salt to taste
- Creole seasoning to taste
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Boil shells according to package directions until al dente and set aside. In a medium sauce pan, heat butter over medium-high heat. Add onions and bell peppers and sauté until wilted, approximately 1-2 minutes. Add garlic and crawfish tails and heat through. Add Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce, salt and Creole seasoning. Remove from heat and let cool. Beat eggs in a large mixing bowl and add to crawfish mixture. Fold in Parmesan cheese and breadcrumbs. Combine well and stuff each pasta shell with an equal amount of crawfish stuffing. Place shells in a 9 x 12-inch baking pan and cover with your favorite pasta sauce or Alfredo. For ease of preparation, combine 2 cans of cream of shrimp soup with 1/2 cup white wine. Place in oven and bake for 15-20 minutes or until stuffing is heated completely through.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Pasta Salad

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

SERVES: 4-5

COMMENT:

This dish is right at home everywhere from your holiday table to the parking lot tailgating party on LSU campus.

INGREDIENTS FOR SALAD:

- 1 lb peeled crawfish tails
- 1 lb pasta, cooked (small shells)
- 1/2 cup green onions, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, minced
- 1/2 cup yellow pepper, minced
- dill weed (to taste)

INGREDIENTS FOR DRESSING:

- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 5 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 4 tbsp sour cream
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 2 tbsp sugar
- Coarsely ground black pepper
- 2 tsp chopped parsley

METHOD:

Mix dressing first by combining all dressing ingredients. Use a whisk to blend in the sour cream. The salad dressing can be made up ahead of time. In a separate bowl, combine crawfish tails, cooked pasta, green onions, red bell pepper, yellow pepper and celery. Season with dill weed. Pour dressing over crawfish mixture and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
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[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Marinated Crawfish, Zucchini and Summer Squash Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Romantics say that it's the simple things in life that are best. Well if that's so, then this simple crawfish and squash salad should set hearts aglow. I recommend serving it in a beautiful cut crystal bowl to enhance its presentation.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 3 medium zucchini squash, shredded
- 3 medium summer squash, shredded
- 1 small Bermuda onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 red bell pepper, julienned
- 1/2 yellow bell pepper, julienned
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup sweet pickle relish
- 1/3 cup salad oil
- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine crawfish, squash, 1 small Bermuda onion, bell peppers, garlic and relish. In a separate mixing bowl, combine salad oil, wine vinegar, basil, thyme, salt and pepper. Using a wire whisk, whip until well-blended. Pour marinade evenly over vegetable mixture, cover and refrigerate salad overnight. Prior to serving, toss and drain off any excess liquid. Place the salad into a decorative serving bowl and garnish with edible flower petals such as pansies, dianthus, violets or marigolds.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
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[Contact](#) |
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 [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Carboneaux

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4 - 6

COMMENT:

This pasta dish was first introduced at Lafitte's Landing Restaurant in 1981. Pasta was coming of age in American cooking and South Louisiana had the perfect ingredients for such a dish. Today, this dish is found throughout America.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups cooked angel hair pasta
- 1 cup cooked crawfish tails
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 1 tbsp chopped garlic
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1/4 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1/2 cup diced andouille or bacon
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a two quart heavy bottom sauce pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Add garlic, green onions, mushrooms, tomatoes and andouille. Saute three to five minutes or until all vegetables are wilted. Add crawfish and cook for an additional two minutes. Deglaze pan with white wine and lemon juice, and continue cooking until volume of liquid is reduced to one half. Add heavy whipping cream and, stirring constantly, reduce until cream is thick and of a sauce-like consistency, approximately five minutes. Add diced red bell pepper and cook for one minute. Remove from heat, add parsley and season to taste using salt and pepper. Gently fold in cooked angel hair pasta and serve. May be chilled and served as a cold pasta salad.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Crawfish Andouille Fettuccini

Prep Time: 45 Minutes**Yields:** 6 Servings**Comment:**

Probably the two ingredients most associated with Louisiana cooking, crawfish and andouille, come together in this wonderful pasta dish. The light, smoky flavor of andouille adds the perfect touch to the fettuccini

**Ingredients:**

- 2 pounds crawfish tails, cooked
- ½ cup diced andouille sausage
- 1 pound fettuccini noodles, cooked
- ¼ pound butter
- 2 tbsps chopped garlic
- ½ cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup diced green bell peppers
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- ½ cup diced tomatoes
- ¾ cup flour
- 1 quart crawfish stock (see method below)
- or 1 quart water seasoned with chicken bouillon
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ¼ cup tomato sauce
- 1½ cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 tsp chopped basil
- 1 tsp chopped tarragon
- 2 tbsps chopped parsley
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a heavy-bottomed 3½-quart saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add garlic, onions, celery, bell peppers, mushrooms, tomatoes and andouille. Sauté for 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and blend well. Whisk in crawfish stock, white wine, lemon juice and tomato sauce. Whisk well until all is blended. Bring to a simmer and hold for 10 minutes, stirring frequently. Add crawfish tails and cream. Return to simmer and cook 10 minutes. Add basil, tarragon, parsley and green onions. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from heat and toss with pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Old-Fashioned Macaroni and Cheese Cups with Crawfish

Prep Time: 35 Minutes

Yields: 6-8 Servings

Comment:

Working parents will love this recipe. It is quick, easy and inexpensive to make. It also tastes great and supplies much-needed dairy to your diet.

Ingredients:

- 1 (12-ounce) package long macaroni
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 2 cups grated mild Cheddar
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- ¼ tsp paprika
- ¼ tsp cayenne
- salt and black pepper to taste
- ½ cup bread crumbs
- 2 tbsps butter

Method:

Cook macaroni according to package instructions. Drain. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a buttered 9" x 13" baking dish, layer macaroni, crawfish tails and 1½ cups grated cheese. In a separate bowl, beat eggs, milk and seasonings well. Pour mixture over layered macaroni, cheese and crawfish. Sprinkle with bread crumbs, dot with 2 tablespoons of butter and top with remaining grated cheese. Bake 25–30 minutes or until knife inserted in center comes out clean.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Burger

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

In Cajun country, Louisiana's favorite "mud bugs" are often found nestled between hamburger buns as an alternative to ground meat.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lbs cleaned crawfish tails
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 2 tbsps garlic, diced
- 3 eggs, beaten
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup seasoned breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups unseasoned flour

METHOD:

Grind crawfish, onions, celery, bell pepper, and garlic in a homestyle meat grinder or cuisinart. Once ground, add eggs and season to taste using salt and pepper. Add breadcrumbs, 1/2 cup at a time, to absorb any excess liquid. Add parsley. Mold all ingredients into hamburger-style patties. In a 10-inch cast iron skillet add vegetable oil and heat over medium-high heat. Dust each crawfish patty with flour and saute in skillet until golden brown on both sides. Remove, drain well and prepare as you would any hamburger.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crawfish Bread

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4-5

COMMENT:

What better way to eat crawfish étouffée than nestled in a loaf of French bread!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (28-ounce) bag of Chef John Folse's Louisiana Style Crawfish Étouffée
- 5 tbsps cornstarch
- 1/3 cup water
- 1 loaf French bread
- 3 tbsps butter, softened



Crawfish Bread

Preheat oven to 350°F. Take Crawfish Étouffée and heat according to package directions. In a medium saucepan, pour contents of bag and bring to a simmer. In a small bowl add 5 tablespoons cornstarch and 1/3 cup water and mix until cornstarch is dissolved. Add cornstarch to simmering étouffée and stir until thickened. The mixture will be slightly thicker than pie filling. Set aside to cool. Cut top off of a loaf of French bread. Scoop inside out of loaf and set aside. Put crawfish mixture into bread. Butter top, place on top of filling and wrap loaf in foil. Bake for 20-30 minutes. Cut into slices and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Triple Seafood and Tasso Stuffed French Bread

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 4–5 Servings

Comment:

Crawfish and crabmeat and shrimp, oh my! All tucked into a crusty French loaf with a taste of tasso, too—this sandwich is hard to top!

Ingredients:

- 1 pound medium (31–35 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 pound claw crabmeat
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 1 cup diced tasso
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced green bell peppers
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- ½ cup diced tomatoes
- 2 tbsps diced garlic
- 1 jalapeño, minced
- 2 bay leaves
- ½ cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup flour
- 1 quart shellfish stock or water
- 1 ounce sherry
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- 1 loaf French bread

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a 2-gallon stockpot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, tomatoes, garlic and bay leaves. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend shrimp, crabmeat, crawfish, tasso and tomato sauce into mixture. Whisk flour into vegetable mixture to form a white roux. Slowly add stock or water, a little at a time, until sauce consistency is achieved. Continue adding stock as necessary to retain consistency. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30–40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add sherry, green onions and parsley. Cook 5 minutes. Season with salt, cayenne pepper and hot sauce. Set aside to cool. Slice French bread in half. Scoop inside out of each half and set aside. Stuff mixture into bottom half of bread. Replace top half, and wrap loaf in foil. Bake 8–12 minutes. Cut into 3–4 inch slices and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Stuffed Summer Squash

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

YIELDS: 6 Servings

COMMENT:

The name summer squash is a little deceiving because these vegetables are plentiful even in the cool fall months. This recipe uses shrimp and seasonings to make a delicious stuffed squash. Any other type of squash can be substituted. You may even want to try stuffing zucchini using 1 pound of cooked and drained ground beef in place of shrimp.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound small shrimp (70-90 count)
- 3 medium yellow summer squash
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 cup minced zucchini
- ¼ cup minced onions
- ¼ cup minced celery
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- ¼ cup minced red bell pepper
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 1 cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Slice yellow squash lengthwise into two equal halves. Remove neck from squash and finely dice for recipe. Place squash halves in pot of boiling water and cook for 8–10 minutes or until skin is tender. Remove from water and allow to cool. In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add zucchini, yellow squash, onions, celery, garlic and bell peppers. Sauté approximately 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add lump crabmeat and shrimp and fold gently into mixture. Add lemon juice and cook 1 additional minute. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Add bread crumbs a little at a time until squash mixture is held together but not too dry. Using a metal spoon, scoop seed section from center of yellow squash and discard seeds. Divide stuffing equally between six halves, stuff and place on baking pan. Sprinkle with additional bread crumbs and bake 10–15 minutes until squash is golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Mississippi River Shrimp Stuffed Bell Peppers

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Long before lake and gulf shrimp were available to Louisianans, river shrimp were in great supply. Almost everyone I know in South Louisiana has a vegetable garden, and by the middle of summer, we all have an abundance of fresh bell peppers, eggplant and tomatoes. Instead of canning or giving away your extras, make dinner! Nothing tastes better than vegetables at their peak of ripeness. This dish is most commonly eaten as an entrée. However, try cutting each pepper in half and serving in place of a vegetable and starch side dish.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 whole green bell peppers
- 2 whole yellow bell peppers
- 2 whole red bell peppers
- 2 whole orange bell peppers
- 4 eggplants, peeled and cubed
- 4 cups river shrimp tails, cooked
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 cup onions, diced
- ½ cup celery, diced
- ½ cup red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ cup garlic, minced
- ½ cup tomatoes, diced
- ½ pound ground pork
- ½ pound ground beef
- 1 cup rich chicken stock
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1½ cups seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- ¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut and discard the tops from the bell peppers and clean the pulp from inside. In a large pot, cover bell peppers by 2 inches with lightly salted water. Bring to a low boil and cook 5-8 minutes. Remove peppers from pot and cool under cold tap water. In the same pot, boil diced eggplant until tender, approximately 10-15 minutes. Strain and reserve stock for later use. In a 4-quart saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and tomatoes approximately 10-15

minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ground pork and ground beef and slow cook until golden brown and each grain of meat is well separated. Add small amounts of chicken stock if the meat mixture becomes too dry during cooking. When mixture is browned, add eggplant and cook an additional 30 minutes until vegetables, meat and eggplant are completely tender and well blended. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Gently fold in river shrimp and sprinkle breadcrumbs into the mixture to absorb most of the liquid. Stuff mixture into bell peppers, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and a small amount of additional breadcrumbs and place on a large baking sheet. Bake 15-20 minutes or until peppers are heated thoroughly. You may wish to cook the stuffed peppers in a casserole dish topped with your favorite tomato or marinara sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Mike Graham's Deep Fried Oysters and Shrimp

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Deep frying is still quite common in the South. With the introduction of "lite" oils, the technique seems to live on forever. I feel it is necessary to include my own frying technique since so many customers request it time and time again.



INGREDIENTS FOR BATTER:

- 1 egg
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup water
- 4 tbsps yellow mustard
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 1-quart mixing bowl blend all ingredients well. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR FRYING:

- 2 dozen freshly shucked oysters
- 21-25 count shrimp, peeled, tail on and deveined
- oil for deep frying
- 4 cups yellow corn flour
- 2 tbsps granulated garlic
- 2 tbsps salt
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper

METHOD:

Using a home-style deep frying unit, such as a Fry Daddy, heat oil according to manufacturer's directions. A high quality vegetable oil or peanut oil should be considered. Corn flour, a double-ground, yellow cornmeal, may be found in the gourmet section of most food stores or as a pre-packaged fish fry such as Zatarain's. Combine corn flour, garlic, salt and peppers, blending well to ensure seasonings are evenly distributed. Dip oysters and shrimp in egg batter and then into seasoned corn flour. Deep fry, a few at a time, until they float to the top of the oil and are golden brown. Continue the process until all oysters and shrimp are done.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Japanese Fried Rice with Shrimp

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

In Japan, rice is more than just a staple. It is also a symbol of prosperity, health and well-being. Fried rice is a delicious accompaniment to any meal and a wonderful way to use leftover meats and day-old rice. The key to good fried rice is a really hot skillet, fresh vegetables and cooled rice.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2½ cups rice, cooked and cooled
- ½ pound tiny shrimp, 90-110 count
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 large carrot, diced small
- 1 bunch green onion, sliced
- ¼ cup soy sauce, or to taste

METHOD:

In a large skillet, heat a couple of teaspoons of vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Season the beaten eggs with salt and pepper. Add to the pan and cook like a thin omelet. Remove cooked eggs from the pan, and cut into ½ inch square pieces. Using the same pan, add a little more oil and heat. Fry the diced carrots until they are slightly tender, about 3 minutes. Add shrimp and sauté until pink and curled, about 2 minutes. Reduce heat to low, add rice and mix well. Add green onions and cooked eggs and mix gently. While mixing, slowly add a little soy sauce at a time. Add soy sauce until the color of the fried rice is a slight golden brown color. Increase the heat to high and fry the rice mixture, add salt and pepper to taste.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp and Crawfish Cake Sandwich

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

In this great Lenten recipe, we have changed great crab cakes into something better- shrimp and crawfish cakes. We garnish this sandwich with sliced avocado and remoulade sauce to make a great Friday lunch or dinner. Add bacon to make a tasty club sandwich for lunch any other day of the week.

INGREDIENTS:

½ pound small shrimp, peeled and deveined (70-90 count)
 1 pound crawfish tails, drained
 2 tbsps green onions, minced
 2 tbsps red bell pepper, minced
 2 tbsps onions, minced
 3 eggs
 4 tsp lemon juice
 2 tsp dry mustard
 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
 1 tsp kosher salt
 1 tsp cayenne
 4 tsp Zatarain's Creole Seasoning
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 2 cups panko (Japanese) bread crumbs
 toasted slices of Texas toast
 lettuce
 sliced avocado
 remoulade sauce



METHOD:

In the bowl of a food processor, combine, shrimp, crawfish, green onions, red bell pepper and onions. Pulse 2-3 times or until seafood is coarsely chopped. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together eggs, lemon juice, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, salt, cayenne and Creole seasoning. Add seafood mixture and breadcrumbs. Form into 12 equal balls and flatten into cakes. In a medium skillet, heat vegetable oil over medium high heat. Sauté cakes until golden brown, about 3-5 minutes on each side. Serve on Texas toast with lettuce, bacon, avocado and remoulade sauce. Cut each sandwich into four triangles and pierce with frilled toothpicks to keep each section together.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Coconut Shrimp with Satsuma Sweet & Sour Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Coconut batters are all the rage these days. And it is also about that time of year when you see vendors selling Satsumas on every corner. Here is a great recipe for coconut shrimp with a dipping sauce that uses South Louisiana's favorite citrus fruits.

INGREDIENTS FOR COCONUT SHRIMP:

- 3 dozen large shrimp, peeled and de-veined (tail on)
- 2 egg yolks
- 2 cups ice water
- 2 cups rice flour
- 2 cups sweetened coconut, shredded
- Oil for frying

INGREDIENTS FOR SATSUMA SWEET AND SOUR SAUCE:

- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 2 tbsp red onion, minced
- 2 tbsp carrot, minced
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp ginger, minced
- ½ tsp Serrano chilies, minced
- ¼ cup pineapple, crushed
- 2 cups pineapple juice
- 6 satsumas, juiced
- 2 Meyer lemons, zested and juiced
- 3 cups sugar
- 2 tsp cornstarch
- Salt and black pepper

METHOD:

To make the dipping sauce, heat oil in a large saucepan. Sauté the onions, carrot, garlic, ginger, and chilies until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the pineapple, juices, lemon zest and sugar. Bring to a boil and reduce heat to simmer. Simmer for about 10 minutes. In a small bowl mix cornstarch and a small amount of water to make a paste. Add the cornstarch slurry to the sauce and stir until thickened. Serve warm or at room temperature. To cook the shrimp, heat oil in deep fat fryer or frying pan to 375 degrees using an oil thermometer. Mix egg yolk, water, rice flour and coconut in a mixing bowl. Dip shrimp into batter and fry until batter is golden brown, about 3-5 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Seafood Paella

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Crawfish tails and shrimp can be used by heart-conscious chefs. They are higher in cholesterol than most meats and seafood, yet are low in fat content, especially low in saturated fat; therefore, they do not affect your blood cholesterol level as much when eaten in moderate portions.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup (170-190 count) shrimp, peeled and de-veined.
- 1 cup crawfish tails, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup lump crabmeat
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1 cup diced tomato
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1/3 cup diced andouille sausage
- 4 ½ cups seafood stock or clam juice
- 3 cups raw rice
- salt, cracked black pepper and red pepper to taste
- 2 tbsps minced fresh parsley
- 1 tsp cumin
- 1 ½ tsps chili powder
- ½ cup sliced green onions

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Using a vegetable oil cooking spray, spray a paella pan or other oven-proof baking dish. Heat olive oil over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and tomatoes. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add frozen peas and blend well. In a separate non-stick skillet, sauté andouille until light brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Remove to paper towels and blot off surface fat. Return sausage to paella pan, add seafood stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add rice and season to taste using salt and pepper. Blend in parsley, cumin, chili powder, green onions, shrimp, crawfish and crabmeat. Cover pan with aluminum foil and bake 45 minutes to 1 hour. Remove from oven, stir and allow to set 30 minutes before serving. The seafood stock may be made by simmering the shrimp and crab peelings and the lightly rinsed crawfish peelings for 20 minutes or more. Strain and discard the peelings, chill and skim off any fat.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Stuffed Eggplant with River Shrimp

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This dish is most commonly eaten as an entree. However, try cutting it into vegetable-size portions and serving in place of a potato dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 medium-sized eggplants, split lengthwise
- 2 eggplant, peeled and cubed
- 4 cups river shrimp tails
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 pound ground pork
- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1 cup rich chicken stock
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 1/2 cups seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Boil all eggplant in lightly salted water until tender. Remove and cool under tap water. Using a metal spoon, scrape meat from inside of the halved eggplants, being careful not to tear the shell. Save the shells to be stuffed later. Add this scraped meat to the uncooked cubed eggplant and set aside. The cubed eggplant has been added to ensure that enough vegetable will be available at the time of stuffing. In a four-quart sauce pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and tomatoes approximately 10-15 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ground pork and ground beef and slow cook until golden brown and each grain of meat is well separated. Add small amounts of chicken stock, should the meat mixture become too dry during cooking. When mixture is browned, add eggplant and continue to cook an additional 30 minutes until vegetables, meat and eggplant are well blended. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Gently fold in river shrimp and sprinkle breadcrumbs into the mixture to absorb most of the liquid. Using a metal cooking spoon, stuff shells with cooked eggplant mixture, dividing equally between the six shells. Sprinkle additional breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese on top of stuffed eggplant and place on baking pan. Bake until breadcrumbs and cheese are golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp and Grits

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Don't you know it; grits would somehow find its place alongside Gulf shrimp in Louisiana. Well, sure enough it did, and here it is.

INGREDIENTS FOR SHRIMP:

2 dozen 21-25 count shrimp, peel and deveined
 ½ cup butter
 ¼ cup red bell pepper, finely diced
 ¼ cup yellow bell pepper, finely diced
 ¼ cup green bell pepper, finely diced
 ½ cup red onion, finely diced
 ½ cup celery, finely diced
 1tbsp garlic, minced
 ½ cup andouille sausage, minced
 ¼ cup flour
 4 cups shrimp stock
 ½ cup cream
 ¼ cup green onions, sliced
 Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD FOR SHRIMP:

In a large sauté pan, heat butter over medium high heat. Add all vegetables and andouille. Sauté 3-5 minutes stirring occasionally, about 5 minutes. Add flour and stir until slightly golden, 3-5 minutes. Add shrimp stock one cup at a time stirring until mixture achieves a sauce-like consistency. Continue adding as much stock as necessary. Add cream, blend well and bring to a low boil. Add green onions and shrimp and cook until shrimp curl and turn pink, 3 -5 minutes. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Serve a generous portion of sauce and 4 large shrimp over each portion of grits.

INGREDIENTS FOR GRITS:

1 ½ cups stone ground grits
 3 ½ cups whole milk
 3 ¼ cups water
 1 ½ tbsps salt
 1/2 tsps white pepper
 4 tbsps. butter
 ½ pound shredded Gouda cheese, not smoked

METHOD FOR GRITS:

In a 1-gallon-stockpot, combine milk, water, salt, pepper and butter. Bring to a low boil over medium high heat. Add grits and stir well into the liquid. Reduce heat to medium-low and cover. Cook 12-14

minutes stirring occasionally until thickened. Stirring. Remove from heat and blend in cheese. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve a generous portion of grits along with the shrimp.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Stuffed Mirliton

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The Chayote squash or vegetable pear, as some may know it, is known here in South Louisiana as mirliton. It was brought here by the Cajuns from South America in 1755. Today, it is the premier vegetable of the Cajuns and Creoles.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 mirlitons, sliced lengthwise
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1/2 pound diced ham
- 1 cup 150-200 count shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup rich chicken stock
- 1/4 pound butter
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1-1/2 cups seasoned Italian bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
- 6 pats chipped butter
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Boil mirlitons in lightly salted water until meat is tender enough to scoop from the shells. Once tender, remove and cool under tap water. Using a metal spoon, remove seeds from the center of the mirlitons and gently scoop all meat out of the shells. Reserve meat and save shells for stuffing later. In a four quart sauce pot, melt butter over medium high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper, green onions, garlic and diced ham. Cook approximately fifteen minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chicken stock should vegetable mixture becomes too dry during cooking. Add mirlitons and shrimp, and continue cooking approximately twenty-five to thirty minutes or until mixture is well incorporated. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt, cracked black pepper and parsley. Sprinkle in seasoned bread crumbs to absorb any excess liquid. Stuff mirliton mixture into the shells, dividing equally into six portions. Place stuffed mirlitons on a baking pan and top with one pat of chipped butter and remaining bread crumbs. Bake until golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Louisiana Seafood Sausage

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

MAKES: 50 (6-inch) Links

COMMENT:

From Canadian geese to catfish, Louisianians make sausage with every ingredient imaginable. However, this recipe is typical of the Cajun desire to marry meat and seafood. Try it. You'll be amazed!

INGREDIENTS:

- 9 pounds ground pork
- 3 pounds ground shrimp
- 1 1/2 pounds whole shrimp
- 1/3 cup green onions, finely sliced
- 1 cup pimento, finely chopped
- 2 tbsps Old Bay seasoning
- 2 1/2 tbsps granulated garlic
- 3 tbsps salt
- 2 tbsps black pepper
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1/2 tsp dried basil

METHOD:

Place all ingredients into a large mixing bowl. Using your hands, mix the ingredients together for approximately 5-10 minutes. Blend well. Using commercial hog casing, available at your local butcher shop, stuff ingredients into 6-inch links approximately 4 ounces each.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Picatta

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Tiger Prawns are jumbo shrimp that are easily identifiable with the green stripe that runs every 1/4-inch across the tail. They are available in the seafood case at most grocery stores. However, feel free to substitute jumbo white or brown gulf shrimp in place of the tigers. Feel free to adjust the amount of garlic or lemon in this recipe to suit your personal taste. Personally, I love garlic and an additional squeeze of lemon in this classic Italian dish.

INGREDIENTS:

16 Tiger Prawns, peeled and deveined with tail section intact
 1 1/2 tbsps flour
 1/2 stick butter
 1/4 cup olive oil
 6 cloves garlic, sliced
 1/4 cup shallots, minced
 1 lemon slice, quartered
 1/4 cup capers, drained
 1 tbsp parsley, chopped
 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
 1 tbsp fresh oregano, chopped
 juice of 1 lemon
 1/2 cup white wine
 1 cup shrimp stock or water
 salt and pepper to taste
 seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
 4 servings cooked pasta, hot

METHOD:

Take peelings from shrimp and place in 3 cups of water. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to low and simmer 10-15 minutes. Strain and reserve 1 1/2 cups. In a large mixing bowl, season shrimp to taste with salt and pepper and sprinkle in flour. In a large skillet, combine butter and oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic and sauté until edges begin to turn golden, then add shallots and lemon slice. Sauté 1 additional minute and add shrimp. Cook until pink and curled, approximately 2 minutes. Add capers, parsley, herbs, lemon juice and white wine. Bring to a simmer, reduce wine to 1/2 volume and add shrimp stock. Bring to a rolling boil and cook until slightly thickened. Season to taste using salt and pepper. When ready to serve, place hot pasta in the center of 4 serving dishes and top with the picatta sauce and 4 jumbo shrimp. Sprinkle with seasoned Italian breadcrumbs and garnish with a fresh basil or oregano leaf.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Scampi

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Although scampi is a term used in some parts of the world to describe a certain species of shrimp, it is most often used to describe an Italian dish. This simple scampi recipe is magnificent when served over pasta, but may also be used as a topping for chicken and fish or served alongside any rice dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 pounds (20-25 count) fresh shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/2 cup all purpose flour
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 6 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1/4 cup shallots, chopped
- 2 tbsps fresh basil
- 2 tbsps fresh oregano
- 1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 1/4 cup fresh parsley, minced
- 1/2 cup dry white wine

METHOD:

In a bowl, combine flour, salt and peppers and blend thoroughly. Dust shrimp lightly in flour and set aside. In a large sauté pan, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic and sauté 1-2 minutes or until edges turn golden. Add shrimp, shallots, basil and oregano. Using a slotted spoon, turn shrimp on each side until pink and curled. Add mushrooms, parsley and deglaze with white wine. Season to taste using salt and peppers. Serve an equal amount of shrimp over seasoned rice such as pilaf.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Black-Eyed Pea Battered Shrimp

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Deep frying shrimp is an everyday occurrence in Louisiana. Often, however, the batters or dips used to flavor the shrimp are as varied as the cooks who prepare them. This recipe was created by Robert Harrington, Dean of the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute at Nicholls State University. I think it's an incredible combination.

INGREDIENTS:

36 (16 to 20-count) head-on shrimp, peeled and de-veined
 3/4 cup black-eyed peas, cooked
 1/4 cup onion, diced
 1 tbsp garlic, minced
 1/8 tsp ground ginger
 2 tsps Creole seasoning
 1 1/2 tsps black pepper
 1/2 tsp salt
 2 eggs
 2 ounces vegetable oil
 1 1/4 cups beer
 2 cups all-purpose flour
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 1 quart vegetable oil

METHOD:

I recommend peeling the shells from the tail of the shrimp, taking care not to separate the tails from the head. When battering the shrimp, dip only the tail portion into the batter and the shrimp will have an elegant presentation. In the bowl of a food processor, combine peas, onion, garlic, ginger, Creole seasoning, black pepper and salt. Blend 2-3 minutes on high speed or until peas are coarsely chopped. Add eggs, vegetable oil and beer. Continue to blend until peas are puréed, approximately 1-2 minutes. Add flour and blend once again for 1-2 additional minutes. Pour the black-eyed pea batter into a ceramic bowl. When ready to fry, heat vegetable oil in a home-style Fry Daddy according to manufacturer's directions. If a home-style fryer is not available, place 3 inches of vegetable oil in a large pot and heat to 350 degrees F. Dip the shrimp into the batter, allowing all excess to drain off. Gently place shrimp into the deep fryer and allow to cook until golden brown and partially floating.

NOTE: The fryer used in today's segment is a Bravetti (Platinum Pro) EP67, which can be ordered for approximately \$100 from Chef's Ingenuity Smart Solutions (order no. 2721). Please call (888) 944-9888 for more information.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

BARBECUED SHRIMP LONGMAN

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

This recipe comes from Ruth Levy Longman, a schoolteacher from Franklin, La., who loved to eat at Pascal's Manale. Many years ago, she created this dish based on the restaurant's famous dish.

Ingredients:

4 dozen (21–25 count) shrimp, head-on
 ½ pound butter
 ¼ cup olive oil
 4 cloves garlic, minced
 1/3 cup Worcestershire sauce
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 1 tsp paprika
 2 tsps salt
 cracked black pepper to taste
 ¼ cup chopped parsley

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place shrimp in a large baking pan with a 1-inch lip. In a 15-inch cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add olive oil. Once olive oil is hot, blend in garlic, Worcestershire, hot sauce, paprika, salt and pepper. Sauté 1–2 minutes. Sprinkle in parsley and sauté 1 additional minute. Pour garlic sauce over shrimp and bake 10–12 minutes, turning shrimp occasionally. Pour shrimp and sauce into a large ceramic serving bowl, and serve warm with French bread.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Diablo

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Although many Cajun dishes are often mistaken for being hot and spicy, this recipe certainly adds credibility to that myth. This recipe is an old fishing camp dish, and the fisherman had no trouble extinguishing the heat with a can of ice-cold beer. Please feel free to tone down the spice to your liking.

INGREDIENTS:

36 jumbo shrimp, head-on
 6 cups cooked penne pasta
 ¼ pound butter
 ½ cup onions, minced
 ¼ cup celery, minced
 ¼ cup red bell pepper, minced
 ¼ cup yellow bell pepper, minced
 2 tbsps garlic, minced
 ½ cup andouille or tasso, julienned
 ¼ cup green onions, sliced
 ½ cup Rotel tomatoes
 ½ cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
 1 tsp cayenne or jalapeño peppers, minced
 1 ounce dry white wine
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 3 cups heavy whipping cream
 2 tbsps basil, chopped
 2 tbsps fresh thyme leaves
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Peel shrimp shells from the tail being careful not to break the head from the tail. (You may wish to make 2 cups of shrimp stock using the shells and add it in place of an equal amount of whipping cream to lower the fat.) In a 12- to 14-inch cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes, or until the vegetables are wilted. Add andouille and continue to cook one minute. Add green onions, tomatoes and mushrooms. Continue to sauté 3 to 5 minutes. Add cayenne peppers and deglaze with white wine and lemon juice. Add heavy whipping cream and bring to a rolling boil. Lower to simmer and reduce to approximately ½ volume. Add shrimp, basil and thyme and cook until shrimp are pink and curled. Do not overcook. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Heat cooked pasta under hot running water and drain well. Place the pasta in the center of a large serving platter and top with the shrimp diablo, arranging shrimp decoratively over the surface. Garnish with fresh basil.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

"Stirrin' It Up" Shrimp Viala

PREP TIME: 20 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This unique shrimp presentation was created at Lafitte's Landing for use during the height of the white shrimp season. The dish was named in honor of J. P. Viala, builder of Viala Plantation, the former home of Lafitte's Landing Restaurant.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 dozen 21-25 count shrimp, peeled and de-veined
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced
- ¼ cup chopped green onions
- ¼ cup sliced mushrooms
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced green bell pepper
- ½ cup diced Creole tomatoes
- 2 ½ tbsps flour
- 1 oz dry white wine
- 2 ½ cups hot shellfish or chicken stock
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp parsley
- salt and cracked black pepper, to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat olive oil over medium high heat. Sauté garlic, green onions and mushrooms approximately 2 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add red, yellow and green bell pepper and tomatoes, cook 1 additional minute. Add shrimp and stir fry into vegetables until shrimp begin to turn pink and curl, approximately 2 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend well to create a white roux. The flour will absorb most of the liquids in the pan and act as a thickening agent for the sauce. Deglaze with white wine and add 2 cups hot stock, whisking well into seasoning mixture. Add lemon juice and parsley and season to taste using salt and cracked pepper. Cook until sauce is thickened and shrimp are done, but not over cooked, 2 to 3 minutes. Additional stock may be added, should sauce become too thick. This dish may be served in an au gratin dish or heated chafing dish with garlic croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp and Potato Pancakes

MAKES: 20 4-inch pancakes

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ lb (70-90 count) shrimp, peeled and de-veined
- 6 Idaho potatoes, peeled and halved
- 1 cup onion, diced small
- ½ cup minced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped green onion
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1½ tbsps salt
- 1½ tbsps black pepper
- 3 eggs, beaten
- ¼ cup vegetable oil

METHOD:

Boil potatoes in lightly salted water until tender but not overcooked, approximately 20 minutes. Drain potatoes and refrigerate a minimum of 3 hours, preferably overnight. (It is easier to grate chilled potatoes.) Grate potatoes using the large holes on a cheese grater. Rough chop the shrimp and squeeze off all excess liquid. Mix the shrimp, onions, garlic, green onions and parsley with the grated potatoes. Add salt and pepper and fold in eggs. Blend well and form into 4-inch pancakes, approximately ½ inch thick. In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium heat and sauté pancakes 2 or 3 at a time approximately 5-7 minutes, turning occasionally. Continue until all pancakes are cooked. Serve as a breakfast pancake or as an accompaniment to any meat or seafood dish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Mama's Shrimp Spaghetti - (Something Old)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

For as long as I can remember, Mama cooked this dish for us when we were growing up. I never knew of another spaghetti sauce that included a roux, but I guess that's what made this one special. Using pancake mix in place of flour gave the roux its Cajun flavor but certainly with a different twist. We craved it back then and we still love it today. Even though Mama is no longer with us, she taught us everything in her own special way, and I think of her every time I cook this dish. - Carol Benoit, Morgan City.

INGREDIENTS:

5 pounds (50-60 count) shrimp peeled and de-veined
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 1/2 cup pancake mix
 2 cups chopped onions
 1/4 cup chopped bell pepper
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 1 (10-ounce) can Rotel tomatoes
 2 (6-ounce) cans tomato paste
 2 tbsps Worcestershire Sauce
 5 cups water
 1 tsp celery salt
 1 tsp salt
 black pepper
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 1 (16-ounce) package spaghetti, cooked

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stock pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add pancake mix and, using a wire whisk, stir until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add Rotel and tomato paste, blending well into the roux mixture. Cook 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add Worcestershire Sauce and water. Blend well to create a slightly thickened tomato sauce. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add half of the shrimp. Bring back to simmer and stirring occasionally, cook 30-45 minutes. Season the sauce to taste using celery salt, salt and pepper. Add green onions, parsley and the remaining shrimp. Cook 5-10 minutes longer and serve over hot spaghetti.

Mama's Shrimp Spaghetti - (Something New)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS:

5 pounds (50-60 count) shrimp, peeled and de-veined
1/4 cup vegetable oil
1/2 cup pancake mix
2 cups chopped onions
1/4 cup chopped bell pepper
1 tbsp minced garlic
1 (10-ounce) can Rotel tomatoes
2 (6-ounce) cans tomato paste, no salt added
2 tbsps Worcestershire Sauce
5 cups water
1/2 tsp celery salt
salt substitute
black pepper
1 cup sliced green onions
1/4 cup chopped parsley
1 (16-ounce) package spaghetti, cooked

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stock pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add 1/4 cup pancake mix and, using a wire whisk, stir until dark brown roux is achieved. Add remaining mix to roux and continue to stir until well blended. Add onions, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add Rotel and tomato paste, blending well into the roux mixture. Cook 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add Worcestershire Sauce and water. Blend well to create a slightly thickened tomato sauce. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add half of the shrimp. Bring back to simmer and, stirring occasionally, cook 30-45 minutes. Season the sauce to taste using celery salt, salt substitute and pepper. Add green onions, parsley and the remaining shrimp. Cook 5-10 minutes longer and serve over hot spaghetti.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Curry Shrimp With Broccoli

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

Western cooks may consider Oriental cooking beyond their reach. This simple Beef with Spinach recipe will allow the novice to create the unique flavor of Chinese food in a Wok or skillet right in your home kitchen, and best of all, the ingredients may be found in the specialty food section of any large supermarket or Oriental store.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ lb. shrimp (peeled and de-veined)
- 4 tablespoon vegetable oil
- ½ tablespoon soy sauce (cooking wine)
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 cups broccoli
- 2 cups onion
- 2 cups mushrooms
- 5 tablespoons water
- 1 tablespoon curry powder
- 1/3 teaspoon salt
- 1/3 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch

METHOD:

Blend 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil, soy sauce and cornstarch with shrimp to prevent them from sticking together during frying. In a wok or large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon vegetable oil. Briefly stir-fry broccoli, onion, mushrooms and water. Remove and put in bowl and keep warm. Add an additional 2 tablespoons vegetable oil to wok. Add shrimp and stir-fry to desired tenderness. In small mixing bowl, combine water, curry powder, salt, sugar, and cornstarch. Add this mixture to the wok along with vegetables and blend well until heated thoroughly.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Cajun Drunken Shrimp

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Though I first discovered this technique in Japan where Sake was used to steam the shrimp, I couldn't help but think that this should be a good Cajun appetizer. When substituting beer for the Sake, the dish took on an interesting flavor and, in my opinion, was better than the Oriental version.

INGREDIENTS:

36 (10-count), head on shrimp
 3 bottles Abita Beer
 1 quart water
 2 carrots, sliced
 1 red bell pepper, sliced
 6 (3-inch) ears of corn, sliced
 6 new potatoes, halved
 1 lemon, sliced
 1 tbsp diced garlic
 1 onion, quartered
 2 bay leaves
 1 tbsp green peppercorns
 1 tbsp red peppercorns
 1 tbsp white peppercorns
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 dash of hot sauce

METHOD:

In a large roasting pan, place all vegetables. Pour beer in slowly as it will tend to foam and may run over the top of the pan. Add all remaining ingredients, except shrimp. Place roaster on top of stove, cover and bring mixture to a rolling boil. Reduce heat to simmer and allow vegetables to steam fifteen to twenty minutes. Add shrimp and cook for five minutes. Remove from heat and steep in beer marinade an additional ten minutes. Do not remove cover. If potatoes and corn are not quite done, remove shrimp and boil vegetables in the beer mixture until tender.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Boiled Shrimp

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

INGREDIENTS:

30 quarts cold water
 12 medium onions, quartered
 6 heads of garlic, cut in half to expose pods
 1 dozen lemons, quartered
 1 quart cooking oil
 4 pounds salt
 1/2 pound cayenne pepper
 4 (3-ounce) bags crab boil
 24 medium red potatoes
 12 ears of corn
 50 (21/25 ct.) pounds head on shrimp

METHOD:

In a 60- quart stockpot, bring water to a rolling boil. Add onions, garlic, lemons, cooking oil, salt, pepper and crab boil. Continue to boil for 30 minutes. This boiling of the vegetables will ensure a good flavor in the boiling liquid. Add red potatoes and cook approximately 10-12 minutes. Add corn and cook 10 minutes before adding the shrimp. Once the water returns to a boil, cook shrimp 7-10 minutes, turn off heat and allow to set in boiling liquid 12 additional minutes. Shrimp should be served hot with potatoes, corn and pitchers of ice cold beer.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Jack's Barbeque Shrimp

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Pasqual Manales Restaurant on Napoleon Street in New Orleans made Barbecued Shrimp famous in the South. By adding Gentleman Jack liquor to this recipe, I think it rivals the Manale recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pounds 21-25 count head-on shrimp
- 4 tbsps diced garlic
- 4 tbsps cracked black pepper
- 3 ounces Gentleman Jack Rare Tennessee Whiskey
- 4 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsps dried basil
- 1 cup melted butter
- 1 tbsp dried thyme
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1 tbsp Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

It is important to realize that the head-on shrimp is best used when barbecuing. In Cajun country, it is a must to suck the heads of the butter-garlic flavored cooked shrimp. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a heavy bottom saute pan, heat butter and olive oil over medium high heat. Combine all remaining ingredients and blend well into butter mixture. Cook one to two minutes. Place head-on shrimp in a large baking pan with a one inch lip. Pour melted butter mixture on top of shrimp, coating as evenly as possible. Place shrimp on center rack of oven and cook three to five minutes or until shrimp are pink and curly. Turn shrimp one time, baste well and allow to cook three to five additional minutes. Remove from oven and serve in soup bowls with the seasoned butter mixture. Hot French bread should accompany this dish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Viala in Crawfish Tasso Butter

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This unique shrimp presentation was designed here at Lafitte's Landing Restaurant for use during the height of the white shrimp season. At this time of year, shrimp are plentiful and we only select ten to twelve count shrimp for this recipe.

INGREDIENTS FOR SHRIMP VIALA:

- 3 dozen ten to twelve count head-on shrimp
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tbsp Creole mustard
- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 1 tbsp dry sherry
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1/2 cup bechamel sauce
- 1/2 cup finely diced onions
- 3/4 cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup finely diced celery
- 1/4 cup finely diced red bell pepper
- salt and cracked black pepper
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 2 tbsps finely diced garlic
- 1/2 cup dry sherry
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 cup water

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Place shrimp right side up on cutting board. Using a sharp paring knife, cut through the tail shell from the top of the tail to the bottom of the flipper, making sure not to separate head from tail. Using your thumbs, open the tail flat, remove the vein and gently pry the meat away from the shell, leaving it intact at the head. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients except crabmeat, salt and pepper and the last three ingredients. Using a large spoon, blend until all ingredients are well incorporated. Gently fold in crabmeat being careful not to break lumps. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Stuff tail with generous portion of crabmeat stuffing. Once stuffed, the tail should lay flat on a baking pan. Place stuffed shrimp on a large baking sheet and drizzle with butter and sherry. Put water into the bottom of the baking pan and place on center oven rack. Bake until stuffing is golden brown, approximately fifteen to twenty minutes. Place two ounces of crawfish butter in center of plate and top with six shrimp.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRAWFISH TASSO BUTTER:

- 1/4 cup melted butter

1/4 cup sliced green onions
1/2 cup fresh crawfish tails
1 sprig fresh thyme
1/4 cup diced tasso
1 ounce dry white wine
1 tbsp minced garlic
1 1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
1/4 cup diced tomato
1/4 pound unsalted butter
1/4 cup sliced mushrooms
salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom saute pan, heat butter over medium high heat. Add all ingredients up to and including the thyme. Saute until crawfish and tasso are cooked thoroughly and vegetables are wilted, approximately ten minutes. Deglaze with white wine, reduce slightly and add heavy whipping cream. Continue to cook until volume of cream is reduced to one half and thickened. Slowly melt butter, a few pieces at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt and pepper. All ingredients may be strained from the sauce or allowed to remain depending on preference. Hold warm until serving. YIELDS: 1 1/2 cups

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

CREAMY SHRIMP & VEGETABLE CASSEROLE

Yields: 6 Servings

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Ingredients:

- 1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ½ cup fresh asparagus, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ½ cup sliced fresh mushrooms
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup diced green bell peppers
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 (10¾-ounce) can cream of celery soup
- ¾ tsp dried thyme
- salt and black pepper to taste
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Coat a 2-quart baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Combine soup, shrimp, asparagus, mushrooms, green onions, bell peppers, garlic and thyme in a large bowl. Season with salt and peppers. Mix well. Place in prepared baking dish. Cover and bake 30 minutes. Serve over hot rice if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

SPANISH-STYLE RICE WITH CHICKEN AND SHRIMP

Yields: 6-8 Servings

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Comment:

The Spanish are famous for their rice dishes. This dish is reminiscent of their paella in that it is made with chicken and shrimp. However, paella also includes rabbit, sausage and other types of shellfish. Paella was the inspiration for jambalaya, that theme can be seen in this dish as well.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups long grain rice
- 1 cup boneless skinless chicken thighs, diced
- 1 pound (30-35 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined with tail shell intact
- ¼ cup of vegetable oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup red bell pepper
- ½ cup yellow bell pepper
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 3 jalapeño peppers, seeded and minced
- 2 cups of diced ripe tomatoes
- 1-tablespoon tomato paste
- 3 cups of chicken stock or can broth
- ¼ cup of fine dice cilantro
- ¾ cup of frozen green peas
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a 2-gallon Dutch oven heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Sauté chicken until brown. Add onions, bell peppers, garlic and jalapeños. Cook 8-10 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Stir in tomatoes and tomato paste. Continue to cook 3-5 minutes. Pour in chicken stock and blend well. Bring to a rolling boil then stir in rice. Remove from heat then add shrimp, cilantro and peas. Season with salt and cracked black pepper. You should slightly over-season since rice tends to require a little extra seasoning. Blend well then cover and place in oven. Bake 20-25 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Noel

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

In Louisiana, it's always the right season for shrimp. The combination of red and green bell peppers in this recipe ensure that your shrimp will be perfectly dressed for the holiday season.

Ingredients:

3 dozen (21–25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 ¼ pound butter
 1 tbsp diced garlic
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup sliced mushrooms
 ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup diced green bell peppers
 2 tbsps flour
 1 ounce dry white wine
 2½ cups hot shrimp stock
 1 tsp lemon juice
 1 tsp parsley
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 garlic croutons for garnish

Method:

In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté garlic, green onions and mushrooms 2 minutes or until mushrooms are slightly wilted. Stir in bell peppers, and cook 1 additional minute. Add shrimp and stir-fry into vegetables for 3 minutes or until they begin to turn pink and curl. Blend in flour until a white roux is achieved. NOTE: The flour will absorb most liquid in pan and act as a thickening agent for sauce. Deglaze with white wine and add hot stock. Whisk well. Add lemon juice, parsley, salt and pepper. Cook until sauce is thickened, but avoid overcooking shrimp. Additional stock may be added if sauce becomes too thick. Serve with garlic croutons in an au gratin dish or heated chafing dish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

BARBECUED SHRIMP TANGIPAHOA

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Barbecued shrimp first made its debut at Pascal's Manale Restaurant on Napoleon Street in New Orleans. The original owner of the restaurant served this wonderful garlic and herb shrimp to his friends who would visit the restaurant each week to partake in a poker game.

Ingredients:

36 (16–20 count) shrimp, head-on
 ½ pound butter
 ¼ cup olive oil
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 ¼ cup minced purple shallots
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 3 tbsps chopped basil
 3 tbsps chopped oregano
 3 tbsps chopped rosemary
 2 tbsps chopped thyme
 ½ cup Worcestershire sauce
 1 cup beer
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 Creole seasoning to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a 13" x 9" baking dish with a 2-inch lip, spread shrimp out evenly. In a 1-quart saucepot, heat butter and oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic, shallots, green onions, basil, oregano, rosemary and thyme. Sauté 3–5 minutes to flavor butter with herb mixture. Blend in Worcestershire and beer. Pour hot mixture over shrimp. Season with salt, pepper, Creole seasoning and hot sauce. Overseason because shells will prevent meat from absorbing most flavors. Place in oven and stir shrimp once during cooking. Cook 15 minutes or until shrimp are pink and curled. Do not overcook, as shrimp will become hard to peel. Place 6 shrimp in each of 6 soup bowls and top with equal portions of herbed-butter sauce. Serve with New Orleans French Bread.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

SHRIMP AND FETA WITH FRESH TOMATOES

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

It's hard to imagine that a famous Greek dish with ancient roots could be considered a delicacy in Creole Country. That Greek specialty Garides Saganaki, shrimp with feta, when simmered in tomatoes, spiced with jalapeños and sprinkled with cheese is very similar to Shrimp Creole Au Gratin.

Ingredients:

24 large shrimp, peeled and deveined leaving head and tail intact
 4 ounces Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Goat Feta cheese, cubed or crumbled

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

¾ cup diced yellow onions

3 cloves sliced garlic

½ jalapeño, seeded and diced

1 cup fresh diced tomatoes

1 (14.5 ounce) can diced tomatoes, including juice

1 tbsp Herbsaint liqueur (optional)

¼ cup chopped parsley

salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

In a 10-inch skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, garlic and jalapeño, sautéing 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Stir in tomatoes, bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 5 minutes. Add shrimp, Herbsaint, feta, parsley, salt and pepper. Cook 5–7 minutes or until shrimp are pink and curled. Do not overcook. Serve 4 shrimp with a generous helping of sauce as an appetizer or over pasta as an entrée.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

"Joos-Tain's" Shrimp A La Creole

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This recipe comes from The Justin Wilson Cookbook. It was one of his favorite shrimp dishes to prepare, and as a tribute to him, we have cooked it today.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound (50-60 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/2 cup onions, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- 1/3 cup sweet bell peppers, diced
- 2 cups water
- 1 small clove garlic, minced
- 2 cups tomatoes
- 1 cup tomato puree
- 1/2 tsp Lea & Perrins Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 tsp Louisiana Hot Sauce
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 cups cooked rice

METHOD:

In a cast iron skillet, sauté onions, celery, parsley and bell peppers until tender, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add water, garlic, tomatoes and tomato puree and simmer 5 minutes. Season mixture with Lea & Perrins, Louisiana Hot Sauce and salt and cook for 30 minutes. Add shrimp and cook an additional 30 minutes, or until shrimp are curled, pink and tender. Mixture should be of a thick consistency. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Creole

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Without a doubt, this is the most famous dish in the city of New Orleans. As common as red beans and rice on Monday, the shrimp Creole can be found on any table in Louisiana for Friday lunch.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds 21-25 count shrimp, peeled and de-veined
 3/4 cup vegetable oil
 3/4 cup flour
 1 cup chopped onions
 1 cup chopped celery
 1 cup chopped bell pepper
 2 tbsps diced garlic
 2 cups tomato sauce
 1 cup diced tomatoes
 1-1/2 quarts shellfish stock(see recipe)
 1 cup chopped green onions
 1/2 cup chopped parsley
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

The flavor of this dish will be greatly enhanced by the use of a rich shrimp stock. This may be done by boiling the shrimp shells in shellfish stock to achieve a concentrated flavor. In a two gallon heavy-bottomed sauce pan, heat oil over medium high heat. Using a wire whisk, add flour, stirring constantly, until light brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately three to five minutes. Add tomato sauce and diced tomatoes and blend well into roux mixture. Slowly add shellfish stock, a little at a time, stirring constantly until sauce-like consistency is achieved. Allow to cook approximately fifteen minutes, stirring occasionally. Add stock should mixture become too thick. Add shrimp, green onions and parsley and continue to cook five additional minutes. Season to taste using salt and black pepper. Serve over hot white rice using a dash of Louisiana Gold.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Sweet Corn and Shrimp Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Long before lake and gulf shrimp were available to Louisianans, river shrimp were in great supply. Many dishes featured this unique ingredient, but none is more famous than the Creole Style Sweet Corn and Shrimp Soup. The marriage of these items came about because of our friendship with the native American Indians and their gift of corn.

Mamere (grandmother) made the best corn and shrimp soup, period! Many days my brothers and I would sit around her large kitchen table peeling river shrimp and pulling the silk from the freshly picked corn. Using an "Old Hickory" knife, she would remove the kernels from the cobs and then the secret to her tasty recipe was revealed. She would boil the corn cobs with the shells of the river shrimp in a large pot, seasoned with yellow onions, celery, garlic and one hot pepper. The aroma was incredible. This secret stock was then strained through her old bent colander. The results of her labor still linger on in my memory, so many years later.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups whole kernel corn
- 2 pounds freshwater or other shrimp
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1 cup diced tomatoes, seeded
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 2 1/2 quarts shellfish stock
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a two gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium high heat. Add corn, onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Saute three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes, blend well into the vegetable mixture and add flour. Using a wire whisk, whip constantly until white roux is achieved. Do not brown. Add tomato sauce and stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a low boil and reduce to simmer. Add half of

the shrimp and cook for thirty minutes. Add remaining shrimp, cream, green onions and parsley. Allow the shrimp to cook approximately ten minutes. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Carnival-Style Shrimp Creole

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Shrimp Creole is a signature New Orleans dish. Just as red beans became a traditional Monday dinner, this is often seen on South Louisiana tables on Friday. Shrimp Creole is a perfect dish to serve friends and family before the next Mardi Gras parade.

Ingredients:

3 pounds (21–25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 ¾ cup vegetable oil
 ¾ cup flour
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced bell peppers
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 2 cups tomato sauce
 1 (10-ounce) can Ro*Tel Diced Tomatoes and Green Chilies
 1½ quarts shellfish stock
 1 cup chopped green onions
 ½ cup chopped parsley
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

In a 2-gallon heavy-bottomed sauce pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until light brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in tomato sauce and Ro*Tel. Slowly add shellfish stock, stirring constantly until a sauce-like consistency is achieved. Cook approximately 15 minutes, stirring occasionally. More stock may be added if mixture becomes too thick. Add shrimp, green onions and parsley then cook 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve over steamed white rice with a dash of hot sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Tuscan Shrimp Pasta

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Tuscany is without a doubt one of the regions of Italy best known for its cuisine. This wonderful shrimp dish is of Tuscan origin and may be served over a multitude of pastas. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

3 dozen shrimp (21-25 count) peeled and deveined
 2 lbs. pasta, cooked al dente
 1/4 lb. butter
 1 tbs. garlic, sliced
 1/4 cup green onions, diced
 1/4 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, julienne
 1/4 cup yellow bell pepper, julienne
 1/4 cup green bell pepper, julienne
 1/2 cup Creole tomatoes, diced
 1/4 cup black olives, sliced
 2 tbs. flour
 1 oz. dry white wine
 2 1/2 cups hot shellfish or chicken stock
 1 tsp. lemon juice
 1 tsp. parsley
 salt and pepper, to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté garlic, green onions and mushrooms approximately 2 minutes or until mushrooms are slightly wilted. Add bell peppers, tomatoes and olives, stir into mixture and cook one additional minute. Add shrimp and stir fry into vegetables until shrimp begin to turn pink and curl, approximately 2 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend into dish until white roux is achieved. The flour will absorb most of the liquids in the pan and act as a thickening agent for the sauce. Deglaze with white wine and add hot stock, whisking well into seasoning mixture. Add lemon juice and parsley and season to taste using salt and pepper. Cook until sauce is thickened and shrimp are perfectly cooked, but not overdone. Additional chicken stock may be added should sauce become too thick. Serve over your favorite pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

South Louisiana Shrimp Rémoulade

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Rémoulade sauce may be found in any restaurant in South Louisiana and in many versions. The rémoulades of New Orleans are normally Creole mustard based and highly seasoned. This, however, is the River Road version.

INGREDIENTS FOR BOILING:

- 3 dozen (21-25 count) shrimp, peeled and de-veined
- 2 quarts cold water
- 1 onion, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper
- 3 bay leaves
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 lemon, sliced
- 4 tbsps salt

METHOD:

In a 4-quart stock pot, over medium-high heat, add water and all seasoning ingredients. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and allow to cook 15 minutes for flavors to develop. Bring mixture back to a rolling boil, add shrimp and stir approximately 3-5 minutes. At this point, shrimp should be pink and curled. Test for doneness, being careful not to over-cook. Once water returns to a boil, shrimp should be perfectly done. Pour off boiling water and replace with cold tap water to stop the cooking process. Drain and place shrimp in a serving bowl. Cover with clear wrap and refrigerate. This may be done the night before.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Mousse

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 20

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups boiled, chopped shrimp
- 4 5-8 catfish fillets, poached
- 1 cup HELLMANN'S mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 ounce sherry
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- salt to taste
- 2 pkg unflavored gelatin dissolved
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper in 1/4 cup cold water

METHOD:

Coarsely chop poached catfish. In a two quart mixing bowl, add all remaining ingredients, blending well to incorporate seasonings into the mixture. Adjust salt and pepper if necessary, and pour mixture into a terrine mold. Place in refrigerator covered overnight. When serving, remove from mold and garnish with French bread or garlic croutons. To enhance the presentation of the terrine, you may wish to color two cups of mayonnaise, one with red food coloring and one with green. Using a pastry bag with a star tip, pipe colored mayonnaise around the base of the terrine. You may also wish to garnish the top of the terrine with a small amount of the colored mayonnaise and a fresh tomato rose.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Layered Fruit & Shrimp Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Fruit is not just for dessert anymore! With its wide range of colors and textures, nothing makes a more beautiful entrée salad than layers of fresh or canned fruit. Why not create an interesting and unique summer salad by combining colorful, healthful fruit with fresh shrimp or other seafood?

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups watermelon balls
- 2 cups cantaloupe balls
- 2 cups honeydew balls
- 2 cups sliced peaches
- 2 cups sliced pears
- 2 cups quartered orange sections
- 2 cups sliced plums
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cup fresh strawberries
- 1 cup cubed pineapple
- 2 dozen (21-25) count boiled shrimp
- 2 cups crawfish tails
- 1 recipe fruity yogurt dressing
- ½ cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

In a large glass serving bowl, layer fruit by alternating stratas of color. Once all the fruit has been layered, line shrimp and crawfish in a decorative pattern around the edge of the bowl. Top with fruity yogurt dressing, and toss the mixture to blend the dressing into the fruit. Sprinkle with pecans and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Seafood Jambalaya Rice Salad**PREP TIME:** 30 Minutes**SERVES:** 6**INGREDIENTS:**

2 cups cooked rice
 1 cup mayonnaise
 ½ cup Creole mustard
 1 cup chopped tomatoes
 1 cup chopped Bermuda onions
 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
 1 cup crawfish tails
 1 cup jumbo lump crabmeat
 1 cup (60-90 count) boiled shrimp
 ½ cup diced ham
 ½ cup sliced smoked sausage
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 salt and black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, place rice. Add mayonnaise, mustard, tomatoes and onions. Blend well until all is incorporated. Season to taste using thyme, basil, salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Add all seafood, ham and sausage. Mix until thoroughly blended. Add green onions and parsley. Refrigerate for 2 hours and serve on lettuce leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Deep Fried Shrimp or Oyster Po-Boy

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Deep frying of seafoods is still considered the number one technique in the South. Even with the concerns that many have with deep fat frying, they still expect to eat seafoods in this manner when visiting Cajun Country. Personally, I feel the oyster po-boy or "peace maker" as it is called in New Orleans is the best of all deep-fried seafood recipes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 dozen (70-90 count) shrimp or 3 dozen shucked oysters
- 6 (10-inch) po-boy loaves
- 1 egg beaten
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup water
- 2 tbsps Creole mustard
- 1 tbsp yellow mustard
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 3 cups yellow corn flour
- 2 tbsps granulated garlic
- oil for deep frying
- 6 tbsps tartar sauce (see recipe)
- 6 tbsps ketchup
- 18 thin slices of tomato
- 2 cups shredded lettuce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a home-style deep fryer such as a Fry Daddy, heat oil according to manufacturer's directions. Slice the po-boy bread lengthwise and place on a large cookie sheet. Set aside. In a mixing bowl, combine egg, milk, water, mustards and season to taste using salt and pepper. In a separate mixing bowl, combine yellow corn flour, garlic and season to taste using salt and pepper. Set aside. When ready to prepare the po-boys, place the bread in the oven and turn off the heat, this will allow the bread to become crispy and warm. Dip shrimp or oysters, 6 at a time, in the egg batter and then into the corn flour mixture. Place in the deep fryer and cook until seafood floats, approximately 3 minutes. Remove, drain and keep warm. Continue until all seafood is fried. While shrimp and oysters are cooking, remove po-boy bread from the oven and top one side with the tartar sauce and the second side with the ketchup. Place 3 slices of tomato on the bottom half and sprinkle with shredded lettuce. Place 6 shrimp, oysters or a combination of both over the lettuce and top with the other po-boy half. Secure with toothpicks and slice into 2 equal halves. Serve hot.

HINT: To spice up this dish, you may wish to sprinkle a dash of hot

sauce over each oyster on the po-boy.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Shrimp Bread

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4-5

COMMENT:

What better way to eat shrimp than nestled in cheese!

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups of peeled shrimp
- 1 loaf French bread
- 1/2 stick butter
- 1/2 cup onions, chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup mozzarella cheese
- 1/3 cup cheddar cheese



METHOD:

Cut top off of French bread. Scoop inside out of loaf and set aside. In a large skillet, melt butter and cook onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and shrimp for 15 minutes. Add dry mustard and mayonnaise. Mix all together, then mix in all cheeses and blend until melted. Put shrimp mixture into bread. Butter top and wrap in foil. Bake on barbecue pit or in 350°F oven for about 20-30 minutes. Cut into slices and serve.

Note: May substitute crawfish for shrimp.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

FIRST-AND-TEN SHRIMP FRITTERS

Prep Time: 4 Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

These shrimp fritters could not be easier to prepare. Make them at your next tailgating party, or serve them to guests watching the big game on television. Reward yourself every time the home team gets a first down by eating one of these delicious fritters.

Ingredients:

1 pound (31-35 count) shrimp, cooked, peeled and deveined
 1 cup flour
 1 tsp baking powder
 1 tsp salt
 1 tsp cracked black pepper
 ½ tsp granulated garlic
 2 large eggs
 ¼ cup beer
 ½ cup diced onions
 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup whole kernel corn, drained
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 ½ tsp chopped thyme
 vegetable oil for frying

Method:

Coarsely chop shrimp and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, cracked black pepper, granulated garlic, eggs and beer. Beat until smooth. Stir in shrimp, onions, jalapenos, green onions, corn, parsley, garlic and thyme. Cover and chill 2 hours. In a home-style deep fryer, such as a FryDaddy, heat oil according to manufacturer's directions. If a deep fryer is not available, pour 5 inches of vegetable oil into a Dutch oven and heat to 375°F. Drop batter by rounded tablespoons. Fry, a few at a time, 3-5 minutes or until golden brown. Drain fritters on paper towels. Serve with your favorite dipping sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Christmas Seafood Terrine

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 20 Servings

Comment:

This terrine makes an excellent hors d'oeuvre during the holiday season.

Ingredients:

2 cups boiled shrimp, chopped
 2 cups claw crabmeat
 1 cup mayonnaise
 ½ cup sour cream
 1 tbsp diced garlic
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup diced yellow bell peppers
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 ½ ounce sherry
 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 salt to taste
 2 packages unflavored gelatin dissolved in ¼ cup warm water
 2 tbsps cracked black pepper

Method:

Pick through crabmeat to remove any shells. In a 2-quart mixing bowl, blend all ingredients. Adjust salt and pepper if necessary, and pour mixture into an oiled terrine mold. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Remove from mold and garnish with French bread or garlic croutons. To enhance presentation of terrine, you may wish to color 2 cups of mayonnaise—1 with red food coloring and 1 with green. Using a pastry bag with a star tip, pipe colored mayonnaise around base of terrine. Garnish top of terrine with a small amount of colored mayonnaise and a fresh tomato rose.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Fried Oyster Dressing

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

INGREDIENTS:

2 dozen select oysters
 1 pint chicken livers
 1 cup giblets from fowl
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 2 cups diced onions
 2 cups diced celery
 1 cup diced bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1 cup chicken broth
 1 bay leaf
 1 tsp thyme
 1 tsp basil
 1/2 tsp salt
 black pepper
 hot sauce
 1 cup vegetable oil
 1 cup corn meal
 4 cups cooked rice
 1/2 cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

If you would prefer to substitute 1 cup of ground pork in place of the giblets, feel free to do so. Poach chicken livers in lightly salted water until firm. Strain, cool and chop the livers. Set aside. In a 10-inch cast iron skillet, heat 1/4 cup vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Add chopped chicken livers and giblets. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until giblets are browned. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Continue to sauté, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are wilted, approximately 10-15 minutes. Add 1/2 cup of chicken broth to the skillet, along with bay leaf. Should mixture become too dry during the sautéing process, continue to add a small amount of broth. Blend mixture well, remove pan from heat and set aside. When ready to complete the dressing, return the giblet mixture to the heat and bring to a low simmer. Add thyme, basil, salt, pepper and hot sauce. Pour in a small amount of chicken broth to retain moisture. While mixture is simmering, heat 1 cup of vegetable oil in another 10-inch cast iron skillet over medium-high heat. Dredge the oysters in seasoned corn meal and fry, a few at a time, until golden brown and cooked. Drain on paper towels and keep warm. To the giblet mixture add rice, beaten egg, green onions and parsley, stirring quickly to coat the rice with all seasonings. Stir in fried oysters and adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve as a side dish to any roasted fowl or as a stuffing for turkeys or ducks.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Deep Fried Oysters

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Deep frying is still quite common in the South. With the introduction of "lite" oils, the technique seems to live on forever. I feel it is necessary to include my own frying technique since so many customers request it time and time again.

INGREDIENTS FOR BATTER:

- 1 egg
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup water
- 4 tbsps yellow mustard
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 1-quart mixing bowl blend all ingredients well. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR FRYING:

- 2 dozen freshly shucked oysters
- oil for deep frying
- 4 cups yellow corn flour
- 2 tbsps granulated garlic
- 2 tbsps salt
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper

METHOD:

Using a home-style deep frying unit, such as a Fry Daddy, heat oil according to manufacturer's directions. A high quality vegetable oil or peanut oil should be considered. Corn flour, a double-ground, yellow cornmeal, may be found in the gourmet section of most food stores or as a pre-packaged fish fry such as Zatarain's. Combine corn flour, garlic, salt and peppers, blending well to ensure seasonings are evenly distributed. Dip oysters in egg batter and then into seasoned corn flour. Deep fry, a few at a time, until they float to the top of the oil and are golden brown. Continue the process until all oysters are done.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Oysters Dunbar

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This dish was named after the great restaurateur, Coreen Dunbar. Coreen had one of the few pot-luck restaurants. This simply meant that you walked in, pulled up a seat and whatever was in the pot was being served on the table that evening - no options, no choices. This dish became a mainstay at her restaurant and went on to become a sought after dish on other New Orleans restaurant menus.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 dozen oysters
- 1 cup reserved oyster liquid
- 12 oyster shells
- 2 cups artichoke hearts
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup yellow bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup flour
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp Creole seasoning
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 tbsp basil, chopped
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- salt and black pepper to taste
- hot sauce to taste
- 3 cups seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- 3/4 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Wash oyster shells once or twice with hot, soapy water and rinse under cold, running water until all soap is removed. Reserve shells in cold water for later use. Chop 2 dozen oysters along with artichoke hearts into bite-size pieces and set aside. In a cast iron Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chopped oysters and artichoke hearts, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Sauté 5-7 additional minutes to incorporate flavors. Sprinkle in flour and blend well to create a white roux. Add heavy whipping cream and reserved oyster liquid, stirring constantly to blend into the roux mixture. The consistency should be that of a slightly-thickened white sauce. Add Worcestershire sauce, Creole seasoning, green onions, basil, thyme and nutmeg. Season lightly using salt, pepper and hot sauce.

Continue to cook 7-10 minutes then remove from heat. Stir in 2 cups of breadcrumbs until mixture is thickened and resembles a stuffing. Place 1 whole oyster in the center of each oyster shell and top with equal portions of Dunbar stuffing. Place stuffed oyster shells on a cookie sheet and sprinkle with remaining breadcrumbs and Parmesan cheese. Bake oysters until stuffing is heated thoroughly and bubbly, approximately 30 minutes. It is imperative that the oysters in the shells are hot and fully cooked.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Steak and Oyster Pie

PREP TIME: 1 ½ Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENTS:

This Irish dish could certainly be created in Bayou country. Oysters are plentiful here and this hearty beef stew resembles a typical French Fricassee'.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ½ pounds cubed chuck
- 1 pint oysters in liquid
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsps flour
- 2 1/2 cups beef stock
- 2 cups sliced mushrooms
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 cup diced potatoes

CRUST:

- 1 cup Pioneer Biscuit Mix
- ¼ cup melted butter
- 1 cup milk
- 1 egg
- pinch each of thyme and basil
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium high heat. Add beef and sear until golden brown on all sides. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Stir well into the meat and cook 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour blending well into the vegetables. Add beef stock and oyster liquid. Blend well into the ingredients, bringing to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add mushrooms, cover and cook 45 minutes to an hour or until meat is tender. Stirring occasionally until meat is tender. Additional stock may be added to retain stew like consistency. When tender, season to taste using salt and pepper. Add carrots and potatoes and cook 10-12 additional minutes. Add oysters. Blend the oysters well into the mixture and continue to simmer until oysters are puffed and curled. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. While stew is simmering, create a pastry crust by combining 1 cup Pioneer biscuit mix with ¼ cup melted butter, milk and egg. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper. Herbs such as thyme or basil may be added to this biscuit topping.

Whisk to combine the ingredients thoroughly and remove all lumps. Remove the skillet from the stove and pour the biscuit topping evenly into the center of the stew and place in the preheated oven. Allow to bake 25-30 minutes or until biscuit topping is cooked thoroughly.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Deviled Oysters

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This recipe, though quite similar to the stuffing, is an excellent casserole side dish. It may also be considered for a brunch or light lunch item.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pints select oyster in liquid
- 1 cup melted butter
- 1 cup onion, finely diced
- 1 cup celery, finely diced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, finely diced
- 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup egg, diced
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp hot sauce
- 2 1/2 cups Seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- salt to taste

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. In a 2-quart sauce pot, heat butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onion, celery, bell pepper, green onions and garlic until vegetables are wilted, approximately 2-3 minutes. Add heavy whipping cream, bring to a low boil and reduce to simmer. Add oysters and oyster liquid and cook until oysters are slightly curled. Remove from heat and add egg, parsley, Worcestershire and hot sauce and blend well into mixture. Sprinkle in breadcrumbs, one cup at a time, until proper consistency is achieved. Mixture should remain moist but hold together well with breadcrumbs. Season to taste using salt. Place in a well-greased 9" x 13" baking dish or individual shells and bake approximately 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Oysters Bienville

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENTS:

Sometimes called the "Father of Louisiana," Jean Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville, was chosen to command the expedition for Louis XIV to found a colony in Louisiana. Responsible for founding the settlement of New Orleans, Jean Baptiste became an early governor of Louisiana. This succulent dish named in his honor was originally created at Antoine's by Chef Auguste Michel. However, it became known as Arnaud's dish after Arnaud Cazanave, proprietor of Arnaud's Restaurant, tasted Michel's concoction and began serving it in his restaurant.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 dozen oysters
- 1 stick butter
- 1/2 cup onions, minced
- 1/4 cup celery, minced
- 1 red bell pepper, minced
- 1 bunch green onions, sliced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 4 tbsps flour
- 1/2 cup Chardonnay
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 cups oyster liquid
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup Italian bread crumbs

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Poach the oysters in their own liquid for one minute, just until their edges begin to curl. Strain the oysters out of the liquid and set aside. Add enough water to the poaching liquor to bring it to 2 cups. Set aside. Melt butter in a saucepan over medium-high heat and add onions, celery, bell peppers, green onions and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add flour and cook for 2 minutes. Deglaze with Chardonnay, whipping cream and the oyster liquid. Using wire whisk, blend well. Season with salt and pepper. Simmer for a few minutes until the sauce thickens. Fold in the cheese and sprinkle in bread crumbs. Set aside to cool. Arrange the oysters in individual ovenproof dishes (6 per portion) and cover with the Bienville sauce. Bake for 15 minutes, or until the sauce begins to brown on top.

Note: This dish is normally served over an oyster in the half shell and then baked.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Oysters Belle Helene

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This is an excellent example of the evolution of Cajun and Creole cooking. The flavor of oysters and andouille, added to a classical butter sauce and served over French pastry, brings our cuisine into the 1990's.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 dozen select oysters, reserve liquid
- 1/2 cup chopped green onions
- 1/4 cup diced tomatoes
- 2 sheets 8-1/2" x 13" puff pastry
- 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 ounces champagne
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup diced andouille sausage
- 1/4 pound chipped cold butter
- 2 tsps diced garlic
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Place two sheets of puff pastry, one atop the other, and cut into three inch squares. Lightly butter a large baking sheet and place squares of puff pastry evenly on the baking pan. Brush top of pastry with beaten egg, as this will enhance the color. Bake pastry until golden brown, approximately ten to fifteen minutes, remove and keep warm. In a heavy bottom sauce pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Saute andouille, garlic, mushrooms, green onions, tomatoes and bell pepper approximately three to five minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add oysters and oyster liquid and deglaze with champagne. Saute until edges of oysters begin to curl, about two minutes. Add heavy whipping cream, bring to a slight boil and reduce cream to one half volume. Once cream is thickened to sauce consistency, slowly add chipped butter, two to three chips at a time, swirling pan constantly until all butter is incorporated. It is important to swirl pan around burner and not to stir with a spoon, as butter may break down if hot spots occur. Continue until all butter has been added. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Place pastry square in center of six inch serving plate, remove top half of pastry and fill with equal parts of oysters and oyster butter sauce. Top with other half of pastry and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Linguine With Spicy Oyster Sauce

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 8 (12-ounce) Servings

Comment: Louisianans are famous for blending their local styles and flavors with traditional cuisine. Here we see a traditional Italian dish married with fresh oysters for a uniquely Louisiana flavor.

Ingredients:

- 1 pint raw oysters
- 1 (12-ounce) package linguine
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ cup thinly sliced garlic
- ½ cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced bell peppers
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained
- ¼ cup tomato paste
- red pepper flakes to taste
- ½ cup frozen whole kernel corn
- ½ cup sliced carrots
- 1 cup clam juice
- ½ cup chopped basil
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Sriracha chili sauce to taste
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley

Method:

In a large saucepan, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic, onions, celery and bell peppers and sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in tomatoes, tomato paste, red pepper flakes, corn and carrots and simmer 3 minutes. Add clam juice, basil and oysters. Simmer for 2 minutes or until oysters start to curl. Season to taste with salt, pepper and chili sauce. Boil linguini according to package directions. Drain and place in serving bowl. Toss pasta with a portion of the sauce to lightly coat. Top linguine with the remaining sauce and garnish with parsley and Parmesan cheese if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Oyster and Artichoke Bisque

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Once again, Louisiana gulf oysters are used to create a masterpiece among cream based soups. This recipe is used on a weekly basis at Lafitte's Landing Restaurant. The great New Orleans chef, Warren Leruth, introduced Cajuns to this dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (10 ounce) containers oysters, freshly shucked
- 1 quart oyster liquid
- 2 (14 ounce) cans artichoke hearts
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1/2 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup basil, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1 cup flour
- 1-1/2 quarts chicken stock
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and white pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a two-gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add artichoke hearts, onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Saute five to ten minutes or until vegetables are wilted and artichokes are tender. Remove all ingredients from stock pot and place in food processor equipped with a metal blade. Chop on high speed approximately one minute or until mixture is fairly well pureed. Return to stock pot and bring back to a simmer. Using a wire whisk, sprinkle in flour, stirring constantly until white roux is achieved. (see roux technique) Add chicken stock and oyster liquid, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook thirty minutes. Add oysters, heavy whipping cream, green onions and parsley. Return to a boil, and cook until edges of oysters begin to curl. Season to taste using salt and white pepper.

HINT: It is imperative that oyster liquid be used in this recipe if it is to be successful. give your seafood supplier ample time to reserve this amount.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Cajun Oyster Stew in Patty Shells

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Although there are a multitude of recipes claiming to be the original oyster stew of New Orleans, I feel that the brown oyster stew is, without a doubt, the original. Cream or milk used in many oyster stews today were not found in New Orleans recipes in the early 1700s. Secondly, oysters were not considered edible until the Cajuns were introduced to the delicacy by the Indians in Bayou Country. The dark brown roux of the Cajuns was added to the new-found delicacy and the brown oyster stew was born.

INGREDIENTS:

24 select oysters
 3/4 cup vegetable oil
 1 cup flour
 1 cup onion, diced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/2 cup bell pepper, diced
 1 tbsp garlic, minced
 2 quarts oyster liquor
 3/4 cup green onions, chopped
 1/2 cup parsley, diced
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 6 baked patty shells

METHOD:

Pre-bake the patty shells according to package directions and set aside. In a heavy-bottom saucepot, preheat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and blend well using a wire whisk. Continue to stir until dark brown roux is achieved. Once roux is golden brown add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Cook three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Slowly add oyster liquor (chicken stock may be substituted) stirring constantly with a wire whisk until all stock has been added. Remember that once the fresh oysters are added, the natural juices will thin out the stew. Simmer 20-30 minutes stirring occasionally, then add oysters. Continue to cook until edges of oysters are curled, but not overcooked. Garnish with green onions and parsley and season to taste using salt and pepper. Ladle a generous serving of oyster stew into the center of the patty shells. Serve one as an appetizer or two as an entrée.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Bisque of Wild Mushroom with French Fried Oyster Crouton

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

It is always best to use a variety of wild mushrooms to create this soup. However, if they are unavailable in your area, you may substitute the dried forestière mushroom packs which are found in most grocery stores. If worse comes to worst, fresh button mushrooms along with any other variety on the shelf will certainly do.

INGREDIENTS:

1 lbs. fresh mixed mushrooms, sliced
 1/4 lb. butter
 1 cup onions, diced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/4 cup bell pepper, diced
 2 tbsp. garlic, minced
 6 tbsp. flour
 1 quart hot chicken stock
 1 cup heavy whipping cream
 1 tsp. thyme, chopped
 1 tsp. sage, chopped
 salt and pepper to taste
 1 ounce sherry

METHOD:

In a 1-gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and sauté until wilted, approximately 5-7 minutes. Add onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 10 additional minutes or until vegetables are slightly caramelized but not brown. Place the ingredients into the bowl of a food processor and chop until the mixture is pureed but not quite liquefied. There should be some slight mushroom identity still visible. Return to the stock pot and sprinkle in flour blending well into the mixture. Once flour is well blended add hot chicken stock one ladle at a time until all is incorporated. Add heavy whipping cream, thyme, sage and season to taste with salt and pepper. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Add sherry, blend well and serve by placing the soup in an appropriate bowl and garnishing with 2 crispy pan-fried oysters (using your favorite fried oyster recipe.)

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

The Peace Maker - The Ultimate Oyster Po-boy

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

Makes: 6 Servings

COMMENT:

Deep-frying seafood is still considered the number one technique in the south. Even with the concerns that many have with deep fat frying, they still expect to eat seafood in this manner when visiting Cajun country. Personally, I feel the oyster po-boy or "peace maker" as it is called in New Orleans is the best of all deep-fried seafood recipes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 dozen fresh oysters
- 6 (10-inch) po-boy loaves

EGG WASH:

- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup water
- 2 tbsps Creole mustard
- 1 tbsp yellow mustard
- salt & cracked black pepper to taste

BREADING:

- 1 1/2 cups yellow corn meal
- 1 1/2 cups yellow corn flour
- 2 tbsps granulated garlic
- Oil for deep frying

DRESSING:

- 3 cups Remoulade slaw (see recipe)
- 18 thin slices of tomato
- Spicy ketchup

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a home style deep fryer such as a Fry Daddy, heat oil according to manufacturer's directions. Slice the po-boy bread lengthwise and place on a large cookie sheet. Set aside. In a mixing bowl, combine egg, milk, water, mustards and season to taste using salt and pepper. In a separate mixing bowl, combine corn meal, yellow corn flour, garlic and season to taste using salt and pepper. Set aside. When ready to prepare the po-boys, create Remoulade sauce and slaw (see recipe) and set aside. Place the bread in the oven and turn off the heat; this will allow the bread to become

crispy and warm. Dip oysters, six at a time, in the egg batter and then into the corn meal, corn flour mixture. Place in the deep fryer at 365 degrees F and cook until oysters float, approximately three minutes. Remove and drain and keep warm. Continue until all oysters are fried. While oysters are cooking, remove po-boy bread from the oven and place Remoulade slaw and tomato slices on the bottom side of the bread and the spicy ketchup on the top side . Place six oysters over the slaw and top with the other po-boy half. Secure with toothpicks and slice into two equal halves. Serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Spicy Gingered Oysters

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I'm often amazed at the similarity of ingredients used worldwide in creating local recipes. Here in Louisiana most of our seafood gumbos and certainly our famous Cajun Oyster Stew require garlic, oysters and chili peppers as main ingredients in the recipes. On a recent trip to China I discovered yet another dish that incorporated these three flavors, and I have since made them a staple on my Lafitte's Landing menu. Here is the recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

3 dozen oysters, reserve
 1/2 cup liquid
 2 tbsp. slivered, candied ginger
 1 tsp. corn starch
 1/2 tsp. Sambal Oelek Ground Chili Paste
 2 tbsp. sesame oil
 1 tsp. Tuong Ot Toi Chili Garlic Sauce
 1/4 cup minced shallots
 1/2 cup clam juice
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 1 tbsp. chopped parsley
 2 tbsp. minced garlic
 salt to taste

METHOD:

I should begin by mentioning that both the hot chili sauce and the garlic sauce are extremely hot, and you should first test the amount used to guarantee it within your pallet range. Dissolve corn starch in reserved oyster liquid and set aside. In the bottom of a 10-inch skillet heat sesame oil over medium high heat. Add shallots, green onions, garlic and ginger. Saute 3 - 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add oysters and blend well into the vegetable seasonings. Add the hot chili sauce, garlic sauce and clam juice. Cook until oysters are puffy, but not over cooked, 3 - 5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove oysters from the skillet and keep warm. Return the skillet to the heat and bring to a low boil. Stir the dissolved corn starch liquid and add to the skillet, stirring constantly. Season to taste using salt and reduce the liquid to « volume. Return the oysters to the thickened liquid and reheat for 1 minute. Serve over garlic croutons or with crackers. You may wish to serve as a pasta sauce over angel hair or spaghetti.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Fire-Roasted Oysters

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Oysters in the shell can be cooked very successfully on the grill. This is a welcomed change to opening them by hand. The heat from the grill steams the oysters and pops the shell open, while poaching the oyster inside. I especially enjoy this technique as an appetizer prior to grilling steaks or ribs.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 dozen oysters in the shell
- 2 cups rock salt
- 1/2 pound salted butter
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 2 tbsps shallots, minced
- 2 tbsps fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp dried basil
- 1 tbsp dried tarragon
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tbsp Louisiana Gold Hot Sauce
- 2 tbsps Lea & Perrins Worcestershire sauce
- juice of one lemon
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Wash the oysters under clean, running water to remove any sand or mud. Place the oysters in a bucket of clear water to cover by one inch. Add the rock salt and allow the oysters to sit for one hour. Make a sauce by melting butter over medium-high heat. Add all remaining ingredients. Remove from heat and allow to sit until later as flavor will develop. Heat grill according to manufacturer's directions. Place the prepared sauce on one edge of the grill to keep warm. Do not boil. Place the oysters on the grill 8-10 at a time and close the lid. In 2-3 minutes the oysters should begin to pop open. Using a grill glove, remove the oysters from the grill and pop open the outer shell using an oyster knife. Top with 1/4 tsp of the sauce and serve hot. Note: For a patio party I recommend having 6 oyster knives along with 6 heavy-duty gloves or kitchen towels in order to hold the hot oysters as they are removed from the grill. The oysters should be eaten directly from the shell while steaming hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Oyster-Stuffed Artichoke Bottoms

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

One of the most famous soups in South Louisiana is oyster and artichoke bisque. The flavors of these two ingredients are often married in Louisiana cuisine. Here is just another example of the flavor of oysters and spinach used together to create a delicious appetizer. You may wish to try using crabmeat instead of oysters. Replace the cup of oysters with ½ pound of lump crabmeat.



Ingredients:

12 artichoke bottoms, fresh or canned
 1 cup chopped oysters
 ¼ cup butter
 ½ cup minced onions
 ½ cup minced celery
 ¼ cup minced red bell pepper
 1 tbsp diced garlic
 3 cups cooked spinach
 ¼ cup tomato ketchup
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 ½ ounce Herbsaint or anise
 ½ cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
 ¼ pound butter
 1 ounce sherry
 2 tbsps chopped parsley

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. If the artichoke bottoms are canned, soak in cold water for one hour to remove the brine and vinegar taste. In a heavy-bottomed skillet, melt ¼ cup butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Chop the cooked spinach very fine and add to the vegetables. Blend well and add oysters. Stir until all ingredients are well incorporated. Simmer 5 minutes then add ketchup, salt, pepper and hot sauce. Lower heat to simmer and cook 10-15 additional minutes. Add Herbsaint, blend into the oyster and spinach mixture and remove from heat. Sprinkle in breadcrumbs and allow the mixture to cool slightly. Once cooled, stuff the center of each artichoke bottom with the oyster and spinach mixture. Place the artichokes in a large baking pan and top with an equal portion of melted butter and sherry. Sprinkle with parsley and bake uncovered

for 15-20 minutes. Serve 2 artichokes with a spoon of sherry-butter sauce. You may wish to place one whole oyster on the bottom of the artichoke prior to stuffing.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Oyster and Artichoke Pie

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 1 Pie

Comment:

The marriage of oysters and artichokes is common in Louisiana cuisine, but seldom is this combination used in a pie. This unique pie makes an excellent brunch item.

Ingredients:

- 1 pint oysters, drained
- 1 (13.75-ounce) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained and roughly chopped
- 1 (9-inch) deep-dish piecrust
- 2 tbsps butter
- ½ cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- 2 tbsps diced red bell peppers
- 2 tsps minced garlic
- ½ cup Italian bread crumbs
- 3 eggs
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp chopped parsley
- pinch nutmeg
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper



Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Stir in artichokes and sauté 5 minutes. Add oysters and sauté until edges start to curl. Blend in bread crumbs then cool mixture slightly. Place the cooled mixture into piecrust. In a mixing bowl, whisk eggs, whipping cream, Parmesan cheese, parsley, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Pour the mixture on top of the pie filling. Bake for 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Oysters Marie Laveau

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Marie Laveau was the voodoo queen of Bourbon Street. Legend has it that the pirate Jean Lafitte often met Marie at the Old Absinthe House late in the evening where they enjoyed oysters on the half shell while trading secrets of Barataria Bay.

Ingredients for Oysters:

- 3 dozen select oysters, reserve liquid
- 3 tbsps butter
- 1 tsp garlic
- 1 tsp chopped parsley
- ½ ounce Pernod or Herbsaint

Method:

In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Stir in garlic and parsley and sauté 2 minutes. Add oysters and cook until edges begin to curl, but do not overcook. Deglaze with Pernod and cook 1 minute. Remove oysters, reduce liquid to half volume and reserve for sauce.

Ingredients for Sauce:

- ¼ pound butter
- ½ cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ½ cup white crabmeat
- OR ½ cup chopped cooked shrimp
- 2½ tbsps flour
- 3 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- reserved cooked liquid from oysters
- reserved oyster liquid
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell peppers
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- Parmesan cheese for topping

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a 1-quart heavy-bottomed saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, garlic and green onions and sauté 3 minutes. Stirring constantly, add crabmeat or

shrimp and sauté 1 minute. Whisk in flour until a white roux is achieved then whisk in cream and wine. Bring to a low boil, stirring constantly as mixture thickens. Pour in cooked liquid from oysters and reserved oyster liquid. Reduce heat to simmer and cook 10–15 minutes, adding hot water if sauce becomes too thick. Add nutmeg and bell peppers then season with salt and pepper. Place 6 oysters in each au gratin dish, top with a generous serving of sauce and bake until bubbly. If desired, sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top prior to baking. Serve with garlic croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crab and Asparagus Quiche

PREP TIME: 1½ hours

SERVES: 12-16

COMMENT: Maybe real men don't eat quiche, but moms love it! For Mother's Day, make your mom this very easy to make, rich quiche filled with succulent crabmeat and tender asparagus. She will love you more than she already does, if that's even possible.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup back fin crabmeat
- 1 cup claw crabmeat
- ½ cup asparagus tips, cut into ½ inch pieces (see method)
- 24 whole asparagus spears about 4" long
- ½ cup bacon, cooked crispy and chopped
- 1½ cup shredded Swiss cheese
- ¼ cup minced onion
- ¼ cup minced red bell pepper
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups half and half
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 (9-inch) unbaked deep dish pie shells



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Grasp asparagus spear with two hands, holding the floret in one hand and the stem in the other. Gently bend spear until it snaps. Discard stem end. Repeat with entire bunch, reserving 24 whole spears. In a saucepan, bring a quart of water to a rolling boil. Add all asparagus and poach until crisp-tender, about 2 minutes. Drain asparagus and set aside to cool. Divide bacon, cheese, onion, red bell pepper, crabmeat and asparagus tips and sprinkle evenly into each pie shell. In a medium bowl, whisk together eggs, half and half cream, salt, thyme and cayenne. Pour egg mixture evenly into both pastry shells. Place 12 whole asparagus spears in a starburst shape on top of each pie with florets pointing out from the center. Trim stem ends of asparagus if necessary. Bake for 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 300 degrees F and bake for an additional 30 minutes or until a knife inserted 1 inch from edge comes out clean. Allow quiche to sit for 10 minutes before cutting into wedges.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Lump Crab & Creole Tomato Linguine

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

Serves: 6

COMMENT:

When crabs are in season in south Louisiana, which is normally the summer months, Creole tomatoes are also hanging heavy on the vine. There's no better time than now to create this magnificent pasta than now. If you like a little spice in your pasta, try adding 1/8 teaspoon of red pepper flakes or even a finely minced Tabasco pepper.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crab meat
- 1 pound cooked linguine
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 4 cloves sliced garlic cloves
- 1/4 cup minced shallots
- 1/4 cup minced parsley
- 2 tbsp chopped basil
- 1 cup diced Creole tomatoes
- 1 cup half & half
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy sauce pan, heat olive oil and sauté garlic and shallots 1 - 2 minutes. Add herbs and tomatoes. Cook an additional 2 minutes. Slowly add half & half, whisking constantly and bring to a boil. Reduce to simmer and add half of the crab meat to flavor the sauce. Cook until slightly thickened, stirring often. When the sauce holds to the back of a spoon, gently fold in the other half of the crab meat. Cook an additional 2 to 3 minutes, just to heat meat through. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Toss with cooked linguine.

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crabmeat & Shrimp Stuffed Summer Squash**PREP TIME:** 45 Minutes**Serves:** 6**COMMENT:**

Once again, we take a traditional vegetable of Bayou country and incorporate a different twist to create a dish that will certainly give the cook something to experiment with. Try using some of your local vegetables in this recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 pound lump crabmeat
- 1/2 pound small shrimp
- 3 medium size yellow summer squash
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup minced zucchini
- 1/4 cup minced onions
- 1/4 cup minced celery
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1/4 cup minced red bell pepper
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 1 cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Slice yellow squash lengthwise into two equal halves. Remove neck from squash and finely dice for recipe. Place squash halves in pot of boiling water and cook for eight to ten minutes, or until skin is tender. Remove from water and allow to cool. In a heavy bottom sauté pan, over medium high heat, melt butter. Add zucchini, yellow squash, onions, celery, garlic and bell peppers. Sauté approximately three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add lump crabmeat and shrimp and fold gently into mixture. Add lemon juice and cook one additional minute. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Add bread crumbs, a little at a time, until squash mixture is held together, but not too dry. Using a metal spoon, scoop seed section from center of yellow squash and discard seeds. Divide stuffing equally between six halves, stuff and place on baking pan. Sprinkle with additional breadcrumbs and bake ten to fifteen minutes until squash is golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Deep-Fried Hard-shell Crabs

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

Serves: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

Normally, whole blue crabs in Louisiana are served boiled, stuffed or in an au gratin mixture. Over the past couple of years, we have come up with some very interesting variations using the cleaned whole crab in the shell. This deep-fried recipe has certainly become a winner as well as a tradition at our Lafitte's Landing Restaurant.

INGREDIENTS:

- 18 whole crabs, cleaned
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 1 cup water
- 1 tbsps Creole mustard
- 2 tbsps prepared yellow mustard
- 1 tbsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tbsp dried tarragon
- 1 tbsp granulated garlic
- 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tbsp salt
- 2 quarts vegetable oil
- 4 cups yellow corn flour
- 2 tbsps granulated garlic

METHOD:

In a home-style deep frying unit, such as Fry Daddy, heat oil according to manufacturer's directions. Corn flour is a double ground yellow corn meal and may be found in most stores as a pre-packaged seafood fry. Have your seafood supplier remove the outer shell of the crabs, eyes, mouth and belly flap. Clean away the lungs and other fleshy material from the center of the crab, leaving the fat and roe intact. The crabs are now ready for frying. In a large mixing bowl, combine eggs, milk and water. Using a wire whisk, whip until well blended. Add Creole and yellow mustard along with the herbs, garlic, salt and pepper. Blend well into the egg mixture and set aside. In a separate bowl, combine the yellow corn flour, garlic, salt and pepper. Blend well to distribute seasonings. You may wish to break the crabs in half for easier handling. Dip crabs into egg/mustard mixture and then into the fish fry. Carefully place in a deep fryer and cook three to five minutes or until crab section floats and turns golden brown. Drain well and eat the crabs hot as you would boiled crabs. Serve with cocktail or tartar sauce.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crab Newburg

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4 - 6

COMMENT:

If you have fresh crab shells, to create a highly flavorful seafood stock, simmer them along with 1 quartered onion, 1 stalk of celery and 4 cloves crushed garlic for 1 hour. Strain the stock through fine cheese cloth or a sieve.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 1/4 pound butter
- 5 shallots, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, finely diced
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 3 tbsp flour
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 1/2 cup heavy cream
- 3 cups seafood stock
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 1 sprig tarragon, chopped
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add shallots, onion, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 - 5 minutes. Sprinkle flour over seasoning mixture and blend well to create a white roux. Do not brown. Deglaze with white wine. Add heavy cream; add stock as needed. Reduce temperature. Add tomato sauce, tarragon and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Continue to blend, cooking 3 - 5 additional minutes. Place crabmeat, picked through to remove any shells, into a Pyrex baking dish or 6 individual ramekins. Top with sauce and bake until bubbly.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Lump Crabmeat St. Martin

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Remember for that next cocktail party, this dish makes an excellent hours d'oeuvre and should be served hot with garlic croutons or crackers.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 3 1/2 cups hot whipping cream
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1/4 cup chopped onions
- dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- 1/4 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 2 tbsps flour
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a 2-quart heavy bottom sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, green onions and garlic. Saute 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Be careful not to brown vegetables. Sprinkle in flour, blending well into mixture. Using a wire whip, whisk hot cream into sauce pan stirring constantly until thick cream sauce is achieved. Reduce heat to simmer and add white wine, lemon juice and hot sauce. Add Parmesan cheese, stirring constantly so mixture will not scorch. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add red bell pepper for color. If mixture becomes too thick, add a small amount of whipping cream or hot water. Remove from heat and gently fold in lump crabmeat. Place in souffle ramekins, garnish with parsley and serve with garlic croutons.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crabmeat- and Shrimp-Stuffed Mirliton

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The "chayote" squash, as many know it, is commonly referred to in Louisiana as mirliton. This unique vegetable was brought to bayou country by the Canary Islanders, who relocated to Louisiana when Spain took ownership of New Orleans from France. Whether called chayote, mirliton or vegetable pear, this Southern Louisiana delicacy is indeed wonderful when stuffed with shrimp and crabmeat.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 mirlitons, sliced lengthwise
- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 1 pound (70-90 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell peppers, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
- salt and black pepper to taste
- hot sauce to taste
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 2 cups seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- 12 pats butter

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Boil sliced mirlitons in lightly salted water until meat is tender enough to scoop from the shells but shells stay intact, approximately 30-40 minutes. Once tender, remove from water and cool. Using a teaspoon, remove the seed pod from the center of the mirliton and gently scoop all meat out of the shell. Because so much water accumulates when scooping the meat, discard excess liquid. Take extra care not to break or tear the outer shell. Reserve meat and save shells for stuffing. In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and basil. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add shrimp and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Cook 2-3 minutes or until shrimp are pink and curled. Add the reserved meat from the mirliton to the skillet, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Chop the large pieces and cook 15-20 minutes, stirring until flavors develop. After most of the liquid has evaporated, remove from heat and season to taste using salt, pepper, hot sauce and parsley. Fold in crabmeat, being careful to not break the lumps. Sprinkle in approximately 1 1/2 cups of breadcrumbs to absorb any excess liquid and to hold the stuffing intact. Divide crabmeat mixture into 12 equal portions and stuff into the hollowed-out shells. Place stuffed mirlitons on baking pan and sprinkle with remaining breadcrumbs. Top each

mirliton with 1 pat of butter. Bake until golden brown, approximately 30 minutes. Serve 1 mirliton half as a vegetable or 2 as an entrée.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crab Cakes Rex

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Normally in Bayou Country crab cakes are dense in texture due to the amount of breadcrumbs in the recipe. Personally, I appreciate a higher crabmeat content so I've cut back the breadcrumbs for a looser texture.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound lump crabmeat
- 3 tbsps butter
- 1/2 cup onions, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell peppers, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1 cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- 1/4 cup green onions, minced
- 1/4 cup mayonnaise
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsps parsley, minced
- 2 tsps Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsps lemon juice
- 2 tbsps Old Bay seasoning
- 1 tsp Creole mustard
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp cracked black pepper
- hot sauce to taste
- 1/2 cup Italian breadcrumbs for dusting
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil

METHOD:

Using your fingers, pick through crabmeat to remove any shell or cartilage. In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Remove and allow to cool slightly. In a large mixing bowl, combine sautéed vegetables along with all remaining ingredients except crabmeat. Gently fold in crabmeat with your fingers, continually checking for shell or cartilage. Blend carefully into the breadcrumb mixture until all ingredients are well incorporated. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Gently form crab mixture into a 1" x 2 1/2" patty, dust lightly with breadcrumbs and place on a cookie sheet. Place in the refrigerator and chill for at least 1 hour. In a sauté pan, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Once oil is hot, sauté crab cakes 2-3 minutes on each side, turning each cake over gently so they don't fall apart. Place crab cake in the center of a dinner plate and top with white or red rémoulade sauce.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Fried Soft-Shellled Crabs

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Home-style frying units, such as Fry Daddy or Fry Baby, make deep frying simple for the home kitchen. Also, be aware of the nice "lite" frying oils available on the market today. Using these will make deep frying a lot healthier.

FOR BATTER:

- 1 cup milk
- 1/2 cup water
- 2 eggs
- 3 tbsps Creole mustard
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

In a 1-quart mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients. Whisk with a wire whip to ensure mixture is well blended.

FOR BREADING:

- 2 cups yellow corn flour
- 2 1/4 tps salt
- 1 1/2 tps granulated garlic
- 1 1/2 tps cracked black pepper
- 1 1/2 tps cayenne pepper
- 1 1/2 tps dry thyme

In a 1-quart mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients. Set aside.

FOR FRYING:

- 6 soft-shell crabs 1 1/2 quarts vegetable oil

In a home-style deep fryer, such as a Fry Daddy or Fry Baby, preheat oil according to manufacturer's directions, or to 375 degrees F. Place soft-shell crabs in batter mixture and allow to set 10 to 15 minutes. Drain all excess liquid from crabs and bread well in yellow corn flour. Shake off all excess breading and deep fry 1 at a time until crabs turn golden brown and float to top of frying unit. Remove and drain on paper towels. Top with Louisiana Style Crawfish Etouffee (see recipe) and serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crab and Artichoke Casserole

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4-6

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tbsp butter
- 3 tbsp flour
- 1½ cups milk
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- ½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
- Dry mustard to taste
- Hot sauce to taste
- 4 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- 1 pound can artichoke hearts (bottoms)
- 1 lb crab meat
- ¼ cup or more Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Make white sauce by melting butter, adding flour, and gradually adding milk, stirring constantly. Season with salt, pepper, Worcestershire sauce, cheese, mustard, hot sauce. Add eggs, artichoke hearts, and crab meat. Pour into 1½-quart casserole. Sprinkle top with ¼ cup or more Parmesan cheese. Bake at 350 degrees F for 30 minutes. Serves 4 to 6 - 6 for luncheon, 4 for dinner. Serve over pasta or toast.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Vietnamese Stuffed Crabs (Cua Farci)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This recipe comes from Pho Tau Bay Restaurant in Gretna, Louisiana.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 hard-shelled crabs
- 1/4 lb. ground pork
- 2 tablespoons tree ears soaked for 20 minutes, then drained and chopped
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 ounce cellophane noodles soaked 20 minutes, then drained and chopped
- fresh ground black pepper to taste
- 1 egg, beaten
- 2 shallots, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 teaspoons bottled fish sauce (nuoc mam)
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil

METHOD:

Break off the claws from the crabs. Turn the crabs over and remove the roe, if the crab is female, and set aside. Twist the skirt attached to the underside of each body. Break it off and discard. Also remove and discard the spongy parts attached to the crab. Rinse under cold running water. Remove the top shell from each; wash, dry well, and reserve for stuffing. Cook the crab bodies for five minutes in boiling water. Drain and pick out the crabmeat, then combine with the reserved roe (if any), and the pork, tree ears, onion cellophane noodles, pepper, egg, shallots, garlic and fish sauce. Stuff the reserved crab shells with this mixture. In a frying pan, heat the oil over a high flame. Place the crab shells in the oil, filling side down. Turn the heat to medium and cook until browned, then turn over and cook for seven more minutes; the shells will turn bright orange.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Lake Des Allemande Crab Cakes

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Lake Des Allemande was the first home of the Cajuns, once they decided to move from the Mississippi River into the swamplands of Louisiana. In addition to some of the finest hunting and fishing, this lake is known for its blue crab harvest each year. Crabs are most often boiled in season, but pan-fried crab cakes are wonderful and can be served all year long.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
 1 pound claw crabmeat
 1/2 cup whole kernel corn
 1/4 cup minced onions
 1/4 cup minced celery
 1/4 cup minced red bell pepper
 1 tbsp chopped garlic
 1/2 cup mayonnaise
 1/4 cup Creole mustard
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 pinch of thyme
 pinch of basil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 Worcestershire Sauce to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 1 tsp Old Bay Seasonings
 1 egg
 2 cups seasoned Italian bread crumbs
 2 cups oil

METHOD:

In a large black iron skillet, heat oil over medium high heat. In a mixing bowl, combine claw crabmeat, corn, onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, mayonnaise, mustard and parsley. Using a mixing spoon, blend all ingredients until well incorporated. Add thyme, basil, salt, pepper, Worcestershire, Louisiana Gold and Old Bay Seasonings. Add egg and stir well into the crabmeat mixture. Fold in lump crabmeat, being careful not to break the lumps. Dust in enough bread crumbs to hold the mixture together and absorb the moisture. Form the crab mixture into round patties, approximately two and a half inches in diameter. Coat the outside of each crab cake lightly with remaining bread crumbs and pan fry on each side until golden brown. Serve with remoulade, tartar or cocktail sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crab Backs - (Crabmeat-Stuffed Shells)

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The people of the Caribbean enjoy a bounty of seafood dishes much like we do in South Louisiana. Try this tasty Crab Backs recipe much like our own recipe for Stuffed Crabs.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crab meat
- 6 cleaned crab shells
- 3 tbsp butter
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- 1 tbsp chopped garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped chives or green onions
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Unseasoned dry bread crumbs

METHOD:

Preheat broiler to 500 degrees F. Melt butter in a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add onions, tomatoes and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add lump crabmeat, chives and Worcestershire Sauce blending well into the vegetables seasonings. Once crabmeat is thoroughly heated, season to taste using salt and black pepper. Remove sauté pan from heat and sprinkle in approximately 1/4 cup bread crumbs. Blend well, then stuff the crab shells with the meat mixture. Top the crabs with additional bread crumbs and brown under a pre-heated broiler. Serve with cocktail or tartar sauce.

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FIND A RECIPE

SEAFOOD

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

OVEN-BAKED GARLIC CRABS

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 4–6 Servings

Comment:

This crab recipe calls for many cloves of garlic. Once the garlic has been sautéed in butter sauce and baked with crabs, it becomes quite sweet. The garlic can then be spread on French bread along with butter dipped from the baking pan.

Ingredients:

1 dozen crabs, cleaned
 1 pound melted butter
 1 cup olive oil
 40 cloves garlic, sliced
 ¼ cup diced onions
 ¼ cup diced celery
 ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 2 bay leaves
 Worcestershire sauce to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 French bread for dipping

Method:

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a large sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Pour in olive oil to prevent butter from burning. Add garlic, onions, celery, bell peppers, green onions, parsley and bay leaves. Stir constantly to prevent garlic from scorching. Garlic that is over-browned will taste bitter. Season with Worcestershire, hot sauce, salt and pepper. Place crabs in a large casserole dish with a 1 or 2-inch lip and cover with garlic butter mixture. Bake 15–20 minutes, remove and serve warm with hot French bread.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Pan-Fried Soft-Shell Crabs

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

YIELDS: 6 Servings

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup milk
 1/2 cup water
 2 eggs
 3 tbsps Creole mustard
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Clean the crabs by lifting the pointed edges of the shell and removing the lungs or "dead men" located immediately under the shell. Place cleaned crabs in a Pyrex baking dish. Combine flour, salt, pepper, garlic and paprika in a mixing bowl. Heat oil in a large skillet to 350°F then add butter. Drizzle crabs with milk and season with salt, pepper and garlic. Dredge crabs in seasoned flour and shake off excess. Place 3–4 crabs shell-side down in oil. Do not overcrowd. Fry 2–3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Continue until all crabs are fried. Remove crabs to a platter and keep warm. Squeeze the juice of lemon into pan drippings. Add parsley and cook 1 minute. Pour sauce over crabs and serve immediately with you favorite tarter or rémoulade sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Corney's Low-Fat Crab Bisque

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Serves: 4-6



Comment: Corney Welsh entered this wonderful soup recipe for our Holiday 2003 Stirrin' It Up for the Holidays recipe contest. We felt that such a great tasting and simple to prepare dish that was also low fat, couldn't be passed up. So, if you are watching your waistline this Holiday season, this soup is just right for you.

Ingredients:

- 1 lb. Crabmeat
- ½ stick Parkay light margarine
- 2 cups diced onion
- 1 cup sliced celery
- ½ cup diced green bell pepper
- ½ cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 3 cups skim milk
- 10 oz. light Velveeta
- 4 cups fat free half and half
- Salt and Pepper to taste

In a 4-quart saucepot, melt margarine over medium high heat and sauté onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic until slightly browned, approximately 5-10 minutes. Add milk and potatoes and cook until potatoes are tender. Add cubed Velveeta and heat until completely melted. Add crab and half and half and bring to a low simmer and cook for about 5-10 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Louisiana Crab and Twin Cheese Panini

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4 (5-inch) Sandwiches

Comment:

Between the layers of buttery French bread, perfect friendships are born. Crustacean meets cow in this perfect panini.

Ingredients:

1 loaf French bread
 2 (12-ounce) packages imitation crabmeat or fresh claw crabmeat
 softened butter for brushing
 ½ cup mayonnaise
 ¼ cup brown sugar sweetened honey mustard
 2 cups grated Cheddar cheese
 2 cups grated Kashkaval cheese
 1 head green leaf lettuce, shredded ½-inch
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

Preheat a panini press. NOTE: If you do not have a panini press, heat a skillet over medium heat. Another heavy skillet will be needed to press down and flatten the sandwiches. Slice French bread in half lengthwise then cut into 5-inch segments. Brush outside of bread with softened butter. In a small mixing bowl, combine mayonnaise and sweet honey mustard. Once well mixed, lightly spread on inside top and bottom half of loaf. Layer crabmeat on bottom half of loaf. Top with grated cheeses and lettuce. Season with salt and pepper. Close sandwich and cook approximately 3 minutes in a panini press or until golden brown and cheese is melted. If using a skillet, cook 3 minutes on each side.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Lump Crabmeat and Crawfish Dip

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

My great aunt made the most wonderful crab and cheese soup in the world. One Sunday morning, she was busy in the kitchen chopping onions, celery and bell pepper in anticipation of the family coming over for lunch. Since we lived far out in the country and ingredients weren't easy to come by, we had to prepare well in advance for every dish. Once the soup started to come together, her old house cat, Lucy, jumped up on the kitchen counter and knocked over a pint of her half and half cream. With a blink of the eye, she looked around and said, "Don't panic. Instead of soup, we'll have my 'now famous' crabmeat appetizer."

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
 1 pound crawfish tails
 1/4 cup lite margarine
 1 cup onions, diced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, minced
 1/2 cup flour
 3 cups evaporated skim milk
 1/2 pound lite Swiss cheese, grated
 1/2 ounce sherry
 salt substitute
 black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

In a cast iron Dutch oven, melt margarine over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, whip until white roux is achieved. Pour in skim milk, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add cheese and sherry. Continue to cook until cheese is melted. Fold in crabmeat and crawfish tails and season to taste using salt substitute, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Should you wish to recreate my great aunt's wonderful crab and cheese soup, simply add 3 cups of milk or chicken stock. Blend all ingredients well, heat and serve.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Lump Crab and Artichoke Dip

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

For your next cocktail party, especially around the holiday season, no combination is better for a unique and tasty dip than crabmeat and artichokes. An interesting thing about this recipe is the many variations that may come about by simply adding more cream to create a soup or throwing in 2 cups of chopped spinach and replacing the crab meat with oysters for a fabulous Oysters Rockefeller Dip.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 2 (8 1/2-ounce) cans artichoke hearts, drained
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup yellow bell pepper, diced
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 1/4 tsp granulated garlic
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 2 cups Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp basil, chopped

METHOD:

Begin by rinsing artichokes well under cold water to remove the brine. Chop artichokes coarsely in a food processor, remove and set aside for later use. In a 2-quart heavy-bottom sauté pan melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add artichokes and blend well into the vegetable mixture, stir and cook 5 additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend well to form a white roux, do not brown. Add chicken stock and heavy whipping cream, one cup at a time, whisking constantly until a thick cream sauce is achieved. Reduce heat to simmer. Add white wine and season to taste using salt and pepper. Simmer approximately 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep from scorching. The mixture should resemble a thick cream sauce. Should it become too thick, additional whipping cream or stock may be added to reach desired consistency. Add green onions and parsley, then fold in lump crabmeat. Cook 5 minutes longer and

remove from heat. Fold in Parmesan cheese and adjust seasonings if necessary. Place the mixture in a chafing dish and serve with garlic croutons or crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Crab-Stuffed Artichoke Bottoms

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

One of the most famous soups in South Louisiana is crab and artichoke bisque. The flavors of these two ingredients are often married in Louisiana cuisine. Here is just another example of the flavor of crab and spinach used together to create a delicious appetizer. You may wish to try using oysters instead of crabmeat. Replace the ½ pound of lump crabmeat with 1 cup of oysters.

Ingredients:

12 artichoke bottoms, fresh or canned
 ½ pound lump crabmeat
 ¼ cup butter
 ¼ cup minced onions
 ¼ cup minced celery
 ¼ cup minced red bell peppers
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 cups cooked spinach
 ¼ cup tomato ketchup
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 ½ ounce Herbsaint
 ½ cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
 ¼ pound butter, melted
 1 ounce sherry
 2 tbsps chopped parsley

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. If the artichoke bottoms are canned, soak in cold water for one hour to remove the brine and vinegar taste. In a heavy-bottomed skillet, melt ¼ cup butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Chop the cooked spinach very fine and add to the vegetables. Blend well and add lump crabmeat. Stir until all ingredients are well incorporated. Simmer 5 minutes then add ketchup, salt, pepper and hot sauce. Lower heat to simmer and cook 10-15 additional minutes. Add Herbsaint, blend into the crab and spinach mixture and remove from heat. Sprinkle in breadcrumbs and allow the mixture to cool slightly. Once cooled, stuff the center of each artichoke bottom with the crab and spinach mixture. Place the artichokes in a large baking pan and top with an equal portion of melted butter and sherry. Sprinkle with parsley and bake uncovered for 15-20 minutes. Serve 2 artichokes with a spoon of sherry-butter sauce. You may wish to place one whole oyster on the bottom of the artichoke prior to stuffing with the crab and spinach mixture.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Spicy Crabmeat Guacamole

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup crabmeat
- 2 ripe avocados, peeled and quartered
- 1 Roma tomato, seeded and diced
- 1/4 cup onions, finely diced
- 1 tbsp cilantro, chopped
- 1 tsp garlic, chopped
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 tsp Louisiana Gold Hot Sauce
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp jalapenos, chopped
- 2 tsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tbsp sour cream

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, add all ingredients and mix together until a chunky paste is formed. Serve with lightly salted tortilla chips.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Creole Quesadillas

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Although quesadillas are Spanish and Southwest in origin, they were a natural addition to Creole country. The Spanish had control of the city of New Orleans in the late 1700s, and many of their cooking techniques are a major part of Creole cuisine today.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh crawfish tails
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 1/2 pound wild oyster mushrooms
- 1/2 pound button mushrooms, sliced
- 1/2 pound Chanterelle mushrooms
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tbsps cilantro, chopped
- 1 cup Creole tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 cup yellow bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1 tbsp Creole seasoning
- salt and black pepper to taste
- hot sauce to taste
- 8 large tortilla shells
- 1 pound grated Monterey Jack cheese

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. You may wish to substitute a local seafood such as shrimp or crab or even chicken if crawfish is unavailable in your area. In a large cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add green onions, garlic and mushrooms. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until mushrooms are wilted. Add crawfish, thyme, cilantro, tomatoes and bell peppers. Continue to sauté until juices are rendered and liquids have almost completely evaporated, approximately 10 minutes. Season to taste using Creole seasoning, salt, pepper and hot sauce. Place the tortilla shells on a large cookie sheet and sprinkle with a small amount of Monterey Jack cheese. Top with a portion of the crawfish stuffing and more of the Monterey Jack cheese. Fold each tortilla in 1/2 and bake 7 to 10 minutes or until cheese is melted and tortillas are slightly crisp but not over-browned. NOTE: The quesadillas may be pan sautéed in a hot skillet that has been sprayed with a small amount of vegetable spray. Be careful not to over-brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Crabmeat Au Gratin

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4-6

COMMENT:

Au Gratin refers to the crusty topping that appears on the top of a cheese dish after it is removed from the oven or broiler. The most famous of all Au Gratins in Louisiana is the jumbo lump crabmeat Au Gratin. Try substituting shrimp or even crawfish into the recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1/2 tsp flour
- 1 (13-ounce) can evaporated milk
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp cayenne
- 1/4 tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp basil, chopped
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 1/2 pound sharp Cheddar cheese, grated

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add celery, onion, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. While vegetables are sautéing, whip egg yolks and evaporated milk until well blended and set aside. Sprinkle flour over seasoning mixture and blend well into the sauté pan to create a white roux. Do Not Brown. Using a wire whisk, add milk/egg mixture while stirring constantly to blend into roux mixture. Season to taste using salt, peppers, basil and thyme. Continue to blend, cooking 3-5 additional minutes. Remove from heat and fold 1/4 pound Cheddar cheese into the white sauce mixture and blend until cheese is totally melted. Place cleaned crabmeat into a Pyrex baking dish. Top with the cheese sauce, then sprinkle with remaining grated cheddar. Cover and bake until bubbly. Uncover then slightly brown the top of the casserole.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Marinated Crab Claws

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Over the past few years, we have seen less of the beautiful blue crabs from Lake Maurepas. These blue giants are sought after nationwide and have unfortunately been overfished, causing a scarcity. If you are lucky enough to get your hands on a bushel of Maurepas crabs, the recipe possibilities are endless.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound crab claws, peeled
 1/2 cup olive oil
 1/2 cup water
 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1/4 cup garlic, chopped
 1 tsp horseradish
 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 3 tbsps low-sodium Worcestershire sauce
 1 tbsp fresh thyme
 1 tbsp fresh basil
 salt substitute
 black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

In a large glass mixing bowl, add olive oil, water, vinegar, lemon juice, garlic, horseradish, green onions, parsley and Worcestershire sauce. Using a wire whisk, whip until all ingredients are well blended. Add herbs and season to taste using salt substitute, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Add the crab claws and coat well with the seasoning mixture. Cover with clear wrap and refrigerate overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

French Fried Frog Legs**PREP TIME:** 1 Hour**SERVES:** 6**COMMENT:**

Although the frog leg is the most rare seafood delicacy, it is quite common here in South Louisiana. I have had them prepared in many ways and in many places, but I still enjoy them beer-battered and deep-fried best.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 dozen frog legs
- 1 quart buttermilk
- 1 egg
- 3 tbsps Creole mustard
- 1(10-ounce) bottle of beer
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste
- Worcestershire Sauce to taste
- dash of hot sauce
- 4 cups seasoned yellow corn flour
- 2 cups oil

METHOD:

Preheat oil to 375 degrees F. Place frog legs in a mixing bowl and top with buttermilk. Allow to sit one hour at room temperature. In a separate bowl, combine egg, mustard and beer. Using a wire whisk, stir ingredients until well blended. Season lightly using salt, pepper, garlic, Worcestershire sauce and hot sauce. Place corn flour in a paper bag. Remove frog legs from buttermilk, coat in beer batter and place in bag. Seal tightly and shake vigorously to coat legs thoroughly. Deep fry until golden brown. Serve with tartar sauce or cocktail sauce.

****LAGNIAPPE****

Buttermilk is used as a tenderizer in this frog leg recipe. Most people realize that buttermilk is a by-product from the processing of butter. But did you know that over 80% of the world's non-white population cannot drink milk? It seems that nature designed milk to nourish babies and thus designed babies to best digest milk. The rich sugar in milk, called lactose, can only be digested with the aid of an enzyme called lactase. This enzyme is produced in the intestines of babies and decreases as one grows older. For some reason, white adults maintain more lactase in their system than non-whites. The American Indians drank no milk before Columbus, because of the absence of milk producing animals, and most still consider it distasteful today. Well, with this bit of information, it is interesting that most of us still love milk. Whether we drink it or not, it is still used in the majority of the dishes we cook.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Osso Bucco of Frog Legs

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Osso Bucco literally translated in Italian means "bone with a hole" and generally refers to the shank portion of an animal especially veal, lamb and pork. The meat surrounding this marrow-filled bone is perfect for long, slow braising in rich sauces such as tomato or veal stock. When the very large frog legs of South Louisiana are too tough and stringy for deep frying, the braising method or Osso Bucco style is perfect for the meat.

INGREDIENTS:

6 frog legs, cleaned
 1/2 cup olive oil
 1/2 cup flour
 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
 1/2 cup diced carrots
 1/2 cup diced potatoes
 1/2 cup diced zucchini
 1/2 cup diced squash
 10 pearl onions
 1/2 cup diced onions
 1/2 cup diced celery
 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1 quart beef stock
 1/2 cup red wine
 1/2 cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 salt and black pepper
 dash of Worcestershire sauce
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

In a 10-inch cast iron skillet, heat olive oil over medium high heat. Season flour to taste using thyme, basil, salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Dredge frog legs in flour, shaking off excess. Place in olive oil and sear until lightly browned on each side. Do not overcook. Add carrots, potatoes, zucchini, squash, onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add beef stock, one ladle at a time, until well blended. Add red wine and stir into mixture. Season to taste using salt, pepper, Worcestershire and Louisiana Gold. Cover pot and cook for 30 minutes or until tender. Add green onions and parsley and serve with pasta or rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Frog Legs Provencal

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

When I was growing up on the bayous of South Louisiana, I thought frog legs were by far the greatest delicacy to come out of the swamp waters. Today, I know they are! Provencal refers to that style of cooking from the south of France bordering the region of Provence on the Mediterranean Sea. Normally, tomatoes smothered in garlic and olive oil along with herbs de Provence set the tone for this style of cooking.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 Louisiana frog legs
- 1 cup seasoned white flour
- 1/4 pound melted butter
- 2 tablespoons Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1/2 cup minced Bermuda onions
- 1/4 cup slivered garlic
- 1 cup diced Creole tomatoes
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- salt and pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a 10-inch sauté pan heat butter and olive oil over medium high heat. Coat frog legs in seasoned flour shaking off all excess. When butter is hot, sauté frog legs 2 to 3 minutes on each side. Add onions and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes and cook 2 to 3 additional minutes. Deglaze with white wine, then add chicken stock. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook until frog legs are tender, 5 to 7 minutes. Sauce should be slightly thickened because of the flour in the skillet. Add green onions and season to taste using salt, pepper, and Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce. Additional stock may be needed to return a sauce-like consistency.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SEAFOOD

Lobster Cooking Tips

Comment:

Although most Cajuns rush to select the largest ingredients they can find when cooking, I suggest they take a step in reverse when choosing a live lobster. The smaller the lobster, the sweeter and more tender the meat. Ideally, a 1 1/4- to 1 1/2-pound lobster is always best when boiling, steaming or grilling.

Boiling:

When boiling lobsters, use a kettle large enough to hold 1 or 2 lobsters at a time allowing 3-quarts of water per lobster. You may wish to add 1 tbsp of salt per quart. When water comes to a rolling boil, submerge live lobsters one at a time. Return water to a boil. Lower heat to simmer and boil 8 to 10 minutes for 1- to 1-1/4 pound lobsters, or 12 to 14 minutes for 1 1/2-pound lobsters. The tails should begin to float toward the surface once the lobsters are cooked.

Steaming:

If you wish to steam a lobster it is best done in a large stainless steel pasta pot using the steaming insert. Place approximately 2 inches of water in the bottom of the stockpot and bring to a rolling boil. Place 2 or more lobsters in the pot, cover and steam 8 to 10 minutes for a 1- to 1 1/4-pound lobster and 12 to 14 minutes for a 1 1/2-pound lobster.

Grilling or Broiling:

If you prefer to grill or broil your lobster, I suggest submerging the lobster for 2 minutes into a pot of boiling water. Remove and allow the lobster to cool slightly. Turn the lobster over on its back and, using a sharp chef's knife, split it open from head to tail. Brush the tail meat lightly with oil or butter and season with salt and pepper. Place the lobster on a large cookie sheet, meat side down and cook 5 minutes. Turn over onto the shell and cook 5 additional minutes, or until meat is firm and white. Do not overcook.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

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[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#) | [Contact](#) | [Site Map](#)



FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Shrimp Bread

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4-5

COMMENT:

What better way to eat shrimp than nestled in cheese!

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups of peeled shrimp
- 1 loaf French bread
- 1/2 stick butter
- 1/2 cup onions, chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise
- 1/3 cup mozzarella cheese
- 1/3 cup cheddar cheese



METHOD:

Cut top off of French bread. Scoop inside out of loaf and set aside. In a large skillet, melt butter and cook onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and shrimp for 15 minutes. Add dry mustard and mayonnaise. Mix all together, then mix in all cheeses and blend until melted. Put shrimp mixture into bread. Butter top and wrap in foil. Bake on barbecue pit or in 350°F oven for about 20-30 minutes. Cut into slices and serve.

Note: May substitute crawfish for shrimp.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Shrimp Malarcher

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This dish was named in honor of the famous Malarcher sugar planters of River Road Louisiana. Their sugar plantation was located in Convent, Louisiana, west of New Orleans. This is now a traditional Lafitte's Landing appetizer and has been for 25 years.



INGREDIENTS:

- 3 dozen (21-25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup sliced mushrooms
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced green bell pepper
- 2 tbsps flour
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 2½ cups hot shrimp stock
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp parsley
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Sauté garlic, green onions and mushrooms approximately 2 minutes or until mushrooms are slightly wilted. Add bell peppers, stir into mixture and cook 1 additional minute. Add shrimp and stir fry into vegetables until shrimp begin to turn pink and curl, approximately 2 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend into dish until white roux is achieved. The flour will absorb most of the liquid in the pan and act as a thickening agent for the sauce. Deglaze with white wine and add hot stock. Whisk well into seasoning mixture. Add lemon juice and parsley and season to taste using salt and cracked pepper. Cook until sauce is thickened and shrimp are perfectly cooked but not overdone. Additional chicken stock may be added, should sauce become too thick. This dish may be served in an au gratin dish or heated chafing dish with garlic croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

French-Fried Crab Claws

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Home-style frying units, such as Fry Daddy or Fry Baby, make deep frying simple for the home kitchen. Also be aware of the nice "lite" frying oils available on the market today. Using these will make deep frying a lot healthier.

INGREDIENTS FOR BATTER:

- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup water
- 2 eggs
- 3 tbsps Creole mustard
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 1-quart mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients. Whisk with a wire whip to ensure mixture is well blended. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR BREADING:

- 2 cups yellow corn flour*
- 2¼ tsps salt
- 1½ tsps granulated garlic
- 1½ tsps cracked black pepper
- 1½ tsps cayenne pepper
- 1½ tsps dried thyme

METHOD:

In a 1-quart mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR FRYING:

- 1 pound cleaned crab claws
- 1½ quarts vegetable oil

METHOD:

In a home-style deep fryer, such as a Fry Daddy or Fry Baby, preheat oil according to manufacturer's directions or to 375° F. Place crab claws in batter mixture and allow to sit 10-15 minutes. Drain all excess liquid from crab claws and bread well in yellow corn flour. Shake off all excess breading and deep fry a few dozen at a time until claws turn golden brown and float to top of frying unit. Remove and drain on paper towels and serve hot with cocktail or tartar sauce.

*NOTE: Yellow corn flour may be found in most gourmet shops or food stores. It may be packaged and pre-seasoned as a seafood breading mix such as fish fry. If unavailable in your area, plain flour or equal parts flour and yellow corn meal may be substituted.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Crawfish Cheesecake

PREP TIME: 2½ Hours

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Everyone loves cheesecake! In this recipe, I have made a savory cheesecake seasoned with crawfish and chives. Use this cake as an appetizer or serve it with crackers like a party cheese ball.



INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

- 6 tbsps melted butter
- 1 egg white
- 2 cups crushed butter crackers (like Ritz)

METHOD FOR CRUST:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small bowl, combine melted butter, egg white and crackers. Press mixture into the bottom of a 10-inch springform pan. Bake for 8 minutes to crisp. Remove from oven and cool. Reduce the oven temperature to 250°F.

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

- 1 pound crawfish tails, chopped
- 3 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup sour cream
- 3 tbsps cornstarch
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp Zatarain's Creole seasoning
- 2 tbsps minced onions
- 2 tbsps minced celery
- 2 tbsps minced red bell pepper
- 1/3 cup sliced chives
- 2 large eggs

METHOD FOR FILLING:

In a mixing bowl, blend cream cheese, sour cream, cornstarch, salt, Creole seasoning, onions, celery, bell pepper and chives. Blend well, scraping down the sides of the bowl. Add eggs and mix well, scraping down the sides of the bowl again. Fold in the chopped crawfish tails. Pour the batter over the cooled crust. Bake for 1 hour. Turn the oven off and leave the cake in the oven for another hour without opening the door. Cool on a rack for at least 4 hours. Carefully unmold. Keep refrigerated until ready to serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Marinated Crab Claws

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Over the past few years, we have seen less of the beautiful blue crabs from Lake Maurepas. These blue giants are sought after nationwide and have unfortunately been overfished, causing a scarcity. If you are lucky enough to get your hands on a bushel of Maurepas crabs, the recipe possibilities are endless.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound crab claws, peeled
 ½ cup olive oil
 ½ cup water
 ¼ cup red wine vinegar
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 ¼ cup chopped garlic
 1 tsp horseradish
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 3 tbsps low-sodium Worcestershire sauce
 1 tbsp fresh thyme
 1 tbsp fresh basil
 Salt substitute to taste
 Black pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large glass mixing bowl, add olive oil, water, vinegar, lemon juice, garlic, horseradish, green onions, parsley and Worcestershire sauce. Using a wire whisk, whip until all ingredients are well blended. Add herbs and season to taste using salt substitute, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Add crab claws and coat well with seasoning mixture. Cover with clear wrap and refrigerate overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Lump Crabmeat and Crawfish Dip

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

My great aunt made the most wonderful crab and cheese soup in the world. One Sunday morning, she was busy in the kitchen chopping onions, celery and bell pepper in anticipation of the family coming over for lunch. Since we lived far out in the country and ingredients weren't easy to come by, we had to prepare well in advance for every dish. Once the soup started to come together, her old house cat, Lucy, jumped up on the kitchen counter and knocked over a pint of her half and half cream. With a blink of the eye, she looked around and said, "Don't panic. Instead of soup, we'll have my 'now famous' crabmeat appetizer."

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- ¼ cup lite margarine
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ½ cup flour
- 3 cups evaporated skim milk
- ½ pound lite Swiss cheese, grated
- ½ ounce sherry
- Salt substitute to taste
- Black pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a cast iron Dutch oven, melt margarine over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, whip until white roux is achieved. Pour in skim milk, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add cheese and sherry. Continue to cook until cheese is melted. Fold in crabmeat and crawfish tails and season to taste using salt substitute, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Should you wish to recreate my great aunt's wonderful crab and cheese soup, simply add 3 cups of milk or chicken stock. Blend all ingredients well, heat and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Lump Crab and Artichoke Dip

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

For your next cocktail party, especially around the holiday season, no combination is better for a unique and tasty dip than crabmeat and artichokes. An interesting thing about this recipe is the many variations that may come about by simply adding more cream to create a soup or throwing in 2 cups of chopped spinach and replacing the crab meat with oysters for a fabulous Oysters Rockefeller Dip.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 2 (8½-ounce) cans artichoke hearts, drained
- ¼ pound butter
- ½ cup diced onion
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- ¼ tsp granulated garlic
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- ½ cup flour
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 2 cups grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp chopped basil

METHOD:

Begin by rinsing artichokes well under cold water to remove the brine. Chop artichokes coarsely in a food processor, remove and set aside for later use. In a 2-quart heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add artichokes and blend well into the vegetable mixture, stir and cook 5 additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend well to form a white roux. Do not brown. Add chicken stock and heavy whipping cream, one cup at a time, whisking constantly until a thick cream sauce is achieved. Reduce heat to simmer. Add white wine and season to taste using salt and pepper. Simmer approximately 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep from scorching. The mixture should resemble a thick cream sauce. Should it become too thick, additional whipping cream or stock may be added to reach desired consistency. Add green onions and parsley, then fold in lump crabmeat. Cook 5 minutes longer and

remove from heat. Fold in Parmesan cheese and adjust seasonings if necessary. Place the mixture in a chafing dish and serve with garlic croutons or crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Stuffed Mushrooms Dominique Youx

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Dominique Youx, a notorious general for Jean Lafitte—some say his half brother—went on to become one of New Orleans' leading politicians. He was quite a cook, and this recipe is dedicated to his memory.

INGREDIENTS:

24 jumbo fresh mushrooms
 ¼ pound melted butter
 1½ cups chopped mushroom stems
 ½ cup finely diced green onions
 ¼ cup finely chopped parsley
 1 tbsp finely diced garlic
 ¼ cup diced tasso
 ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
 ¾ cup white crabmeat
 1 ounce sherry
 1 tsp lemon juice
 Salt and black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 ½ cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
 ¼ pound melted butter
 4 ounces sherry
 2 ounces dry white wine

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 450°F. Wash mushrooms well and remove stems. In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add mushroom stems, green onions, parsley, garlic and red bell pepper. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add white crabmeat, sherry and lemon juice. Continue cooking an additional 2-3 minutes. Season mixture to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Add bread crumbs, a little at a time, until stuffing is of proper texture but not too dry. Using a teaspoon, fill each mushroom cap with generous serving of stuffing. Place 6 mushrooms in each of 6 au gratin dishes and top with melted butter, sherry and white wine. Bake for 10-15 minutes or until mushrooms are golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

South Louisiana Shrimp Rémoulade

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Rémoulade sauce may be found in any restaurant in South Louisiana, and in many versions. The rémoulades of New Orleans are normally Creole mustard-based and highly seasoned. This, however, is the River Road version.

INGREDIENTS FOR BOILING:

- 3 dozen (21-25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 quarts cold water
- 1 diced onion
- ½ cup diced celery
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper
- 3 bay leaves
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 1 sliced lemon
- 4 tbsps salt

METHOD:

In a 4-quart stock pot over medium-high heat, add water and all seasoning ingredients. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and allow to cook 15 minutes for flavors to develop. Bring mixture back to a rolling boil, add shrimp and stir approximately 3-5 minutes. At this point, shrimp should be pink and curled. Test for doneness, being careful not to over-cook. Once water returns to a boil, shrimp should be perfectly done. Pour off boiling water and replace with cold tap water to stop the cooking process. Drain and place shrimp in a serving bowl. Cover with clear wrap and refrigerate. This may be done the night before.

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Shrimp Mousse

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 20

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups boiled, chopped shrimp
 4 (5-8 ounce) catfish fillets, poached
 1 cup HELLMANN'S mayonnaise
 ½ cup sour cream
 1 tbsp diced garlic
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
 ¼ cup diced yellow bell pepper
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 ½ ounce sherry
 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
 Dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 Salt to taste
 2 package unflavored gelatin, dissolved
 2 tbsps cracked black pepper in ¼ cup cold water

METHOD:

Coarsely chop poached catfish. In a 2-quart mixing bowl, add all ingredients, blending well to incorporate seasonings into the mixture. Adjust salt and pepper if necessary, and pour mixture into a terrine mold. Cover and place in refrigerator overnight. When serving, remove from mold and garnish with French bread or garlic croutons. To enhance the presentation of the terrine, you may wish to color 2 cups of mayonnaise, 1 with red food coloring and 1 with green. Using a pastry bag with a star tip, pipe colored mayonnaise around the base of the terrine. You may also wish to garnish the top of the terrine with a small amount of the colored mayonnaise and a fresh tomato rose.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Terrine of Smoked Catfish

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 20

COMMENT:

This recipe has become one of our most popular hors d'oeuvre items as we bring Louisiana cooking around the world. Companies such as Delta Pride Catfish in Indianola, Mississippi, are making farm-raised catfish a household term.

INGREDIENTS FOR SMOKING:

- 4 (5-8 ounce) catfish fillets
- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp dry thyme
- 1 tsp dry basil
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- dash of Louisiana Gold pepper sauce

METHOD:

Preheat home-style smoking unit according to manufacturer's instructions. Pre-soak wood chips such pecan or hickory in root beer for a unique flavor. Combine all the above ingredients, blend well and pour over catfish fillets. Allow to set at room temperature approximately 30 minutes. Smoke fillets for approximately 35 minutes or until flaky. Remove and allow to cool.

INGREDIENTS FOR TERRINE:

- 4 (5-8 ounce) smoked catfish fillets
- 1 cup heavy duty mayonnaise
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ ounce sherry wine
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- dash of Louisiana Gold pepper sauce
- salt to taste
- 2 packages unflavored gelatin dissolved in ¼ cup cold water
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper

METHOD:

Coarsely chop smoked catfish. In a 2-quart mixing bowl, add all remaining ingredients, blending well to incorporate seasonings into the mixture. Adjust salt and pepper if necessary and pour mixture into a terrine mold. Place in refrigerator covered overnight. When

serving, remove from mold and garnish with French bread or garlic croutons. To enhance the presentation of the smoked terrine, you may wish to color 2 cups of mayonnaise, 1 with red food coloring and 1 with green. Using a pastry bag with a star tip, pipe colored mayonnaise around the base of the terrine. You may also wish to garnish the top of the terrine with a small amount of the colored mayonnaise and a fresh tomato rose.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Lump Crabmeat St. Martin

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Remember for your next cocktail party, this dish makes an excellent hours d'oeuvre and should be served hot with garlic croutons or crackers.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- ¼ pound butter
- ¼ cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsps flour
- 3½ cups hot whipping cream
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- dash of Louisiana Gold pepper sauce
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a 2-quart heavy-bottomed sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, green onions and garlic. Saute 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Be careful not to brown vegetables. Sprinkle in flour, blending well into mixture. Using a wire whip, whisk hot cream into sauce pan stirring constantly until thick cream sauce is achieved. Reduce heat to simmer and add white wine, lemon juice and hot sauce. Add Parmesan cheese, stirring constantly so mixture will not scorch. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add red bell pepper for color. If mixture becomes too thick, add a small amount of whipping cream or hot water. Remove from heat and gently fold in lump crabmeat. Place in soufflé ramekins, garnish with parsley and serve with garlic croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spicy Gingered Oysters

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I'm often amazed at the similarity of ingredients used worldwide in creating local recipes. Here in Louisiana, most of our seafood gumbos and certainly our famous Cajun oyster stew require garlic, oysters and chili peppers as main ingredients in the recipes. On a recent trip to China, I discovered yet another dish that incorporated these 3 flavors, and I have since made them a staple on my Lafitte's Landing menu. Here is the recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 dozen oysters
- ½ cup oyster liquid
- 2 tbsps slivered candied ginger
- 1 tsp corn starch
- 2 tbsps sesame oil
- ¼ cup minced shallots
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- 2 tbsps minced garlic salt to taste
- ½ tsp Sambal Oelek Ground Chili Paste
- 1 tsp Tuong Ot Toi Chili Garlic Sauce
- ½ cup clam juice
- salt to taste
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley

METHOD:

I should begin by mentioning that both the chili paste and the garlic sauce are extremely hot, and you should first test the amount used to ensure that it suits your taste. Dissolve corn starch in oyster liquid and set aside. In the bottom of a 10-inch skillet, heat sesame oil over medium-high heat. Add shallots, green onions, garlic and ginger. Saute 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add oysters and blend well. Add the ground chili paste, garlic sauce and clam juice. Cook until oysters are puffy, but not over cooked, 3-5 minutes. Using a slotted spoon, remove oysters from the skillet and keep warm. Return the skillet to heat and bring to a low boil. Stir the dissolved corn starch liquid and add to the skillet, stirring constantly. Season to taste using salt and reduce the liquid to half volume. Return the oysters to the thickened liquid and reheat for 1 minute. Serve over garlic croutons or with crackers. You may wish to serve as a pasta sauce over angel hair or spaghetti. Sprinkle with parsley to garnish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Oyster Shooters

PREP TIME: 10 Minutes

SERVES: 1

COMMENT:

No comment needed!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 oyster
- 1 ounce Absolut Vodka
- 2 dashes of Louisiana Gold Hot Sauce

METHOD:

Put all ingredients in a shot glass and enjoy!

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spicy Crabmeat Guacamole**PREP TIME:** 30 Minutes**SERVES:** 6**INGREDIENTS:**

- ½ cup crabmeat
- 2 ripe avocados, peeled and quartered
- 1 Roma tomato, seeded and diced
- ¼ cup finely diced onions
- 1 tbsp chopped cilantro
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsps lime juice
- 1 tsp Louisiana Gold pepper sauce
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp minced jalapeños
- 2 tsps cracked black pepper
- 1 tbsp sour cream

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, add all ingredients and mix together until a chunky paste is formed. Serve with lightly salted tortilla chips.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Creole Quesadillas

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Although quesadillas are Spanish and Southwest in origin, they were a natural addition to Creole country. The Spanish had control of the city of New Orleans in the late 1700s, and many of their cooking techniques are a major part of Creole cuisine today.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh crawfish tails
- ½ cup butter
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- ½ pound wild oyster mushrooms
- ½ pound sliced button mushrooms
- ½ pound Chanterelle mushrooms
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- 2 tbsps chopped cilantro
- 1 cup diced Creole tomatoes
- ½ cup diced yellow bell pepper
- ½ cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp Creole seasoning
- salt and black pepper to taste
- hot sauce to taste
- 8 large tortilla shells
- 1 pound grated Monterey Jack cheese

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. You may wish to substitute shrimp, crab or even chicken if crawfish is unavailable in your area. In a large cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add green onions, garlic and mushrooms. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until mushrooms are wilted. Add crawfish, thyme, cilantro, tomatoes and bell peppers. Continue to sauté until juices are rendered and liquids have almost completely evaporated, approximately 10 minutes. Season to taste using Creole seasoning, salt, pepper and hot sauce. Place the tortilla shells on a large cookie sheet and sprinkle with a small amount of Monterey Jack cheese. Top with a portion of the crawfish stuffing and more of the Monterey Jack cheese. Fold each tortilla in half and bake 7-10 minutes or until cheese is melted and tortillas are slightly crisp but not over-browned.

NOTE: The quesadillas may be pan sautéed in a hot skillet that has been sprayed with a small amount of vegetable spray. Be careful not to over-brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Grilled Bacon-Wrapped Shrimp with Bourbon Citrus Glaze

Prep Time: 30 minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment: To some people, leaving the heads of the shrimp intact may seem strange, but I can assure you it adds a lot of extra flavor to the finished dish. The slightly sweet glaze is a perfect compliment to the shrimp and the red pepper flakes add a nice punch. These shrimp are sure to be a hit at your next party.

Ingredients:

2 pounds (16-20 count) head-on shrimp
 1 pound bacon
 ¼cup bourbon
 ¼cup lemon juice
 ¼cup lime juice
 ½ cup orange juice
 1¼ cups brown sugar
 2 tbsps mustard
 ½ tsp red pepper flakes (optional)
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a small saucepan, combine bourbon, juices, sugar, mustard, pepper flakes and a pinch of salt. Simmer over medium-low heat until reduced by half. Pour into a glass bowl and set aside. Peel shrimp, leaving head and tail intact. Season with salt and black pepper. Cut bacon into 2-inch pieces and wrap around body of shrimp, securing with a toothpick. Place on a medium-hot grill and cook 3-4 minutes on each side or until shrimp are curled and cooked through. Brush glaze evenly on both sides of shrimp. Cook 1 minute more and serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Skewered Rosemary Shrimp with Louisiana Pesto

Prep Time: 1 Hour**Yields:** 24 Shrimp**Comment:**

Rosemary grows abundantly in Louisiana and, if left unattended, it will into a large shrub. The fragrant sprigs of this plant lend excellent flavor to shrimp, meat or vegetables when used as skewers. Toasted Louisiana pecans and fresh gulf shrimp add to the local flavor of this dish.

**Ingredients for pesto:**

- ½ cup toasted pecans
- 3 garlic cloves, peeled
- 2 tbsps Feta cheese
- 2 tbsps Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp coarsely chopped jalapeños, seeded
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp ground black pepper
- 2 cups fresh mint leaves, packed
- 4 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 2/3 cup extra-virgin olive oil

Method:

In a food processor, combine pecans, garlic, cheeses, jalapeños, salt and pepper. Pulse until mixture is smooth. Add mint leaves and lemon juice. Process until mixture is smooth, stopping occasionally to scrape sides of the bowl. Gradually add olive oil and process until the pesto is smooth and creamy. This sauce can be made 1 day ahead, covered and stored in the refrigerator.

Ingredients for shrimp:

- 24 large shrimp peeled and deveined with tails left intact
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley
- 3 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 24 (4-inch) woody rosemary sprigs, stripped at the bottom
- salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

Preheat griddle or grill. Season shrimp with salt and pepper. In a medium bowl, whisk together oil, garlic and parsley. Add shrimp and mix well. Let this mixture stand at room temperature for 15 minutes.

Skewer 1-4 shrimp on each rosemary sprig. Lay skewers on griddle or grill and cook approximately 2 minutes on each side or until shrimp are opaque in the center. Occasionally brush shrimp with pesto sauce while grilling. When done, brush again with pesto, arrange skewers on a platter and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Crawfish Stuffed Portobello Mushrooms

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 4 Mushrooms

Comment: The meaty quality of Portobello mushrooms makes it an excellent addition to Lenten menus. When topped with this spicy mixture of Louisiana crawfish tails and dusted with Parmesan cheese, a perfect appetizer or light entrée is created.



Ingredients for stuffing:

- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 4 Portobello mushroom caps
- 3 tbsps butter
- ½ cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup diced garlic
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsps minced parsley
- 2 tsps Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsps lemon juice
- 1 tbsp Old Bay seasoning
- 1 tsp Creole mustard
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp cracked black pepper
- hot sauce to taste
- 1 cup Italian breadcrumbs

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Stir in crawfish and continue to sauté 5 minutes. Allow crawfish mixture to cool slightly. In a large mixing bowl, combine mayonnaise, egg, parsley, Worcestershire, lemon juice, Old Bay seasoning, Creole mustard, salt, pepper and hot sauce. Blend well then add in crawfish mixture. Sprinkle in breadcrumbs and mix well. Set the stuffing mixture aside.

Ingredients for mushrooms:

- 1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
- salt and black pepper to taste
- ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup minced green onions

½ cup Italian breadcrumbs
paprika to taste
2 tbsps chopped parsley

Method:

Scrape the underside of each mushroom with a spoon to remove the black gills. Brush each mushroom inside and out with olive oil then season with salt and pepper. Fill each with equal amounts of crawfish stuffing. Top stuffing with Parmesan cheese, breadcrumbs and paprika. Place on cookie sheet and bake, uncovered, 15 minutes or until heated through. Garnish with chopped parsley and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Crawfish and Green Onion Sausage Cabbage Rolls

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yield: 1 Dozen

Comment:

The luck of the Irish smiles upon us, as crawfish are abundant on St. Patrick's Day. This non-traditional cabbage roll combines the flavors of Louisiana with cabbage, which is thrown from St. Patrick's Day parade floats of New Orleans.

Ingredients:

- ½ pound crawfish tails, chopped
- ½ pound fresh green onion sausage, removed from casings
- 12 cabbage leaves blanched
- 2 tsps unsalted butter
- 1 cup diced yellow onions
- ½ cup diced bell peppers
- 1 tsp Creole seasoning
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 cup cooked white rice
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- salt to taste
- black pepper to taste
- 2 tbsps chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh oregano

Method:

Blanche cabbage leaves by placing leaves in salted boiling water. Boil until soft and pliable. Remove from boiling water and immediately immerse in ice water to stop the cooking process. Remove and pat dry. In a medium skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, bell peppers and Creole seasoning. Cook 5-7 minutes or until wilted and starting to brown. Add garlic and cook 1 minute. Stir in green onion sausage and cook 5-7 minutes or until no longer pink. Mix in rice, tomato sauce and crawfish then season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from heat and stir in parsley and oregano. Adjust seasonings if necessary and allow mixture to cool. Lay cabbage leaves, rib side down, on a flat work surface. Spoon about 3 tablespoons of filling into center of each leaf. Roll each leaf into a neat cylinder, tucking in the sides. Place rolls in the top of a steamer basket. Cover and steam 15-20 minutes then remove basket from the heat. Serve hot on your favorite spaghetti sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

CAJUN SPICY SHRIMP & AVOCADO DIP

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: 5 Cups

Comment:

This spicy, Mexican-style dip is a twist on the original guacamole. By adding boiled shrimp, the dish is "Cajunized" and is a perfect party food. For extra kick, use hot salsa rather than mild.

Ingredients:

½ pound medium boiled shrimp
 2 avocados, diced
 ½ cup diced onions
 1 cup crushed tomatoes
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 tbsps chopped cilantro
 3 tbsps fresh lime juice
 ½ cup tomato sauce
 1 (24-ounce) jar salsa
 1 tbsp jalapeño peppers, seeded and minced
 ½ tsp chipotle chili powder
 salt to taste

Method:

Peel, devein and coarsely chop shrimp. In a medium bowl, stir all ingredients together until well blended. Serve with your favorite chips.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

HOT CRAB, ARTICHOKE AND JALAPEÑO DIP

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

Simple enough for a Superbowl party and sinful enough for a Mardi Gras bash, this dip will win you rave reviews every time.

Ingredients:

1 pound claw crabmeat
 2 (14-ounce) cans artichoke hearts, drained and diced
 3 jalapeño peppers, seeded and minced
 ¼ pound butter
 ½ cup minced red onions
 ½ cup minced green bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced yellow bell peppers
 ½ cup thinly sliced green onions
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 cups mayonnaise
 ¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese
 1½ tbsps fresh lemon juice
 ¼ cup Worcestershire sauce
 1 tsp celery salt
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 ¾ cup Italian bread crumbs
 ½ cup chopped pecans

Method:

In a heavy-bottomed skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, jalapeños, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 2–3 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Stir in artichokes and green onions, and cook 3–5 minutes. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine cooled vegetables, mayonnaise, cheese, lemon juice, Worcestershire, celery salt, salt and black pepper. Mix well, and gently fold in crabmeat. Transfer mixture to a buttered ovenproof baking dish. NOTE: Before adding pecans and bread crumbs, feel free to refrigerate mixture up to one day. Sprinkle top with pecans and bread crumbs. Bake 25–30 minutes or until golden brown and bubbly. Serve with croutons or chips.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

50-Yard Line Florentine Artichoke Dip

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

YIELDS: 4 Cups

COMMENT:

It's football season again—time to get together with friends and cheer for your favorite team. Whether you're tailgating at the stadium or watching the game from home, enjoy this delightful blend of spinach and artichokes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (10-ounce) package frozen chopped spinach, thawed, drained and squeezed dry
- 1 (14-ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped
- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsps lemon juice
- salt and black pepper to taste
- cayenne pepper to taste



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Lightly grease an 8" x 8" baking dish. In a medium mixing bowl, blend together cream cheese and mayonnaise until smooth. Mix in spinach, artichoke hearts and Parmesan cheese. Add garlic and lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and peppers. Spread evenly into baking dish. Cover dish with foil and bake for 20 minutes. Remove foil and bake for 5 additional minutes or until slightly browned. Serve with tortilla chips, breadsticks, pretzels or veggies. For a more elegant presentation, dredge quartered artichoke hearts in egg wash and Italian breadcrumbs, deep fry until crispy and use for dipping instead of chips.

Note: This recipe can also be made in a slow cooker and cooked until heated thoroughly, approximately 1–1½ hours.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Pansanella

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

I first discovered this old world delicacy while having lunch with Father John Lacari, a wonderful Italian priest, who brought this dish here from Italy. Although simple to produce, the flavors once incorporated are indescribable. Try it not only as an hors d'oeuvre, but as the perfect garnish to any Italian or Southwest dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups diced Creole tomatoes
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsps chopped fresh basil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 25 whole basil leaves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 25 French bread croutons, toasted
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup red wine vinegar
- salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except whole basil leaves and croutons. Blend well, cover and refrigerate 1-2 hours. When ready to serve, place 1 whole basil leaf on top of a French bread crouton and serve 1 heaping tablespoon of the Pansanella on top. Serve as a chilled hors d'oeuvre.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Quick and Spicy Black-eyed Pea Dip

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This is a wonderful recipe to create with black-eyed peas left over from lunch on New Year's Day. Feel free to enjoy it during the bowl games that evening. Should you not have left over black-eyed peas, substitute 4 cups of canned black-eyed peas, drained.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups cooked black-eyed peas including any seasonings or meat
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and minced
- 1 (4-ounce) can minced green chilies
- 8 ounces cubed sharp Cheddar cheese
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup diced pimento
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

If using left over black-eyed peas, include any of the ham or bacon seasoning to enhance the dip. Measure 4 cups and place in a sieve or strainer to drain for approximately 10 minutes. Removing this excess moisture from the cooked peas will guarantee a creamier dip. In a large sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery and garlic and sauté 2-3 minutes. Add jalapeño pepper and chopped green chilies. Cook 2-3 additional minutes and add half of the black-eyed peas. Simmer 2 minutes, add cheese and stir until melted. Pour contents into the bowl of a food processor and purée. Transfer to a decorative serving bowl and add remaining black-eyed peas. Stir well to incorporate. Add pimento and parsley for garnish. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with warm tortilla chips or crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spinach Madeleine

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 5-6 Servings

Comment:

This traditional Louisiana recipe was first presented in River Road's cookbook from the Junior League of Baton Rouge. It is safe to say that this single recipe made the book world famous. In the late 1990s, Kraft foods did away with their jalapeño cheese roll which was originally used in the recipe. Recently, an alert customer informed us that Kraft's Velveeta line introduced a similar Mexican cheese.

Ingredients:

- 2 packages chopped spinach, frozen
- 4 tbsps butter
- 2 tbsps flour
- 2 tbsps chopped onions
- ½ cup evaporated milk
- ½ cup reserved spinach liquor
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ¾ tsp celery salt
- ¾ tsp garlic salt
- 6 ounces Velveeta Mexican cheese, sliced into ¼-inch cubes
- salt and red pepper to taste
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

Method:

Cook spinach according to directions on package. Drain and reserve liquid. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Add flour, stirring until blended and smooth, but not brown. Add onions and sauté 3-5 minutes or until wilted. Add evaporated milk, spinach liquor and Worcestershire sauce slowly, stirring constantly to avoid lumps. Cook mixture until smooth and thick, stirring constantly. Add seasonings and cubed cheese. Stir until melted and combine with cooked spinach. This may be served immediately or put into a casserole and topped with buttered bread crumbs. The flavor is improved if the latter is done and kept in refrigerator overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spinach, Lump Crab and Artichoke Dip

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT:

For your next cocktail party, especially around the holiday season, no combination is better for a unique and tasty dip than crabmeat and artichokes. An interesting thing about this recipe is the many variations that may come about by simply adding more cream to create a soup, or by throwing in 2 cups of chopped spinach and replacing the crabmeat with oysters for a fabulous Oysters Rockefeller Dip or Soup.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup cooked spinach, squeezed
- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 2 (8.5 ounce) cans artichoke hearts, drained
- ¼ pound butter
- ½ cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- ¼ tsp granulated garlic
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- ½ cup flour
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 2 cups grated Parmesan cheese
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp Cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp chopped basil

METHOD:

Begin by rinsing artichokes well under cold water to remove the brine and chop coarsely in a food processor. Remove and set aside for later use. In a 2-quart, heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add artichokes and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Stir and cook 5 additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend well to form a white roux. Do not brown. Add chicken stock and heavy whipping cream 1 cup at a time, whisking constantly until a thick cream sauce is achieved. Reduce heat to simmer. Add white wine and season to taste using salt and pepper. Simmer approximately 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep from scorching. The mixture should resemble a thick cream sauce. Should it become too thick, additional whipping cream or stock

may be added to reach desired consistency. Add spinach, green onions and parsley, then fold in lump crabmeat. Cook 5 minutes longer and remove from heat. Fold in Parmesan cheese and adjust seasonings if necessary. Place the mixture in a chafing dish and serve with garlic croutons or crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spear Elegance

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1½ cups sauce and 48 spears

COMMENT:

This wonderful appetizer combines asparagus spear with a creamy lemon-tarragon dipping sauce. It makes a very elegant presentation when served in separate crystal glasses.

INGREDIENTS:

- 48 asparagus spears (about 2 bunches), tough bottoms removed
- 1 container Chef John Folse's Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- ¼ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tbsps tomato ketchup
- 3 tbsps minced red onion
- 2 tbsps lemon juice
- 4 tsps capers, drained and chopped
- 2 tsps dried tarragon
- ½ tsp onion powder
- ½ tsp sugar
- ¼ tsp pepper



METHOD:

Blanch the asparagus in lightly salted boiling water until slightly tender, about 3-5 minutes. When tender, drain and drop immediately into a bowl of ice water to stop the cooking process. To make the dipping sauce, in a mixing bowl, blend the Creole cream cheese, mayonnaise, ketchup, onion, lemon juice, capers, tarragon, onion powder, sugar and pepper. Blend well and refrigerate until chilled. Serve in crystal glasses or on a platter with a bowl of the dipping sauce on the side.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Roasted Onion and Eggplant Pâté

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This recipe is great when served as a dip or in a pie shell.

INGREDIENTS:

1 large onion, quartered
 1 medium eggplant
 olive oil
 1 cup cream cheese
 1 clove garlic
 pinch of chili powder
 lemon or lime juice to taste
 salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Quarter onion and place on a baking sheet with eggplant. Season lightly and drizzle with olive oil. Roast for 45 minutes, until eggplant is blackened and the skin wrinkled. Allow to cool. Cut off and discard the end of eggplant. Place eggplant in a food processor with onion, cream cheese, garlic and chili powder and blend until completely smooth. Season pâté with salt, pepper and lemon or lime juice to taste.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Cheese and Onion Beignets

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 15

COMMENT:

These fried pastry puffs are really easy to make, but it is important to measure the ingredients accurately. Add the egg to the dough gradually - you may not need it all - you want the dough to hold its shape, so keep it quite stiff.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup Cheddar cheese, grated
 2 Creole shallots, minced
 oil to deep-fry
 4 tbsps butter
 2/3 cup water
 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 2 medium eggs, beaten
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oil in a deep-fryer to 400 degrees F. To make the choux pastry, heat butter and water together in saucepan, over medium high heat, until the butter has melted and bring to a rolling boil. Add flour, immediately take the pan off the heat and beat vigorously until the mixture forms a ball and leaves the sides of the pan. A sturdy wooden spoon works best. Gradually add eggs, beating well between each addition. Add cheese, shallots and seasoning. Carefully drop teaspoonfuls of the choux pastry into the hot fat and deep-fry for 3 to 4 minutes, or until golden brown. Drain thoroughly on plenty of crumpled paper towels and serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spanish Olive Tapenade

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 Cup

COMMENT:

The French love their olive spread made from lusty black Nicoise olives. The Italians choose rich Gaeta olives for theirs. However, the Spanish Manzanilla olives offer a fruitier-tasting version. These olives are small, slightly sweeter green olives available on most supermarket shelves. Blended with extra virgin Spanish olive oil, which has a smooth, sweet flavor reminiscent of fruit and almonds, the bite of the tapenade is mellowed and then brightened with the addition of lemon juice and cilantro. Spread on large croutons, brushed with oil and toasted, and serve with a Fino sherry for a perfect hors d'oeuvre. Have small bowls of almonds and dried cherries alongside to sweeten the palate.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups pitted Spanish Manzanilla olives
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp capers, drained
- 1/4 cup extra virgin Spanish olive oil
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsps fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a food processor, combine olives, garlic and capers. Process until just smooth, scraping down the sides of the bowl if necessary. With the machine running, slowly drizzle in the oil and lemon juice through the feed tube and process until well combined. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and fold in the cilantro and pepper. Let rest at room temperature for 1 hour for the flavors to come out.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Poke Salad Dip

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 6 Cups

COMMENT:

"Poke, the *Phytolacca americana* of the botanists, is probably the best known and most widely used wild vegetable in America. The Indian tribes eagerly sought it and early explorers were unstinting in their praise of this succulent potherb. They carried seeds when they went back home and poke soon became a popular cultivated garden vegetable in southern Europe and North Africa, a position it still maintains. In America it is still a favorite green vegetable with many country people and the tender young sprouts, gathered from wild plants, often appear in vegetable markets, especially in the South." Stalking the Wild Asparagus, Euell Gibbons

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup poke salad, cooked and drained (or canned)
- 1 ½ cups sour cream
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 2 tsps herb-seasoned salt
- 1 ½ tsps oregano
- 1 tsp dried dill weed
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and black pepper
- 1 large red cabbage

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine poke salad, sour cream, mayonnaise, cream cheese, pecans and green onions. Using a wooden spoon, mix thoroughly until all ingredients are well blended. Add herb seasoning, oregano, dill weed and lemon juice. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Cover bowl with clear wrap and place in refrigerator for a minimum of 2 hours. Trim core end of cabbage to form a flat base. Cut a crosswise slice from the top, making it wide enough to remove about a 1/4 of the cabbage. Lift out enough inner leaves to form a shell or bowl about 1-inch thick. Spoon dip into cavity of cabbage and serve with an assortment of fresh vegetables or croutons.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Eggplant Belle Rose

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Normally, eggplant is thought of simply as a vegetable here in Louisiana. However, once again, we are borrowing from the classical style to produce a new dish, certain to take its place as a tradition on the Louisiana table.

INGREDIENTS FOR BATTER:

- 1 medium size eggplant
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup water
- 1 egg
- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup milk

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1 tsp diced garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped mushrooms
- 1 pound crawfish tails or lump crabmeat
- 2 tsps chopped parsley
- 1/2 ounce white wine
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 12 ounces brown meunière sauce
- 6 ounces hollandaise sauce

METHOD:

In a sauté pan, preheat oil to approximately 350 degrees F. In a mixing bowl, combine milk, water, and egg. Season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Whisk well using a wire whip. Cut six slices from center of eggplant, approximately 1/4 inch thick. Place in egg wash and set aside. Season one cup of flour to taste using salt and pepper. Remove eggplant from egg wash, dip in flour and pan fry until golden brown and tender to the touch, approximately three minutes on each side. Drain and keep warm.

In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Sauté green onions, garlic and mushrooms approximately two to three minutes. Add crawfish tails or lump crabmeat, stir and cook one additional minute. Deglaze pan with white wine and lemon juice. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Continue cooking until crawfish or crabmeat is thoroughly hot. Place two ounces of meunière sauce in center of serving plate and top with one eggplant medallion. Distribute an equal amount of crawfish or crabmeat on each eggplant and garnish with

hollandaise sauce and chopped parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Hot Turnip Greens and Tasso Dip - Ashland-Belle Helene

PREP TIME: 1 hour

MAKES: 5-6 cups

COMMENT:

Though turnip, mustard and spinach greens were often cooked as vegetables in South Louisiana, it wasn't common for them to be used in any other fashion. Duncan Kenner, builder of Ashland, loved turnip greens and when he combined them with the tasso of the Germans from St. Charles Parish, this appetizer emerged.

INGREDIENTS:

1 bunch fresh turnip greens
 1-10 ounce package chopped turnips greens
 1/4 cup butter
 1/2 cup chopped onions
 1/2 cup chopped celery
 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1/2 cup minced tasso ham
 1 cup sliced mushrooms
 1 tbsp grated orange rind
 1 cup béchamel sauce
 1-6 ounce package garlic cheese spread
 dash of Worcestershire Sauce
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

If tasso is unavailable in your area, you may wish to substitute ham, bacon or heavy smoked sausage. If using fresh turnip greens, wash them well and rinse at least twice. Peel the spine from the leaf and chop. Boil in lightly salted water until tender. Remove, drain and reserve one and a half cups of greens. If using frozen, cook according to package directions, drain and set aside. In a heavy bottom black iron skillet, melt butter over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tasso and mushrooms and continue to cook an additional three to five minutes. Add turnip greens and orange rind, blend well into seasoning mixture and place all ingredients from the skillet into the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Process until smooth. Return the ingredients to the skillet and combine with bechamel sauce, cheese and Worcestershire Sauce. Stir constantly until mixture is well blended and cheese is thoroughly melted. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. This dip should be served hot with a basket of garlic croutons, crackers or vegetable sticks.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Baked Pumpkin Seeds

PREP TIME: 2-3 hours

MAKES: 2 cups

COMMENT:

St. Francis Episcopal Church located at 726 Maple Street in Denham Springs had such a success in their 1996 Pumpkin Patch fall celebration that organizers expanded the pumpkin sale to include a fair and a pumpkin cookbook this year. The pumpkins were purchased from Native Americans in the Southwest with proceeds going back to the tribe as an outreach ministry for the church. The children further enjoyed roasting pumpkin seeds.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups pumpkin seeds
- 1¾ tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsp melted butter
- 1 tsp salt

METHOD:

Leave pumpkin seeds unwashed with shells left on but fibers rubbed off. Combine ingredients in shallow pan. Stirring frequently, bake at 250 degrees to 2 to 3 hours, until dry. Cool, then store in tightly covered container.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spinach and Andouille Soufflé

PREP TIME: 1 ½ hours

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

The word soufflé will often scare the cook! However, this is one soufflé recipe that can be accomplished by even the most inexperienced chef. Since spinach is available all year long, fresh or frozen, there is no excuse not to attempt this recipe. Make it a part of your special occasion table.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pkgs frozen leaf spinach
- 1 cup minced andouille
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup minced onions
- 1/4 cup minced celery
- 1/4 cup minced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- pinch of nutmeg
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 8 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 1 cup grated Swiss cheese

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a six cup soufflé mold and line the bottom with wax or parchment paper. Set aside. Thaw spinach in refrigerator overnight, drain and squeeze out all excess liquid. This is best done in a colander to make sure all liquid is removed. Place the spinach on a cutting board and using a sharp French knife, chop until almost pureed. You may wish to do this in a food processor. Do not over-chop. In a large sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until wilted. Add andouille sausage and continue to cook an additional two to three minutes.

Add spinach, blending into the vegetable mixture. Cover and cook five to ten minutes until done, stirring occasionally. Season to taste using salt, pepper and nutmeg. Remove from heat, blend in milk and add eggs slowly, stirring constantly. Once all is well blended, add bread crumbs and cheese. Continue to stir until all is well incorporated. Pour soufflé mixture into buttered mold and place in baking pan with three inch lip. Pour one inch of water into pan to form a water bath around the soufflé mold. Bake forty-five minutes to an hour or until a knife inserted into the soufflé comes out clean. You may make the soufflé and freeze it uncooked. Then cook in the same fashion but allow one and a half hours in the oven.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spicy Cajun Caviar - Oak Alley Plantation

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 5 Cups

COMMENT:

Blackeyed peas have become a tradition on New Year's Day here in Louisiana. They are wonderful when slowly cooked with smoked ham or even fresh green beans, but I really enjoy them in this less conventional way, as a dip. Try them next January 1st and see if your luck improves.

INGREDIENTS:

2-15 ounce cans blackeyed peas
 8 strips of bacon
 1 cup finely chopped onions
 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
 1/2 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1/2 cup ketchup
 3 chicken bouillon cubes
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 1 tsp sugar
 2 cups chopped tomatoes
 1/4 cup chopped jalapenos
 3 tbsps flour
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom dutch oven, cook bacon strips over medium high heat until golden brown and fat is rendered. Remove bacon, chop fine and return to pot. Into the bacon drippings, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Saute three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ketchup, bouillon cubes, cinnamon, nutmeg and sugar. Using a wire whisk, blend until all ingredients are mixed thoroughly. Add tomatoes and jalapenos and continue to cook two to three minutes. Pour in blackeyed peas and continue to simmer for thirty additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour, blend well and cook an additional ten minutes. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Adjust seasonings to your liking, pour into a souffle dish and serve hot with French bread croutons or miniature corn bread muffins.

****LAGNIAPPE****

Few people realize that the Africans, coming to the New World, gave us not only yams and okra but also their famous congre or blackeyed peas, as we know them today. They arrived in Louisiana from the Virginias and Carolinas around the 1720's and by the Civil War, there were approximately 11,000 Africans in New Orleans. The men tended the fields and the women became cooks and housekeepers,

influencing Louisiana cooking like no other nationality.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Italian-Stuffed Artichokes

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

There are as many recipes for stuffed artichokes as there are Italian families in New Orleans. This is one of those easy and traditional favorites. Feel free to remove the center leaves and stuff the cavity. Or, you may wish to leave them in, steam the artichoke and pull out the center leaves and eat with olive oil and vinegar.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 large artichokes
- 6 lemon slices
- ½ pound smoked bacon, sliced
- 10 cups Italian style breadcrumbs
- 1 ½ cups Parmigiano Reggiano cheese, grated
- 1 ½ cups Pecorino Romano cheese, grated
- 1 cup green onion, thinly sliced
- ½ cup parsley, minced
- ½ cup garlic minced
- 2 tbsps. salt
- 1 tbsp. freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp. cayenne pepper
- 2 tbsps. chopped basil
- 3 cups extra virgin olive oil

METHOD:

Using scissors snip off the prickly end of each artichoke leaf. Using a paring knife slice off the stem end of each artichoke so that they sit up straight. Rub a lemon on the cut ends to prevent browning. Fry the bacon until crisp and drain. Crumble bacon into a large bowl, and add in the breadcrumbs, cheese, green onions, parsley, garlic, seasonings, and 1 ½ cups of olive oil. Using your hands blend the ingredients thoroughly. Beginning at the top of the artichoke spread the leaves as much as possible and pack in a generous amount of stuffing. Continue around the artichoke until all leaves are completely filled down to the bottom. (Note: It is always best to stuff the artichokes inside the bowl of stuffing so that the excess breading falls back into the bowl. Tap each artichoke gently to let any loose stuffing fall off. Stand artichokes in a roasting pan or canning pot just large enough to hold them in a single layer. Add water to a depth of 1 inch. Pour ¼ cup of olive oil in a slow stream over each artichoke, allowing it to seep in. Top each artichoke with a slice of lemon. Bring the water to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, cover and steam the artichokes until the leaves pull off easily, at least one hour. Check the water level often and add more if necessary. Serve hot or warm. The stuffed artichokes can be prepared in advance and reheated before serving. If you would like, sprinkle grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese over the top and place briefly under a broiler until cheese

melts and begins to brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Ouachita Stuffed Peppers

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

The Indians of Louisiana were instrumental in helping to develop the cuisines of the Cajuns and Creoles. Corn, squash, beans and cornmeal were part of their daily repertoire and quickly found their way into the black iron pots. Here, we combine the Native American ingredients with beef to create an entree out of this world.

INGREDIENTS:

4 each red, green and yellow bell peppers
 8 pounds ground beef
 1/2 cup butter
 2 cups chopped onion
 2 cups chopped celery
 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
 1/2 cup diced yellow bell pepper
 1/2 cup diced garlic
 2 cups beef stock
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1/2 cup chopped parsley
 2 cups whole kernel corn
 4 cups crushed corn bread
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 8 cups prepared tomato sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large black iron skillet, melt butter over medium high heat. Add beef and cook until golden brown, approximately thirty minutes. Drain off all but two tablespoons of oil. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add beef stock to keep mixture moist while meat is sautéing. Once tender, add green onions, parsley and corn. Sprinkle in crushed corn bread and blend well into meat mixture. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Remove the top from the bell peppers and clean all pulp from the inside. Stuff with the meat dressing, place in a large casserole dish and surround with a prepared tomato sauce. Bake for thirty minutes or until peppers are tender.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Pickled Mirliton Sticks

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 12 Pickle Jars

INGREDIENTS:

- 18 large mirlitons
- 1 bag Zatarain's Dry Crab Boil Seasoning
- 2 quarts rice wine vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp salt
- ¼ pound dried whole cayenne peppers
- 4 pods fresh garlic, peeled
- 36-40 bay leaves

METHOD:

Slice the mirlitons lengthwise, carve out the seedpod and discard. Peel the skin from the mirlitons and cut them as you would ¼-inch thick French fries. In a large stockpot over high heat, add crab boil, rice wine vinegar, sugar and salt and bring to a rolling boil. Add sliced mirlitons, lower heat when liquid returns to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Taste the mirlitons for doneness. They should be slightly tender on the outside yet crisp on the inside. Remove the mirlitons from the pickling juice and reserve. Line up 12 pint-sized Mason jars and, using tongs, arrange the mirliton sticks as if standing on edge in the jars. Pack each jar tightly with mirliton sticks. Evenly divide the cayenne peppers, garlic and bay leaves into the jars. Divide the pickling juice evenly between the jars. If more liquid is needed, add water and white vinegar to ensure that all surface areas of the mirliton are immersed in juice. Cover and allow to cool. Let stand for a minimum of one week before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Pickled Asparagus Spears**PREP TIME:** 1 Hour**MAKES:** 1 Jar**COMMENT:**

Feel free to use this simple recipe to pickle any fresh vegetable such as green beans, okra and brussel sprouts. The vivid green color may be enhanced with the addition of one or two julienned strips of red and yellow bell pepper. Make this dish in small batches, however, because it keeps for only 6 weeks or so.

INGREDIENTS:

- 20 stalks trimmed asparagus spears
- 2 ½ cups white wine vinegar
- 10 peppercorns
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg

METHOD:

Wash the asparagus in cold water, then soak in lightly salted water for 4 to 6 hours. Blanch the asparagus in boiling, salted water for 1-minute. Remove and drain on a clean dishcloth and cool. Place the vinegar, peppercorns, bay leaf and nutmeg in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Bring to a low boil. Cook 5 minutes. Remove and cool thoroughly. Pack the asparagus in a sterilized wide-mouth jar, standing the spears upright. Cover with the cold vinegar mixture and seal. Refrigerate and hold 2 to 3 weeks prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

CINCO DE MAYO SALSA

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: 5 Cups

Comment:

Turn your day into a fiesta by making this Mexican favorite. This salsa is great with chips or served over other Mexican dishes such as tacos or tamales.

Ingredients:

½ cup diced onions
 1 cup crushed tomatoes
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 tbsps chopped cilantro
 3 tbsps fresh lime juice
 ½ cup tomato sauce
 1 (24-ounce) jar picante sauce
 1 tbsp jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced
 ½ tsp chipotle chili powder
 salt to taste

Method:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and stir until well blended.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

GUACAMOLE PUEBLA

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: 1 Cup

Comment:

Cinco de Mayo, the fifth of May, is a day to remember the victory of a small group of Mexican soldiers over a larger French army in the Battle of Puebla in 1862. Commemorate the holiday by feasting on traditional Mexican fare such as guacamole.

Ingredients:

3 avocados, halved, cored and peeled
 juice of 1 lime
 ½ tsp salt
 ½ tsp ground cumin
 ½ tsp cayenne pepper
 ½ small yellow onion, diced
 2 Roma tomatoes, seeded and diced
 2 tbsps chopped cilantro
 1 clove garlic, minced

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, toss avocados and lime juice. Drain and reserve juice. Add salt, cumin and cayenne pepper to avocados. Mash with a potato masher or fork. Fold in onions, tomatoes, cilantro and garlic. Add 1 tablespoon reserved lime juice. Let sit a room temperature 1 hour before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Jalapeño Cheese and Sausage Dip - (Kent House Plantation)

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 15-20

COMMENT:

The Spanish brought peppers to North America after developing a taste for them during their contact with the Mayans and Incas. A variety of these peppers thrived in Mexico and eventually came through Texas into plantation country. Thank God for the Spanish!

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds Velveeta cheese, diced
- 1 (12-ounce) can jalapenos, chopped
- 1 pound andouille sausage, heavy smoked
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1 cup onion, diced
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 4 cups mayonnaise
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
- 1/4 cup parsley, minced

METHOD:

Allow cheese to sit at room temperature for 30 minutes. Remove seeds from jalapeno peppers and rinse under cold, running water. This will remove some of the heat. Dice the andouille or other heavy-smoked sausage. In a heavy-bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, bell pepper, garlic and andouille. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add jalapenos and continue to sauté 2-3 minutes more. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Pour the ingredients from the sauté pan into the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Blend well until smooth. Place the blended ingredients in a large mixing bowl and add cheese and mayonnaise. Using a wire whisk, whip until mixture is smooth and of a dipping sauce consistency. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Sprinkle in parsley. Pour ingredients into a decorative serving bowl and heat to serving temperature in the microwave. Place in the center of a large serving platter surrounded by garlic croutons, toast points or tortilla chips. This dip may also be served cold and will hold well in the refrigerator for a couple of days.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Stuffed Pistolettes

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 24 Servings



Comment: Linda Bordelon, one of the winners of our Stirrin' It Up for the Holidays recipe contest, sent in this recipe for a great little party appetizer. These pistolettes are perfect for holiday get-togethers or tailgating parties.

Ingredients:

- 2 (12-piece) bags of Pepperidge Farm or CobblestoneMill pistolettes
- 2 (10-ounce) boxes chopped broccoli
- 2 lbs ground beef (or turkey)
- 1 (15-ounce) jar Cheez Whiz
- 1 (15.5-ounce) jar Tostitos Salsa Con Queso Dip
- salt, pepper, and granulated garlic to taste
- butter flavored cooking spray
- 1 (12-ounce) bag finely shredded Colby and Monterey Jack cheese

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cut each pistolette in half, from the middle down (not lengthwise), and scoop out the bread forming a small cup-like shape. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside. In a medium saucepot, boil broccoli according to package directions. Do not over-boil. When done, drain and cool. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, cook meat until browned completely. Season with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Drain meat then place in a large mixing bowl. Add broccoli, Cheez Whiz and queso dip. Broccoli will mash during mixing. Take one pistolette half and spray the outside and inside the top edge with cooking spray. Spoon one tablespoon of meat mixture into buttered pistolette. Continue this buttering and filling process with each pistolette half. On a foil covered jellyroll pan, stand the pistolettes on pointed end, side by side. Place pan in oven and bake about 15 minutes or until nicely browned. Take pistolettes out of the oven and sprinkle generously with shredded cheese. Allow cheese to melt and serve on a large platter.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Sausage-Stuffed Jalapeños

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings



Comment:

These stuffed peppers are sure to spice up any tailgate party. They are also a wonderful hors d'oeuvre at any event.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound bulk Creole green onion pork sausage
- 20 jalapeño peppers, seeded and split lengthwise
- ¼ cup minced tasso
- ½ cup minced onions
- ½ cup minced celery
- ½ cup minced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1 (11.5-ounce) container Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- ranch dressing or favorite dipping sauce, optional

Method:

Preheat oven to 425°F. In a Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed skillet, sauté sausage and tasso over medium heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and parsley. Continue to cook approximately 20 minutes or until meat is browned and vegetables are wilted. In a mixing bowl, combine Creole cream cheese and Parmesan. Fold cheese mixture into skillet. Spoon about 1 tablespoon of mixture into each jalapeño half. Place in baking dish and bake uncovered 15-20 minutes or until filling is lightly brown and bubbly. Serve with dressing or sauce if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

APPETIZERS

Spicy Meatballs

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 3 Dozen

Comment:

Most Cajuns love hot and spicy food. In the fall of the year, Tabasco, cayenne and jalapeño peppers can be seen growing in many bayou gardens. This recipe most likely evolved when a Cajun family threw slices of these hot peppers into a pot of meatballs being prepared for a holiday treat or a wedding.

Ingredients for Meatballs:

- ½ pound ground beef
- ½ pound ground pork
- ¼ cup minced onions
- ¼ cup minced celery
- ¼ cup minced red bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 2 eggs
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- pinch of thyme
- pinch of basil
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- ¾ cup Italian bread crumbs

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, combine meats, onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and eggs. Using your hands, blend all ingredients well. Season to taste using salt, pepper, thyme, basil and hot sauce. Continue to mix until seasonings are well blended. Mix in bread crumbs. Shape mixture into 1-inch meatballs.

Ingredients for Sauce:

- ¼ cup butter
- ½ cup ketchup
- ½ cup barbecue sauce
- 1 tbsp minced jalapeño, Tabasco or cayenne peppers
- 2 tbsps brown sugar
- 1 tbsp Louisiana cane syrup
- 1 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp Creole mustard
- dash of Worcestershire sauce
- salt to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

Method:

In a 14-inch sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add meatballs and brown on all sides. Remove meatballs from pan and set aside. In the same pan, whisk together ketchup, barbecue sauce, jalapeños, brown sugar, cane syrup and vinegar. Add mustard, Worcestershire, salt and hot sauce. Continue to whisk until ingredients begin to simmer. Place cooked meatballs into sauce, reduce heat to simmer and cook 15–20 minutes. Sprinkle in fresh parsley. Transfer meatballs and sauce to a chafing dish and serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

CHICKEN SOUP WITH MATZO BALLS

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

I first discovered this recipe in Celebration: The Book of Jewish Festivals sent to me by my good friend Malcolm Taub of New York. Malcolm thought I should familiarize myself with the foods and traditions of cultures other than those of Cajun and Creole origin... and you know, I think he was right.

Ingredients for Chicken Soup:

1 (4–5 pound) chicken
 1 gallon cold water
 3 carrots, sliced
 4 celery stalks, sliced
 2 onions, quartered
 2 cloves garlic, sliced
 10 peppercorns
 1 bay leaf
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 6 sprigs fresh dill

Method:

Rinse chicken under cold running water. Drain well. Cut into quarters and place in a stockpot. Add all ingredients except salt, pepper and dill. Simmer 2 hours, skimming surface occasionally to remove impurities. Strain soup and cool. Remove chicken and set aside for later use. Refrigerate stock until fat rises to top and can be separated from liquid, preferably overnight. Reserve 3 tablespoons of chicken fat for matzo balls. Once matzo balls are made, bring stock to a simmer. Add matzo balls and cook 30 minutes. Adjust seasonings with salt and pepper if necessary. To serve, ladle soup and 1 matzo ball along with poached chicken meat into 6 bowls and garnish each with a sprig of fresh dill. If you prefer not to serve the chicken in soup, consider using it in a chicken salad.

Ingredients for Matzo Balls:

3 eggs, separated
 3 tbsps chicken fat
 ½ tsp salt
 3 tbsps hot water or chicken stock
 ¾ cup matzo meal

Method:

In a medium mixing bowl, whisk yolks until light and thick. Add chicken fat along with salt and chicken soup. Blend well. In a separate bowl, whisk egg whites until stiff, but not too dry. Gently fold egg whites into egg yolk mixture. Once blended, fold in the matzo meal with a rubber spatula. Refrigerate 1 hour or until batter is stiff enough

to form balls. Remove a portion of matzo mix and roll into golf ball sized portions.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

CHICKEN, OYSTER AND ANDOUILLE GUMBO

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 12 Servings

Comment:

The Cajuns of South Louisiana often included andouille and oysters in a holiday gumbo. Normally, a sack of Gulf oysters would be purchased the day before the celebration. Half would be opened for the gumbo, and the other half would be eaten immediately with a dash of hot sauce. Serve this gumbo on Christmas Eve, and you will be duplicating an age-old bayou tradition.

Ingredients:

1 (4–5 pound) stewing hen, cut into serving pieces
 4 dozen fresh shucked oysters, reserve liquid
 1 pound andouille, sliced
 1 cup vegetable oil
 1½ cups flour
 2 cups diced onions
 2 cups diced celery
 1 cup diced bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 3 quarts chicken stock
 2 cups sliced green onions
 1 cup chopped parsley
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

In a 2-gallon stockpot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Once oil is hot, whisk in flour until a light brown roux is achieved. Do not scorch. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Cook 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add hen and andouille, blend into vegetable mixture and sauté 15 minutes. NOTE: For the best andouille, visit Jacob's Andouille at 505 W. Airline Highway in LaPlace, La. Add chicken stock, 1 ladle at a time, stirring constantly. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 1 hour. Add oysters and reserved liquid. Cook an additional 10 minutes. Blend in green onions and parsley. Simmer until edges of oysters begin to curl. Season with salt and pepper. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Grilled Chicken and Andouille Sausage Pasta Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENTS:

No one can imagine the variety of ingredients that found their way into pasta sauce. Marrying meat, vegetables and seafood into one dish is common in pasta today. In this recipe, a basic Alfredo is enhanced with chicken and smoky andouille sausage to create a New Orleans favorite.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups diced grilled chicken
- ½ cup diced andouille sausage
- ¼ cup melted butter
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ½ cup sliced mushrooms
- 2 tbsp flour
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- 2 tbsps chopped basil
- 2 tbsps chopped thyme
- ½ cup grated mozzarella cheese
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In 12-inch skillet, heat butter and olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add mushrooms and andouille and sauté 3 additional minutes, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle in flour, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Add 1-cup chicken stock and heavy whipping cream, bringing to a rolling boil. Reduce heat to simmer, stirring to blend well. When cream is reduced slightly, fold in cheeses making sure to melt completely. Additional chicken stock may be needed to maintain a sauce-like consistency. Using a wire whisk, stir constantly until a smooth sauce is achieved. Add grilled chicken, green onions, basil and thyme and season to taste using salt and pepper. When sauce is thickened to a perfect pasta topper consistency remove from heat and incorporate with 6 cups of your favorite cooked pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

The Queen's Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

One can only imagine the extravagance of the carnival balls held at the Degas House. It is obvious from this recipe that elegant foods were a major part of these functions. I can envision a large gilded terrine on the Degas table filled with this soup honoring a Queen of Mardi Gras.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 boneless chicken breasts, skinned
- 1 gallon chicken stock (see recipe)
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh sage, chopped
- 1 onion, quartered
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 3 stalks of celery, sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 10 whole peppercorns
- 1/2 cup wild rice
- 1/2 cup long grain converted rice
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1/2 cup minced carrots
- 1/2 cup minced yellow bell pepper
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh sage, chopped
- 1/4 cup chopped chives
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- Salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large cast iron dutch oven, combine stock with bay leaves, 1 tablespoon of thyme, 1 tablespoon of sage, onion, sliced carrot, celery, garlic and peppercorns. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Strain the flavor ingredients from the stock and discard vegetables. Return approximately 3 1/2 quarts of liquid to the pot and bring to a low boil. Poach chicken breasts in hot stock for 10-15 minutes or until thoroughly cooked. Remove, allow to cool and dice into 1/4-inch cubes. Set aside. Add wild rice to the simmering stock and cook 30 minutes. Add white rice and cook 15 additional minutes or until rice is tender. The rice will act as a thickening agent for the soup. In a separate sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add flour and, stirring constantly, cook until white roux is achieved (see recipe). Do not brown. Add minced carrots, yellow bell pepper, remaining thyme, sage and chives. Cook 3-5 minutes then add the roux mixture to the stock, stirring

constantly to completely incorporate. Add heavy whipping cream, bring to a low boil and season the soup to taste using salt and pepper. Add diced chicken to the soup and cook 2 additional minutes. Additional stock or water may be needed to retain soup-like consistency. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve soup in warmed soup bowls over fresh garlic croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Brunswick Stew

PREP TIME: 2 ½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This hunter's stew has as many recipes as there are cooks. This complete meal in a pot is cooked over an open fire and includes meat from the day's hunting such as rabbit or squirrel. Dry vegetables such as beans and corn and cured meat such as country ham are almost always included. I have made this recipe more user-friendly by replacing the game with chicken.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pounds chicken thighs
- 2 pounds fresh tomatoes, peeled & seeded
- 2 tbsps salad oil
- 1 cup diced country ham
- 3 quarts chicken stock
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1½ cups fresh or frozen baby lima beans
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 hot peppers, diced
- 3 pounds chicken thighs
- 1 tsp thyme
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1½ tbsps salt
- 1½ tsps black pepper
- 3 cups fresh corn
- 2 tbsps butter
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 4 medium potatoes, peeled and cubed

METHOD:

In a 10-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken and sauté until golden brown on both sides. Add ham and stock. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook for 1 hour. Add onion, lima beans, bay leaf, hot peppers, potatoes, tomatoes, thyme, sugar, salt and pepper. Cover and simmer for 45 minutes. Add corn and cook, uncovered, for 15 minutes. Adjust seasonings if necessary. When ready to serve, swirl in butter and Worcestershire sauce. Serve in soup bowls with hot cornbread.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Prairie Chicken and Dumpling Stew

PREP TIME: 1 ½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Prairie chicken was abundant in America's Heartland and made a great soup or stew, especially when mixed with fresh spring or winter vegetables. This recipe is particularly good in the fall or winter and can be prepared with game bird as well.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups chicken meat, diced
- ½ cup butter
- 2 cups diced onions
- 2 cups sliced celery
- ½ cup flour
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 2 cups sliced carrots
- 2 cups diced potatoes
- 2 cups biscuit mix
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

METHOD:

Prepare 2 cups of biscuit mix such as Bisquick, according to package directions. Once biscuit dough is formed, place in a bowl, cover with clear wrap and set aside. In a 7-quart cast iron Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add chicken and sauté 5-10 minutes until cooked and lightly browned. Add onions and celery. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Sprinkle in flour, and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Add chicken stock, one ladle at a time, until all is incorporated. Bring mixture to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Add carrots and potatoes. Continue to cook 10-15 minutes. Season mixture to taste using salt and pepper. Spoon the biscuit mix into the pot in the shape of dumplings. Cover and cook approximately 1 hour. Serve in a soup bowl with a generous amount of the vegetables and a couple of the dumplings.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Chicken Soup For The Soul

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

Nothing says home cooking like chicken noodle soup. It's the comfort food that grandma served from her cast iron pot when we were under the weather..whether we were sick or not. The strange thing about chicken noodle soup is that, for the experienced cook, it's such a simple dish, but for the child in us, it's the broth that memories are made of.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 4 to 5 pound baking hen, cut
- 1 gallon cold water
- 1 large onion, quartered
- 1 rib of celery, diced
- 3 carrots, diced
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 bay leaf
- 10-12 whole peppercorns
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp chopped garlic
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- 3 quarts reserved chicken stock
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 (12-ounce) bag small seashell noodles
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp chopped, fresh basil
- 1 tsp chopped, fresh thyme
- salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Rinse chicken under cold running water and allow to drain thoroughly. Place the chicken in a large stock pot with water, onions, celery, carrots, garlic, bay leaf and peppercorns. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, cover and cook 2 to 3 hours until chicken is tender, adding water if necessary. When chicken is tender, remove from stock pot and strain stock. Allow the stock to settle as chicken fat will rise to the surface. Remove the fat and reserve 3 - quarts of the stock. In a heavy-bottom Dutch oven melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic 3 to 5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and using a wire whisk, blend to create a blond roux, do not brown. Add chicken stock one ladle at a time until all has been incorporated and a soup-like texture is achieved. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 15 to

20 minutes. Add more stock if needed to retain volume. De-bone the chicken and set aside. Add carrots and shell noodles. Continue to cook approximately 10 minutes then add the chicken, green onions, parsley, basil and thyme. Season to taste using salt and pepper. The large volume of noodles will give the soup a pasta-like finish. Should you desire less pasta, add half of the package to the pot rather than the whole 12-ounces.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Cajun Chicken Gumbo - (Something Old)**PREP TIME:** 1½ Hours**SERVES:** 6**STORY:**

This is the kind of gumbo my mother used to make for her family. I am now 77 years old, so it's easy to see how long this recipe has been around. This type of gumbo is different from the traditional recipe in that the roux is added at the end. This technique has been handed down in my family from generation to generation. - Mrs.

Walterine D. Brunet- Montegut

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-pound) chicken, skin and fat removed
- ¼ cup oil
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 2½ cups cold water
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup sliced green onion tops
- ¼ cup finely chopped bell pepper
- 1 gallon water
- ½ cup oil
- ½ cup flour
- 1 tsp salt
- black pepper
- hot sauce
- 1 tsp fresh filé

METHOD:

Cut chicken into 8 serving pieces. In a cast iron dutch oven, heat 1/4 cup oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and sauté until lightly browned. Add water, parsley, celery, green onions and bell pepper. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Add chicken and simmer 3-5 minutes. Add 1 gallon hot water. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 45 minutes. In a heavy-bottom skillet, heat 1/2 cup of oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Once chicken is tender, add the roux to the boiling chicken mixture. Blend well into soup and allow to cook 5-10 additional minutes. Season using salt, pepper and hot sauce. Remove gumbo from heat and allow oil to rise to the surface. Using a ladle, skim off any excess fat. Finish with gumbo filé. Serve over steamed white rice.

Cajun Chicken Gumbo - (Something New)**PREP TIME:** 1½ Hours**SERVES:** 6

INGREDIENTS:

1 (3-pound) chicken, skin and fat removed
2 tbsps oil
½ cup chopped onion
2½ cups cold water
¼ cup chopped parsley
½ cup chopped celery
¼ cup sliced green onion tops
¼ cup finely chopped bell pepper
1 gallon hot water
½ cup oil-less roux
¼ tsp salt
black pepper
hot sauce
1 tsp fresh filé

METHOD:

Cut chicken into 8 serving pieces. In a cast iron dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and saute until lightly browned. Add water, parsley celery, green onions and bell pepper. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Add chicken and simmer 3-5 minutes. Dissolve oil-less roux with 1 cup of hot water. Set aside. Add remainder of hot water to pot. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Once chicken is tender, add the roux to the boiled chicken mixture. Blend well into soup and allow to cook 5-10 additional minutes. Season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. Remove gumbo from heat and allow oil to rise to the surface. Using a ladle, skim off any excess fat. Finish with gumbo filé. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Cock-a-Leekie Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

A traditional Irish recipe with ingredients not used in Louisiana's everyday cooking. However, once you attempt this recipe you will be delighted with the flavorful results. I serve this personal favorite on St. Patrick's Day, and I always end up sharing the recipe with whoever tastes it.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 chicken breast, boneless, skinless, (cut into 1/2 inch wide strips)
- 3 cups chicken stock or low-salt broth
- 1/4 cup prunes, pitted, (cut into 1/4 inch
- 1/3 cup barley
- 1 tsp butter, unsalted wide strips)
- 2 tbsps fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 small leeks (white and pale green parts only), salt to taste
- cut into match stick-size strips
- pepper to taste

METHOD:

Soak the barley in water in refrigerator overnight. When ready to use drain. In a 3-quart cast iron sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add chicken, season to taste using salt and pepper. Sauté until the chicken is just cooked through, about 3-5 minutes. Remove chicken and set aside. Add leeks to the sauce pan and cook over low heat until tender, stirring frequently, 3-4 minutes. Add barley and stir for 2 minutes. Add the stock, bring to a boil. Reduce heat and cover partially. Simmer until the barley is tender, approximately 18 minutes. Add chicken, prunes and parsley and simmer for 2 minutes. Season to taste using salt and pepper.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Chicken and Andouille Gumbo

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 8-10 Servings

Comment:

Almost every species of wild game in Louisiana has been used in the creation of gumbo. Since most Cajun men were hunters and trappers, it is not surprising that they preferred Mallard duck and smoked andouille gumbo. However, chicken and sausage is still the most popular gumbo in Louisiana.

Ingredients:

- 1 (5-pound) stewing hen
- 1 pound andouille
- 1 cup oil
- 1½ cups flour
- 2 cups diced onions
- 2 cups diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 3 quarts chicken stock
- 2 cups sliced green onions
- 1 bay leaf
- sprig of thyme
- 1 tbsp chopped basil
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- 4 cups cooked white rice

Method:

Using a sharp boning knife cut the stewing hen into 8-10 serving pieces. Remove as much of the fat from the chicken as possible. Cut andouille into ½-inch slices and set aside. In a 2-gallon stockpot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until golden brown roux is achieved. Do not scorch. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in chicken and andouille. Sauté approximately 15 minutes. Add chicken stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook approximately 1 hour. Skim any fat or oil that rises to the top of the pot. Add green onions, bay leaf, thyme and basil. Season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. Cook an additional 30 minutes or longer if necessary, until chicken is tender and falling apart. Add parsley and adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve over hot, steamed white rice.

NOTE: You may wish to boil the chicken 1-2 hours prior to beginning the gumbo to tenderize the meat. Reserve this stock, bone the chicken and use the meat and stock in the gumbo.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

The Queen's Soup

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment: This soup was created to honor the Queen of Mardi Gras at the extravagant carnival balls. It is obvious from this recipe that elegant foods were a major part of these functions. The soup was usually served in a large gilded tureen.



Ingredients for stock:

- 1 gallon chicken stock
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp chopped thyme
- 1 tbsp chopped sage
- 1 onion, quartered
- 1 carrot, sliced
- 3 stalks of celery, sliced
- 4 garlic cloves, smashed
- 10 whole peppercorns

Method:

In a large cast iron Dutch oven, combine stock, bay leaves, thyme, sage, onion, carrot, celery, garlic and peppercorns. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Strain stock, discard vegetables and retain liquid.

Ingredients for soup:

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts
- ½ cup wild rice
- ½ cup white rice
- ¼ cup butter
- ¼ cup flour
- ½ cup diced carrots
- ½ cup diced yellow bell peppers
- 1 tbsp chopped thyme
- 1 tbsp chopped sage
- ¼ cup chopped chives
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- Salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

Return approximately 3½ quarts of liquid to the pot and bring to a low boil. Poach chicken breasts in hot stock for 10-15 minutes or until thoroughly cooked. Remove, allow to cool, dice into ¼-inch cubes and

set aside. Stir wild rice into the simmering stock and cook 30 minutes. Add white rice and cook 15 additional minutes or until rice is tender. The rice will act as a thickening agent for the soup. In a separate sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until a white roux is achieved. Add carrots, yellow bell peppers, thyme, sage and chives. Cook 3-5 minutes then add this roux mixture to stock, stirring constantly. Stir in heavy whipping cream and bring to a low boil. Season with salt and pepper. Mix in diced chicken and cook 2 additional minutes. Use additional stock or water to retain soup-like consistency. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve soup in warmed soup bowls over fresh garlic croutons.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Smoked Turkey Neck, Shrimp and Okra Soup

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Recipe Courtesy of Charles Arnold

Ingredients:

- 1 (1½–2 pound) package smoked turkey necks
- 2 pounds shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 pounds sliced okra
- 2 (14.5-ounce) cans chicken broth
- 1½ quarts water
- 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a large pot, bring water and chicken broth to a rolling boil. Add turkey necks, reduce heat to medium and cover. Cook 2 hours or until meat comes off bone. Remove and discard bones. Save 1½ quarts cooking liquid. Add meat, cooking liquid, okra and tomatoes to pot. Bring to a boil, lower heat and cook 30 minutes. Add shrimp and cook an additional 15 minutes, stirring as needed. Season with salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Duck, Oyster and Andouille Gumbo

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 12 Servings

Comment:

Almost every species of wild game in Louisiana has been used in the creation of gumbo. Since most Cajun men were hunters, it is not surprising that the day's kill was used in the evening meal. Many of the hunters preferred mallard duck and smoked andouille gumbo.

Ingredients:

- 2 mallard ducks, cut into serving pieces
- 2 pounds sliced andouille
- 2 pints select oysters
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1½ cups flour
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 3 quarts chicken stock
- 12 chicken livers
- 2 cups sliced green onions
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- steamed white rice

Method:

In a 2-gallon stock pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until golden brown roux is achieved. (See roux recipes.) Stir in onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Fold in duck and andouille. Sauté approximately 15 minutes. Add chicken stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and stir in chicken livers and oysters. Cook 1 hour, adding stock as needed until duck is tender. Sprinkle in green onions and parsley. Season to taste with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Cook an additional 5 minutes and serve over steamed white rice.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Kristi Liffman's Got the Flu for the Holidays Chicken Soup

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Recipe Courtesy of Susan Raborn

Ingredients:

1 small whole chicken or turkey
1 can chicken broth
6 cups water
3 stalks celery, sliced
3 fresh carrots, sliced
OR 1 (15-ounce) can sliced carrots, drained
½ cup diced onions
3 cloves garlic
1 tbsp Beau Monde spice
1 tbsp herbes de Provence
2 tsps celery seed
½ cup uncooked rice
1 bunch fresh cilantro, coarsely chopped
salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

Clean and cut chicken into quarters. In a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat, add chicken, broth, water, celery, carrots, onions and garlic. Stir in Beau Monde spice, herbes de Provence and celery seed. Bring to a boil, lower heat and simmer 35 minutes or until meat falls from bone. Remove chicken from broth and pull meat from bone. Set aside. Add rice to broth and bring to a boil. Simmer 20 minutes or until rice is tender. Return pulled chicken to broth. Stir in cilantro, salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Rooster Stew

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 12 Servings

Comment:

I remember back in the mid-1980s, my good friend E.J. Ourso took me over to a friend's home in Mowatar, La., near Lafayette. As we drove up the long, gravel driveway, E.J. announced that we had driven 1½ hours to partake in a one-of-a-kind delicacy, Rooster Stew—Mowatar style.

Ingredients:

- 1 (5–8 pound) rooster, cut into serving pieces
- 1½ cups vegetable oil
- 1¾ cups flour
- 2 cups diced onions
- 2 cups diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 1 pound andouille or smoked sausage, sliced
- 1 can Ro*Tel tomatoes
- 3½ quarts chicken stock
- 1 tbsp chopped basil
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- 4 dozen fresh shucked oysters, reserve liquid
- 2 cups sliced green onions
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste

Method:

In a 3-gallon Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Once oil is hot, whisk in flour until a dark brown roux is achieved. Do not scorch. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and minced garlic. Cook 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add andouille and cook an additional 3–5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Blend Ro*Tel tomatoes into roux mixture. Whisk in 3 quarts chicken stock, basil and thyme until dissolved in roux. Add rooster, bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 2–2½ hours or until meat is fork tender. NOTE: A large rooster, depending on age, may take a little less or more time to tenderize. Use your discretion. When tender, add oysters and liquid, green onions, parsley, salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Continue cooking 15–20 minutes, adding remaining stock or water to retain stew-like consistency. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Cream of Chicken and Artichoke Soup

Prep Time: 1 Hour**Yields:** 10–12 Servings**Comment:**

Many people are not aware that artichokes are grown in Louisiana. However, the vegetable is abundant in the state and has been used as an ingredient in Cajun and Creole dishes for many decades.

Ingredients:

- 1 whole young fryer
- 8 (canned) artichoke bottoms, sliced and uncooked
- 3½ quarts cold water
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 1 cup flour
- 3 quarts reserved chicken stock (see below)
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- 1 tbsp thyme
- 1 tbsp basil
- salt and white pepper to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

In a 2-gallon stockpot, place fryer and water. If desired, add 1 quartered onion, 1 split head of garlic and 1 stalk of celery. Bring to a rolling boil and cook until chicken is tender and falling off bones. Remove chicken and strain stock through a fine chinois or cheesecloth. Reserve 3 quarts stock. (Discard any vegetables used.) Bone chicken and set aside. In same pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and artichokes. Sauté 5–10 minutes or until vegetables are wilted and artichokes are tender. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until white roux is achieved. Slowly add reserved chicken stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Stir in chicken and cream. Return to simmer then add green onions, parsley, thyme and basil. Season with salt, white pepper and hot sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Chicken and Sausage Gumbo

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 8–10 Servings

Comment:

Chicken and sausage are the most popular gumbo ingredients in Louisiana. The ingredients were readily available since most Cajun families raised chickens and made a variety of sausages. Oysters were often added to this everyday dish for a special Sunday or holiday version.

Ingredients:

- 1 (5-pound) stewing hen
- 1 pound smoked sausage
- 1 cup oil
- 1½ cups flour
- 2 cups diced onions
- 2 cups diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 3 quarts chicken stock
- 24 button mushrooms
- 2 cups sliced green onions
- 1 bay leaf
- sprig of thyme
- 1 tbsp chopped basil
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- steamed white rice

Method:

NOTE: You may wish to boil chicken 1–2 hours before beginning gumbo. Reserve stock, bone chicken and use meat and stock in gumbo. Using a sharp boning knife, cut hen into 8–10 serving pieces. Remove as much fat as possible. Cut smoked sausage into ½-inch slices and set aside. In a 2-gallon stockpot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until golden brown roux is achieved. Stir in onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend chicken and sausage into vegetable mixture, and sauté approximately 15 minutes. Add chicken stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook approximately 1 hour. Skim any fat or oil that rises to surface. Stir in mushrooms, green onions, bay leaf, thyme and basil. Season with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Cook an additional 1–2 hours, if necessary, until chicken is tender and falling apart. Stir in parsley and adjust seasonings. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
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- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Cream of Louisiana Oyster and Fleur-de-Lis Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT:

Other than New Orleans Oyster Soup, the famous Oyster and Brie Cheese Soup stands out as one of the most sought after bisque recipes. Here in south Louisiana, we have taken the liberty to incorporate the Fleur-de-Lis triple cream cheese of Bittersweet Plantation Dairy to create a soup that is sure to rival either recipe.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 quart P&J oysters w/liquid
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 cup minced onions
- 1 cup minced celery
- ¼ cup minced green bell pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- ¾ cup flour
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1 quart heavy cream
- 2 (8-ounce) rounds Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Fleur-de-Lis fromage triple cream [BUY NOW](#)
- ¼ cup minced red bell pepper
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ¼ cup sliced green onions

METHOD:

Drain oysters and reserve oyster liquid. In heavy sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, green bell pepper and garlic until vegetables are tender, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add flour and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Add chicken stock and oyster liquid, whisking well into the roux. Slowly add heavy whipping cream until all is well blended. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, and cook approximately 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Cut wheels of Fleur-de-Lis into 8 pieces. Add cheese including rind into the soup, stirring constantly until cheese has melted. Cook 5 additional minutes. Strain the soup through a china cap or strainer to remove seasonings and any unmelted rind. Add oysters and red bell pepper. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Garnish with parsley and green onions. Once oysters are curled and puffy but not overcooked, the soup is ready to serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Shrimp and Corn Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12-16

COMMENT: Long before lake and gulf shrimp were available to Louisianans, river shrimp were in great supply. Many dishes featured this unique ingredient, but none more famous than the Creole Style Sweet Corn and Shrimp Soup. The marriage of these items came about because of our friendship with the native American Indians and their gift of corn.

Mamere (grandmother) made the best corn and shrimp soup, period! Many days my brothers and I would sit around her large kitchen table peeling river shrimp and pulling the silk from the freshly picked corn. Using an "Old Hickory" knife, she would remove the kernels from the cobs and then the secret to her tasty recipe was revealed. She would boil the corn cobs with the shells of the river shrimp in a large pot, seasoned with yellow onions, celery, garlic and one hot pepper. The aroma was incredible. This secret stock was then strained through her old bent colander. The results of her labor still linger on in my memory, so many years later. I have taken the liberty to use canned corn in place of fresh in this recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup dried shrimp
- 1 pound small (70-90) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 5 cans (15 ounces) Whole Kernel Corn
- 5 cans (15 ounces) Cream Style Corn
- 1 stick butter
- 2 cups diced onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced green bell pepper
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 2 cans (15 ounce) Stewed Tomatoes
- 1 can (10 ounce) Rotel
- 2 cans (5 ounce) V-8 Juice
- Season All to taste
- granulated garlic to taste
- black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large sauce pot, melt butter. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and sauté until onions are transparent, about 3-5 minutes. Add raw shrimp and sauté until they are just pink. Add all canned ingredients and dried shrimp. Season to taste using Season All, granulated garlic and pepper. Bring to a boil, reduce to simmer and cook for approximately 45 minutes. Add additional seasonings or water if necessary.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Veloute of Boiled Crawfish, Corn and Potatoes

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

One Saturday afternoon immediately following a crawfish boil, I noticed a table still piled with boiled crawfish, corn and potatoes. With the help of a few friends, we peeled the crawfish and, using the shells, made a boiled crawfish stock. I guess the rest of the story is obvious. This wonderful soup was created!

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds boiled crawfish tails
 1 cup shoepeg corn
 6 small potatoes, cubed
 1 cup melted butter
 1 cup onions, chopped
 1 cup celery, chopped
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
 1/4 cup garlic, chopped
 1 cup flour
 2 1/2 quarts crawfish stock
 1 pint heavy whipping cream
 1 cup green onions, sliced
 1 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and white pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a 1-gallon stock pot, place the shells of the boiled crawfish along with any remaining onions, lemons, etc. Add 3 quarts of cold water, bring to a low boil and cook for 30 minutes. This will impart a concentrated boiled crawfish flavor into the water. If you do not have boiled crawfish, simply boil the corn and potatoes in water lightly seasoned with crab boil for the same effect, or use chicken stock. Once stock is flavorful, strain and reserve 3 quarts of liquid. Once the stock pot has been cleaned, place over medium-high heat, add butter and sauté the onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic until wilted. Add the corn and continue to cook another 3-5 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and stir until well blended. Slowly pour in the crawfish stock, stirring constantly until the consistency of a creamy soup is achieved. Bring to a low boil then add 1/2 of the crawfish and all the potatoes. Cook until potatoes are tender, but not mushy. Add remaining crawfish, heavy whipping cream, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. You may wish to add a bit more of the crawfish stock to retain the desired consistency of the soup.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Judge Porter's Cane River Seafood Soup

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Typical fish soups in this part of the country often begin with a brown roux and are flavored with tomatoes and spices such as our redfish courtbouillon. This recipe is a much needed twist from the original because it's easier to make and has a unique flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

12 (21-25 count) shrimp, head on
 2 pounds redfish, 1-inch cubed
 1 dozen oysters
 1/2 pound crawfish tails
 6 gumbo crabs, cleaned and halved
 1/4 cup butter
 1 cup onions, diced
 1 cup celery, diced
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1 tbsp garlic, minced
 1 cup carrots, diced
 3 tbsps flour
 2 quarts oyster liquor
 1/2 cup tomatoes, diced
 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
 2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce
 1 bay leaf
 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
 1 tsp fresh tarragon, chopped
 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and black pepper to taste
 hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a cast iron Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and carrots. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until white roux is achieved. Add oyster liquor, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cook soup 10-15 minutes or until carrots are al dente. Add tomatoes, mushrooms, tomato sauce, bay leaf, thyme and tarragon. Continue to cook 5 additional minutes, stirring occasionally. Add crabs and shrimp and cook for 2 minutes then add fish. Take care when stirring the soup since the tender fish will break apart easily. Add oysters and crawfish and cook an additional 2 minutes or until oysters begin to plump up. Add green onions, parsley and season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. To serve, place an equal portion of the seafood in each bowl and top with broth. Serve with French bread.

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- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

River Road Shrimp Stew

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This is the most popular of all shrimp dishes cooked in Bayou country. It is easy to prepare and is a must on every table during the Lenten season. Crawfish may be substituted as well. It is easy to prepare and, although similar to crawfish bisque, this dish may be completed in half the time.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds (80-90 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 1 cup vegetable oil
 1 cup flour
 2 cups onions, minced
 1 cup celery, minced
 1 cup bell pepper, minced
 2 tbsps garlic, diced
 1/4 cup tomato sauce
 1 quart shrimp stock or water
 1 cup green onions, minced
 1 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

A rich shrimp stock will certainly make this dish a winner. Any shellfish stock or fish stock may be substituted, but the dish will be good even if plain water is used. In a 2-gallon stock pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and using a wire whip, stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. When brown, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add shrimp and cook until meat is pink and slightly curled. Stir in tomato sauce and slowly add shrimp stock stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add green onions and parsley and season to taste using salt and pepper. When done, serve over white rice with a few dashes of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Brown Oyster Stew

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

The Creoles of New Orleans created a butter and cream-based oyster soup that was so rich it was referred to as oyster stew. The Cajuns, looking to adapt the dish to their bayou style incorporated the dark brown roux and oyster liquid in place of the butter and cream. Personally, I prefer the bayou version.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pints oysters, reserve liquid
 1/2 cup oil
 1/2 cup flour
 1 cup onions, diced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/4 cup bell peppers, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, minced
 1 1/2 quarts oyster liquid or chicken stock
 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 dash of hot sauce

METHOD:

Ask your seafood supplier to reserve one and a half quarts of fresh shucked oyster liquid for this recipe. If oyster liquid is not available, simply substitute either clam juice or chicken stock. In a heavy-bottomed dutch oven, heat liquid over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Do not scorch. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add one pint of oysters and oyster liquid from 2 containers. Add the oyster or chicken stock, a little at a time, to achieve a stew-like consistency. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 25-30 minutes. Season with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Add green onions and parsley. Add remaining 2 pints of oysters and adjust seasonings if necessary. Cook 5 additional minutes and serve over rice or puff pastry shells.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Oysters Rockefeller Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

This particular soup has become famous at Lafitte's Landing Restaurant and is requested on more occasions than all other soups combined. The idea to create a soup from the premier oyster dish of New Orleans was indeed a good idea.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 dozen freshly shucked oysters
- 1 quart oyster liquid
- 1 cup melted butter
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- ½ cup bell pepper, chopped
- ¼ cup garlic, diced
- 1 (10-ounce) package cooked frozen spinach, thawed
- ½ cup andouille sausage, finely diced
- 1 cup flour
- 1½ quarts chicken stock
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- ½ cup green onions, sliced
- ½ cup parsley, chopped
- ½ ounce Pernod or Herbsaint
- salt and white pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stockpot, heat butter over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add spinach and andouille sausage. Using a metal spoon, chop spinach into vegetable mixture until all is well incorporated. Sprinkle in flour, blending well into spinach mixture. Stir constantly to avoid scorching. Add chicken stock and oyster liquid, one ladle at a time, until all is well blended. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook thirty minutes. Add heavy whipping cream, oysters, green onions and parsley. Continue to cook until edges of oysters begin to curl. Season to taste using salt and white pepper. Stir in Pernod or Herbsaint. Adjust seasonings if necessary. This soup may be garnished with diced yams.

HINT: It is imperative that oyster liquid be used in this recipe if it is to be successful. Give your seafood supplier ample time to reserve this amount.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Crawfish and Mirliton Bisque

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Mirliton, or chayote squash, was a gift from the Canary Islanders to the Creoles back in 1765. It is hard to imagine any bayou garden being complete without a mirliton vine growing over an arbor. It is truly one of Louisiana's most versatile vegetables.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 mirliton
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 1/2 pound tasso, julienned
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell peppers, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tbsp fresh tarragon
- 1 cup flour
- 2 1/2 quarts shellfish stock or water
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and white pepper to taste

METHOD:

Split mirliton lengthwise through the center and poach in lightly salted water for approximately 45 minutes or until tender. The mirliton will be perfectly cooked when a fork can be inserted easily into the pulp. Remove and cool. Once cool, scoop the meat from the mirliton using a teaspoon, discarding the seed and shell. Drain and set aside. In a 2-gallon stockpot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and tasso. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add nutmeg, tarragon and flour and using a wire whisk, stir until white roux is achieved. Do not brown. Add crawfish and shellfish stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Add mirliton, blending well into the mixture. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Add heavy whipping cream, green onions and parsley. Allow to cook an additional 5 minutes. Season to taste using salt and white pepper.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

New England Clam Chowder

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

No New England dish has been subjected to more abuse than clam chowder. My recipe may not be the definitive or only authentic recipe for this famous dish, but it has the virtue of being very true to the spirit and style of the original. Chowder is a one-pot dish, more of a stew than a soup. It should be thick but not thickened. Although a sprinkling of flour is usually added, the dish is normally thickened by the starch released from the potatoes during the cooking. Chowder is a perfect main course for lunch or a light supper. Serve it with oyster crackers, biscuits or clam fritters. Fritters and chowder are a marriage made in heaven!

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds Hen clams, chopped or
 5 pounds Littleneck clams in the shell
 1/4 pound salt pork, diced
 1/4 cup butter, melted
 2 1/2 cups onions, diced
 1 tbsp white flour
 3 cups white potatoes, 1/2-inch cubed
 3 cups half and half cream
 3 cups whole milk
 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
 2 tbsps fresh parsley, chopped
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Hen clams are the variety most often used in New England chowder. It is a larger clam normally found chopped and frozen and is slightly pink in color. Should you wish to use Littleneck clams, simply place 5 pounds in 1 inch of boiling water, cover and steam until the clams open, approximately 2 to 3 minutes. Remove from the heat and save the stock removing the meat from the shells. In a 1-gallon saucepot, heat salt pork over medium-high heat. Render the fat, but do not brown. When the fat has been rendered, add butter. When melted, stir in the diced onions. Cook 2 to 3 minutes stirring occasionally. Sprinkle in flour to create a white roux. Add potatoes, cream, milk and thyme, bring to a low boil then reduce to simmer. When potatoes are fork tender, but not falling apart, add clams and approximately 1 cup of the clam stock if available. Season to taste using parsley, salt and pepper. Serve hot with your favorite crackers or fritters.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Crawfish Bisque

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Crawfish bisque is a tradition in Louisiana. This dish is normally made in May or June, toward the end of crawfish season. Usually, an entire family gets together to make enough bisque at one time for everyone's freezer.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds cleaned crawfish tails
 60 cleaned crawfish heads
 1½ cups minced onions
 1 cup minced celery
 ½ cup minced bell pepper
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 ½ cup chopped parsley
 3 eggs, beaten
 2 cups seasoned Italian bread crumbs
 salt and pepper to taste



METHOD:

Ask your seafood supplier to clean 60 crawfish heads for this dish. The heads may be frozen for an extended period of time. Prior to using, you may wish to soak the heads overnight in cold soda water. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grind crawfish tails, onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and parsley in a home-style meat grinder or food processor. Once ground, add eggs and enough bread crumbs to hold the mixture together but not so that the stuffing becomes too bready. Begin with 1 cup. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Stuff equal amounts into the 60 crawfish heads. Bake for 20 minutes or until lightly browned to fully cook the seasonings in the crawfish heads. Remove and set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

1 pound cleaned crawfish tails
 1½ cups vegetable oil
 1½ cups flour
 1½ cups diced onion
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced bell pepper
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 ¼ cup tomato sauce
 3 quarts crawfish stock
 1 cup chopped green onions

½ cup chopped parsley
salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add crawfish tails and tomato sauce, blending well into vegetable mixture. Slowly add crawfish stock a little at a time until sauce-like consistency is achieved. Additional stock may be needed during the cooking process. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add stuffed crawfish heads. Stir well into the mixture and simmer 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. It is important to stir the dish since the crawfish will settle to the bottom of the pot and may tend to scorch. Add green onions and parsley and season to taste using salt and pepper. Serve in a 10-ounce soup bowl over white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Louisiana Crawfish and Sea Scallop Bouillabaisse

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds live crawfish
 1 pound cooked crawfish tails
 20 giant sea scallops
 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
 2 cups onions, diced
 2 cups carrots, diced
 6 cloves garlic, mashed
 2 whole bay leaves
 1 tbsp. fresh thyme leaves
 4 parsley stems
 1/4 cup brandy
 1/2 cup white wine
 1/4 cup tomato paste
 1/2 tsp. saffron blended in 1/4 cup warm water
 salt & pepper to taste
 2 tbsps. Herbsaint
 1 ounce olive oil
 1/2 cup carrots, finely diced
 1/2 cup onions, finely diced
 1/2 cup celery, finely diced
 1/2 cup tomatoes, finely diced
 1/4 cup basil, finely chopped

METHOD:

In a 2 gallon stock pot, heat 1/4 cup olive oil over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, carrots and garlic, stirring constantly until light brown, about 10 minutes. Add bay leaves, thyme and parsley and blend into vegetable seasoning. Add live crawfish and cover until crawfish are slightly steamed, about 2 to 5 minutes. Remove lid and add brandy and white wine. Be careful, as brandy may flame as it hits the pot. Bring wine to a low simmer and reduce by 1/2 the volume. Add tomato paste, blending well into liquid. Add 3 quarts cold water and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook stock until nice crawfish flavor is achieved, about 30 minutes. During this process, it is best to pull the heads from the tails of the crawfish to heighten the flavor. Add saffron and season to taste with salt and pepper. Allow stock to continue to simmer until desired rich flavor is achieved. When stock is done, strain and remove 2 quarts. Discard flavoring ingredients and return to stock pot. Return to low simmer and add Herbsaint. Stir well and taste for proper seasoning.

In a sauté pan, heat remaining olive oil over medium-high heat. Season scallops lightly with salt and pepper. When olive oil reaches smoke point, sauté 10 scallops until golden brown around the edges, about 2 minutes on each side. Continue until all scallops are cooked.

Remove and keep warm.

In same pan add carrots, onions, celery, and tomatoes. Sauté until wilted, about 3 to 5 minutes. Move seasoning to one side of pan and add cooked crawfish tails to warm completely. Season lightly with salt and pepper. When ready to serve, place 1 to 2 tbsps. of heated vegetable seasoning into bottom of a soup bowl. Add 2 scallops and an even portion of crawfish tails. Ladle hot crawfish stock over top of ingredients and garnish with basil. Serve with hot French bread.

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Bisque of Wild Mushroom with French Fried Oyster Crouton

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

It is always best to use a variety of wild mushrooms to create this soup. However, if they are unavailable in your area, you may substitute the dried forestière mushroom packs which are found in most grocery stores. If worse comes to worst, fresh button mushrooms along with any other variety on the shelf will certainly do.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pounds fresh mixed mushrooms, sliced
 1/4 pound butter
 1 cup onions, diced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/4 cup bell pepper, diced
 2 tbsps. garlic, minced
 6 tbsps. flour
 1 quart hot chicken stock
 1 cup heavy whipping cream
 1 tsp. thyme, chopped
 1 tsp. sage, chopped
 salt and pepper to taste
 1 ounce sherry

METHOD:

In a 1-gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and sauté until wilted, approximately 5-7 minutes. Add onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 10 additional minutes or until vegetables are slightly caramelized but not brown. Place the ingredients into the bowl of a food processor and chop until the mixture is puréed but not quite liquefied. There should be some slight mushroom identity still visible. Return to the stock pot and sprinkle in flour, blending well into the mixture. Once flour is well blended, add hot chicken stock one ladle at a time until all is incorporated. Add heavy whipping cream, thyme, sage and season to taste with salt and pepper. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Add sherry, blend well and serve by placing the soup in an appropriate bowl and garnishing with 2 crispy pan-fried oysters (using your favorite fried oyster recipe).

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Fricot

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Fricot is a thick soup that may have in some way influenced gumbo, the premier soup of Cajun Country. The dish is made with beef or chicken and thickened with potatoes, as opposed to the dark brown roux of Bayou Country. The Cajuns of Nova Scotia brought Fricot to Louisiana; however, somewhere along the way, it was put aside in favor of Corn and Shrimp Soup and Seafood Gumbo.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds beef chuck roast, diced 1/4-inch
- 1/4 cup Crisco
- 3 cups diced onions
- 1 cup chopped chives
- 3 cups diced potatoes
- 1 cup diced celery, optional
- 1 cup diced bell pepper, optional
- 1/4 cup chopped garlic, optional
- salt and pepper to taste, optional
- Louisiana Hot Sauce to taste, optional

METHOD:

In a large cast iron pot, melt Crisco over medium high heat. Add beef and sauté until golden brown. Add onions and continue to cook until vegetables are wilted. (**NOTE:** Although the original Fricot contained only beef, onions, chives and potatoes, I have taken the liberty to recommend additional vegetables and spice to give the dish some Cajun Country flair. You may add the optional ingredients at this time; however I recommend trying the original version to get a feel for authenticity.) Add cold water to the pot to cover beef by two inches. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until beef is tender, approximately 45 minutes. Add chives and potatoes and continue to cook until potatoes are tender and the soup is slightly thickened with the potato starch. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Additional water may be necessary in order to maintain a soup-like consistency.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Louisiana Seafood Gumbo

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

The premier soup of Cajun country, seafood gumbo, is known worldwide as the dish to seek out when visiting South Louisiana. There are as many recipes for this soup as there are people who cook it. This, however, is my favorite.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound (35-count) shrimp, peeled and de-veined
- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 2 dozen shucked oysters, reserve liquid
- 3 quarts shellfish stock
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup flour
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1/2 pound sliced andouille sausage
- 1 pound claw crabmeat
- 2 cups sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- salt and cayenne pepper
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

In a 7-quart cast iron dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until brown roux is achieved. Do not allow roux to scorch. Should black specks appear in roux, discard and begin again. Once roux is golden brown, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté approximately 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add andouille, blend well into vegetable mixture and sauté an additional 2-3 minutes. Add claw crabmeat and stir into roux. This will begin to add seafood flavor to the mixture. Slowly add hot shellfish stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook approximately 30 minutes. Add additional stock if necessary to retain volume. Add green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Fold shrimp, lump crabmeat, oysters and reserved oyster liquid into soup. Return to a low boil and cook approximately 5 minutes. Adjust seasonings and serve over cooked rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Creole Bouillabaisse

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 12

INGREDIENTS:

4 (1½ pound) cleaned red snapper
 2 pounds head on shrimp (31-35 count)
 4 whole bay leaves
 2 pounds live crawfish
 12 fresh cleaned crabs
 1 cup olive oil
 2 cups chopped onions
 2 cups chopped celery
 1 cup chopped red bell pepper
 4 whole diced tomatoes
 ¾ cup tomato sauce
 ¼ cup diced garlic
 2 medium carrots, diced
 3 quarts shellfish stock
 2 cups dry white wine
 1 tsp dry thyme
 1 tsp dry basil
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1 cup chopped parsley
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

Pour olive oil into a two-gallon stock pot. Layer the onions, celery, bell pepper, tomatoes, tomato sauce, garlic, bay leaves, and carrots. On top of vegetables, layer whole fish, shrimp, crawfish, and crabs. Place on medium-high heat, cover and steam approximately three to five minutes. Add shellfish stock, white wine, thyme and basil. Bring to a low simmer, approximately 190 degrees F, or just below the boiling point. Top of stock should ripple but not boil. Cook thirty minutes and remove from heat. Carefully pour off all shellfish stock, and reserve for soup. Using a spatula remove all seafood. Peel shrimp, crawfish and crab, then de-bone all meat from the fish. Bring the stock back to a low boil and add all seafood. Reduce to a simmer and add green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Serve by placing a generous amount of the seafood in the center of a soup bowl and ladle over with hot soup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

She-Crab Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This creamy seafood soup, chock-full of crab meat and finished with a touch of sherry, paprika and crab roe, is a traditional dish from the coast of Carolina to the Florida panhandle. You'll need about 8 or 9 large crabs to get enough meat to serve 6. Of course y'all, they have to be female, because after all, that's where the roe comes from. Naturally, you could always buy the crab meat and roe from the seafood supplier, should you not be up to the task of boiling and cleaning crabs.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crab meat
- ½ cup crab roe
- ¼ cup melted butter
- ½ cup minced onions
- ¼ cup minced celery
- ¼ cup minced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 2 tbsps. flour
- 3 cups milk
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- ½ tsp. ground mace
- 1 tsp. grated lemon peel
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup dry sherry
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 2 tbsps. chopped parsley

METHOD:

Pick the crab meat well to remove any shells or cartilage. Chop the roe and set aside. In a dutch oven, heat butter over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Add milk, heavy whipping cream and season with mace, lemon peel, salt and pepper. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and add half of the crab meat. Cook, stirring occasionally, 10 to 15 minutes. When ready to serve, adjust salt and pepper if necessary, then add remaining crab meat, crab roe and sherry. Return to a low boil to heat crab meat thoroughly. When serving, garnish with a pinch of paprika and chopped parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Bouillon De Poisson - (From The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book)

PREP TIME: 4 Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Anyone with a pot crane and a good cast iron dutch oven can cook this dish in the fireplace. However, we've adapted this recipe to cook on the stove.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds large catfish, cubed
- 1/4 pound butter
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped garlic
- 1 cup julienned carrots
- 6 cups fish or chicken stock
- 1/2 cup tomato sauce
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/2 tsp chopped thyme leaves
- 1 tsp. chopped basil
- 1/2 pound sliced mushrooms
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup julienned green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom Dutch oven melt butter over medium high heat or coals. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and carrots. Cook 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add fish stock, tomato sauce, bay leaf, thyme, basil, and mushrooms. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add approximately one cup of the fish and save the remaining portion for later. Simmer 1 1/2 hours, stirring occasionally, then add the remaining fish, poaching it in the liquid until tender and done, 2 to 3 minutes. Add green onions and parsley and adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve in a soup bowl over pasta or rice or eat simply as a seafood soup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Oyster and Artichoke Bisque

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Once again, Louisiana gulf oysters are used to create a masterpiece among cream based soups. This recipe is used on a weekly basis at Lafitte's Landing Restaurant. The great New Orleans chef, Warren LeRuth, introduced Cajuns to this dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 dozen freshly shucked oysters
- 1 quart oyster liquid
- 8 fresh artichoke bottoms, sliced and uncooked
- 1 cup butter
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- ¼ cup diced garlic
- 1 cup flour
- 1½ quarts chicken stock
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- salt and white pepper to taste
- ½ cup chopped bell pepper

METHOD:

In a two gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and artichoke bottoms. Sauté five to ten minutes or until vegetables are wilted and artichokes are tender. Remove all ingredients from stock pot and place in food processor equipped with a metal blade. Chop on high speed approximately one minute or until mixture is fairly well pureed. Return to stock pot and bring back to a simmer. Using a wire whisk, sprinkle in flour, stirring constantly until white roux is achieved. (see roux technique) Add chicken stock and oyster liquid, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook thirty minutes. Add heavy whipping cream, oysters, green onions and parsley. Return to a boil, and cook until edges of oysters begin to curl. Season to taste using salt and white pepper.

HINT: It is imperative that oyster liquid be used in this recipe if it is to be successful. Give your seafood supplier ample time to reserve this amount.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Smoked Duck, Oyster and Andouille Gumbo

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

During the Christmas season in Cajun Country, a hot bowl of gumbo awaits visitors at every home on Christmas Eve. The tradition of serving Louisiana's premier soup as the entree after midnight Mass dates back more than 200 years.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 Long Island ducks, smoked and cut into serving pieces
- 1 pint oysters
- 1 pound sliced andouille
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/4 cups flour
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1 pint oyster liquor
- 3 quarts chicken stock
- 2 cups sliced green onions
- 1 cup chopped parsley
- salt to taste
- cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a two gallon stock pot, heat oil over medium high heat. Once oil is hot, add flour and using a wire whisk, stir constantly until roux is golden brown. Do not scorch. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add duck and andouille, blending into vegetable mixture. Add chicken stock and oyster liquor, one ladle at a time. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook approximately two hours. When duck is tender, add oysters and cook an additional ten minutes. Add green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Shrimp and Okra Gumbo

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds 35 count shrimp, peeled and deveined
 1 cup vegetable oil
 1-1/2 cups flour
 4 cups sliced okra
 2 cups chopped onions
 1 cup chopped celery
 1 cup chopped bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 3 quarts shellfish stock
 2 cups chopped green onions
 1/2 cup diced parsley
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

I must note at this time that in many cases the okra used in gumbo is first chopped and sautéed in oil until all of the stringy texture is removed and the vegetable is light brown. However, it is perfectly acceptable to add the uncooked okra into this dish. In a two gallon stock pot, heat oil over medium high heat. Once oil is hot, add flour and using a wire whisk, stir constantly until golden brown roux is achieved. Do not allow roux to scorch. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. When golden brown, reduce heat to simmer and sauté okra approximately fifteen minutes. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and sauté approximately three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add shellfish stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Return to medium high heat, bring to a low boil and allow to simmer thirty minutes. Add shrimp, green onions and parsley and season to taste using salt and pepper. Allow to cook an additional five minutes. Serve over cooked rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Frogmore Stew

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

What is Frogmore Stew? It's a mixture of sausage, potatoes, corn and shrimp, seasoned with a prepared spice mix such as Old Bay seasoning, and boiled until everything is tender and the shrimp have turned pink. The name Frogmore is the names of an old fishing community on St. Helena Island, South Carolina. According to legend, a fisherman developed the recipe when he couldn't find fish for stew. He scavenged for leftovers, added what shrimp and crab he did catch, and the delicious result has become a hallmark recipe of the Low country.

INGREDIENTS:

1/4 cup Old Bay seasoning
 4 lbs small red potatoes
 2 lbs kielbasa or hot, smoked line sausage, cut into 1½-inch slices
 6 ears fresh corn, halved
 4 lbs unpeeled, large fresh shrimp
 Additional Old Bay seasoning
 Commercial cocktail sauce

METHOD:

Fill large container of a propane cooker halfway with water; add 1/4 cup Old Bay seasoning. Bring to a boil, following manufacturer's instructions. Add potatoes, return to a boil, and cook 10 minutes. Add sausage and corn; return to a boil, and cook 10 minutes or until potatoes are tender. Add shrimp; cook 3 to 5 minutes or until shrimp turn pink. Remove with a slotted spoon onto a serving platter or newspaper-lined table. Serve with additional Old Bay seasoning and cocktail sauce.

Note: Frogmore Stew may be cooked indoors in a large Dutch oven on a cook top surface, over high heat, if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Leontine Callais's Oyster Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

I thought I knew how to make Oyster Soup until I tasted this dish. It was served to me at the first meeting held by the committee to establish the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute at Nicholls State University. Betsy Ayo, late wife of Nicholls President Donald Ayo, had her mother and aunt help prepare the meal and this was one of their dishes. I hope you enjoy it as much as I have.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 gallon oysters
- 1½ large potatoes (red or white) sliced thin
- 2 quarts reserved oyster liquid
- 6 ounces curly Vermicelli #32
- 1 1/2 pounds salt meat
- 1/2 cup shredded carrots
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 3 large onions, sliced fine
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/4 cup minced garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

Note: Have your seafood supplier shuck ½ gallon of fresh oysters and reserve 2 quarts of oyster liquid for the soup. If oyster liquid is not available, simply purée 1 pint of oysters along with 1½ quarts of cold water to create a similar flavored liquid.

Cut the salt meat into 1" cubes removing the excess fat. Place the salt meat in a 1-quart pot and cover by 3 inches with cold water. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until salt meat is tender and falling apart, approximately 45 minutes to an hour. When done, drain and set aside. In a 7-quart dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Add sliced onions and garlic and stir fry 2 to 3 minutes being careful not to brown. Add approximately 1 quart of water to the onion mixture and simmer until onions become soft. Do not brown but cook the onions until they turn to a very soft mass. Place salt meat in dutch oven with sliced potatoes and oyster liquid. Return to a low boil, reduce to simmer, cover and cook until potatoes are falling apart and acting as a thickening agent in the soup, 30 minutes. More water may be needed to retain volume. When potatoes have been totally cooked apart, add oysters, pasta and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Cook until pasta is tender and soup is full flavored. Finish with whipping cream and adjust seasonings if necessary.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Monterey Bay Cioppino

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I first tasted Cioppino in Monterey, California, at the Sardine Factory restaurant. The owner and my good friend, Bert Cutino, made the dish from his father's original recipe brought to California from Sicily.

INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups sliced onion
- ¼ cup sliced garlic
- ¼ cup tomato paste
- 1 cup Chardonnay
- 2½ pounds ripe tomatoes, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 1 cup yellow bell pepper, diced
- 2 tbsps chopped flat leaf parsley
- 1 tbsp minced fresh thyme leaves
- 1 bay leaf
- 3 cups bottled clam broth
- 2 cups chicken broth, low sodium if using canned
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves, sliced
- 1 dozen fresh clams, in shell
- 1 dozen fresh mussels, in shell
- 1 pound large shrimp, peeled and deveined
- ¼ pound sea scallops, trimmed
- ½ cup red snapper or cod, cubed
- ½ pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- Kosher salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large dutch oven heat, olive oil over medium high heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté 3-5 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook for 1 minute. Add wine and using a wooden spoon, scrape up any brown particles in the bottom of the pot. Simmer until wine is reduced by half. Add the ripe tomatoes, bell pepper, parsley, thyme and bay leaf. Stir well into the tomato mixture and then add the broths. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Add all remaining ingredients except crabmeat and simmer until fish is cooked and flaky but not overcooked. Gently fold in crabmeat and season to taste using salt and pepper. Serve in a large soup bowl with a good mixture of the seafood and hot Italian or French bread.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Front Porch Carrot and Crawfish Bisque

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The first thing you'll notice as you drive into the camellia-lined driveway of Elliott House is the massive front gallery of the house. This carrot soup is best when served in coffee cups either hot or cold and enjoyed while swaying in one of those comfortable rockers at Elliott House or on your own patio.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 2 medium-sized potatoes, peeled and sliced
- 7 cups chicken stock (see recipe)
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- Creole seasoning to taste
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a cast iron dutch oven, combine carrots, potatoes, chicken stock, onions, celery, bell pepper and Worcestershire sauce. Bring mixture to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cover. Cook soup until potatoes and carrots are tender, approximately 15-20 minutes. Season to taste using Creole seasonings, salt and pepper. Place the solid ingredients into the bowl of a blender or food processor. Slowly pour the soup in through a strainer. Do not overfill the bowl, because hot liquid will expand and the steam will cause the top to pop up during blending. Place just enough of the hot liquid to cover the vegetables by 1 inch. Take caution. Puree soup until smooth and creamy. Return pureed soup to the dutch oven and bring mixture to a low boil. Add heavy whipping cream, crawfish, nutmeg and parsley. Adjust seasonings if necessary. The soup may be served hot or cold, garnished with fresh chives and sour cream optional.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Sweet Corn and Shrimp Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Long before lake and gulf shrimp were available to Louisianans, river shrimp were in great supply. Many dishes featured this unique ingredient, but none is more famous than the Creole Style Sweet Corn and Shrimp Soup. The marriage of these items came about because of our friendship with the native American Indians and their gift of corn.

Mamere (grandmother) made the best corn and shrimp soup, period! Many days my brothers and I would sit around her large kitchen table peeling river shrimp and pulling the silk from the freshly picked corn. Using an "Old Hickory" knife, she would remove the kernels from the cobs and then the secret to her tasty recipe was revealed. She would boil the corn cobs with the shells of the river shrimp in a large pot, seasoned with yellow onions, celery, garlic and one hot pepper. The aroma was incredible. This secret stock was then strained through her old bent colander. The results of her labor still linger on in my memory, so many years later.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups whole kernel corn
- 2 pounds freshwater or other shrimp
- 1 cup butter
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1 cup diced tomatoes, seeded
- 1 cup flour
- 1 cup tomato sauce
- 2 1/2 quarts shellfish stock
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a two gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium high heat. Add corn, onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Saute three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes, blend well into the vegetable mixture and add flour. Using a wire whisk, whip constantly until white roux is achieved. Do not brown. Add tomato sauce and stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a low boil and reduce to simmer. Add half of

the shrimp and cook for thirty minutes. Add remaining shrimp, cream, green onions and parsley. Allow the shrimp to cook approximately ten minutes. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Corney's Low-Fat Crab Bisque

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 4-6 Servings



Comment: Corney Welsh entered this wonderful soup recipe for our Holiday 2003 Stirrin' It Up for the Holidays recipe contest. We felt that such a great tasting and simple to prepare dish that was also low fat, couldn't be passed up. So, if you are watching your waistline this Holiday season, this soup is just right for you.

Ingredients:

1 pound crabmeat
 ½ stick light margarine
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup sliced celery
 ½ cup diced green bell peppers
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 3 cups skim milk
 2 cups diced white potatoes
 10 ounces light Velveeta cheese
 4 cups fat free half-and-half
 salt and pepper to taste

Method:

In a 4-quart saucepot, melt margarine over medium high heat and sauté onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic until slightly browned, approximately 5-10 minutes. Add milk and potatoes and cook until potatoes are tender. Add cubed Velveeta and heat until completely melted. Add crab and half and half and bring to a low simmer and cook for about 5-10 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve hot.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Mike Graham's Lentil Soup

PREP TIME: 2½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This recipe came directly from Mike's wife, Gloria Graham. This is Mike's favorite soup, so I thought I should go directly to the source for this recipe.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1-pound lentils
- 1 pound chuck or shoulder roast, 1 inch diced
- salt, pepper and granulated garlic to taste
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- 2 cups onions
- 1 cup celery
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 3 quarts chicken stock
- 1 cup carrots, sliced on bias
- ½ pound garlic bologna, ½ inch diced
- pirogues
- ¼ cup parsley, chopped

METHOD:

Soak lentils in water overnight or for at least 2 hours. Season beef with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. In a 1 gallon stockpot heat oil over medium high heat. Sauté onion, celery and garlic until onions are translucent, about 3-5 minutes. Add beef, reduce heat to low, cover and cook for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add chicken stock and bring to a rolling boil. Drain lentils completely and add soaked lentils to the boiling stock. Cook for approximately 1 hour or until lentils are tender. Add carrots, garlic bologna and pirogues and cook for 25 additional minutes. Best if served the next day to allow flavors to develop.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Red Bean and Sausage Soup

PREP TIME: 2½ Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT: Red beans and rice are Louisiana's Monday dish. Here, we have taken this recipe and made it into a hearty soup that can be used as a starter or an entrée. We have left in the great smoky flavor found in red beans by using turkey sausage and tasso in place of fat-filled pork products.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup dried red kidney beans
- ¼ pound Butterball fat free turkey smoked sausage, sliced
- ¼ cup Richard's turkey tasso, diced (optional)
- 9 cups low sodium chicken broth
- ½ cup diced onion
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced bell pepper
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- 2 tbsp chopped parsley
- 2 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 bay leaf
- 2 tsp cider vinegar
- ¼ tsp thyme
- ¼ tsp chili powder
- ¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

METHOD:

Place all ingredients in a 1-gallon heavy-bottom pot and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer, cover the pot and cook for 2 hours, stirring occasionally to make sure that nothing sticks to the bottom of the pot. When the beans are very soft and tender, you may purée some of the beans in a blender or food processor and return them to the soup for a thicker consistency. You may use white or black beans in the place of the red beans for an easy variation to this dish.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Navy Bean Soup

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Nothing is healthier or more comforting than a navy bean soup when prepared with lean ham rather than a fat ham hock or sausage. This light recipe has less sodium and is perfect for a cold January night.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound dried navy beans
 1 cup onions, diced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1 cup tomatoes, diced
 1 cup potatoes, diced
 1 cup cabbage, chopped
 1/2 cup elbow macaroni
 2 cups lean ham, diced
 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 1/4 tsp salt
 black pepper to taste
 hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

Rinse the beans under cold running water. You may wish to soak the beans in cold water overnight to cut the cooking time by one-third. Place the beans in a large cast iron Dutch oven and cover by 2 inches with cold water. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cook approximately 1 hour or until beans are tender, stirring occasionally. Add onions, celery, tomatoes, potatoes, cabbage, macaroni and ham. Blend well into the bean mixture and cook 20 - 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. You may need to add water to retain desired consistency. Add green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. NOTE: When stirring beans during the cooking process, mash approximately half of the beans by pressing the cooking spoon against the inside of the pot. This will give the navy bean soup a creamy consistency.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Red Beans and Rice Gumbo

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT:

In South Louisiana, we normally think of red beans as a "Monday" dish and always serve them over rice with a link of smoked sausage. This gumbo variation started out as a perfect solution to making use of leftover red beans and rice. Today, its a fall delicacy.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (16-ounce can) Blue Runner New Orleans Red Beans
- 1 (10-12-ounce) can red kidney beans in water
- 1 cup cooked long grain rice
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup bacon fat
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup bell peppers, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 quart chicken stock or water
- 1 pound sugar cured ham, diced
- 1/2 pound smoked sausage, sliced
- 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste



METHOD:

In a 7-quart cast iron pot, heat oil and bacon fat over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery and bell peppers and saute 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add garlic and saute, stirring occasionally, for an additional 3 minutes. Add chicken stock, blending well into the roux mixture. Add ham and smoked sausage and cook 3-5 minutes. Add Blue Runner beans, blending well into the stock. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 45 minutes. Add additional stock or water as necessary to maintain soup-like consistency. Add cooked kidney beans, rice, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Return to a low boil and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Tomato Bisque

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

YIELDS: 6-8 Servings

INGREDIENTS:

8 medium Creole tomatoes
 1 cup tomato sauce
 ½ cup olive oil
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced bell pepper
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 cup diced carrots
 1 cup flour
 1 cup dry white wine
 3 quarts beef stock
 1 tbsp chopped fresh basil
 1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
 1 tbsp chopped fresh oregano
 1 cup whipping cream
 salt and white pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 8 leaves fresh basil, cut into strips

METHOD:

Cut tomatoes in half, remove cores and squeeze out seeds. Chop 2 tomatoes coarsely and reserve for garnish. In a 5-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-low heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and carrots. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and blend well into the vegetable mixture using a wire whisk. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce and white wine, blending well into the roux mixture. Add beef stock until a soup-like consistency is achieved. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and add basil, thyme and oregano. Cook 30 minutes, adding stock as necessary to retain volume. Fold in cream and season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. When ready to serve, garnish with chopped tomatoes and fresh basil.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Potato and Cabbage Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Originally this soup was served on Mondays in Ireland. It was usually made up of the leftovers from the traditional Sunday dinner of boiled bacon, cabbage and mashed potatoes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large boiling potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1/2 head green cabbage, shredded
- 4 tbsps butter
- 2 onions, peeled and diced
- 1 leek, washed and diced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1 cup milk
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 2 tbsps lightly whipped heavy cream
- 1 tsp parsley, chopped
- salt and freshly ground white pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 1-quart heavy-bottomed saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, leek and potatoes and sauté until soft, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add cabbage and season to taste with salt and pepper, bay leaf and nutmeg. Simmer approximately 3 to 4 minutes. Add milk and chicken stock, bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat and simmer an additional 30 minutes. Remove bay leaf and transfer soup to a food processor. Purée until smooth and adjust seasonings to taste. Ladle into 10-inch soup bowls and garnish with lightly whipped cream and fresh chopped parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Yam, Thyme and Lump Crab Bisque

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

There is much controversy over the origin of yams and the route taken to get here in bayou country. Some say they were brought over by the Africans. Others debate that the Conquistadors brought them up the Mississippi Valley from South America. Whatever their origin, thank God they made it here to Cajun Country!

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups yams, cooked and mashed
 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
 1/4 cup butter
 1 tbsp garlic, minced
 1/2 cup onions, minced
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, minced
 1/2 cup claw crabmeat
 1/2 cup flour
 2 quarts reserved crab stock
 1 bay leaf
 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
 1 cup heavy whipping cream
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Begin by creating a crab or shellfish stock by combining 2 pounds of crab, shrimp or crawfish shells available from your local seafood market with 2 quarts of cold water, 1 sliced onion, 1 sliced carrot, 2 cloves of garlic and 1 bay leaf. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 45 minutes. Strain and reserve 2 quarts of the stock for the soup. If the shells are unavailable you may simply use clam or chicken bouillon in its place. In a heavy-bottom saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add garlic, onions and bell pepper and sauté 3 - 5 minutes. Add claw crabmeat blending well into the vegetable mixture. Slowly sprinkle in flour while stirring constantly. Once the flour is well blended, add yams, blend well then add stock, 1 cup at a time, stirring to incorporate. Continue until all has been added. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add bay leaf and nutmeg and season to taste using salt and pepper. Simmer 15 minutes then add heavy whipping cream, fresh thyme and jumbo lump crabmeat. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Additional stock may be added to thin soup to your liking.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Austin Leslie's Blackeyed Pea and Okra Soup

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

In the early days, this soup was referred to around the plantations as "good luck" soup. The name originated from the fact that many think that eating blackeyed peas on New Year's Day will give you good luck throughout the year. I often wonder if gumbo didn't originally influence the creation of this soup.

INGREDIENTS:

1 lb dried blackeyed peas
 1 (10-oz) package cut okra
 1 lb cubed ham
 1/4 cup butter
 2 cups onions, chopped
 1 cup celery, chopped
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
 1/4 cup garlic, diced
 1 bay leaf
 1 sprig of thyme
 2 1/2 quarts chicken stock
 1 cup tomatoes, chopped and seeded
 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and cracked black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottom dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Saute 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ham, bay leaf and thyme and cook an additional 3 to 5 minutes. Pour in chicken stock and add blackeyed peas. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cover and cook for approximately 1 hour. While stirring, mash peas on side of pot with a cooking spoon. This will help thicken the finished soup. Add okra and tomatoes and season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Add green onions and parsley, blend well into the soup and allow to cook 20 to 30 minutes longer or until peas are tender and soup is creamy. I recommend serving cornbread muffins with this soup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Cabbage Patch Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups cabbage, finely shredded
 2 tbsps margarine
 1 lb lean ground beef
 1 medium onion, thinly sliced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, diced
 1 (15-ounce) can tomatoes with juice
 2 cups water
 1 can red kidney beans
 1 tsp chili powder
 salt and black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

In a 5-quart cast iron dutch oven, melt margarine over medium-high heat. Add ground beef and brown until meat is thoroughly cooked and separated, grain for grain. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes and, using the back of a spoon, break tomatoes into the meat/vegetables mixture. Add water and beans, blending well until all is incorporated. Add cabbage, bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until cabbage is tender. Season to taste using chili powder, salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

French Onion Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This classic soup was traditionally the 'hangover-remedy' soup, sold in all-night cafes in Paris. It was thought that the rich beef broth flavored with sautéed onions and topped with a hearty crouton would revive revelers in the early hours of the morning, following a night of indulgence. Often the soup is thickened with 1 1/2 tbsps of flour sprinkled into the sautéed onions.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 large onions, finely sliced
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup Pinot Noir
- 4 cups beef broth
- 2 large bay leaves
- salt and pepper to taste
- 6 pieces of French bread, thickly sliced
- 3/4 cup Swiss cheese, grated

METHOD:

In a large cast iron dutch oven, heat butter and oil together. Once oil is hot, add onions and garlic and cook over medium heat for approximately 30 to 45 minutes, stirring occasionally, until caramelized but not burned. If you wish for a slightly thickened soup, sprinkle in 1 1/2 tbsps of flour and blend well. Deglaze with Pinot Noir. Add broth along with seasonings and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer, cover and cook for 30 minutes. Remove bay leaves and adjust seasonings if necessary. Preheat oven on broiler setting. Place 6 soup cups on a cookie sheet and fill to 3/4 volume. Place a French bread crouton on top of the soup and cover evenly with Swiss cheese. Place under broiler until bread is toasted and cheese is fully melted. Serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Soup De Five Bean Award

PREP TIME: 25-30 minutes

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

This recipe was created in honor of my brother, Chef John Folse, and his wife, Laulie, whose Lafitte's Landing Restaurant at Bittersweet Plantation in Donaldsonville received The Five Bean Award. This award, received on October 15, 1999, is the highest rating awarded to a restaurant in the New Orleans area by The Times Picayune Food Critic, S. M. Hahn.

Congratulations, Johnny and Laulie and best wishes for continued success at Lafitte's Landing at Bittersweet Plantation. I'm as proud as one can be for a brother and sister-in-law Jerry Folse

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups diced andouille
- 1 cup pureed onion
- 1/2 cup finely chopped bell pepper
- 1/3 cup minced green onion
- 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
- 1 tbsps granulated garlic
- 2 tbsps roux
- 1 can Blue Runner Red Beans
- 1 can Blue Runner White Beans
- 1 can Trappey's White Beans
- 1 can Trappey's Butter Beans
- 1 can Trappey's Lima Beans
- 1 can Trappey's Green Beans
- 3 cans Chicken Broth
- Salt, pepper, & Creole seasoning, to taste

METHOD:

In an 8-10 quart stockpot, add 2 cups of andouille and onion over medium heat. Puree onions and bell peppers and add this to the pot, stirring often to avoid sticking. Sauté for five minutes and then add chicken stock, granulated garlic, & liquid from beans. Puree 1/2 can of each: Blue Runner White Beans, Blue Runner Red Beans. Add all beans except the can of Green Beans to the stock. Add 1/2 parsley and 1/2 green onions. Simmer for 15 minutes. Stir often. Add green beans and season to taste. Garnish with the remaining green onions and parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Bisque of Three Lettuces

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

The combination of these three lettuce flavors is incredible. This soup was created quite by accident, but has been one of the best creations to come out of our kitchen.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups romaine lettuce
 2 cups bibb lettuce
 1 cup butter
 2 cups red leaf lettuce
 1 cup chopped onions
 1 cup chopped celery
 ½ cup chopped bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1 cup sliced mushrooms
 ½ cup diced andouille sausage
 1 cup flour
 2 ounces sherry
 2-1/2 quarts chicken stock
 1 pint heavy whipping cream
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1 cup chopped parsley
 salt and white pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a two gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium high heat. Add three lettuces, onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, mushrooms and andouille. Sauté and stir constantly until lettuces are wilted, approximately five to ten minutes. Remove ingredients from stock pot and place in food processor with metal blade. Chop on high speed until vegetables are pureed. Return mixture to pot, simmer and sprinkle in flour. Using a wire whisk, stir constantly until white roux is achieved. Do not brown. Add chicken stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Add sherry, heavy whipping cream, green onions and parsley, and cook an additional ten to fifteen minutes. Season to taste using salt and white pepper. If you wish, you may garnish with julienned pieces of the three lettuces.

NOTE: Often, I finish this soup by adding a pound of jumbo lump crabmeat to the dish. You may wish to try this fabulous addition.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Gumbo Des Herbes - Gumbo Z'Herbs

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

Although there are many versions of this recipe, I feel that Leah Chase, owner of Dooky Chase's Restaurant in New Orleans, has the best recipe in the world for this dish. Leah, the Queen of Creole Cooking, serves this famous dish each Holy Thursday at her restaurant on Orleans Avenue in downtown New Orleans.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 bunch mustard greens
- 1 bunch collard greens
- 1 bunch turnips
- 1 bunch watercress
- 1 bunch beet tops
- 1 bunch carrot tops
- 1/2 head lettuce
- 1/2 head cabbage
- 1 bunch spinach
- 3 cups onions, diced
- 1/2 cup garlic, chopped
- 1 1/2 gallons water
- 5 tbsps flour
- 1 pound smoked sausage
- 1 pound smoked ham
- 1 pound hot sausage
- 1 pound brisket, cubed
- 1 pound stew meat
- 1 tsp thyme leaves
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp filé powder

METHOD:

Clean all greens under cold running water, making sure to pick out bad leaves. Rinse away any soil or grit. The greens should be washed 2 to 3 times. Chop greens coarsely and place in 12-quart pot along with onions, garlic and water. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, cover and cook for 30 minutes. Strain greens and reserve the liquid. Place greens in the bowl of a food processor and purée or chop in a meat grinder. Pour greens into a mixing bowl, sprinkle in 5 tablespoons flour, blend and set aside. Dice all meats into 1-inch pieces and place into the 12-quart pot. Return the reserve liquid to the pot and bring to a low boil, cover and cook 30 minutes. Add puréed greens, thyme and season with salt and pepper. Cover and

continue to simmer, stirring occasionally until meat is tender, approximately 1 hour. Add water if necessary to retain volume. Add filé powder, stir well and adjust salt and pepper if necessary. Serve over steamed rice.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Vegetable Chili Soup

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

On those cold winter days, one could choose to water down their favorite chili recipe and serve it in a soup bowl, with good results. But, for those of you wishing to start from scratch with a true chili soup, this recipe using canned beans just can't be beat.

INGREDIENTS:

1 quart water
 24 ounce can diced tomatoes
 3 ounces tomato paste
 2 tablespoons chili powder
 1 ½ tablespoons ground cumin
 2 teaspoons fresh chopped basil
 2 teaspoons fresh chopped thyme
 1 cup diced yellow onion
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced green bell pepper
 ½ cup diced red bell pepper
 2 tablespoons minced garlic
 1 15 ½ ounce can red kidney beans
 1 15 ½ ounce can black beans
 1 15 ½ ounce can navy beans
 2 tablespoons corn starch
 1 cup yellow squash, diced ½-inch thick
 1 cup zucchini, diced ½-inch thick
 salt, pepper and hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

Slurry the corn starch with ½ cup water and set aside. In an 8 quart saucepan, heat oil over medium to high heat. Once oil is hot, add onion, celery, bell peppers, and garlic. Sauté vegetables until translucent. Add cumin and chili powder. Continue to sauté for an additional 3 minutes. This helps roast the spices and draw flavor. Next, add diced tomatoes and cook them down 1 to 2 minutes. Add water, thyme, basil, yellow squash and zucchini. Bring to a boil. Add corn starch slurry. Incorporate slurry fully. Once this begins to thicken, add beans. Bring to a boil once more, then simmer for 5 minutes. Salt, pepper, and hot sauce to taste. Enjoy!

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Spinach and Sweet Potato Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

While visiting Japan, I worked with a Japanese chef who taught me a simple truth about cooking. If food looks good, it will certainly taste good. This recipe incorporates that very basic principle. The vivid green spinach and the bright orange sweet potato give the soup visual appeal, and the flavor is out of this world.



INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups spinach leaves
- 2 cups sweet potatoes, diced ¼-inch
- 1 cup julienned smoked sausage
- ½ cup margarine
- 1 cup chopped onions
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup chopped red bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced garlic
- 1 cup flour
- 3 quarts defatted chicken stock
- 1 quart heavy whipping cream
- ½ cup sliced chives
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- dash of hot sauce

METHOD:

Wash spinach leaves to remove any sand or grit and finely chop into ¼-inch squares. In a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven, melt margarine over medium-high heat. Add smoked sausage, onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, stir vegetable mixture to form a blonde roux. Add chicken stock, one ladle at a time, whisking constantly until soup consistency is achieved. Add sweet potatoes. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook approximately 20 minutes. Add spinach and cook approximately 10 additional minutes. Additional stock may be added to retain proper consistency. Add heavy whipping cream, chives and parsley. Season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. Once potatoes are tender, serve in individual soup bowls and garnish with finely chopped spinach.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Bacon, Lettuce and Tomato Sandwich Soup

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Imagination and creativity has always been the hallmark of the Louisiana cook. Just to prove that fact, the wonderful flavor of a bacon, lettuce and tomato sandwich has been combined with a chicken veloute to create a soup that is sure to excite your dinner guests.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 pound cooked bacon, drained
 1 head romaine lettuce, sliced
 3 seeded tomatoes, diced
 1/4 pound butter
 1/2 cup chopped onions
 1/2 cup chopped celery
 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
 1/2 cup chopped yellow bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1/2 cup flour
 1 quart chicken stock
 1 pint heavy whipping cream
 pinch of thyme
 pinch of basil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 1 cup toasted croutons

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom dutch oven melt butter over medium high heat. Add bacon and sauté two to three minutes. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, blend well into bacon/vegetable mixture. Add chicken stock, stirring constantly, until all is incorporated. Add lettuces and tomatoes and fold well into the soup. Add heavy whipping cream. Season to taste using thyme, basil, salt and pepper and allow to cook for an additional fifteen minutes. When ready to serve, ladle soup into individual bowls and garnish with toasted croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Great Lakes Potato Soup

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Potatoes were the staple of early Midwestern cookery and were usually made into cream-style soups. I find this old variation refreshingly different.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound red new potatoes
- 6 cups chicken broth
- 1 carrot peeled and sliced 1/2-inch thick
- 1 leek, sliced white only
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 tsp prepared horseradish
- 2 slices cooked bacon, crumbled
- 1/2 tsp chopped parsley
- 6 slices garlic toast

METHOD:

Leave the potatoes unpeeled as this will add not only nutrients to this dish but also color and flavor. In addition, the skins help the potatoes retain shape during cooking. Slice the potatoes 1/4-inch thick. Pour chicken broth into a 3-quart cast iron Dutch oven. Add carrots and leeks and cook for 5 minutes or until vegetables are al dente. Add potatoes and cook until tender, approximately 10-12 minutes. Season to taste using salt and black pepper. Add horseradish and bacon. To serve, place soup in a large soup bowl and garnish with parsley. Serve with garlic toast.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Callaloo Soup - (Caribbean Greens)

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

This is a favorite recipe of the Eastern Caribbean. The dish is thick and green, much like a creamy spinach soup. Callaloo is better defined as a thick, kale-like leafy vegetable that grows in the Caribbean.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds fresh kale
 1/2 pound callaloo, or fresh spinach
 12 okra pods
 1/4 pound salt pork, cut into thin strips
 1/2 pound fresh lean pork, cubed
 2 onions, thinly sliced
 1 hot pepper, seed removed, sliced
 1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
 8 cups chicken stock
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Pull all stems from kale and callaloo. Discard stems and roughly chop the leaves. Wash leaves thoroughly as leafy vegetables tend to contain sand and grit. Rinse once or twice under cold water. Slice okra into 1/2 inch circles. Place salt meat and lean pork into a 7-quart cast iron Dutch oven. Sauté 7 to 10 minutes, stirring occasionally to render fat. Discard all but 2 tablespoons of fat.

Add onions and continue to sauté until meat is brown and onions are translucent, about 5 minutes. Add kale, callaloo, okra, hot pepper, thyme and chicken stock. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer. Cover and cook approximately 2 hours. Additional chicken stock may be needed to retain volume. Many Caribbean cooks remove the salt pork prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Lillian James' Dumpling Squash Soup

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 2-4 Servings

Comment: This entry to our Stirrin' It Up for the Holidays recipe contest, caught our attention because of its interesting presentation. Lillian James's bakes this great onion soup in a sweet dumpling squash that can be eaten with the soup. Add a little red bell pepper and green onion for some holiday color.

Ingredients:

2 large (or 4 small) dumpling squash
 3 tbsps butter
 3 tbsps canola or olive oil
 6 medium onions, sliced (about 7 ½ cups)
 1 tsp sugar
 2 tbsps flour
 3 (10.5-ounce) cans chicken broth
 3 cans water
 Parmesan cheese

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a 4-5 quart saucepot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add oil. Once oil is hot, add onions. Cover and sauté for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Stir in sugar and sauté for 20 additional minutes or until golden brown. Add flour and cook for 2 minutes. Slowly add chicken broth and water. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce heat to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes. Wash squash, cut off the tops and clean the pulp and seeds from the inside*. Pour soup into squash. Place in a pan with about 1-inch of water. Bake for about 1 hour or until squash is tender when tested with a fork. Carefully remove squash from water bath. Before serving sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

*Note: You can also bake the squash prior to filling with the soup, if you are worried about working with a hot water bath. Follow the above procedure for cutting the squash and then bake for about 20 minutes on a cookie sheet. Fill each squash with hot soup and bake for an additional 15-20 minutes or until tender.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Trail of Tears Red Beans, Rice and Smoked Sausage Gumbo

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 10-12 Servings

Ingredients:

1 (28-ounce) bag Chef John Folse's New Orleans Red Beans and Smoked Sausage
 ½ cup oil or bacon fat*
 ½ cup flour*
 1 cup diced onions
 ½ cup diced bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 2½ quarts chicken stock
 1 cup cooked long grain rice
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ½ cup chopped parsley
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

Heat bagged red beans according to package directions. In a large stockpot or cast iron Dutch oven make combine oil or fat and flour to create a dark roux. *Note: You may use 1 cup of a commercial dark roux instead of making your own. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, and garlic and sauté until wilted. Blend in chicken stock. Add bag of red beans and sausage, bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 45 minutes. Add additional stock or water as necessary to maintain soup-like consistency. Add cooked rice, green onions, and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Return to a low boil and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Cuban Black Bean and Ham Soup

Prep Time: 1 ½ Hours

Yields: 6-8 Servings

Comment:

Beans are a naturally low-fat food and they contain many essential nutrients, such as fiber and iron. In this recipe, we have combined beans with great tasting herbs and vegetables, creating a wonderful soup that has less than 3 grams of fat per serving.



Ingredients:

- 3 (15-ounce) cans black beans, undrained
- 1 pound lean or low-fat cubed ham
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- ¾ cup diced red bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- 3 tbsps chopped fresh cilantro
- ¼ tsp dried thyme
- 1 (10-ounce) can Rotel tomatoes
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 2 quarts fat-free chicken stock
- salt and black pepper to taste
- low-fat or fat-free sour cream
- cilantro for garnish

Method:

In a 5-quart stockpot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, red bell peppers and garlic. Sauté vegetables for 3-5 minutes or until softened. Stir in ham and cook 2-3 minutes or until slightly brown around the edges. Season with cumin, cilantro and thyme. Sauté for 1 minute to allow spices to toast. Blend in Rotel and tomato paste. Add chicken stock and black beans. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook for 30-45 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. If a thicker, smoother soup is desired, purée half of the soup in a blender or with a hand mixer. Serve hot with a dollop of low-fat or fat-free sour cream and a sprig of cilantro.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Irish Colcannon Soup with Shrimp

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Colcannon is a Gaelic dish made of boiled cabbage and potatoes. This holiday dish is so popular in Ireland that poems and songs have been written in its honor. We have changed the traditional colcannon and created a rich soup. The addition of shrimp honors the Irish Bayou fishermen of eastern New Orleans.



Ingredients:

- 4 medium potatoes, diced
- 4 cups coarsely chopped cabbage
- 1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 4 cups chicken broth
- ¼ cup butter
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 2 ribs celery, diced
- ½ tbsp minced garlic
- ½ tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- ¼ tsp chopped dill weed
- 1 tbsp chopped chives
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- ½ tsp hot sauce
- pinch of nutmeg
- salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a stockpot, simmer chicken broth and potatoes until tender. In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Stir in cabbage, onions, celery, garlic and parsley. Cook until vegetables are tender then add to stockpot and bring to a simmer. Put half of the soup into a blender. Pulse until smooth then return to pot. Add shrimp and all remaining ingredients. Return to a simmer and hold approximately 10 minutes or until shrimp are cooked. Garnish with additional chopped chives and a dill sprig.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Chilled Carrot Soup

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

This carrot soup is best when served cold in coffee cups. Enjoy this soup while swaying on a porch swing or sitting in a comfortable patio rocker before or after your Easter dinner.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound fresh carrots, peeled and sliced
- 2 medium-sized potatoes, peeled and sliced
- 7 cups chicken stock (see recipe)
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- Creole seasoning to taste
- salt and black pepper to taste
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

Method:

In a cast iron Dutch oven, combine carrots, potatoes, chicken stock, onions, celery, bell peppers and Worcestershire sauce. Bring mixture to a low boil then reduce to simmer. Cover and cook 15-20 minutes or until potatoes and carrots are tender. Season to taste using Creole seasonings, salt and pepper. Strain vegetables from the soup and reserve stock. Place cooked vegetables into a blender or food processor. Add enough of the hot stock to cover the vegetables by 1 inch. Do not overfill, because hot liquid will expand and the steam will cause the top to pop up during blending. Pulse until soup is smooth and creamy. Return puréed soup to Dutch oven, and stir in remaining reserved liquid. Bring mixture to a low boil then add heavy whipping cream, nutmeg and parsley. Adjust seasonings if necessary. The soup may be served hot or cold and can be garnished with fresh chives and sour cream.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Mirliton Succotash Chowder

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

Mirliton is a type of squash that is often called chayote. This gourd is part of the cucumber family, but it greatly resembles the subtle flavor of yellow squash.

Ingredients:

4 large mirlitons, peeled, seeded and diced
 2 cups sweet potatoes, peeled and diced
 4 tbsps butter
 1 cup diced onions
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 ½ cup diced green bell peppers
 2 jalapeño peppers, seeded and chopped
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 ¼ cup flour
 2 cups chicken stock or broth
 1 cup frozen whole kernel corn
 1 cup diced smoked sausage
 1 small can chopped green chiles
 1 cup diced yellow squash
 1 cup diced zucchini
 1 (15-ounce) can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
 1 (15-ounce) can black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained
 1 (15-ounce) can lima beans, rinsed and drained
 2 cups milk
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 shredded Cheddar cheese for garnish
 chopped bacon for garnish

Method:

Melt butter in a Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Sauté mirlitons, sweet potatoes, onions, bell peppers, green onions, jalapeños, sausage and garlic 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle with flour, and cook 2 minutes. Gradually add chicken stock, stirring constantly. Stir in corn, chiles, yellow squash, zucchini, red beans, black-eyed peas, lima beans and milk. Simmer 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Ladle into bowls, and garnish with cheese and bacon.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

CARAMELIZED ONION AND PORTABELLA MUSHROOM SOUP WITH GOAT CHEESE CROUTONS

Prep Time: 2½ Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Eating this soup, it would be easy to imagine yourself at an outdoor bistro in Paris, yet it works just as well as a post-parade pick-me-up on Bourbon Street.

Ingredients for Soup:

1½ pounds onions, halved and thinly sliced (about 5 cups)
 1½ pounds portabella mushrooms, stemmed, halved and cut into ¼-inch strips
 4 tbsps butter
 4 sprigs thyme
 1 tbsp sugar
 3 tbsps Cognac or brandy
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 4 cups beef broth
 4 cups vegetable broth
 ¼ cup sherry
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

In a large, heavy-bottomed soup pot, melt 1 tablespoon butter over high heat. Sauté onions, thyme and sugar 10 minutes or until onions begin to soften. Reduce to low; cook 20 minutes or until onions are caramelized, stirring occasionally. Transfer onion mixture to a medium bowl and set aside. Melt remaining butter in same pot over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, and sauté 15 minutes or until soft. Blend in Cognac and garlic, and stir an additional 30 seconds. Stir in onion mixture, beef broth, vegetable broth and sherry. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low. Simmer 45 minutes or until onions are tender. Discard thyme sprigs. Season with salt and pepper.

Ingredients for Croutons:

1 loaf French bread, sliced 1-inch thick
 8 ounces soft fresh goat cheese, room temperature

Method:

Preheat broiler. Place cut croutons on large baking sheet. Spread goat cheese on croutons. Broil 30 seconds or until cheese begins to brown. Serve with soup.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Tuscan Sausage and Cannellini Bean Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 8 Servings

COMMENT: Americans eat more Italian food than any other regional cuisine. This soup combines cannellini beans, which are often used in Italian cooking, with spinach, sweet peppers and sausage to create a wonderful Italian dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound bulk Italian sausage
- 2 cans Bush's cannellini beans
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- ½ cup diced yellow bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 1 quart vegetable broth
- 1 quart chicken broth
- 3 cups chopped fresh spinach
- 1¼ tps Italian seasoning
- salt and black pepper to taste



METHOD:

In a 3-quart stockpot, brown sausage over medium-high heat. Drain excess grease. Add all ingredients except for the beans and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 30-45 minutes. Add beans and cook 10 additional minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve in warm soup bowls over a piece of crusty Italian bread. Garnish with a sprig of fresh basil.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Smoked Duck, Oyster and Andouille Gumbo

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Almost every species of wild game in Louisiana has been used in the creation of gumbo. Since most Cajun men were hunters and trappers, it is not surprising that wild mallard duck and smoked andouille was often used, however, chicken is still the most popular choice. In this case, I am using Long Island duck since it is more accessible to the home cooks on an annual basis.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 Long Island ducks, smoked and cut into serving pieces
- 1 pint oysters
- 1 pound andouille, sliced
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/4 cups flour
- 2 cups onions, chopped
- 2 cups celery, chopped
- 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1 pint oyster liquor
- 3 quarts chicken stock
- 2 cups green onions, sliced
- 1 cup parsley, chopped
- salt to taste
- cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stock pot, heat oil over medium high heat. Once oil is hot, add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until roux is golden brown. Do not scorch. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3 - 5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add duck and andouille, blending into vegetable mixture. Add oyster liquor and chicken stock, one ladle at a time. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook approximately 2 hours. When duck is tender, add oysters and cook an additional 10 minutes. Add green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Stern's Cincinnati-Style Five-Way Chili

PREP TIME: 90 Minutes

SERVES: 4

HEAT SCALE: Mild

COMMENT:

In Cincinnati, chili bears no resemblance to the con carne style seen in Texas and most of the rest of the world. Here, chili is a layered meal, normally served in a large oval bowl. The chili sauce is often ladled over spaghetti and then topped with a spicy, sautéed ground beef mixed with kidney beans. The whole bowl is then topped off with mounds of grated cheddar and garnished with oyster crackers.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup thick barbecue sauce
- ½ cup water
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½ ounce unsweetened chocolate, grated
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon allspice
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- ½ teaspoon salt
- tomato juice, as needed
- 9 ounces spaghetti, cooked and lightly buttered
- 1 (16-ounce) can kidney beans, heated and drained
- 1 pound cheddar cheese, finely shredded
- oyster crackers (garnish)

METHOD:

Brown meat with half the chopped onion and the garlic, stirring to keep it loose. (Set the remaining onion aside to top the chili when it's done.) Drain any fat from the pan. Add barbecue sauce and water and bring the mixture to a boil. Add all spices. Cover pan, reduce heat to low and simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. The chili will thicken as it cooks. Add tomato juice as necessary to create a brew that ladles up easily. Allow the chili to "rest" at least 30 minutes in a covered pan at room temperature. (Chili can be refrigerated and reheated to serve.) To serve, put a layer of spaghetti on each plate, top spaghetti with hot chili, then a few beans, then the reserved chopped onions (to taste). Pat on the cheese so the chili's heat can begin to melt it. Serve immediately with oyster crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

SEC Championship Chili

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8

HEAT SCALE: Medium to Hot

COMMENT:

Glen Dickey of Arlington, Texas, walked away with the trophy in 1997 from the International Chili Competition with this recipe. His secret -- the use of the first and second seasoning technique.

INGREDIENTS:

Meat and Liquids:

- 2 ½ pounds cubed chuck roast
- 1 - 2 (14 ½ ounce) cans Swanson beef broth
- 1 (8 ounce) can Hunt's Tomato Sauce

First Seasonings:

- 2 tbsps paprika
- 1 tbsp beef bouillon crystals
- 1 tbsp Pendery's Fort Worth light chili powder
- 1 tbsp granulated onion
- 1 tsp chicken bouillon crystals
- 1 tsp ground cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp jalapeno pepper powder
- ½ tsp salt

Second Seasonings:

- 2 tbsps Gebhardt's chili powder
- 2 tbsps Pendery's Fort Worth light chili powder
- 2 tbsps R.T. chili powder
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp powdered garlic
- ½ tsp white pepper

METHOD:

Brown meat in a heavy pot and drain off fat. Simmer meat in beef broth and tomato sauce for 40 minutes. Combine first set of seasonings, stir into meat and cook over medium heat until meat is tender. Total cooking time needed to tenderize meat should be approximately an 1-1 1/2 hours. One half hour before serving, combine second set of seasonings and add to the pot. Simmer 30 minutes and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Vegetable Chili Soup

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

On those cold winter days, one could choose to water down their favorite chili recipe and serve it in a soup bowl, with good results. But, for those of you wishing to start from scratch with a true chili soup, this recipe using canned beans just can't be beat.

INGREDIENTS:

1 quart water
 24 ounce can diced tomatoes
 3 ounces tomato paste
 2 tablespoons chili powder
 1 ½ tablespoons ground cumin
 2 teaspoons fresh chopped basil
 2 teaspoons fresh chopped thyme
 1 cup diced yellow onion
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced green bell pepper
 ½ cup diced red bell pepper
 2 tablespoons minced garlic
 1 15 ½ ounce can red kidney beans
 1 15 ½ ounce can black beans
 1 15 ½ ounce can navy beans
 2 tablespoons corn starch
 1 cup yellow squash, diced ½-inch thick
 1 cup zucchini, diced ½-inch thick
 salt, pepper and hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

Slurry the corn starch with ½ cup water and set aside. In an 8 quart saucepan, heat oil over medium to high heat. Once oil is hot, add onion, celery, bell peppers, and garlic. Sauté vegetables until translucent. Add cumin and chili powder. Continue to sauté for an additional 3 minutes. This helps roast the spices and draw flavor. Next, add diced tomatoes and cook them down 1 to 2 minutes. Add water, thyme, basil, yellow squash and zucchini. Bring to a boil. Add corn starch slurry. Incorporate slurry fully. Once this begins to thicken, add beans. Bring to a boil once more, then simmer for 5 minutes. Salt, pepper, and hot sauce to taste. Enjoy!

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

13 Vegetable and Beef Soup

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

This is a hearty, rich vegetable soup, and is a meal in itself, but I would recommend serving hot French bread with this dish.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds beef stew meat including marrow bones
 2 cups onions, diced
 2 cups celery, diced
 1/2 cup bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, chopped
 2 gallons water
 1 8-ounce can red kidney beans
 1 8-ounce can white navy beans
 1 8-ounce can lima beans
 1 8-ounce can green beans
 1 8-ounce can black-eyed peas
 1 8-ounce can sliced carrots
 1 8-ounce can mixed vegetables
 2 cups white potatoes, cubed
 1 cup diced turnips
 1 8-ounce can whole tomatoes, drained
 1 8-ounce can whole kernel corn
 1/2 head cubed cabbage
 1 8-ounce can sliced okra
 1 package vermicelli noodles
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large stock pot, place stew meat over medium-high heat. Stir fry 10-15 minutes, stirring occasionally until meat browns well on all sides and sticks slightly to the bottom of the pot. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic stir frying into the meat, 2-3 minutes. Then add water and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook until beef is tender, approximately 1 1/2 hours. Add all remaining ingredients including the liquid in the cans, except vermicelli. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Cook until potatoes are al dente. Break in vermicelli noodles and cook an additional 10-12 minutes. Additional water may be needed should the soup over-reduce in the cooking process. Adjust seasonings if necessary.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

White Chili

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

MAKES: 6 Cups

COMMENT:

There are a few things that make this chili different. First, tortillas are crumbled into the sauce to thicken it, and hominy is added in the place of beans. And ever heard of milk in chili? Well, if not, here is the first recipe you'll see using that ingredient.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 (6-inch) white corn tortillas
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1 pound diced, boneless, skinless chicken breast
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 (4-ounce) can chopped green chilies
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried oregano leaves
- 2 cups skim or 1% milk
- 1¾ cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 (14½-ounce) cans white hominy
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro

METHOD:

In a large cast iron skillet, toast corn tortillas to bring out the corn flavor then crumble and set aside. In a 2-gallon heavy bottom sauce pot or dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium high heat. Add chicken breast and sauté 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add bell pepper and onions and continue to sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 minutes. Add chilies, garlic, chili powder, cumin and oregano. Blend well into the vegetable mixture. Add skim milk and chicken broth. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to a simmer. Allow to cook 15-20 minutes or until chicken is tender. Additional stock may be needed to retain volume. Add drained, rinsed hominy and tortilla strips. Blend well into the mixture and continue to cook until tortilla strips are broken down into a thickening agent and the sauce takes on a thick, rich appearance. Stir in cilantro and adjust seasonings if necessary. You may wish to garnish with fresh lime wedges or whole cilantro leaves once the chili is served.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Black Bean Chili

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

MAKES: 10 Cups

COMMENT:

The thing that I love about this black bean chili is the addition of bittersweet chocolate, which gives it a rich dark finish. Try this version for something new and interesting at that next chili cookout.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound dried black beans
- 2 tbsps ground cumin
- 3 tbsps olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 cups diced onion
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 1 (28-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 1 cup diced red bell pepper with juice
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 2 cups V8 juice
- ½ cup seeded minced jalapenos
- 1 (14 ½-ounce) can vegetable broth
- 1 chipotle, minced
- 2 ounces bittersweet chocolate
- 2 tbsps chili powder

METHOD:

Rinse and drain black beans and place in a stock pot covering by 2 inches of cold water. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to a simmer. Cover and cook 1-½ hours. Drain beans and discard cooking liquid. Set aside. In a heavy bottom dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium high heat. Add onions, peppers, and garlic. Sauté 2-3 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add all remaining ingredients. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to a simmer. Stir in beans and cook uncovered for 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Mild Hot Dog Chili

PREP TIME: 1-1/2 Hours

MAKES: 4-6 Cups

COMMENT:

Everyone in America has a different idea as to the flavor of chili. Some like it hot while others think the more cumin and chili powder, the better. Personally, I like the thick, meaty version that has just enough chili powder to be authentic but not enough to over-power the subtlety of the all-beef frankfurter.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds ground chuck
 2 tbsps granulated garlic powder
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 1 tbsp onion powder
 2 cups diced onions
 1 tbsp cumin
 1 cup diced red bell peppers
 1 tbsp chili powder
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 6 ounces Heinz chili sauce
 2 (15-ounce) cans beef broth
 Salt and Louisiana Gold Pepper-
 2 (15-ounce) cans stewed Italian tomatoes
 Sauce to taste
 2 tsps Season All
 1 tbsp paprika

METHOD:

In a 12 quart cast iron dutch oven, heat oil over a medium high heat. Add ground chuck and brown, stirring occasionally for approximately 20 minutes. Add onions, bell pepper and garlic. Continue to sauté until all vegetables are wilted. Add beef broth, stewed tomatoes and season with Season All, paprika, granulated garlic and onion powder. Blend well into the vegetable mixture. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to a simmer and cook for 30 minutes. Add cumin, chili powder, chili sauce and season to taste using salt and pepper sauce. Additional stock or water may be needed to retain sauce-like consistency. Continue to cook 30 additional minutes, stirring occasionally. The thickness of the chili should be according to your liking. However, I think the thicker the better.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Bisque of Duck and Cauliflower

PREP TIME:

SERVES:

INGREDIENTS FOR DUCK STOCK:

- 1 Long Island Duck
- 6 quarts cold water
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 2 cups carrots, diced
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp black peppercorns
- 1 cup dry white wine

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stockpot, place all of the above ingredients. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cook until duck is tender and falling apart. Remove duck from stock and de-bone. Save skin for garnishing soup and dice the meat into 1/4-inch cubes. Set aside. Reserve 3 quarts of duck stock for soup

INGREDIENTS FOR SOUP:

- 4 cups chopped cauliflower, cooked meat from duck, 2-1/2 quarts reserved duck stock and duck skin baked in oven until crispy and brown
- 1 cup butter
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 cup flour
- 2 1/2 quarts reserved duck stock
- 1 ounce brandy
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stock pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add cauliflower, onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté approximately 25 minutes, stirring constantly until cauliflower can be mashed against the bottom of the pot. Allow to brown slightly. Add flour and stir, using a wire whisk, until white roux is achieved. It is all right if flour browns slightly. Add duck stock, one ladle at a time, stirring until all is incorporated. Add brandy and whipping cream, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cook approximately 30 minutes. Add duck meat, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. When serving, add a small

amount of julienned duck skin to garnish soup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Mamere's Old Fashioned Vegetable Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 1 Servings

COMMENT:

Vegetables were always canned or jarred during the spring months to ensure a good supply over the winter. Often, when the weather started to turn cold, I remember Mamere Zeringue cooking a huge pot of vegetable soup on her old kitchen stove. This is her recipe. Should you wish, please feel free to add any of your favorite vegetables such as turnip, sweet potatoes, white beans, or any other vegetable of your choice.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds bone-in (marrow bone) soup meat
 ¼ pound melted butter
 2 cups coarsely chopped onions
 2 cups coarsely chopped celery
 1 cup coarsely chopped green bell pepper
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 4 quarts beef stock
 1 (12-15 ounce) can diced tomatoes
 2 (12-15 ounce) cans tomato sauce
 1 cup sliced carrots
 1 (12-15ounce) can whole kernel corn
 1 (12-15 ounce) can lima beans
 1 (12-15 ounce) can black-eyed peas
 1 (12-15 ounce) can red kidney beans
 1 small head cabbage, cubed
 2 cups red skin potatoes, cubed
 1 (8-ounce) package vermicelli
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a two-gallon stockpot, melt butter over medium high heat. Add soup meat and bones, cook until golden brown on all sides, 10-12 minutes. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add beef stock, tomatoes and tomato sauce. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until meat is tender. Approximately 2 hours. Add carrots, corn, lima beans, black eyed peas, red beans and cabbage blending well into the soup mixture. Cook 12-15 minutes or until carrots are tender. Add potatoes and vermicelli and cook 12-15 minutes or until potatoes and pasta are tender. Season to taste using salt and pepper.

NOTE: Additional beef stock or water may be added during the cooking process to retain a soup like consistency. Remember you want vegetable soup not vegetable stew!

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Bratwurst and Potato Stew

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

This stew combines quintessential German foods such as bratwurst, potatoes and cabbage. For a true Oktoberfest celebration, enjoy with a few beers.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound cooked bratwurst, cut into ½-inch pieces
- 2 medium potatoes, peeled and diced
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 1 head cabbage, cut into 3-inch pieces
- 1 cup chopped carrots
- 3 cups milk
- 3 tbsps flour
- 4 ounces shredded Swiss cheese
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

In a large Dutch oven, heat canola oil over medium heat. Sauté bratwurst, potatoes, onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic, salt and black pepper. Add chicken broth, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 20 minutes or until potatoes are nearly done. Add cabbage and carrots. Cook until tender. Add 2½ cups milk. Combine remaining ½ cup milk with flour. Gradually stir milk/flour mixture into stew to thicken. When stew is thickened and bubbly, stir in cheese until melted. Season with hot sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Irish Stew

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Like the Cajuns of Louisiana, the Irish had to find ways to make a small amount of meat stretch into a meal for many. In this stew, the Irish staples of potatoes and barley help a little lamb become a hearty feast.

Ingredients:

2½ pounds lamb neck, cubed 1-inch
 vegetable oil for frying
 2 onions, chopped
 1 ounce butter
 1 sprig dried thyme
 7 carrots, sliced 2-inches
 2 tbsps barley
 5 cups chicken stock
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 1 bouquet garni (parsley, thyme and bay leaf)
 12 medium potatoes
 1 bunch parsley, finely chopped
 1 bunch chives

Method:

In a large heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions and butter and cook until translucent. Add thyme and stir. Turn heat to high, and brown lamb to seal in its juices. Add carrots, barley and pour in enough chicken stock so that it almost covers meat and vegetables. Season with salt and pepper. Reduce heat to low, add bouquet garni, cover and cook 2 hours. Do not boil. Add potatoes, cover and cook 30 minutes or until meat is falling from bones and potatoes are fork tender. Garnish with parsley and chives.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Luscious Lemon Soup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

I'm not quite sure if this recipe should fall into the category of soup or "luscious lemon malt!" Either way, I have to say that not only is the flavor unique, it is the perfect beginning or ending to any meal—especially during our hot Louisiana summers.



INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tbsps lemon juice
- 2 tbsps grated lemon peel
- 2 eggs
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 quart buttermilk
- 2 cup vanilla ice cream

METHOD:

I recommend using only fresh squeezed lemon juice in this recipe. When grating the lemon peel, be careful to remove only the peel and not the white skin of the lemon. In a large bowl, whisk eggs, sugar and vanilla. Add lemon juice, lemon peel and buttermilk continuing to whisk constantly until well blended. Pour mixture into the bowl of a 9-cup food processor. Add ½ cup ice cream and blend mixture until ice cream is blended into the soup and liquid has become frothy, approximately 1-2 minutes. If you do not have a 9-cup processor, blend the soup in equal batches. Transfer soup into a large crystal pitcher, cover and chill for a minimum of 4 hours. Serve soup in champagne glasses and garnish with remaining ice cream, mint and additional zest if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Chilled Melon Soup

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

2 over ripe cantaloupe melons, diced
 2 over ripe honeydew melons, diced
 1 dash salt
 2 oz. sugar
 Juice of 1 lemon
 1/2 bottle Muscat de Beaumes-de-Venise wine

METHOD:

Peel, seed and dice melons into 1-inch cubes. Puree the melons while slowly adding the salt, sugar and lemon juice. Strain the puree through a fine sieve and combine with the muscat wine. Chill the soup for 1 hour and serve cold with a spoonfull of Creme Fraiche and Garden Mint.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Golden Gazpacho

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large cantaloupe, peeled, seeded and chopped
- 3 yellow peppers, cored, seeded and chopped
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1/4 cup onion, sliced
- 1 tbsp cilantro, chopped
- 1 1/2 tbsps lime juice
- Salt to taste
- 6 sprigs of cilantro

METHOD:

Puree the cantaloupe, peppers, yogurt, wine, onion and chopped cilantro. Stir in the lime juice and season with salt. Refrigerate until well chilled. When ready to serve, ladle soup into bowls and top each with a sprig of cilantro.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

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- 1 dash salt
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[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

➤ Appetizers

➤ Salads

➤ Game

➤ Meats

➤ Seafood

➤ Vegetables

➤ Pasta

➤ Poultry

➤ Breads

➤ Stuffings & Dressings

➤ Desserts

➤ Beverages

➤ Breakfast & Brunch

➤ Rouxs

➤ Stocks & Sauces

➤ Seasoning Cast Iron

➤ Misc

SOUPS

Chilled Watermelon Soup

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

I first experienced this soup sitting on the veranda overlooking the famous 18th Green at Pebble Beach Country Club in Carmel, California. I was visiting with the Executive Chef of that club who I had known for some time. He started off our magnificent lunch with a cold watermelon soup, which I know for a fact is the tastiest, cold summer soup I have ever had.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds seedless watermelon, diced
 1 mango, diced
 ½ ounce ginger, grated
 8 ounces peach, apricot or berry puree
 2 kumquats, sliced
 Edible flowers for garnish

METHOD:

Place 1 pound of diced watermelon in food processor and blend to liquefy. Set aside and refrigerate. Finely dice remaining watermelon and mango and place with grated ginger in a bowl and allow to marinate. When ready to serve, place an equal amount of the fruit puree in a soup bowl along with equal portions of the marinated melon-mango mixture. Top with watermelon juice. Garnish the rim of the bowl with kumquat slices and edible flower petals.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SOUPS

Chilled Peach Soup - Boscobel Cottage

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT:

Fruit is often used to create a wonderful sauce or soup. Of all the chilled soups using fruit as a main ingredient, this peach soup is my favorite. You may wish to ask your market supplier to give you a call when peaches are plentiful and the price a bit cheaper.

INGREDIENTS:

6 cups peaches, peeled and diced or 2 (14-oz) cans sliced peaches reserve half of the syrup
 2 tbsps Triple Sec
 2 tbsps lemon juice
 2 tbsps almond extract or Frangelico
 ½ tsp salt
 2 cups sour cream or yogurt

METHOD:

In the bowl of a food processor, combine peaches, Triple Sec, lemon juice, almond extract and salt. Blend on high speed until pureed and very smooth. Add sour cream or yogurt and continue to puree until well blended. Taste the soup and if a slightly sweeter taste is desired, you may wish to add a bit of Louisiana cane syrup, honey or sugar. Remove from processor and place in a bowl or crock pitcher, cover and refrigerate. Allow to chill completely and serve in punch cups, demitasse or small soup bowls. For added texture, you may wish to garnish each cup with a teaspoon of finely chopped fresh peaches.

****LAGNIAPPE****

Often people have questions about serving soup. When asked how much soup should be served in a bowl or cup, I say it depends on whether it's a starter or an entree. As a starter, the soup should never exceed 2/3 volume of the cup. As an entree, a terrine or pot of soup should be placed in the center of the table, welcoming guests to have more. The more complex the soup, the simpler the garnish. A sprig of mint will often do the job, while at other times a seafood or vegetable garnish will be needed. You decide!

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Marinated Tomato Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

There are many varieties of tomatoes that grow nationwide. With Louisiana's sub-tropical climate, many varieties thrive here. Tomatoes range in size from ½ inch to 4-6 inches wide and in color from white, red, orange, yellow, purple and black. Use any and all varieties available to you to make this great tomato salad that can be eaten alone, used as a fresh salsa or paired with hot pasta for a vegetarian entrée.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound various small and large colored tomatoes
- 1½ tsps finely minced garlic
- 2 tsps chopped basil
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tbsp capers
- ¼ cup freshly shredded Parmesan cheese
- salt, pepper and crushed red pepper flakes to taste

METHOD:

Cut cherry and any other small tomatoes in half. Remove the cores of large tomatoes and cut into ½-inch dice. Put the tomatoes into a glass or stainless steel mixing bowl. Add garlic, basil, olive oil, capers and Parmesan cheese and toss well to blend. Season with salt, pepper and crushed red pepper flakes to taste. Cover bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour. Serve as is as a salad, use as a fresh salsa for sautéed or grilled fish or toss with hot pasta for an easy entrée.

CHEF FOLSE'S FAVORITE TOMATO VARIETIES:

- Golden Queen
- Orange Strawberry
- Brandywine Black
- Hugh's
- Mammoth German Gold
- Yellow Brandywine
- Mr. Stripey
- German Red Strawberry
- Super Marzano VFNT Hybrid
- Costoluto Fiorentino
- Super Snow White
- Persimmon

Cherokee Purple
Anna Russian
Old Ivory Egg
Violaceum Krypni-Rozo
Orange Banana
Green Zebra
Carbon
Isis Candy
Sugar Snack NT Hybrid
Dr. Carolyn
Black Cherry
Banana Legs
Red Pear
Elberta Peach
Grape Tomato
Jersey Devil
Ukranian Pear
Sweet Cluster VFNT Hybrid
Yellow Pear

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Mediterranean Orzo Salad Stuffed Tomatoes

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

With tomatoes in abundance, how can you resist trying something new? This recipe combines my Mediterranean orzo pasta salad with fresh, ripe tomatoes to create a stuffed tomato perfect for your summer table or picnic.

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 large ripe tomatoes
- 2 (6 ounce) cans marinated artichoke hearts
- 1 cucumber
- ¼ cup yellow bell pepper, small diced
- 1 red onion, halved and sliced very thinly
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 (2 ounce) can sliced black olives, drained
- 1 cup Italian olive salad, not drained
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tsp fresh oregano, chopped
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Cut off about ½-inch from the top of each tomato. With a finger, scoop out the seed pockets and, over the sink, remove the seeds and juice. With a small, sharp knife, remove the inner pulp and discard or save for another use. Place the tomatoes upside down on a rack to drain.

Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a rolling boil. Add pasta and cook for 8-10 minutes or until al dente. Peel cucumber, slice in half lengthwise, seed and slice each half. Drain orzo, run under cold water until completely cooled and place in a large bowl. Add artichoke hearts with liquid, cucumber, bell pepper, onion, feta, olives, olive salad, parsley, lemon juice, oregano and salt and pepper to taste. Scoop mixture into tomato shells and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Mike Graham's Spinach Salad with Hot Bacon Dressing

PREP TIME: 20 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT: Along with Caesar salads, spinach salads are found on almost every restaurant menu. As the Caesar salad has its traditional dressing, the most traditional dressing for a spinach salad is Hot Bacon Dressing. The addition of the warm dressing slightly wilts the spinach and makes for a great contrast of hot and cold.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh spinach, cleaned and stemmed
- 5 slices lean bacon, chopped finely
- 2 tbsps minced shallot or red onion
- ½ cup cider vinegar
- ½ tsp sugar
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 boiled egg, diced
- ½ cup sliced mushrooms
- ¼ cup sliced red onion
- 1 Roma tomato, diced

METHOD:

In a large skillet, cook bacon over moderate heat, turning it until it is crisp. Transfer it to a plate lined with paper towels to drain, and discard all but 2 tbsps of the fat. In the remaining fat, cook the shallot or red onion for 1 minute. Add vinegar, sugar, mustard, and oil. Add salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a boil. In a large salad bowl, place cleaned spinach, diced egg, mushrooms, red onion and diced tomato. Toss well. Add hot dressing and toss to cover each leaf of spinach with the dressing.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Mixed Greens with Warm Ponchatula Strawberry Vinaigrette

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

During the early spring, Louisiana strawberries are in season, and no others can compare to their taste and flavor. We have made a great vinaigrette with this Louisiana pride and joy to take advantage of their abundance at this time. This can be served as a salad before your meal or use it as a bed to place your favorite meat upon.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (5-ounce) bags mixed salad greens or greens of choice
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 tbsp minced onions
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- ½ cup chopped Louisiana strawberries
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp chopped basil
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- 2 tsps Creole mustard
- 4 tsps orange-strawberry juice blend
- 2 tsps Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- ¾ cup olive oil
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large skillet, heat ¼ cup olive oil over medium high heat. Add onions and garlic and sauté for 2-3 minutes or until softened. Add strawberries and vinegar and bring to a simmer. Add basil, thyme, cracked black pepper, Creole mustard, juice blend and cane syrup and blend well. Whisk in vegetable oil and remaining olive oil and warm through. Add salt and pepper to taste. In a large mixing bowl, add salad greens and toss with warm dressing. Add more salt and pepper to taste if desired. I recommend that you serve this under my [Herb-Encrusted Lamb Lollipops](#).

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Remoulade Slaw

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

Serves: 6

COMMENT:

Remoulade sauce may be found in any restaurant in South Louisiana and in as many recipe versions. Commonly served with shrimp or other seafood, this version is a wonderful on "The Peace Maker", the Ultimate Oyster Po-boy.

INGREDIENTS FOR REMOULADE SAUCE:

- 1 1/2 cups heavy duty mayonnaise
- 1/2 cup Creole mustard
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp hot sauce
- 1/2 cup Heinz Hot & Spicy ketchup
- 1/4 cup minced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup minced yellow bell pepper
- 1/2 cup minced celery
- 2 tbsps finely minced garlic
- 1/4 cup minced parsley
- 1/2 tbsp lemon juice
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

INGREDIENTS FOR SLAW:

- 4 cups shredded iceberg lettuce
- 3/4 cup shredded red cabbage
- 3/4 cup Remoulade sauce

METHOD:

Combine slaw ingredients at time of service.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Tomato Salad

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

1 Creole tomato, sliced
 1 orange tomato, sliced
 1 yellow tomato, sliced
 1 large Bermuda or red onion, sliced
 1 tsp fresh basil, chopped
 1 tsp fresh oregano, chopped
 olive oil
 Steen's Cane Vinegar
 salt and black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Slice tomatoes 1/4-inch thick. Slice onion 1/8-inch thick and separate. On a 10-inch platter, arrange sliced tomatoes and top with onions. Sprinkle on fresh basil and oregano. Top with olive oil and vinegar. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

1910 Rice Salad

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

COMMENTS:

This recipe comes from my good friend, Judy Greathouse in Lake Charles, Louisiana. This recipe has been handed down from generation to generation.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups cooked rice
- 4 boiled eggs, diced
- 1/3 cup chopped black olives
- 1/4 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped celery
- 2 tbsp pickle relish
- 1 cup cooked shrimp, chopped
- 1 cup smoked sausage, sliced and sautéed
- 1 tbsp Creole mustard
- 1 tbsp yellow mustard
- 1 tsp salt
- black pepper
- hot sauce

METHOD:

You should determine in advance whether you wish to serve this salad hot or cold. Since the preparation is so simple, it only takes a minute to put together. When serving it as a side dish, I recommend having all of the ingredients prepped and measured prior to removing the hot steamed rice, cooked shrimp and sautéed sausage from the pots. It can be thoroughly mixed and served immediately, steaming hot. On the other hand, should you wish to serve it cold, it may be made 1-2 days in advance, allowing the flavors to enhance over time. In a large glass bowl, combine all ingredients. Using a wooden spoon, toss well to incorporate the juices and flavors of the ingredients. Serve warm as a side dish or cold on a bed of lettuce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Poke Salad Dip

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 6 Cups

COMMENT:

"Poke, the *Phytolacca americana* of the botanists, is probably the best known and most widely used wild vegetable in America. The Indian tribes eagerly sought it and early explorers were unstinting in their praise of this succulent potherb. They carried seeds when they went back home and poke soon became a popular cultivated garden vegetable in southern Europe and North Africa, a position it still maintains. In America it is still a favorite green vegetable with many country people and the tender young sprouts, gathered from wild plants, often appear in vegetable markets, especially in the South." Stalking the Wild Asparagus, Euell Gibbons

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup poke salad, cooked and drained (or canned)
- 1 ½ cups sour cream
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 2 tsps herb-seasoned salt
- 1 ½ tsps oregano
- 1 tsp dried dill weed
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and black pepper
- 1 large red cabbage

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine poke salad, sour cream, mayonnaise, cream cheese, pecans and green onions. Using a wooden spoon, mix thoroughly until all ingredients are well blended. Add herb seasoning, oregano, dill weed and lemon juice. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Cover bowl with clear wrap and place in refrigerator for a minimum of 2 hours. Trim core end of cabbage to form a flat base. Cut a crosswise slice from the top, making it wide enough to remove about a 1/4 of the cabbage. Lift out enough inner leaves to form a shell or bowl about 1-inch thick. Spoon dip into cavity of cabbage and serve with an assortment of fresh vegetables or croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Sliced Green Tomato and Onion Salad - Magnolia Mound Plantation

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Most of us have eaten fried green tomatoes and the pickled version of this unripened fruit. This marinated salad is excellent. For added eye appeal, try alternating slices of ripe red tomatoes.

INGREDIENTS FOR ORANGE CANE SYRUP VINAIGRETTE:

- 1/4 cup sugar cane syrup
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsps orange juice
- 1/2 tsp ground allspice
- 1 tsp grated orange rind
- 1/2 tsp cracked black pepper
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp dried mustard

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients in a quart jar, cover tightly and shake vigorously. Chill thoroughly and shake well before serving. Use as a marinade over sliced tomatoes or as a dressing on salad greens or fresh fruit.

INGREDIENTS FOR SALAD:

- 6 sliced green tomatoes
- 2 thinly sliced Bermuda onions
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup finely diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup finely diced yellow bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, gently place alternating layers of green tomatoes, bermuda onions, green onions and garlic. Pour vinaigrette over the tomatoes to coat generously. Cover with clear wrap and refrigerate two to three hours before using. To serve, place the tomatoes and bermuda onions in a circular pattern around a crystal or glass serving platter. Pour the remainder of dressing over the tomatoes and garnish with red and yellow bell pepper.

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

German Potato Salad

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This classic is the highlight of many a light summer meal: hearty, nourishing and full of flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 pounds new potatoes
- 1/4 pound bacon, chopped
- 1 1/2 cups onion, diced
- 1 1/2 cups celery, chopped
- 1/2 tsp all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 cup cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup water
- Fresh snipped chives, optional garnish
- Minced parsley, optional garnish
- Hard boiled eggs, optional garnish

METHOD:

Cut each potato in half and boil in lightly salted water until tender about 10-15 minutes. Drain and while hot, skin and cut into 1/4-inch slices. You should have about 4 cups. Set aside. Place bacon in a skillet and fry until almost crisp. Remove cooked bacon from pan and add onion and celery, cook until tender and transparent, remove from pan. Drain off all but 1 tablespoon of bacon fat; add flour, sugar, salt and pepper to skillet stir until lightly browned. Add vinegar and water and cook until mixture is slightly thickened. Add back the bacon, onion, and celery. Pour hot dressing over potatoes; stir gently to blend. The potatoes should look glossy. Garnish with hard-boiled egg slices. Sprinkle minced parsley and chives over top. Serve warm.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Tiger Slaw

Prep Time: 10 Minutes

Yields: 8-10 Servings

Comment:

A really quick and easy coleslaw recipe that celebrates the LSU Tigers: what a great idea!

Ingredients:

- 1 head purple cabbage
- 1 pound matchstick cut carrots
- 3 cups Kraft coleslaw dressing



Method:

Cut cabbage in half and remove core. Slice ¼-inch thick and pull apart to create shreds. Mix cabbage, carrots and dressing together and blend well. Add more dressing if needed to create desired consistency.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Balsamic Vinaigrette with Pear/Roquefort Spring Green Salad

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Ingredients for Balsamic Vinaigrette:

4 tbsps balsamic vinegar
 ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
 ½ cup vegetable oil
 3 tbsps red wine vinegar
 3 tbsps light brown sugar
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

Combine all ingredients in a salad dressing bottle or jar, seal tightly and shake until sugar has dissolved. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

Ingredients for Poached Pears:

4 small Bosc pears, peeled
 2 cups burgundy wine
 1 cup sugar
 2 tbsps balsamic vinegar
 zest of 1 orange

Method:

Pears can be halved or left whole. In a large kettle, combine wine, sugar, balsamic vinegar and zest. Bring to a boil, and simmer 5 minutes or until sugar has dissolved. Place pears in wine mixture, and simmer gently 30 minutes or until pears test soft. Remove pears with a slotted spoon and set aside to cool while preparing salad.

Ingredients for Salad:

1 package fresh spring greens
 1 (8-ounce) package Roquefort cheese
 ½ cup fresh sliced mushrooms
 1 red onion, thinly sliced
 2 tbsps chopped parsley
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

Rinse greens under cool running water, drain and pat dry. In a large salad bowl, combine greens, cheese, mushrooms, onions, parsley, sliced poached pears, salt and pepper. Drizzle balsamic vinaigrette over ingredients, toss gently and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

STACKED HEIRLOOM TOMATO AND KASHKAVAL SALAD

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

For the best presentation, it is best to use heirloom tomatoes in a variety of colors.

Ingredients:

6 medium tomatoes, cut into 1/3-inch thick slices
 ½ pound Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Bulgarian-Style Kashkaval (24 slices)
 6 (1-ounce) slices peasant bread
 nonstick cooking spray
 1 clove garlic, halved
 ½ cup Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
 2 tbsps water
 2 tbsps fresh lemon juice
 1 clove garlic, minced
 ¼ cup thinly sliced fresh basil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

NOTE: If a panini press is not available for grilling bread, use a skillet or grill pan, and grill bread 2 minutes on each side. Preheat panini press according to manufacturer's directions. Spray each side of press with nonstick cooking spray. Place bread on press and grill 2 minutes or until lightly browned. Rub cut sides of halved garlic clove over one side of each slice of bread. Set aside. In a blender, process Creole Cream Cheese, water, lemon juice and minced garlic until smooth. Place 1 slice of bread on each plate. Divide tomato and Kashkaval slices, layering each on top of bread. Spoon 1 tablespoon Creole Cream Cheese mixture on top of each serving. Top with basil and a dash of salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

TRADITIONAL POTATO SALAD WITH BACON

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4–6 Servings

Comment:

Made with leftover Easter eggs, this pastel yellow dish looks great on the table every Easter Sunday. Additionally, it serves as the perfect side dish for seafood soups and gumbos. Of course, potato salad is also ideal at outdoor cooking events such as barbecues.

Ingredients:

2 large white baking potatoes, peeled and 1-inch cubed
 6 slices bacon, cooked and crushed, reserve drippings
 4 eggs
 ½ cup mayonnaise
 1 tbsp yellow mustard
 ¼ cup minced celery
 ¼ cup sweet pickle relish
 1 tbsp chopped lemon thyme
 1 tbsp minced chives
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a large saucepot over medium-high heat, cook potatoes in lightly salted water 12–15 minutes or until fork tender. Potatoes should be tender but not mushy or overcooked. While potatoes are cooking, boil eggs 12–15 minutes in a separate pot. NOTE: If desired, cut prep time in half by boiling potatoes and eggs in the same pot. When potatoes are done, strain and slightly cool. Peel eggs, and in a large mixing bowl, separate whites from yolks. Using a paring knife, dice egg whites. In a smaller bowl, mash yolks with a fork and combine with egg whites. Blend in mayonnaise, reserved bacon drippings and mustard. With a large mixing spoon, fold in celery, relish, thyme, chives, bacon and potatoes. Stir carefully, making sure to keep potatoes chunky. Season with salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Layered Fruit & Shrimp Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Fruit is not just for dessert anymore! With its wide range of colors and textures, nothing makes a more beautiful entrée salad than layers of fresh or canned fruit. Why not create an interesting and unique summer salad by combining colorful, healthful fruit with fresh shrimp or other seafood?

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups watermelon balls
- 2 cups cantaloupe balls
- 2 cups honeydew balls
- 2 cups sliced peaches
- 2 cups sliced pears
- 2 cups quartered orange sections
- 2 cups sliced plums
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cup fresh strawberries
- 1 cup cubed pineapple
- 2 dozen (21-25) count boiled shrimp
- 2 cups crawfish tails
- 1 recipe fruity yogurt dressing
- ½ cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

In a large glass serving bowl, layer fruit by alternating stratas of color. Once all the fruit has been layered, line shrimp and crawfish in a decorative pattern around the edge of the bowl. Top with fruity yogurt dressing, and toss the mixture to blend the dressing into the fruit. Sprinkle with pecans and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

"Rum"ba Melon Salad

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Watermelon, cantaloupe and honeydew melon are abundant during the summer months, and we have created a refreshing salad using these three wonderful melons. This salad is dressed with lime juice, almonds, lemon zest and rum for a sweet and invigorating accompaniment to any meal.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups watermelon balls
- 2 cups cantaloupe balls
- 2 cups honeydew balls
- 1 tbsp dark rum
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 3½ tbsps brown sugar
- ¼ cup lime juice
- 3 Serrano chillies, stems removed and thinly sliced with seeds
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest
- 2 tbsps slivered almonds, toasted
- cilantro leaves for garnish

METHOD:

In a medium mixing bowl, mix rum, garlic, brown sugar, lime juice, chillies and lemon zest. Roughly chop almonds and add to rum mixture. Add melon balls and toss gently to coat. Allow to chill in refrigerator about 20 minutes. Serve in carved watermelon basket or glass bowl. Garnish with whole cilantro leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Pecan Ambrosia

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

COMMENTS:

Flavored fruit salads have many variations throughout the country. Often they simply call for only one or, at the most, two main ingredients. In Louisiana, we tend to use all that is at hand to create an ambrosia unlike any other.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 -20 ounce can sliced peaches
- 1 -20 ounce can crushed pineapple
- 6 mandarin oranges, peeled and sectioned
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 1 diced red apple
- 1 diced green apple
- 1 -3 1/2 ounce can flaked coconut
- 1/2 cup sliced maraschino cherries
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 -8 ounce carton Cool Whip

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine all of the ingredients except the strawberries and Cool Whip. Toss the ingredients well to ensure that they are thoroughly mixed. Cover with clear wrap and place in the refrigerator for a minimum of four hours, allowing ingredients to marinate. Immediately prior to serving, fold in the sliced strawberries and the Cool Whip. Blend until the fruit is well-coated with the "dressing". You may wish to serve a spoonful of the ambrosia in a slice of butter lettuce and garnish with grated cheddar cheese for added affect.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Lettuce and Strawberry Salad Ponchatoula

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Ponchatoula is the strawberry capital of the world. It is surprising to the residents of this sleepy South Louisiana town that the rest of the world considers strawberries a dessert ingredient only. Here, they may be found in soups, sauces, as a flavor ingredient over pork roast or lamb or as the perfect finish to a crisp crunchy spring salad.

INGREDIENTS:

- 10 ounces fresh lettuce, cleaned and dried
- 1 pint ripe Louisiana strawberries, sliced
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbsp Balsamic vinegar
- 4 tbsps Boone's strawberry wine
- 6 ounces vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh tarragon, chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Remember to rinse lettuce 2 - 3 times under cold running water to ensure that all sand and grit are removed from leaves. Dry well and set aside. When selecting strawberries for this salad, Ponchatoula berries are always best and should be slightly over-ripe but not mushy. I prefer to buy a 5-ounce block of Parmesan cheese and hand grate it using the large holes of a grater. Create the sauce by combining egg yolk, Balsamic vinegar and strawberry wine in a stainless steel bowl. Using a wire whisk, combine ingredients until well incorporated. Slowly drizzle the vegetable oil into the egg yolk mixture in a steady stream, whisking constantly. A smooth emulsified dressing will emerge. Add thyme and tarragon and season to taste using salt and pepper. Continue whisking until ingredients are well-blended. The dressing may be stored in a glass jar in the refrigerator until ready to use. When ready to serve, toss lettuce with extra virgin olive oil and drizzle with the desired amount of strawberry vinaigrette. Once the leaves are shining from the sauce, but not wilted, add strawberries and cheese and toss once or twice to incorporate. Serve in a large, crystal salad bowl to showcase the vivid colors of this salad.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Spicy Grilled Tuna Salad with - Ponchatoula Strawberry Vinaigrette

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Over the past few years, tuna has become the fish of choice for grilling. During the early spring, Louisiana strawberries are in season and no others can compare to their taste and flavor. This recipe incorporates the best of those two ingredients.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (1-inch thick) tuna steaks
- 2 (5-ounce) bags mixed salad greens or greens of choice
- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbsp onions, minced
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 tsp basil, chopped
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tsp Creole mustard
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 4 tbsps orange-strawberry juice blend
- 2 tbsps Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup Louisiana strawberries, chopped
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Begin by creating the salad dressing. Place egg yolk in the bowl of a blender. Add onion, garlic, basil, thyme, black pepper, mustard, vinegar, orange-strawberry juice and cane syrup. Pulse 2-3 times to blend ingredients well. With blender running, remove the small, plastic center cap from the lid and pour oils in a slow, steady stream. The creamy-style vinaigrette will form immediately. Add strawberries and continue to blend until well incorporated and dressing becomes light pink in color. Additional chopped strawberries may be added to the salad after the dressing is incorporated. If you wish to thin the dressing out, additional fruit juice or water may be added. Adjust seasonings if necessary. This dressing should be slightly sweet and have a hint of strawberry flavor. Remove from blender and refrigerate for later use. The dressing may be kept covered and refrigerated for up to a week. When ready to assemble salad, heat grill according to manufacturer's directions. Season tuna generously with cracked black pepper and a sprinkling of salt. Grill to desired doneness. (NOTE: Tuna is best served medium-rare.) While tuna is grilling, place the greens in a large mixing bowl and toss with a desired amount of dressing. You may further enhance the salad with tomatoes, cheese, cucumbers, etc. Remove the tuna from the grill, cut into bite-sized

portions and toss into the finished salad. This salad is wonderful for a spring or summer entrée or served on a brunch buffet.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Layered Fruit & Shrimp Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Fruit is not just for dessert anymore! With its wide range of colors and textures, nothing makes a more beautiful entree salad than layers of fresh or canned fruit. Why not create an interesting and unique summer salad by combining colorful, healthful fruit with fresh shrimp or other seafood?

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups watermelon balls
- 2 cups cantaloupe balls
- 2 cups honeydew balls
- 2 cups sliced peaches
- 2 cups sliced pears
- 2 cups quartered orange sections
- 2 cups sliced plums
- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 cup fresh strawberries
- 1 cup cubed pineapple
- 2 dozen (21-25) count boiled shrimp
- 2 cups crawfish tails
- 1 recipe fruity yogurt dressing
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

In a large glass serving bowl, layer fruit by alternating stratas of color. Once all the fruit has been layered, line shrimp and crawfish in a decorative pattern around the edge of the bowl. Top with fruity yogurt dressing and toss the mixture to blend the dressing into the fruit. Sprinkle with pecans and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Marinated Crawfish, Zucchini and Summer Squash Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Romantics say that it's the simple things in life that are best. Well if that's so, then this simple crawfish and squash salad should set hearts aglow. I recommend serving it in a beautiful cut crystal bowl to enhance its presentation.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound crawfish tails
- 3 medium zucchini squash, shredded
- 3 medium summer squash, shredded
- 1 small Bermuda onion, thinly sliced
- 1/2 red bell pepper, julienned
- 1/2 yellow bell pepper, julienned
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup sweet pickle relish
- 1/3 cup salad oil
- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine crawfish, squash, 1 small Bermuda onion, bell peppers, garlic and relish. In a separate mixing bowl, combine salad oil, wine vinegar, basil, thyme, salt and pepper. Using a wire whisk, whip until well-blended. Pour marinade evenly over vegetable mixture, cover and refrigerate salad overnight. Prior to serving, toss and drain off any excess liquid. Place the salad into a decorative serving bowl and garnish with edible flower petals such as pansies, dianthus, violets or marigolds.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Seafood Jambalaya Rice Salad

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups cooked rice
 1 cup mayonnaise
 ½ cup Creole mustard
 1 cup chopped tomatoes
 1 cup chopped Bermuda onions
 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
 1 cup crawfish tails
 1 cup jumbo lump crabmeat
 1 cup (60-90 count) boiled shrimp
 ½ cup diced ham
 ½ cup sliced smoked sausage
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 salt and black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, place rice. Add mayonnaise, mustard, tomatoes and onions. Blend well until all is incorporated. Season to taste using thyme, basil, salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Add all seafood, ham and sausage. Mix until thoroughly blended. Add green onions and parsley. Refrigerate for 2 hours and serve on lettuce leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Warm Duck Breast Salad with Asian Spices and Hazelnut Vinaigrette

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

We particularly enjoy this dish as a first course, as it seems to wake up the taste buds. Try to include some spicy greens - mizuna, red mustard, nasturtium leaves - in the mix. The challenging part of this dish is to serve it quickly so that the greens stay chilled and the duck is still warm.

Marinade INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsp minced green onions
- 2 tsp oyster sauce (see Note)
- 1 tsp light soy sauce
- 1 tsp rice wine or dry sherry
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp 5-spice powder (see Note)

Vinaigrette INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1/3 cup hazelnut oil
- 1/3 cup walnut oil or light olive oil
- 1 tbsp minced chives
- 1 tsp light soy sauce
- 1/4 tsp sugar
- 1/3 cup toasted, coarsely chopped hazelnuts
- 2 whole duck breasts (1 to 1 1/4 pounds each)
- 4 to 6 ounces mixed baby salad greens
- Edible flowers (nasturtium, borage) for garnish (optional)

METHOD:

Bone duck breasts and trim off excess fat. Cut each breast in half and place in a shallow dish. Combine ingredients for marinade and coat breasts thoroughly. Allow to marinate for 2 hours at room temperature. In a small bowl, combine all ingredients for vinaigrette at least 2 hours before serving, to allow the flavors to develop.

To assemble salad, preheat broiler or prepare a fire in a charcoal grill. Artfully arrange baby greens on individual serving plates. Wipe excess marinade off duck breasts and grill or broil until medium-rare, about 2 1/2 minutes per side. Do not overcook. Quickly slice breast on the bias and arrange on plates with greens. Drizzle vinaigrette over greens. Garnish with flower petals, if available. Serve immediately.

NOTE: These ingredients can be found in Asian markets.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables

- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Spicy Fried Chicken Pasta Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

One of the greatest challenges faced when planning an outdoor patio party is determining the accompaniments to the main dish and whether they should be served hot or cold. Here in Bayou Country one characteristic of our Cajun and Creole dishes is that most may be served either way and still taste great! This treatment of leftover fried chicken is sure to win praises when added as a main ingredient to an otherwise simple pasta salad.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 pieces cold, spicy fried chicken
- 6 cups cooked rotini pasta
- 6 boiled eggs, yolks separated
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp Creole mustard
- 1/4 cup onions, minced
- 1/4 cup celery, minced
- 1 tsp garlic, chopped
- 1/4 cup red bell peppers, minced
- 1/4 cup green bell peppers, minced
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup sweet pickle relish
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

If you don't have leftover fried chicken, simply take a trip to your favorite fried chicken fast food outlet and pick up 6 pieces of their spicy version. Personally, I love Popeyes. Debone chicken and cut into cubes, making sure that the skin is left intact. Set aside until later. In a large mixing bowl, mash egg yolks well with a fork, then add mayonnaise and Creole mustard, blending well into the yolks. Finely dice egg whites and add to the mixture. Combine all remaining ingredients except the chicken and pasta and mix well until all seasonings are thoroughly coated with the mayonnaise sauce. Add rotini pasta blending well into the mixture, then gently toss in the cold fried chicken cubes. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Place on a large serving platter and garnish with boiled eggs, or you may wish to surround the pasta with additional whole pieces of hot fried chicken.

NOTE: Since the mayonnaise sauce is a typical blend for potato salad, you may wish to add your own special seasoning blend to personalize the dish. The most important flavor aspect here is the seasoning applied to the chicken prior to frying.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Grilled Delta Pride Catfish Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS FOR MARINADE:

3 (5-8 ounce) Delta Pride Catfish fillets
 1/4 cup melted butter
 1/4 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
 1 tbsp dried thyme
 1 tbsp dried basil
 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
 salt to taste

METHOD:

In a mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients and mix well to ensure that spices are well blended. Allow fillets to sit in marinade approximately thirty minutes. Charbroil the fillets on a hot barbecue grill three to five minutes on each side or until fish is cooked to desired doneness. Remove and keep warm.

INGREDIENTS FOR SALAD:

6 leaves red leaf lettuce
 6 leaves romaine lettuce
 6 leaves mache lettuce
 6 leaves curly endive
 1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese
 1 cup high quality blue cheese dressing
 6 cherry tomatoes sliced
 cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

On a six-inch salad plate, place one piece of red leaf lettuce as a base. In a large mixing bowl, combine the other three lettuces and break into appropriate size serving pieces. Place one handful of mixed lettuces on top of red leaf lettuce. Using a sharp knife, cut grilled catfish into one-inch slices. Place an equal number of slices on top of each salad, sprinkle with crumbled blue cheese and top with salad dressing. Garnish each salad with tomato circles and cracked pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

HERB-ENCRUSTED SALMON SALAD

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Salmon is delicious with chilled salad greens and tomatoes. This fish is the perfect ingredient for a Louisiana summer salad. Top it with a light vinaigrette and serve with fresh-squeezed lemonade or iced tea.

Ingredients:

6 (5–8 ounce) salmon fillets
 ¼ cup fresh herbs (tarragon, thyme, basil, chervil), mixed and chopped
 mixed baby salad greens
 pear and currant tomatoes
 ½ cup vegetable oil
 1½ cups rice flour
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 1 tbsp chopped chives

Method:

Preheat oven to 275°F. In a 10-inch heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season fillets with salt and pepper, then coat evenly with herb mixture. Coat with rice flour and shake off excess. Sauté 2 fillets at a time, 3–5 minutes on each side or until golden brown and crispy. Place cooked fish on a large cookie sheet in oven to keep warm. Wash salad greens and tomatoes and dry well. Divide greens and tomatoes into 6 bowls. Slice each salmon fillet into about 4 (1-inch) cubes and place on top of greens. Serve with orange-basil vinaigrette or cane syrup vinaigrette.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Crawfish Pasta Salad

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

SERVES: 4-5

COMMENT:

This dish is right at home everywhere from your holiday table to the parking lot tailgating party on LSU campus.

INGREDIENTS FOR SALAD:

- 1 lb peeled crawfish tails
- 1 lb pasta, cooked (small shells)
- 1/2 cup green onions, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, minced
- 1/2 cup yellow pepper, minced
- dill weed (to taste)

INGREDIENTS FOR DRESSING:

- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 5 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 4 tbsp sour cream
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 2 tbsp sugar
- Coarsely ground black pepper
- 2 tsp chopped parsley

METHOD:

Mix dressing first by combining all dressing ingredients. Use a whisk to blend in the sour cream. The salad dressing can be made up ahead of time. In a separate bowl, combine crawfish tails, cooked pasta, green onions, red bell pepper, yellow pepper and celery. Season with dill weed. Pour dressing over crawfish mixture and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Fillet of Catfish Salad with Apple-Andouille Vinaigrette

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 portions

Comment:

This Cajun twist on the main-stream spinach salad highlights local ingredients. Sautéed catfish fillets and andouille sausage make this dish as unique as south Louisiana.



Ingredients:

- 6 (5-ounce) catfish fillets
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 8 ounces julienne andouille sausage
- 2½ tbsps Creole mustard
- 1/3 cup honey
- 1 cup olive oil
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 2 large eggs, beaten
- 1 cup milk or water
- 2 cups white rice flour
- 1 tbsps granulated garlic
- 2 (6-ounce) packages baby spinach leaves
- 1 (4-ounce) wheel Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Fleur-de-Lis Fromage Triple Cream, cubed

Method:

In a 10-inch sauté pan, cook andouille over medium-high heat 10 minutes. Add vinegar, Creole mustard and honey. Reduce the liquid by half. Whisk in 2/3 cup olive oil. Season to taste with salt and pepper and keep warm. In a small shallow bowl, whisk eggs and milk. In a separate shallow bowl, combine rice flour, garlic, salt and pepper. Season catfish with salt and pepper. Dip fillets into egg wash and then dredge in rice flour. Heat remaining olive oil in a heavy-bottomed skillet over medium-high heat. Add fillets and cook approximately 3 minutes per side until edges are brown, but fish is opaque in the center. Place spinach in a large salad bowl. Toss with enough dressing to coat spinach leaves. Divide salad among 6 plates. Place a catfish fillet over each plate of salad. Sprinkle with cheese cubes, drizzle with additional dressing and serve.

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Shrimp and Avocado Salad with Orange Vinaigrette

Yields: 4 Servings

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Ingredients for Vinaigrette:

- ¼ cup fresh orange juice
- 2 tsps fresh lime juice
- 2 tsps minced shallots
- 2 tsps Creole mustard
- 1 tsp chopped parsley
- ½ tsp chopped orange zest
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
- ½ cup olive oil
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

In a blender, combine orange juice, lime juice, shallots, mustard, parsley, zest, sugar and cayenne pepper. Blend on medium speed 2 minutes until puréed and emulsified. While blender is running, slowly add olive oil until combined. Add salt and pepper to taste. Blend until seasonings are well incorporated. Set dressing aside.

Ingredients for Salad:

- ½ pound large shrimp, peeled, tail intact
- 2 avocados
- 2 oranges
- 1 tbsp fresh lime juice
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Zatarain's Creole seasoning to taste
- ½ tsp granulated garlic
- ¼ cup chopped pecans
- 2 tsps fresh chopped tarragon
- 2 cups baby spinach
- 2 radishes thinly sliced

Method:

With a sharp paring knife, peel oranges and remove all white pith. Cut orange segments free from membranes. Quarter avocados lengthwise, then pit and peel. Cut lengthwise into ¼-inch slices. Drizzle with lime juice and season with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a skillet over high heat until hot but not smoking. Pat shrimp dry and season with salt, pepper, Creole seasoning and granulated garlic. Sauté shrimp turning them until just cooked through. Add pecans and tarragon. Toss well. Sauté for 1 minute longer. In a salad bowl, toss spinach, half of orange segments and radishes with half of

vinaigrette. Arrange avocados and remaining orange segments on 4 plates and top with salad and shrimp. Spoon the remaining vinaigrette over salad and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Fruity Yogurt Dressing

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

Makes: 2 cups

COMMENT:

Try this dressing on my Layered Fruit & Shrimp Salad for cool and refreshing meal. It's also a very appetizing ambrosia dip for fresh strawberries, pineapple chunks, grapes, kiwi and melon slices.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup raspberry or mixed berry yogurt
- 1/4 cup fresh raspberries
- 1/4 cup sliced strawberries
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1 tsp fresh mint

METHOD:

In a blender, combine all ingredients. Cover and blend on high speed about 15 seconds or until smooth. Pour mixture into a serving bowl and serve immediately or refrigerate for up to 3 days for later use.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Orange-Basil Vinaigrette

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

A refreshing and flavorful vinaigrette to use as a salad dressing or as a sauce over grilled fish.

INGREDIENTS:

1 tbsp orange zest
 1/4 cup orange juice
 1/4 cup minced basil
 2 cloves minced garlic
 1/2 tsp ground ginger
 salt and pepper to taste
 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients in a 1 pint mason jar. Screw lid on jar tightly and shake vigorously to incorporate all the ingredients. Adjust salt and pepper, if necessary. Use as a salad dressing or a sauce over grilled fish. This goes especially well on herb encrusted salmon salad with mixed baby greens.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

Cane Syrup Vinaigrette

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 2 1/2 Cups

COMMENT:

I love the flavor of cane syrup. So it's natural that I would create a vinaigrette dressing using this wonderful ingredient. Most people are confused as to the flavor of cane syrup and often compare it to molasses. Nothing could be further from the truth. Molasses is a much stronger and darker syrup and is used in dishes such as gingerbread and spice cakes whereas cane syrup is more of a breakfast syrup.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbsp minced onions
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp chopped basil
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 tsp Creole mustard
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsps orange juice
- 2 tablespoons Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup olive oil

METHOD:

Place egg yolks in a large mixing bowl. Using a wire whisk, whip eggs for one minute. Add onions, garlic, basil, thyme, black pepper, mustard, vinegar, orange juice and cane syrup. Continue to whip until all ingredients are blended. Pour oil in a slow steady stream, whipping constantly until all is incorporated. Season to taste using salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

CLASSIC CAESAR DRESSING

Prep Time: 10 Minutes

Yields: 1 Quart

Comment:

A traditional Caesar salad is made with romaine lettuce, croutons, Parmesan cheese and this wonderfully rich dressing. Often, the dressing is prepared and tossed with the salad tableside, but this food processor recipe is quicker and easier.

Ingredients:

½ tbsp chopped garlic
 1 egg
 ¼ cup grated Parmesan
 2 tbsps Balsamic vinegar
 2 tbsps red wine vinegar
 ½ tbsp whole-grain mustard
 ½ tbsp Dijon mustard
 ½ ounce anchovy fillets
 ½ tbsp salt
 ½ tsp cracked black pepper
 6 ounces vegetable oil
 6 ounces olive oil

Method:

In a food processor, combine everything except for vegetable oil and olive oil. Process 1 minute or until smooth. With machine on low speed, begin adding oils to form an emulsion. Continue until all oil has been added.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SALADS

SPICY SHRIMP TOPPING FOR CAESAR SALAD

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Often I enjoy topping a Caesar salad with a meat or seafood thereby creating an entrée. This spicy shrimp recipe is one of my favorite toppings. Try it on any salad for an added kick.

Ingredients:

2 dozen (21-count) shrimp, peeled and deveined, leaving tail intact
 olive oil for sautéing
 ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 1 tbsp fresh chopped tarragon
 1 tsp red pepper flakes
 ¼ cup dry white wine
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

In a 9-inch skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sauté bell peppers, green onions, garlic, tarragon and red pepper flakes 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add shrimp and sauté an additional 3 minutes or until shrimp turn pink and begin to curl. Deglaze with white wine and adjust seasonings with salt and pepper. Using a slotted spoon, remove shrimp from skillet and place on top of Caesar salad for a unique experience.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Alligator Chili

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Although alligator is served only as an appetizer in sausage form at Lafitte's Landing, I see it served in many ways around the state. The dish seems to have found renewed popularity over the past few years. Here is an old camp recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds alligator meat, diced
 1/2 cup oil
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced bell pepper
 2 tbsps diced garlic
 2 tbsps diced jalapenos
 1 (16-ounce) can pinto beans
 3 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce
 1 cup chicken stock
 1 tbsps chili powder
 1 tsp cumin
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Add alligator and sauté twenty minutes to render juices. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and jalapenos. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately three to five minutes. Add pinto beans, tomato sauce and chicken stock, bring to a low boil and reduce to simmer. Add chili powder and cumin, stir well into mixture and allow to cook one hour, stirring occasionally. Once alligator is tender, season to taste using salt and black pepper. This dish is always served at hunting camp dinners over spaghetti.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Wild Dove in Madeira Wine

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Though Louisiana is the dove capital of the South, many Louisiana hunters today are traveling south of the border to Mexico for their annual hunts. I get many requests for a dove recipe, so here is my favorite.

INGREDIENTS:

18 doves, cleaned
 1 cup butter
 2 cups flour
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced bell pepper
 2 tbsps diced garlic
 2 cups sliced mushrooms
 2 tbsps flour
 6 purple plums, quartered
 3 cups Madeira wine
 1 quart chicken stock
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Wash birds well inside and out and remove any visible shot. In a large dutch oven, melt butter over medium high heat. Dust doves in flour and brown well on all sides in butter. Remove and set aside. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and mushrooms. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately three to five minutes. Sprinkle in two tablespoons of flour and blend well into vegetable mixture. Add purple plums, Madeira wine and chicken stock and blend well until all are incorporated. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and return birds to the hot sauce. Season lightly using salt and pepper. Cover and continue to cook one to one and a half hours. Add a small amount of chicken stock when necessary should mixture become too thick. When cooked, serve three doves per person with a generous amount of sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game

- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Breast of Duck with Caramelized Strawberries

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Often the breasts of large ducks or small geese were removed for pan sautéing. The plantation cook would quickly sear the breasts to medium rare, remove them from the heat and caramelize fresh fruit in the drippings. You will definitely want to try this modern day version.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 Long Island or Mallard duck breasts
- 2 cups strawberries, sliced
- ½ cup strawberry wine
- 1 tbsp cane syrup
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp garlic, diced
- 10 black peppercorns
- 6 basil leaves, torn
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 6 sage leaves, torn
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 can beef consommé
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine breasts, strawberry wine, syrup, bay leaf, garlic, peppercorns, basil, thyme, sage, salt and Louisiana Gold. Toss to coat the breasts in the marinade. Allow to sit at room temperature a minimum of 4 hours. In a large black iron skillet, heat oil over medium high heat. Sauté duck breasts, skin down, until lightly browned. Continue to sauté, turning occasionally, until internal temperature reaches 140 degrees F or medium rare. Remove and keep warm. Add strawberries and sauté in the drippings. Reduce heat to low and cook until strawberries are caramelized, approximately 10-15 minutes. Add consommé, bring to a low boil and reduce to sauce consistency. Season to taste using salt and pepper. You may wish to add a few tablespoons of the marinade for additional flavor. To serve, slice each breast and top with a generous portion of the strawberry sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Roasted Cane River Mallards

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The Cane River runs through the heart of Natchitoches. The early settlers of this Creole town often harvested mallard ducks from this river. There are numerous recipes for the preparation of this delicacy, but I think pot roasting is one of the best. Try substituting a variety of fresh fruit in the place of the apples.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 mallard ducks, cleaned
- 1 tbsp thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp sage, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
- 3 medium onions, quartered
- 2 stalks celery, cubed
- 2 tbsps garlic, diced
- 2 red apples, cubed
- 2 green apples, cubed
- 1 cup andouille sausage, cubed
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 red apples, quartered
- 2 green apples, quartered
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 4 tbsps Mayhaw or fruit jelly

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Season ducks well inside and out using herbs, salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Stuff the cavities of the ducks with quartered onions, cubed celery, garlic, cubed apples and andouille sausage. In a large dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Brown ducks well on all sides, remove from heat and surround with remaining red and green apples and chicken stock. Drizzle butter over ducks and using a pastry brush, paint the breasts well with jelly. Cover with aluminum foil and roast the birds for 1 1/2 hours. Check for tenderness, remove foil and allow breasts to brown evenly. When done, remove ducks and keep warm. Reduce the stock over medium high heat until thickened to a sauce consistency. Strain the sauce and degrease. To serve, place one half mallard duck on a 10-inch dinner plate and top with a generous serving of sauce.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Breast of Duck with Blackberry Demi-glace

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Often the breasts of large ducks or small geese were removed for pan sautéing. The plantation cook would quickly sear the breasts to medium rare, remove them from the heat and fresh fruit in a sauce to accompany the duck breast. You will definitely want to try this modern day version.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 Long Island or Mallard duck breasts
- ½ pint fresh blackberries
- ½ cup port wine
- 1 tbsp cane syrup
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 10 black peppercorns
- 6 basil leaves, torn
- 4 sprigs fresh thyme
- 6 sage leaves, torn
- ¼ cup port wine
- 1 tbsp minced purple shallots
- ½ tbsp minced garlic
- 1 cup veal demi (see recipe)
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine breasts, port, syrup, bay leaf, garlic, peppercorns, basil, thyme, sage, salt and Louisiana Gold. Toss to coat the breasts in the marinade. Allow to sit at room temperature a minimum of four hours. In a large black iron skillet, heat oil over medium high heat. Sauté duck breasts, skin down, until lightly browned. Continue to sauté, turning occasionally, until internal temperature reaches 140 degrees F or medium rare. Remove and keep warm. Discard all the drippings, saving one tablespoon. Sauté shallots and remaining garlic two minutes. Add blackberries and remaining port wine; reduce by half. Add one cup of veal demi glace and reduce by one quarter. Season to taste using salt and pepper. To serve, slice each breast and top with a generous portion of the blackberry sauce.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

Cajun Fried Duck Breast

PREP TIME: 2 ½ Hours

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

2 duck breasts, each sliced in 3 pieces
 1 ½ cup milk
 1 tsp salt
 ½ tsp black pepper
 1/8 tsp cayenne red pepper
 2 eggs, beaten
 1 cup saltine cracker crumbs
 shortening, lard preferred
 6 quart iron pot

METHOD:

Tenderize breasts slightly with meat hammer. Cut each breast into 3 equal pieces. Soak in milk for 2 hours. Remove duck from milk, dip in beaten eggs, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and dredge in finely crumbled cracker crumbs. Deep fry in large skillet with 1 inch of shortening at medium heat for 20 minutes on each side.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Smoked Duck Ham

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 mallard duck breasts
- 2 tsps salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1 tbsps fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsps fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh tarragon, chopped
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 1/4 cup Steen's cane syrup or maple syrup
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- 2 bottles root beer

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine duck breasts with all remaining ingredients, except root beer. Massage the seasonings well into the breasts. Pour all ingredients from the bowl into a Ziploc bag. Place in the refrigerator for 2 days prior to smoking. Turn the bag often over the 2 days. Heat a home-style smoker according to manufacturer's directions. Into the water pan, place one quart of water and the root beer. Soak your favorite wood chips in water and, when ready to cook, place the duck breasts on the top of the smoker. Pour remaining marinating liquid into the water pan of the smoker. Throw two generous handfuls of wet smoke wood onto the hot coals and allow the breast to smoke for approximately 1 hour or until done to your liking. Once done, slice each breast into 6-8 slices and serve with your favorite dipping sauce or as an entree.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Kumquat Roasted Duck

Prep Time: 4 Hours

Yields: 4–6 Servings

Comment: Instead of a huge roasted turkey this holiday season, why not try something different? Long Island Ducks can be found in your local supermarket and are great for a small family or a couple to enjoy on Thanksgiving day. We have roasted this duck with Kumquats, giving a slight hint of citrus to the dish.



Ingredients for Marinade:

- 1 pound butter
- 8 cloves garlic, sliced

Ingredients for Roasting:

- 1 (5–6 pound) domestic duck
- 18 kumquats, halved (or 2 oranges, quartered) with skin on
- 2 onions, quartered
- 2 ribs celery, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 2 carrots, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 4–5 sage leaves
- salt, pepper, granulated garlic and paprika to taste

Method:

Thaw duck completely in the refrigerator for 24 hours or in a sink with cold running water. Do not allow duck to sit at room temperature as this could cause harmful bacteria to grow. Preheat oven to 400°F.

NOTE: You may make your own garlic butter marinade using the method below. You can also use a commercial injectable marinade. In a small skillet, melt half of the butter over medium-high heat. Do not brown. Add sliced garlic and sauté for 2–3 minutes or until golden brown around the edges. Add remaining butter and melt completely. Remove from heat and allow to sit for about 30 minutes. After flavors have infused, reheat butter just until melted and remove garlic slices.

Using a meat-injecting needle, inject the duck with marinade four times in each breast and once in each leg and thigh. Season duck inside and out with salt, pepper, granulated garlic and a small amount of paprika. Fill cavity of the duck with 27 kumquat halves, sage leaves and 1–2 pieces each of onions, celery and carrots. In a large roasting pan, place the remaining onions, celery, carrots and kumquats. Place the duck on top of the vegetables or on a roasting rack. Tie the legs of the duck together using butcher's twine. Cover roasting pan with

lid or aluminum foil. If you use foil, do not allow it to touch the skin. Bake for 1½ hours. Remove foil and brown skin for 15–20 additional minutes or until skin is golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Braised Quail in Juniper Berry Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This recipe is based on one I received from my good friend David Chambers who is the Executive Chef at Rules Restaurant in London, England. Rules, established in 1798, is the oldest game restaurant in London. The tables at Rules have long been crowded with writers and royalty, artists and actors - from Charles Dickens to the Prince of Wales. For a recipe that "Rules," serve this dish on your table.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cans beef consomme
- 2 cans chicken stock
- 2 cups port wine
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 sprig thyme
- 8 quail
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 6 large sliced banana shallots, peeled and chopped
- 15 crushed juniper berries
- ½ pint heavy cream
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup seasoned flour

METHOD:

Simmer the beef consomme, chicken stock, port wine, bay leaf and thyme for approximately 30 to 45 minutes or until 2 cups of stock remain. Strain and set aside. This should render about 2 cups of wine broth. Dredge the quail in seasoned flour and brown in a large frying pan with the oil. Remove and set aside. Add the shallots, juniper berries to the pan and saute until the shallots are tender. Return the quail to the pan along with the wine broth and cream. Simmer gently for 20 - 30 minutes, turning occasionally. Salt and pepper to taste.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Lemon Butter Quail

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

8 quail
 1/2 cup butter
 4 tbsps lemon juice
 1/2 lemon peel, minced
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 8 slices bacon
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 salt and black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a 10-inch cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add lemon juice, peel, garlic and green onions. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Wrap bacon strip around each quail breast and hold in place with a toothpick. Place quail, breast side up, in a 9" x 12" baking pan and drape with foil. Thoroughly baste each bird with butter sauce. Bake for 20 minutes, basting occasionally, to prevent birds from drying out. After 20 minutes, remove foil, turn birds breast side down and brown 10 additional minutes. Remove birds and keep warm. For gravy, dissolve 1 teaspoon of corn starch in 1/2 cup warm water and add to drippings in baking dish. Stir over low heat, reduce to 1/2 volume and adjust seasonings if necessary. Return birds to baking dish and baste with gravy prior to serving. Garnish with parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Rabbit and Squirrel Sauce Piquante

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Sauce piquante, or peppery sauce, is a stew-like dish of French origin in Louisiana. It can be made with seafood, domesticated meats or wild game. Tomato is added to the dish to give it a slight rusty color. Although called peppery, the sauce has just the right touch of spice.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 rabbit cut into 8 pieces
- 1 squirrel cut into 8 pieces
- 1 cup oil
- 1 cup flour
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- ½ cup chopped bell peppers
- 2 tbsps diced garlic
- 1 (10-ounce) can Rotel tomatoes
- 1 (16-ounce) can whole tomatoes
- 1 quart beef stock
- 2 tbsps sugar
- salt to taste
- black pepper to taste
- cayenne pepper to taste
- ½ tsp oregano
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire Sauce
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season rabbit and squirrel using salt and peppers and sauté until golden brown. Remove from oil and keep warm. Add flour to pot and, using a wire whisk, stir until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato paste and continue to stir 5-6 minutes or until the sauce is a nice brown color. Add tomatoes and beef stock. Blend well into the roux mixture, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add meat, sugar, salt and peppers. Blend well. Add oregano and Worcestershire. Allow to simmer 1 hour or until game is tender. Finish with green onions and parsley. Serve over a plate of steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Fricassee of Rabbit with Yellow Corn Biscuits

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

MAKES: 6 Servings

COMMENT:

The fricassee is probably the most popular method of cooking rabbit in South Louisiana. Slowly cooked in the black iron pot, this dish is considered simple, yet the best tasting rabbit dish in Bayou country.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 young rabbits
- 1 diced onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- 4 cloves garlic
- 1 carrot sliced
- 3/4 cup oil
- 1 cup flour
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 2 tbsps diced garlic
- 1 cup diced tomatoes
- 2 cups sliced oyster mushrooms
- 1 quart reserved stock
- 1 tbsp chopped thyme
- 1 tsp chopped rosemary
- Salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Cut rabbit into eight serving size pieces. Place in a stockpot and cover with water by 2 inches. Add 1 diced onion, 1 cup diced celery, 4 cloves garlic and 1 carrot sliced. Bring to a boil - reduce to simmer and cook until rabbit is tender - 1 hour. De-bone and reserve stock. In a one gallon black iron pot, heat oil over medium high heat. Add flour, and stirring constantly, make a brown roux. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and tomatoes. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately three to five minutes. Return rabbit to pot and stir well into seasonings. Add mushrooms and stock. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Bring the stock to a low boil, reduce heat to simmer, cover pot and allow to braise for one hour. Add additional stock, if necessary, should mixture become too dry. Correct seasonings if necessary. This dish should be served over yellow corn biscuits (see recipe).

Yellow Corn Biscuits

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 hours

MAKES: 14 2 1/2-inch biscuits

COMMENT:

These biscuits are an inspiration from Don Drake. We put Bar-B-Que

in bite-size versions and served them as hors d'oeuvre at our "Carolina Christmas" dinner at the James Beard House.

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup fresh raw yellow corn kernels
6 tablespoons heavy cream
8 tablespoons cold, diced unsalted butter
1 cup coarsely ground yellow corn meal
2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1 tablespoon plus
1 teaspoon non-alum baking powder
3 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 egg
1 1/2 cup plus
2 tablespoons buttermilk
extra flour for rolling out the biscuits
2 tablespoons
unsalted butter, melted

METHOD:

Cut the raw corn kernels off of the corn cobs. Scrape the cobs over a bowl to release all of the corn's "milk." Lightly chop the kernels. In a heavy-bottomed sauce pan, combine the corn, the corn "milk" and the heavy cream. Cook over medium heat for 4 to 5 minutes or until the cream is reduced to one third of its original volume. It will be thick and creamy. Set aside and let cool at room temperature.

Process the corn mixture lightly or mash it to break up the kernels. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Dice the butter, put it on a plate and put it back into the refrigerator to remain cold while you are assembling the other ingredients. Combine the cornmeal, flour, baking powder, sugar, salt and pepper. Add the diced butter and cut it into the flour with either a pastry cutter or 2 forks until the butter is reduced to the size of the cornmeal. This should be done quickly so that the butter doesn't get too warm or melt. Beat the egg and the buttermilk together. Mix the creamed corn with the egg and buttermilk..

Add this mixture into the flour mixture a little at a time until the dough comes together. It may be a bit wet, but it can be handled easily with a light dusting of flour. Place the dough on a floured board and round it out with your hands. Pat the round out to a thickness of an inch. Cut the biscuits with a 2 1/2 inch cutter. Place the biscuits on a baking sheet and bake at the top of the 400 degree oven for 15 to 20 minutes or until they are golden brown and cooked through. Remove the baking sheet from the oven and brush the tops of the biscuits with the 2 tablespoons of melted butter. Serve at once.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Rabbit and Oyster Mushroom Sauce Piquante

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds rabbit
 1 cup sliced oyster mushrooms
 3/4 cup oil
 3/4 cup flour
 1 cup chopped onions
 1 cup chopped celery
 1/2 cup red bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
 1 cup diced tomatoes
 2 whole bay leaves
 1/2 tsp fresh thyme
 1/2 tsp fresh basil
 1/4 cup chopped jalapenos
 3 quarts beef stock
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1 cup chopped parsley
 salt and cayenne pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Cut rabbit into 8 serving pieces. In a 2-gallon cast iron sauce pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until dark brown roux is achieved. Add rabbit and cook 10-15 minutes. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and mushrooms. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately three to five minutes. Add tomato sauce and diced tomatoes, blending well into roux mixture. Add bay leaves, thyme, basil and jalapenos. Slowly add stock, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook forty-five minutes. Add additional stock if necessary to retain volume. Add green onions and parsley and cook fifteen additional minutes. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve over hot white rice or pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Cassoulet of Venison

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

Cassoulet can be best described as any casserole containing white beans topped with a rich, game stew and baked. This venison recipe is magnificent for the Louisiana palate. It is a perfect way to make use of all that extra venison in the freezer. Try it with duck and goose as well.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 pounds venison stew meat, cubed
- 1 (15-ounce) can Great Northern white beans, drained
- 2 cups Burgundy wine
- 1 pound bacon cubed
- 3 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 20 cloves garlic
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh sage, chopped
- 3 cups beef or venison broth
- 1 cup button mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup oyster mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup tomatoes, diced
- 1 tsp sugar
- 24 small pearl onions
- 2 cups carrots, diced
- 2 cups potatoes, diced
- 1 cup green onion, sliced
- ½ cup parsley, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup egg wash (1 egg and 1 cup skim milk, blended)
- 4 (9-inch) Pillsbury prepared pie shells

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine cubed venison with Burgundy wine. Season lightly with salt and pepper, blend well and allow to sit at room temperature for 2-3 hours. While venison is marinating, sauté bacon in a large Dutch oven over medium high heat to render fat and brown bacon. Do not scorch the fat. Remove the bacon with a slotted spoon, chop and set aside. Remove the venison from the liquid and reserve marinade, draining the liquid well. Sauté in bacon fat until brown on all sides. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add bay leaves, thyme and sage, blending well into the meat mixture. Add reserved marinade and broth. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add mushrooms, tomatoes, sugar, pearl onions and 1/2 of the chopped

bacon. Cover and cook until tender over medium-high heat, approximately 2 ½ hours, stirring occasionally. Additional stock may be necessary during the cooking procedure to keep the meat moist and juicy. When meat is tender, add carrots, potatoes, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Cook until potatoes are tender, but not falling apart. They should retain their cubed appearance. Preheat oven to 350 F. Place an equal amount of white beans in 8 individual au-gratin or soufflé-type dishes and place an equal amount of the venison stew over the beans. Make sure that an equal amount of garlic and pearl onions are added to each dish. Top with remaining bacon. It is important that each dish have ample sauce. Using a pastry brush, paint a small amount of the egg mixture on the rim of each dish. Cut a portion of the pie crust to fit over each rim by ¼-inch and press securely over the top of the dish to seal in the contents. Paint the top of the pastry with a small amount of egg wash for even browning. Using the tip of a pairing knife, cut two small steam vent holes in the top of the pastry. Bake until crust is golden brown and flaky, approximately 20-30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Venison Backstrap ala Cobb

PREP TIME: 2 hours

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

Often, the viewers and the listeners of my television and radio show submit recipes for my consideration. Bill Cobb, a realtor from Baton Rouge, sent over this venison backstrap recipe just in time for deer season. We tried it...we liked it. Why not give us your comments?

INGREDIENTS FOR DRY RUB:

4 - 3 to 4 inch venison backstrap (loins)
 non - seasoned meat tenderizer
 granulated garlic to taste
 Cajun Land cajun seasoning to taste
 Cajun Land pork seasoning to taste
 dehydrated parsley to taste

METHOD:

Moisten meat slightly with water or red wine and season the backstrap to taste with all of the above ingredients. Cover tightly with Saran Wrap and place in refrigerator for two hours or overnight, if possible.

INGREDIENTS FOR BASTING SAUCE:

1/2 pound butter
 1 1/4 tsp granulated garlic
 1 tsp Cajun Land cajun seasoning
 1/2 tsp Cajun Land pork seasoning
 2 tsps dehydrated parsley
 1 tsp Dale's steak seasoning
 1 tsp Louisiana hot sauce
 2 tbsps red wine

METHOD:

When ready to cook, remove backstrap from refrigerator a minimum of 4 hours prior to cooking and keep at room temperature.

Prepare gas or charcoal grill according to manufacturer's directions. If using a gas grill, turn right side to "high" and left side to "low." If using charcoal, place the majority of hot coals off to one side of pit.

Melt butter in 9 inch skillet and whisk in all remaining ingredients. Remove and keep warm on the low side of the grill. Using a basting brush, brush meat generously with sauce. Place meat on the hot side of the grill, turning often with a pair of tongs, do not use a fork. Piercing the meat with a fork causes the juices to run from the meat. Continue to baste the meat generously with sauce often, turning

every few minutes. The fire will flare up due to the basting sauce. You can alternate between the hot side and the cooler side of the grill. Backstrap cooks quickly and should reach medium - rare in 10 - 12 minutes. When done to your liking, slice the backstrap and dot with a generous portion of the remaining basting sauce. You may wish to slice and serve directly from the skillet.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Pecan Smoked Leg of Venison

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

My good friend, Reece Williams of Cajun Injector fame, really took the fuss and mess out of marinating game. I often recommend the Creole Garlic or Roasted Garlic with Basil injector marinade to season roasts simply, and these may be found at your local grocery store under the Cajun Injector label.

INGREDIENTS:

10 lb young leg of venison
 1/4 lb butter
 16-ounce jar Roasted Garlic with Basil
 Cajun Injector marinade
 1/4 cup Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup
 salt and pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 Louisiana Gold Hot Sauce to taste
 pecan chips soaked in water, drained

METHOD:

Prepare a home-style smoker or barbecue pit according to manufacturer's directions. When smoking in a barbecue grill, place the coals on one side of the pit and light. (For perfect cooking on the grill, I recommend Percy Guidry's Cajun Grill from Lafayette.) Replace the grill and prepare venison as follows. Rub the roast well with the Steen's Cane Syrup and season to taste with salt, pepper, granulated garlic and hot sauce. Melt the butter over medium-high heat and add to the marinade. Using the injector provided with the marinade, inject the roast slowly, until all has been used. Sear the roast quickly on top of the hot coals to brown evenly and then place on the opposite side of the grill away from the coals. Place pecan chips, 2 to 3 handfuls at a time, over the hot coals during the cooking process to flavor the roast. Cover pit and open air vents to maintain a temperature no less than 275 degrees and no more than 350 degrees. Cook 3 hours or until internal temperature reaches 135 degrees for medium rare.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Salmi of Venison

PREP TIME: 2 2 Hours

COMMENT:

Although this stew was always made from leftover game, especially game birds, we often made creative entrees in the same fashion. In this version, venison is used to create a wonderful game pie. Try this recipe with a combination of game meats as the perfect way to clean out the freezer and make unique gifts for friends.



INGREDIENTS:

- 3 lbs cubed venison
- 2 large onions, quartered
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 celery stick, split
- 1 tbsps peppercorns
- 1 bay leaf
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 2 (9-inch) prepared pie crusts
- 2 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup chopped garlic
- 1 quart reserve rabbit stock
- 1 ounce Burgundy wine
- 1 tbsp chopped thyme
- 1 tsp chopped basil
- 1/2 tsp rubbed sage
- Salt and cracked pepper to taste
- 3/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

Place venison in a stockpot along with quartered onions, celery, carrot, garlic, peppercorns, bay leaf and salt. Cover ingredients by 2-3 inches with cold water. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until venison is tender. It is important to skim the impurities that rise to the surface during the cooking process. Once the venison is tender, remove from stock and allow to cool. Strain approximately 1 quart of the venison stock and set aside for later. When venison is cooled, chop meat into small ground meat size pieces. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large cast-iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir until golden brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Slowly add stock, a little at a time, until stew-like consistency is achieved. Add wine,

thyme, basil and sage. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Place the venison into simmering sauce. Allow venison to cook approximately 1 hour, adding additional stock as necessary. The majority of the sauce should be absorbed by the venison toward the end of the cooking time. Add green onions and parsley and adjust seasonings if necessary. Pour the contents onto a large baking pan and allow to cool to room temperature. Press one of the pie shells into the bottom of a pie pan. Spoon in venison mixture then cover with second pie crust. Crimp the edges of the crust together and cut away the excess. Using a paring knife, pierce the crust 3 or 4 places to allow steam to escape. Bake 30 minutes or until golden brown. Allow to cool slightly, prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Venison Marinade

PREP TIME: Varies

COMMENT:

Marinades serve two purposes: to tenderize and to flavor. Older animals or less tender cuts benefit from some form of marmine. The marinade container should be glass or stainless steel. Allow one-half cup of marinade for every pound of meat. The length of time is variable depending on personal taste. A 5-pound venison roast may be marinated up to 7 days, but 2 - 3 hours may also be sufficient. Good marinades always include an oil, an acid, a sugar and flavoring ingredients.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire Sauce
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup dry red wine
- 3 tbsps. Steen=s Cane Syrup or honey
- 6 cloves minced garlic
- 1 tbsps. grated, fresh ginger
- 2 tbsps. chopped basil
- 2 tbsps. chopped thyme
- 2 bay leaves

METHOD:

Combine all of the ingredients making sure to increase the recipe to guarantee 1/2 cup of marinade for every pound of meat. Place the roast or other cut into a bowl, pour in marinade, and turn meat to coat well. Cover and refrigerate up to one week depending on the portion size of the cut or flavor desired. A portion of this marinade may be used during the cooking process.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Venison Jerky

PREP TIME: 34 hours

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lbs lean meat, sliced thin (against grain)
- 1/2 cup liquid smoke
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 1/2 cup Worcestershire Sauce
- 1/4 cup hot sauce
- 2 tbsps Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 1/2 tsp meat tenderizer
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsps brown sugar
- 1/4 cup Teriyaki Sauce
- 2 tbsps Zatarain's Creole Seasonings
- 2 tbsps granulated garlic

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients except meat and whisk well. Place meat in mixture and marinate for 24 hrs in refrigerator. Then place in dehydrator for 9 hours.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Roasted Leg of Venison Bayou Blue

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Bayou Blue is a small body of water that runs through the Coshatta Indian reservation. Venison was a primary ingredient in the Native American diet. The Coshattas combined the pine nuts of the long needle pine forest with the venison to create a dish that was often served on the tables of our Louisiana plantations.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-5 pound) venison leg roast
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3 cups oyster or button mushrooms
- 2 cups sliced Bermuda onions
- 10 cloves garlic
- 4 sweet potatoes, cubed
- 2 cups muscadines or red grapes
- 1 cup pine nuts
- 2 quarts beef stock (see recipe)
- pinch of thyme
- pinch of basil
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- dash of hot sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Season the roast well using thyme, basil, salt, pepper and hot sauce. In a large dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Brown the venison well on all sides. Surround roast with mushrooms, onions, garlic, potatoes, muscadines and pine nuts. Pour in stock, one cup at a time, and bring to a rolling boil. Remove from heat, cover and bake until roast is tender, approximately one and a half to two hours. When done, remove roast and keep warm. Reduce the cooking liquid to a sauce consistency. If you prefer, thicken with a light roux (see roux techniques). Adjust seasonings if necessary. When ready to serve, slice venison roast and top with sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Venison Sausage

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 25 (6-inch) links

COMMENT:

I like a juicy game sausage, and for this reason, I always combine equal amounts of pork with the game meat. This sausage recipe incorporates the trinity of Louisiana flavors along with typical sausage spices to create a magnificent flavored sausage.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds ground venison
 2 pounds ground pork
 1/2 pound pure pork fat
 1/4 cup chopped onions
 1/4 cup chopped celery
 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1/2 cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 salt and black pepper to taste
 1 tbsp ground sage
 1 tbsp caraway seeds
 15 feet pork sausage casing

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine meat, pork fat, onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, green onions and parsley. Using your hands, mix all ingredients well until thoroughly incorporated. Season to taste using salt, pepper, sage and caraway seeds. Continue to blend seasonings into the meat mixture. Force meat through a meat grinder into the casing and tie off at six inch intervals. This sausage may be smoked, pan-fried or poached.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Roast of Venison with Cajun Sausage

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

If venison is known for one unpleasant property, it's the fact that it tends to be dry. Slow roasting methods and protecting the meat with bacon or other fatty meats will help just a little. This recipe uses fresh seasoned sausage in the place of bacon. This not only helps keep the meat juicy, but flavors it as well.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1-5 pound leg of venison, de-boned
- 1 1/2 pounds fresh seasoned sausage
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 4 apples, cubed
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 2 cups chicken stock (see recipe)
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Most grocery stores and meat markets in the South have fresh pork sausage. Here in Louisiana, the fresh sausage is further flavored with garlic, green onions and a mixture of herbs such as thyme and basil. If you cannot find seasoned Cajun sausage, use fresh pork sausage and add the above spices in measurements to your liking. Fill the cavity of the venison roast with bulk sausage. You may wish to truss or tie the cavity shut. Season the roast well using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. In a large dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Brown roast well on all sides and add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Remove from heat and add apples, green onions and parsley. Add chicken stock and adjust seasonings if necessary. Cover and bake until tender, approximately one and a half to two hours. When done, remove and allow to rest thirty minutes prior to slicing. You may wish to reduce the drippings to a sauce consistency before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Rosemary-Stuffed Leg of Venison

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment: Many people believe that all venison is too tough to eat. This recipe disproves that common misconception. This leg of venison is stuffed with herbs and vegetables that will give off wonderful flavors during cooking. By baking the dish in a rich beef stock, the meat stays moist and juicy.

Ingredients:

- 1 venison leg
- ¼ cup chopped rosemary
- 2 tbsps chopped thyme
- 2 tbsps chopped basil
- 2 tbsps chopped sage
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- salt and Pepper to taste
- ½ cup bacon drippings
- 2 red apples, quartered
- 2 green apples, quartered
- 1 large onion, quartered
- 10 cloves garlic
- 6 cups beef stock or broth

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. NOTE: You may wish to remove the lower portion of the shank to ensure that the leg will fit into a 5-quart cast iron Dutch oven. Using a sharp paring knife cut approximately 6–8 (1-inch) slits in the leg. In a small mixing bowl, combine rosemary, thyme, basil, sage, green onions, parsley and garlic. Season the mixture generously with salt and pepper. Blend well and stuff a generous portion of seasoning mixture into each slit. In a 5-quart cast iron Dutch oven, melt bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Place seasoned venison into pan and brown for 3–5 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Surround the leg with apples, onions, whole garlic and any remaining stuffing mixture. Add beef stock and bring to a rolling boil. Cover Dutch oven and bake for 2 ½ –3 hours or until leg is tender. When tender, remove meat, fruits and vegetables from cooking liquid. Use the strained cooking liquid as a thin sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Matt's Hot Pot Venison Roast

Prep Time: 8½ Hours

Yields: 4–6 Servings

Comment:

One of the best ways to ensure your venison roast is tender is to cook it slowly. This crockpot method allows you to return home from work to a perfectly prepared dinner.

Ingredients:

1 (2–3 pound) venison roast
 3 tbsps olive oil
 2 tsps salt
 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
 18 garlic cloves
 3 chile peppers, minced
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 1 cup flour
 4 medium potatoes, peeled and quartered
 2 small onions, coarsely chopped
 ½ pound whole baby carrots
 2 celery stalks, chopped
 1–2 (10.5-ounce) cans French onion soup with beef stock
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

With a paring knife, make 12 incisions into roast. In a small mixing bowl, combine 2 teaspoons salt, 1 tablespoon pepper, 12 garlic cloves, chiles and green onions. Stuff each slit with an equal amount of mixture. Season outside of roast well with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Lightly dust roast with flour. In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Lightly brown roast on all sides. Once browned, remove roast and drain excessive oil. In a 3½–5 quart crockpot, combine potatoes, onions, carrots, remaining garlic cloves and celery. Place roast on top of vegetable mixture. Pour 1 can French onion soup slowly over roast. Roast should be slightly covered with soup. If it is not, use remaining can of soup. Cook on low for 8 hours or until fork tender. Serve over steamed white rice. NOTE: If desired, more vegetables may be added.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

GAME

Roast of Wild Boar

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

This dish will be prepared as the entrée by Certified Master Chef Edward Leonard at the fourth annual Lafcadio Hearn Award Dinner at the Chef John Folse Culinary Institute at Nicholls State University. As part of the "For a Love of Things Italian" menu, Braised Savoy Cabbage, Wild Mushroom Stew and Truffle Polenta will accompany the entrée.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (2 lb) rolled loin of wild boar
 5 ounces Pancetta, sliced
 4 ounces olive oil
 6 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
 1 cup mirepoix, diced
 2 tbsps tomato paste
 6 ounces red wine
 2 – 4 cups pork stock
 kosher salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Place incisions in the meat and fill with sliced garlic. Cover meat with Pancetta and tie. In a brazier pan, heat oil over medium-high heat and brown meat on all sides. Remove meat from pan, add mirepoix and brown. Mix in tomato paste, deglaze with wine and cook until wine is evaporated. Add ½ of stock, return meat to pan and cover. Place in oven and bake for 30 – 45 minutes, adding more stock as needed. When meat is tender, remove and add remaining stock. Bring to a simmer and blend all items in a blender. Adjust seasoning and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Alligator Chili

PREP TIME: 1 ½ Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Although alligator is served only as an appetizer in sausage form at Lafitte's Landing, I see it served in many ways around the state. The dish seems to have found renewed popularity over the past few years. Here is an old camp recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds alligator meat, diced
 ½ cup oil
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced bell pepper
 2 tbsps diced garlic
 2 tbsps diced jalapenos
 1 16-ounce can pinto beans
 3 8-ounce cans tomato sauce
 1 cup chicken stock
 1 tbsp chili powder
 1 tsp cumin
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Add alligator and sauté twenty minutes to render juices. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and jalapenos. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately three to five minutes. Add pinto beans, tomato sauce and chicken stock, bring to a low boil and reduce to simmer. Add chili powder and cumin, stir well into mixture and allow to cook one hour, stirring occasionally. Once alligator is tender, season to taste using salt and black pepper. This dish is always served at hunting camp dinners over spaghetti.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Mike Graham's Leg of Lamb

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

Lamb has always been considered a spring dish. It was eaten most often by the English who settled in the Felicianas, north of St. Francisville. However, it has become an Easter tradition throughout Cajun country. A young spring lamb is the perfect size for this dish.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (8-pound) leg of lamb, bone in
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1/2 cup garlic, minced
- 2 tbsps rubbed sage
- 2 tbsps fresh rosemary, chopped
- 2 tbsps fresh thyme leaves
- 4 fresh bay leaves
- 8-10 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Creole seasoning to taste

METHOD:

Have your butcher trim most of the fat from the leg. Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Place the lamb in a large baking pan and rub with olive oil and lemon juice. Using a paring knife, make 8-10 (1-inch) slits on top of the lamb and stuff generously with salt, pepper, 1/4 cup garlic and 2 tbsps sage. Season the outside of the roast thoroughly with salt, pepper, Creole seasoning, 2 tbsps chopped rosemary, 2 tbsps thyme leaves and remaining garlic. Place the 4 bay leaves in the bottom of the roasting pan and insert 8-10 sprigs of rosemary into each of the seasoned slits. Place lamb in oven and roast 11-13 minutes per pound or until internal temperature reaches 150 degrees F for medium. Remove pan from oven, remove lamb from pan and keep warm. Allow lamb to rest 30 minutes prior to slicing. Place baking pan on stove top over medium heat. Remove as much fat as possible from the pan, retaining the drippings. Deglaze with 1/2 cup red wine, scraping all particles from the bottom of the pan and reduce the liquid by half. Strain sauce through a fine sieve and serve alongside the lamb.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Herb-Encrusted Lamb Lollipops**PREP TIME:** 30 Minutes**SERVES:** 4**COMMENT:**

Any type of meat will be greatly enhanced by adding herbs. In this dish, I have simply combined lamb and herbs to create a nicely seasoned meat that is presented in a fun way. I have Frenched (scraped all of the the meat off of the bone) the lamb chops so that it can be eaten with your hands, hence the name Lollipops.

**INGREDIENTS:**

- 1 rack of lamb, Frenched
- ¼ cup fresh herbs (tarragon, thyme, basil), mixed and chopped
- 1½ cups rice flour
- salt, pepper and granulated garlic to taste
- ¼ cup oil

METHOD:

Cut the rack of lamb into chops. Season with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Pat chopped herbs onto both sides of each chop using all of the herbs. Dredge each chop into the rice flour. In a medium skillet, heat the oil over medium-high heat. Sauté each chop until nicely browned, approximately 5 minutes per side. I recommend serving this with my [Mixed Greens with Warm Ponchatula Strawberry Vinaigrette](#).

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Spicy Lamb Stew on Rigatoni Pasta

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

St. Patrick's Day and the making of St. Joseph's Altars always fall very close together, so we have constructed a dish that honors both of these occasions. We have put together a traditional Irish lamb stew on top of rigatoni in honor of the Italian roots of the St. Joseph's Altar.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound boneless lamb shoulder, cut into ¾-inch cubes
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ pound bacon, chopped
- 1½ cups diced onions
- ¾ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ¾ cup dry red wine
- 1 (28 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup chicken stock or broth
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper
- 2 tbsps chopped fresh basil
- ¼ cup green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 pound rigatoni pasta, cooked
- Parmesan or Romano cheese for garnish

METHOD:

In a 5-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the bacon and stir until fat is rendered. Add the lamb and cook, stirring occasionally, until the meat is browned well, approximately 15 minutes. Add the onions, red bell pepper and garlic and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally until softened, about 5-10 minutes. Deglaze the pan with the red wine and simmer until evaporated, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the casserole. Add the tomatoes, chicken stock, carrots, bay leaf, crushed red pepper and basil. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cover. Stir occasionally until the lamb is very tender, 1½ to 2 hours. Additional stock may be needed to retain liquid. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add green onions and parsley and blend well. Discard the bay leaf. Serve the stew over cooked rigatoni and garnish with Parmesan or Romano cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Chef John Folse's Easter Leg of Lamb

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

Lamb has always been considered a spring dish. It was eaten most often by the English who settled in the Felicianas, north of St. Francisville. However, it has become an Easter tradition throughout Cajun country. A young spring lamb is the perfect size for this dish.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (8-pound) leg of lamb, bone in
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1/2 cup garlic, minced
- 2 tbsps rubbed sage
- 2 tbsps fresh rosemary, chopped
- 2 tbsps fresh thyme leaves
- 4 fresh bay leaves
- 8-10 sprigs fresh rosemary
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Creole seasoning to taste

METHOD:

Have your butcher trim most of the fat from the leg. Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Place the lamb in a large baking pan and rub with olive oil and lemon juice. Using a paring knife, make 8-10 (1-inch) slits on top of the lamb and stuff generously with salt, pepper, 1/4 cup garlic and 2 tbsps sage. Season the outside of the roast thoroughly with salt, pepper, Creole seasoning, 2 tbsps chopped rosemary, 2 tbsps thyme leaves and remaining garlic. Place the 4 bay leaves in the bottom of the roasting pan and insert 8-10 sprigs of rosemary into each of the seasoned slits. Place lamb in oven and roast 11-13 minutes per pound or until internal temperature reaches 150 degrees F for medium. Remove pan from oven, remove lamb from pan and keep warm. Allow lamb to rest 30 minutes prior to slicing. Place baking pan on stove top over medium heat. Remove as much fat as possible from the pan, retaining the drippings. Deglaze with 1/2 cup red wine, scraping all particles from the bottom of the pan and reduce the liquid by half. Strain sauce through a fine sieve and serve alongside the lamb.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Bonnie's Favorite Herb and Garlic Stuffed Leg of Lamb

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6 to 8

COMMENT:

Leg of lamb is best prepared from an animal that is 6-months to 1-year-old. It has a very mild flavor and is tender when roasted. Though lamb was not often used in plantation cooking, it seems to have been a real specialty at Rosedown Plantation. When flavored with rosemary, sage and garlic, there is nothing better. Just ask Bonnie!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (5-pound) leg of lamb
- 1/4 cup rosemary, minced
- 1/4 cup sage, minced
- 1 tbsp tarragon, minced
- 1 tbsp thyme, minced
- 1/4 cup garlic, chopped
- 1/4 pound butter, melted
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup rose petals, chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Using a sharp paring knife, remove the fell or white, papery membrane covering the leg of lamb. In a small mixing bowl, combine all of the herbs and garlic and blend well to incorporate. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Cut a 1-inch hole at intervals around the roast and stuff with equal portions of the seasoning mixture. Fill a minimum of 1 dozen holes. Place the lamb, fat side up, in a large baking pan and drizzle with butter. Rub the remaining herb mixture over the lamb and season to taste using salt and pepper. Place in the oven, uncovered, and cook 10 to 15 minutes. Reduce temperature to 375 degrees F. Roast 30 minutes per pound or until internal temperature reaches 140 degrees F for medium, basting occasionally. Allow lamb to sit 30 minutes before carving and serve with pan drippings. Garnish with rose petals.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Smoked Loin of Lamb

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Though lamb was not commonly found in South Louisiana cooking until the late 1960s, today it has a prime spot on Louisiana tables. At Lafitte's Landing, we have a reputation for the finest variations of lamb recipes in the state

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 (4-rack) lamb loins, deboned
- 4 cans root beer
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 3/4 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1/4 cup rosemary, chopped
- 1/4 cup dried thyme
- 1/4 cup dried basil
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat home-style smoker according to manufacturer's directions. Pre-soak pecan or hickory chips in cold water. In the water pan, place root beer. The use of this liquid instead of water will impart a special flavor to the meat that will surely be a hit. On a large sheet pan, place lamb loins and top with red wine. Moisten lamb loins well with the wine to ensure that all seasonings will adhere to the meat. Generously coat with all remaining ingredients and allow to sit at room temperature for one hour. Place water pan in smoker and put lamb loins on top rack. Place wood chips on coals and smoke, covered, approximately 45 minutes. Check for doneness and use the scale provided with your smoker to ensure proper cooking. The lamb may be served hot but is also excellent served cold and thinly sliced with Creole mustard.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Crawfish Stuffed Rack of Lamb

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

By stuffing the lamb rack with Louisiana seafood, we give this earthy flavored meat a new dimension. This dish has won gold medals in culinary competitions and will certainly be a winner on your table.

INGREDIENTS FOR STUFFING:

- 6 (4-bone) lamb racks
- 2 cups crawfish, cooked
- 1/4 cup onions, finely diced
- 1/4 cup green onions, finely diced
- 1 tsps garlic, diced
- 1 tbsp red bell pepper, diced
- 1/2 cup béchamel sauce
- 1/2cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

Have your butcher select 6 choice lamb racks and specially trim each rack. In a 1-quart mixing bowl, combine all remaining ingredients, blending well to ensure that all seasonings are evenly mixed. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Stuffing should be moist but stiff enough to stand on its own. Add more bread crumbs or béchamel if necessary. Using a 6-inch paring knife, cut a 3/4-inch slit in the center of the lamb loin. Be sure not to cut completely through the meat. The pocket should be large enough to hold a generous portion of the stuffing. Lightly season the inside of the pocket with salt and pepper. Stuff each loin with an equal amount of the seafood stuffing. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS For Cooking:

- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 2 tbsps dried thyme
- 2 tbsps dried basil
- 1 tbsp dried tarragon
- 1 tbsp crushed rosemary
- 2 tbsps garlic, diced
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 3 cups demi-glace

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. On a large baking pan with a 1-inch lip, place stuffed lamb racks. Moisten with melted butter and season generously with thyme, basil, tarragon, rosemary and garlic. Season

to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Place the racks on the baking pan, bone side up, and bake approximately 25 minutes for medium rare. Remove from oven and deglaze the baking pan with red wine, making sure to scrape bottom well. Pour these ingredients into a 10-in saute pan and add demi-glaze. Bring to a boil and reduce until slightly thickened. Using a sharp knife, slice lamb racks into 4 chops each and top with a generous portion of demi-glaze.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Lafitte's Grilled Lamb Chops

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

MAKES: 6

COMMENT:

The Creoles of New Orleans were fanciers of lamb. When the Viala family, builders of the old Lafitte's Landing Restaurant near the Sunshine Bridge, left New Orleans to construct their plantation in Donaldsonville, their love for lamb accompanied them to this city. An integral part of the success at achieving the perfect flavor in this lamb dish is created by marinating the chops for no less than 2 hours at room temperature.

INGREDIENTS FOR MARINADE:

- 12 lamb chops, 1/2-in thick
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsps tarragon, chopped
- 2 tbsps thyme, chopped
- 2 tbsps basil, chopped
- 2 tbsps garlic, chopped

METHOD:

In a 1-qt mixing bowl, combine oil, vinegar and Worcestershire. Using a wire whip, blend thoroughly while adding tarragon, thyme, basil and garlic. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Place lamb chops on a large cookie pan and top with the marinade. Rub the chops well in the mixture, cover and allow to sit at room temperature for 2 hours.

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1/4 cup shallots, minced
- 1/4 cup green onion, sliced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 cup oyster mushrooms
- 1/2 cup port
- 2 cups demi-glacé or brown sauce
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In your home-style grill, place charcoals over to one side or light half of the gas burner if propane. Once pit is hot, sear chops, 4 at a time until grill marks appear and chops are golden brown, approximately 1 to 1 1/2 minutes on each side. Be careful as the marinating mixture may flare up when the chops are placed on the grill. Take care not to scorch or burn in the process. Place seared chops on opposite side of grill and continue until all chops are seared. With the chops sitting off

to the side of the heat, close lid and allow to cook until center temperature reaches 128 degrees F for medium-rare.

While chops are grilling, melt butter in a 12-in saute pan over medium-high heat. When butter is hot, add shallots, green onions and garlic. Saute 3 to 5 minutes, or until garlic browns lightly around the edges. Add mushrooms and saute an additional 2 to 3 minutes. Deglaze with port and reduce the liquid by 1/2 volume. Add demi-glace, bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and season to taste with salt and pepper. Keep warm until lamb chops are ready to serve.

When lamb is ready, place 2 chops in the center of a serving plate and top with 1 1/2 oz of brown sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Shepherd's Pie

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups cooked lamb, chopped
 2 large cloves garlic, peeled
 1 medium onion, quartered
 1 tsp. rosemary, crumbled
 1/4 pound butter
 2 tablespoons flour
 3/4 cup beef broth
 Salt and black pepper, freshly ground
 4 medium potatoes, cooked and mashed

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325°. In a mixing bowl, combine lamb, garlic, onion and rosemary. Put combined ingredients through meat grinder twice or chop fine in food processor. In a skillet with medium heat, melt butter and stir in flour. Cook a few minutes until smooth and blended. Slowly add beef broth. Stir and cook until thickened, about 5 minutes. Add lamb mixture to the skillet. Stir to blend. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Spoon the skillet's contents into 1 1/2-quart casserole or deep pie dish. Spread mashed potatoes on top and cover evenly to the edge of the casserole dish. Make crisscross design on top with a fork. Bake at 325° for 45 to 50 minutes, or until meat is bubbling hot and potatoes are browned.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Herb-Crusted Leg of Lamb

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment: Easter is the perfect time of year to prepare leg of lamb. Many Cajun families choose to have lamb on their holiday table. Roasted vegetables such as [potatoes](#) and [asparagus](#) compliment the mild, tender flavor of the lamb and create a beautiful presentation. (Click links above for vegetable recipes.)



Ingredients:

- 1 (7-8 pound) leg of lamb
- 8 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup chopped mint leaves
- ¼ cup chopped sage leaves
- ¼ cup chopped rosemary
- 1 cup Italian-style bread crumbs
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 2 tbsps Creole mustard

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Trim excess fat from lamb, leaving only a thin layer to protect meat while cooking. Make small slits all over the surface of lamb with a pairing knife. Use half of garlic to stuff slits. In a small mixing bowl, mix the remaining garlic with mint, sage, rosemary and bread crumbs. Season mixture with salt and pepper. Rub lamb with olive oil and then brush with Creole mustard. Sprinkle bread crumb mixture over lamb and pat down to form a thick even coat. Place lamb on a roasting pan, fat side up. Roast 1½ hours or until meat reaches an internal temperature of 130°F. Remove lamb and allow to rest for 20 minutes before carving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

CITRUS LAMB KEBABS

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

For the best flavor, you should marinate the kebabs one day prior to grilling. You may use beef or chicken in place of lamb for a different flavor.

Ingredients for Marinating:

- 1 (3½-pound) boneless leg of lamb, trimmed
- 1 cup orange juice
- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup fresh lime juice
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- 1 tbsp chopped oregano
- 1 tbsp chopped canned chipotle peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 2 tsp minced lime zest
- 2 tsp minced orange zest
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

Cut lamb into cubes, approximately 1½-inches large. Place meat in a large plastic zipper bag. In a mixing bowl, whisk together all marinade ingredients. Pour mixture over lamb in plastic bag then seal. Refrigerate meat overnight, turning occasionally. When ready to use, drain lamb.

Ingredients for Grilling:

- 1 red onion, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 3 fresh poblano peppers, seeded and sliced
- 6 (12-inch) metal skewers

Method for Grilling:

Heat grill according to manufacturer's directions or to medium-high heat. On each skewer, place 4 pieces of each lamb, onion and peppers, alternating each ingredient. Grill lamb, turning frequently, 9 minutes for medium-rare. You may grill longer if you prefer. Serve finished kebabs with rice pilaf.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

MEATS

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

SICILIAN-STYLE LAMB CHOPS

Yields: 4 Servings

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Comment:

By creating a sauce with olive oil, olives, garlic, tomatoes and oregano, a truly Sicilian dish is formed. Be sure not to over cook the chops. It is best to cook briefly, allowing the meat to remain pink and juicy.

Ingredients:

8 (1-inch thick) lamb rib chops
 2 tbsps olive oil
 sea salt to taste
 ½ cup diced onions
 6 garlic cloves, slivered
 2 cups fresh plum tomatoes peeled and seeded
 or canned imported Italian tomatoes
 1 large red bell pepper, diced 1½-inch
 ¼ cup green olives, pitted and coarsely cut
 3 tbsps chopped Italian parsley
 1 tsp chopped oregano leaves
 1 tsp torn basil
 cracked black pepper to taste
 crushed red pepper flakes to taste

Method:

Season chops on both sides with sea salt. In a cast iron skillet, heat oil over high heat. Place lamb chops into skillet being careful not to overcrowd the pan. Allow to brown nicely then turn and brown on other side. Transfer browned chops to a plate and keep warm. In the same skillet, sauté onions and garlic 5 minutes or until golden brown. Add tomatoes with juice and cook for an additional 5 minutes. Stir in bell peppers, olives, parsley, oregano and basil. Season with sea salt and black pepper. Reduce heat to medium and cook, stirring occasionally, 8 minutes or until bell peppers are tender but firm. Sprinkle chops with crushed red pepper flakes and return to skillet with sauce. Continue to cook about 5 minutes, turning chops occasionally. Place sauce and chops on a warm serving platter. Serve 2 chops per person over the pasta of your choice. Penne pasta works well with this dish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Lamburgers with Tomato Chutney

Prep Time: 1 Hour**Yields:** 4 Servings**Comment:**

An exotic twist on the American classic, these flavorful patties are made with lamb instead of beef. In honor of St. Patrick's Day, we top them with a green tomato chutney, but they'd also be great with a touch of feta.

Ingredients:

1½ pounds ground lean lamb
 ¼ cup cider vinegar
 2 tbsps maple syrup
 1 garlic clove, minced
 1 tbsp finely grated peeled ginger
 ½ tsp ground cumin
 ¼ tsp dried red pepper flakes
 1 plum tomato, seeded and diced
 1 small green tomato (unripe), seeded and diced
 salt and black pepper to taste
 2 tbsps chopped fresh cilantro
 4 hamburger buns

Method:

In a small saucepan over high heat, boil vinegar, syrup, garlic, ginger, cumin and red pepper 2–3 minutes or until thickened and reduced to approximately 2 tablespoons. Remove from heat and stir in tomatoes. Add salt to taste. Stir in cilantro just prior to serving. Form lamb into 4 patties and season with salt and pepper. Heat a 12-inch skillet over medium heat. Cook 6–8 minutes on each side. When cooked, place lamburger on bun and top with chutney.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

German Pork Chops in Onion Sauce

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

YIELDS: 4 Servings

COMMENT:

Oktoberfest began in 1810 when King Joseph Maximilian the First of Bavaria decided to celebrate his marriage to princess Theresa of Saxony in royal style. He was to have a grand race in a beautiful meadow that he named for his new bride. Originally it was meant to be an elegant celebration, but with flowing beer and the cheerful and joyful Bavarian character, it quickly became the party to end all parties.

Here in America we continue the tradition of this German holiday with good food, cold beer and great fun.



INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pork chops
- 3 cups sliced onions
- ½ cup flour
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- ½ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced green bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 cup room temperature German beer (i.e., Beck's Dark)
- 1½ cups hot beef broth
- salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Season pork chops with salt and pepper. Dredge chops in flour, shaking off any excess. Reserve 2 tbsps of flour. Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Fry pork chops 3 minutes on each side. Remove chops from skillet and set aside. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic for 5 minutes. Add reserved flour and stir into vegetable mixture. Pour in beer and beef stock. Return chops to the skillet, reduce heat to medium, cover and simmer for 1 hour or until chops are tender. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve with your favorite German side dishes such as potato salad, boiled potatoes, cabbage or Brussels sprouts.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Slow Cooker Barbecued Pork

PREP TIME: 8-10 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

This sandwich filling is so easy, it can be made while you are asleep or at work. How? It is made in a crock pot or slow cooker. You just mix all the ingredients together and turn on the cooker. When you get home, supper's ready.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pounds boneless pork sirloin or shoulder roast
- 1½ cups ketchup
- ½ cup packed brown sugar
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsps Dijon mustard
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp liquid smoke
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- ¼ tsp garlic powder



METHOD:

In a large bowl, combine ketchup, brown sugar, red wine vinegar, Dijon mustard, Worcestershire sauce and liquid smoke. Stir in salt, pepper and garlic powder. Place roast in a 4.5-quart or larger slow cooker. Pour ketchup mixture over roast. Cover and cook on low for 8–10 hours. Before serving, remove meat from cooker and shred with a fork. Return to cooker and stir to coat evenly with sauce. Serve on toasted rolls or buns and top with additional sauce.

Note: You can make this same recipe even easier by using a bottle of your favorite barbecue sauce rather than this homemade sauce. You can also make this recipe with beef instead of pork.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Pork Chop and Potato Gratin

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6–8

COMMENT:

We have taken meat and potatoes to the next level with this dish. Sautéed pork chops are combined with creamy potatoes full of cheese, mushrooms and roasted red bell pepper strips to create a one-dish dinner that everyone will love. As an alternative, omit the cheese and have pork chops and scalloped potatoes instead.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 thick pork chops, bone-in or boneless
- 6 cups thinly sliced potatoes
- 3 tbsps butter
- ¼ cup minced onion
- 3 tbsps minced celery
- 2 tbsps minced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsps minced garlic
- 1½ tps salt
- ¼ tsp ground black pepper
- 3 tbsps flour
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can chicken broth
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 cups mushrooms
- ½ cup roasted red bell peppers, sliced



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Sauté onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic until softened, about 3-5 minutes. Add salt, pepper and flour. Pour in the chicken broth slowly while whisking constantly. Stir until mixture comes to a boil. Add cheese and cream and stir until cheese is completely melted. In a skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat and brown pork chops on each side for 2-3 minutes. Spray a 2½-quart casserole dish with vegetable spray and place a third of the potatoes on the bottom of the dish. Place half of the mushrooms and red bell peppers evenly over the potatoes. Add another third of the potatoes and place the remaining mushrooms and peppers evenly on top. Add the remaining potatoes and pour the cheese mixture over the potatoes to completely cover them. Add the browned chops on top of the potatoes, cover the dish with glass cover or aluminum foil and bake for 1 hour. Uncover and bake an additional 30 minutes. You may exclude the mushrooms and peppers if you prefer. Change the dish up and serve it with chicken

instead of pork. It's all up to you!

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Braciolini-Style Loin of Pork

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Braciolini comes from braciola—"bragole"—the Italian name for roulade. The Italians moved up river from New Orleans in the late 1800s, when jobs were discovered on the sugar plantations. Many of these Italian families later opened grocery stores, vegetable stands and meat markets. Their greatest contribution, however, was to the cuisine of America. This classic recipe is an example of that contribution.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pork loin, trimmed of most fat
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- ½ cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped green onions
- ½ cup sliced pimento olives
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup grated Romano cheese
- ¼ cup pine nuts
- ¼ cup golden raisins
- 1 pound Italian sausage, cut out of casing
- ½ cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell pepper
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 1 cup sliced carrots
- 1 (35-ounce) can Italian plum tomatoes, chopped
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 quart chicken stock
- salt, cracked black pepper and granulated garlic to taste

METHOD:

Place pork loin on a cutting board. Butterfly pork loin, splitting lengthwise just far enough so that the meat opens up into one flat piece, which will be about 1 inch thick, 8 inches wide and 14 inches long. Season the meat generously using salt, pepper and granulated garlic. In a small sauté pan, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, garlic and olives. Sprinkle sautéed vegetables, green onions, cheeses, pine nuts and raisins over the

butterflied loin. Press sausage over the vegetable mixture in an even layer. Roll the loin in a jellyroll fashion and secure with butcher's twine to keep intact during the cooking process. In a large heavy-bottomed dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Brown loin well on all sides, turning occasionally. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, carrots, tomatoes, red wine, tomato sauce and 2 cups chicken stock. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, cover and cook approximately 1 - 1½ hours. Additional chicken stock may be added as needed to retain volume. Once the meat is tender, season the sauce to taste using salt and pepper. If sauce tends to be a bit watery, you may remove the meat to a serving platter and reduce the sauce over medium-high heat until proper consistency is achieved. When ready to serve, slice loin into portions and top with tomato sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Momma Link's Braised Chops

PREP TIME: 4 Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT: Poppa and Momma Link worked on Cabanocey Plantation in St. James Parish for most of their lives. Poppa was known for his knowledge in the art of butchering, and Momma was well known for her cooking. When the cold months of winter rolled around, everyone got on Poppa Link's schedule to butcher the hogs. This recipe for braised, skin-on chops is one of Momma Link's favorites.



INGREDIENTS:

- 4 thick-cut, skin-on pork chops
- 2 tbsps salt
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper
- ½ pound bacon, chopped
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- ¼ cup bell pepper, chopped
- ¼ cup garlic, sliced
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 5 cups beef stock
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 2 onions, quartered
- 3 carrots, cut into 2-inch pieces
- 8 new potatoes

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Season chops well using salt and cracked black pepper. In a cast iron dutch oven, sauté bacon until fat is rendered and bacon is crisp. Brown chops well on both sides. When golden brown, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato sauce and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Add beef stock and rosemary, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cover dutch oven and allow chops to simmer for 1½ hours. After 1½ hours, add quartered onion, carrots and potatoes. Replace cover and continue to simmer for 1½-2 hours, or until the chops are fork tender. Serve by placing a portion of the onions, carrots and potatoes with the chops onto a plate. Garnish with a sprig of rosemary.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Choucroute Garnie

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT: Sauerkraut is one of the most underrated dishes in the South. Most southerners are reminded of the sour, bitter kraut they were served during their elementary school days, rather than the richly garnished sauerkraut of Alsace Lorraine, France. This recipe is from Olga Hirsch, who brought it with her from that region when she moved to Donaldsonville in the 1940s. It is a classic and well worth the effort!

INGREDIENTS:

2 (32 ounce) jars Vlassic sauerkraut
 1/2 pound bacon, cubed
 3 links heavy smoked sausage, sliced
 1 ham steak, bone-in and cubed
 3 pieces smoked pork hocks
 6 links Polish sausage
 2 cups onion, diced
 ¼ cup garlic, minced
 1½ tbsps flour
 1 quart chicken stock
 1 (12-ounce) bottle beer
 1 cup dry white wine
 6 juniper berries
 2 small bay leaves
 8 small potatoes, halved
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

The secret to great sauerkraut is complete rinsing the product prior to cooking, 2-3 times minimum, under cold, running water. It is imperative that this step be completed to remove the sour brine from the cabbage. Drain well. In a heavy-bottom cast iron pot, sauté bacon over medium-high heat until fat is rendered. Do not brown. Add smoked sausage and cook 2-3 minutes longer. Add onion and garlic and sauté 3-5 minutes. Add flour, blending well into the seasoning mixture. Add chicken stock, beer, wine and juniper berries. Bring to a rolling boil and season stock to taste using salt and pepper. Add sauerkraut, blending well into the mixture. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and top with cubed ham steak, smoked pork hocks and Polish sausage. Add bay leaves, cover and simmer 1½ hours stirring occasionally. Add potatoes and continue to cook 15-20 minutes or until tender. Serve sauerkraut with equal portions of meat.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

JOSEPH IONADI'S SWEET ITALIAN SAUSAGE

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 160 (6-inch) Links

Comment:

Joseph Ionadi was born in Calabria, Italy and moved to Toronto, Canada in 1958. Today, he owns Donnalina Fruit Market on Jane Street in Toronto. This sausage, created by Ionadi, is representative of the Italian variety of sausage often enjoyed in Louisiana Creole cuisine.

Ingredients:

50 pounds ground pork butt
 6 cups sweet red pepper sauce (see recipe)
 2 ounces red peppers, dried and crushed
 2½ ounces cracked black pepper
 9½ ounces salt
 1 ounce fennel seed
 90 feet (38mm) hog casing

Method:

Grind pork butt through a ¾-inch die to achieve perfect-sized grind. Blend pork and all remaining ingredients. Stuff mixture into 38mm hog casing. Grill or pan sauté finished sausage with smothered onions and peppers.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Poppa Link's Pot of Pork

PREP TIME: 3 1/2 Hours

COMMENTS:

Poppa Link worked on Cabanocey Plantation in St. James Parish for most of his life and was known for his knowledge in the art of butchering. When the cold months of winter rolled around everyone got on Poppa Link's schedule to butcher the hogs. This recipe for braised skin-on chops was one of his favorites.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 thick-cut skin-on pork chops
- 2 tbsp salt
- 2 tbsp cracked black pepper
- 1/2 pound bacon
- 1/2 cup bacon drippings or vegetable oil
- 2 cups onions, chopped
- 2 cups celery, chopped
- 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, finely diced
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- 2 cups carrots, diced
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 5 cups beef stock
- 1 sprig rosemary
- 4 onions, quartered
- 6 carrots, halved
- 8 new potatoes

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Cut 2 strips of bacon into 1/4-inch strips about 1 1/2 inches long. Combine salt and pepper with the garlic. Using a sharp paring knife, cut 6 - 8 (1-inch deep) slits into the pork chops. Roll bacon and place one roll in each slit. Continue until all slits have been stuffed. Season chops well on all sides using salt and cracked black pepper. In a cast iron Dutch oven, heat bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Brown chops well on all sides. When golden brown, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato sauce, carrots and red wine, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Add beef stock and rosemary, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cover Dutch oven and allow chops to simmer 3 1/2 hours. Wrap onions topped with 1 tbsp of butter in aluminum foil and bake 1 hour. When the chops are tender remove from stock and strain. Discard vegetables and return stock to the pot. Return chops to pot with carrots and potatoes. Bring to a boil and cook until vegetables are tender. Serve by placing a portion of the onions, potatoes and vegetables with the chops in a soup bowl and top with stock. Eat as you would vegetable soup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Creole Pork and Rice Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This is a wonderfully flavored, one-pot dish that will satisfy everyone at your table. If you prefer, you can substitute chicken or beef in the place of pork.

INGREDIENTS:

6 (1/2-inch thick) center-cut pork chops
 1 cup converted rice, uncooked
 1/2 cup olive oil
 1 cup chopped onions
 1/2 cup chopped celery
 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
 1/2 cup chopped yellow bell pepper
 1/2 cup diced garlic
 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
 1 1/2 cup beef consommé
 1 bay leaf
 1 tsp chopped basil
 1/2 cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 1 tsp salt
 black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. In a large cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season chops well using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Brown chops well on both sides, allowing them to caramelize in the bottom of the skillet. Once they are golden brown, remove and keep them warm. In the same skillet, add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato sauce, consommé and water. Bring to a low boil and reduce to simmer. Add bay leaf and basil. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Remember to slightly over-season, since the rice will absorb most of the flavor. Blend in rice, stirring well into the mixture. Layer pork chops over sauce and top with green onions. Cover and cook 1 hour or until rice is totally cooked. When done, sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Grilled Pork Tenderloin with Blackberry BBQ Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Grilling is a great way to infuse smoky flavor into your pork tenderloin. You will want to insert a meat thermometer according to the manufacturer's directions so that you can monitor its doneness. The best method to grill a tenderloin is to build a coal bed on one side of your grill. Once the coals are coated with white ash, place your tenderloin away from the coals so it will receive a medium-high heat. Do not overcook your pork as this will make it dry and tasteless.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (2-3) pound tenderloin
- 1 tbsp granulated garlic
- 2 tbsp ground black pepper
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp mustard powder
- 1 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp packed brown sugar
- 2 tbsp ground paprika
- 1/2 tsp dried oregano

METHOD:

In a small nonporous mixing bowl, combine garlic powder, ground black pepper, salt, mustard powder, chili powder, cumin, brown sugar, paprika and dried oregano. Mix well. Sprinkle tenderloin with mixture and rub in spices. Let rubbed meat sit at least 1 hour in the refrigerator. Light grill. Cook tenderloin, turning once half way through cooking. Remove when the internal temperature reaches 128 degrees F for rare to 150 degrees F for well done. When the pork is almost done, brush Blackberry BBQ Sauce over the meat.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Pork, Chicken and Andouille Jambalaya

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Jambalaya has become the best known rice dish in America. The origin of this dish cannot be disputed. When the early Spanish settlers came to New Orleans, in the early 1700's, they brought with them the recipe for their famous paella. Since the ingredients for paella were not to be found in South Louisiana, their recipe was quickly adapted to the products at hand. Oysters and crawfish replaced clams and mussels in the recipe. Andouille took the place of ham and the new dish emerged from the paella pans of the Spanish. Since the main ingredient in the dish was rice, the dish was named "Jambon a la yaya," ham with rice. Yaya is the African word for rice and there is no argument that the "black hand in the pot" had a tremendous influence on our jambalaya. Today, the dish is made with many variations and with whatever is available. The most popular combination, however, is chicken, pork and andouille.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound cubed pork butt
- 1 pound cubed chicken
- 1 pound sliced andouille
- 1/4 cup oil
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 7 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- salt and black pepper
- dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- 4 cups Uncle Ben's long grain rice

METHOD:

In a two gallon cast iron dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sauté cubed pork until dark brown on all sides until some pieces are sticking to the bottom of the pot, approximately thirty minutes. This is very important as the brown color of jambalaya is derived from the color of the meat. Add cubed chicken and andouille and stir fry an additional ten to fifteen minutes, "long and low". Tilt the pot to one side and ladle out all oil, except for one large spoonful. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Continue cooking until all vegetables are well caramelized, however, be very careful as vegetables will tend to scorch since the pot is so hot. Add chicken stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cook all ingredients in stock approximately fifteen minutes for flavors to develop. Add mushrooms, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. I suggest that you slightly over-season since the rice

tends to require a little extra seasoning. Add rice and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat to very low then cover and allow to cook thirty minutes, stirring once at 15 minutes. When cooked, stir and let steam ten minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

STRAWBERRY-GLAZED PORK LOIN

Prep Time: 2 Hours
Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment:

Ponchatoula, La. is the undisputed strawberry capital of the world. Since pork is so widely used in South Louisiana cooking, it is easy to understand how strawberries found their way into the pork dishes of this area. In most places, apple sauce is used as a fresh fruit flavoring with pork loin, but here strawberries are the ideal substitute.

Ingredients:

1 cup diced strawberries
 ½ cup strawberry syrup
 24 fresh, large strawberries
 1 (3–5 pound) pork loin
 2 tbsps minced onions
 1 tbsp minced celery
 2 tbsps thinly sliced green onions
 2 slices diced bacon
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 ¼ cup melted butter
 1 cup diced onions
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 2 cups beef stock
 1 sprig rosemary
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine diced strawberries, minced onions, celery, green onions, bacon, salt and pepper. Cut 1-inch long slits in pork loin and stuff with seasoning mixture. Drizzle strawberry syrup and melted butter over top of pork loin. Season with salt and pepper. Place loin in a large Dutch oven or roasting pan and surround with whole strawberries, remaining onions, celery, bell peppers and beef stock. Season with rosemary and hot sauce. Cover roasting pan and bake 1–1½ hours. Slice roast and surround with strawberry sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Stuffed Easter Ham

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Other than wild game, smoked ham is the most common meat used as a centerpiece on the holiday table in South Louisiana. Often "secret" glazes or stuffings are used by the bayou families to create that special masterpiece. Here is a favorite recipe from my own family. It is normally seen on our table at Easter time.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (6-7 pound) boneless ham
 2 whole yams
 2 whole Bartlett pears
 1/4 cup butter
 1/2 cup onions, chopped
 1/2 cup celery, chopped
 1/4 cup green bell pepper, chopped
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, chopped
 1/4 cup garlic, diced
 1/4 cup raisins
 1/4 cup fig preserves
 1/2 cup pecans, chopped
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 pinch of filé (optional)
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 6 Bartlett pears, halved

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Poach yams and pears in hot water until tender but not overcooked. Drain and chop into 1-inch cubes. Set aside. In a heavy-bottom sauté pan melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add yams, pears, raisins and fig preserves and continue to sauté until mixture is well blended and resembles a chutney or stuffing. Season with a pinch of cinnamon, nutmeg and filé. Remove and allow to cool. Slice ham horizontally across the middle and fill the center of ham with stuffing mixture about 3/4-inch. Top with upper section of ham and secure in place with skewers. Garnish top of ham with pear halves and glaze ham with Cajun glaze. Bake 20-30 minutes.

Cajun Glaze

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup cane syrup
 1 cup Creole mustard
 1/2 cup brown sugar

1 tbsp cracked black pepper
1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp ground cloves
1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
1/2 tsp ground filé or sassafras leaves

METHOD:

In a stainless steel mixing bowl, combine all ingredients. Blend well and brush over ham prior to baking.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Pepper-Laced Pork Roast

PREP TIME: 3 hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

1 (5-6 pound) boneless pork roast
 6 cloves garlic, chopped
 2 cup green onions, sliced
 1/8 tsp dried thyme
 1/8 tsp dried basil
 1 tsp salt
 1/8 tsp black pepper
 1/4 cup cayenne and jalapeno peppers, sliced
 1/4 cup oil
 2 cups onion, diced
 1/4 cup celery, diced
 1/4 cup bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup parsley
 1 quart beef stock
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a small mixing bowl combine garlic, green onions, thyme, basil, salt and pepper. Pierce holes through the roast and fill each cavity with mixture. Follow with the peppers, leaving approximately 2-inches of the peppers exposed. (This will give flavor to the roast.) Season the roast completely with salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. In a 12-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sear roast in hot oil on both sides. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, parsley and beef stock. Cover and bake until tender, approximately 3 hours. Add water if necessary and reserve broth for serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Loin of Pork Braised in Cream

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

This dish has a strong base in both French and Italian country cuisine. The thought of braising pork or veal in milk, mushrooms and herbs was natural to the rural farmer of those countries. Since both of these nations settled Louisiana, it is obvious that they would have found their way to our bayou table.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-5 pound) boneless pork loin
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 3 tbsps butter
- 16 pearl onions
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 8 whole garlic cloves
- 2 cups mixed wild mushrooms
- 3 cups milk
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1/4 cup sage leaves, chopped
- 1 tsp fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup pimento, diced

METHOD:

Using a pairing knife, cut 6 (1-inch deep by 3/4 inch wide) slits evenly across top of the loin. Place an equal amount of minced garlic in each slit then a small amount of salt and pepper. Follow with a pinch of chopped sage. Season the loin well with salt and pepper. In a large, heavy-bottom Dutch oven, heat olive oil and butter over medium-high heat. Brown pork on all sides. Remove loin from pot and set aside. Sauté onions, celery and garlic cloves, stirring 2-3 minutes. Add mushrooms and continue to sauté 3 minutes longer. Return the pork to pot. Add milk, cream, remaining sage, basil and thyme. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer, cover and cook gently for 2 hours, turning pork every 30 minutes. Loin should be fork-tender at this point. Uncover casserole, remove loin and keep warm. Add pimentos and continue to cook cream until sauce-like consistency is achieved. Adjust seasonings if necessary. When ready to serve, slice loin, place decoratively on a serving platter and top with sage cream. NOTE: If cream is boiled too rapidly while cooking the loin, cream may separate, so be careful.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Crown Roast of Pork With Shoepeg Cornbread Stuffing

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

The Crown Roast, or bone-in Pork Loin Roast, has always been the choice in Creole kitchens as the table centerpiece during the holiday season. It may be stuffed with everything from meat and fruit to rice and vegetables. However, my favorite is the whole-kernel corn and cornbread filling.

INGREDIENTS FOR ROAST:

- 1 (9-11 pound) crown roast of pork, rib ends frenched
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 1/2 tbsps black pepper
- granulated garlic to taste
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup basil, chopped
- 1/4 cup thyme, chopped
- 1/4 cup sage, chopped
- cornbread stuffing (see recipe)
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup carrots, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup apple, chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. If you are not familiar with the Crown Roast, have your butcher french or clean the end of the rib bones of any meat or sinew. You may also wish to ask the butcher for a quick demonstration in tying the roast into the crown shape. In a small mixing bowl, combine garlic, green onions, salt and black pepper. Blend well. Using a paring knife, make 8-10 3/4-inch slits into the loin and season generously with the mixture. Season the roast inside and out with granulated garlic, salt and pepper and remaining herbs. Tie the roast into the crown shape and place on a large sheet of aluminum foil. Place into a baking pan with a 2-inch lip. Fill the center of the roast with the shoepeg corn stuffing, placing any excess into a corner of the roasting pan. Surround the outside of the roast with onions, carrots, celery and apples. Fold the aluminum foil up the side of the crown roast and over the rib ends to cover loosely during the cooking process. The bone should be protected well to keep from burning or turning overly brown while baking. Place in middle of oven and cook for 2 hours. Open up foil to brown roast and cook approximately 45 minutes longer or until meat thermometer reaches 155-160 degrees F. A pan sauce may be made from the drippings by allowing the pan to sit for 1 hour and skimming the excess fat. Thicken the drippings slightly with 1 tbsp cornstarch.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Braised Pork Chops With Persimmons

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Without a doubt, pork is the most often used meat in Louisiana cooking. Nothing is more famous than the garlic and green onion-stuffed pork roast, served on Sundays and holidays. Innovative cooks have developed recipes using certain cuts of the meat that are sure to become classics. This is one such recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

6 (3/4-inch), center cut loin chops
 flour for dusting
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 salt and black pepper to taste
 1 cup onions, chopped
 1 cup celery, chopped
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, chopped
 1/4 cup yellow bell pepper, chopped
 1 tbsp garlic, diced
 3 persimmons, sliced
 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1 quart beef stock
 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
 dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 1 tsp dried thyme
 1 tsp dried basil

METHOD:

Have your butcher cut 6 (3/4-inch) chops from the center of a pork loin. The heavy chops will hold up under the long braising period. Season the chops with salt and pepper and dust lightly in flour. In a large black iron skillet, with lid, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sauté chops on both sides until golden brown. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted. Add sliced persimmons, mushrooms and beef stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cover and allow to cook until chops are tender, approximately 2 hours. Be careful not to scorch or burn. (NOTE: You may wish to place the pan into a 375 degrees F preheated oven to bake for 2 hours, rather than braise on the stovetop.) Add green onions, parsley and season to taste using Louisiana Gold, thyme and basil. Once chops are tender, remove to a serving platter and top with the persimmon sauce. Serve with rice dressing or mashed potatoes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

A Duo Of Sausages Smothered in Apples

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Early settlers found wild apple trees growing in Louisiana and often made wine with the fruit or included it in recipes. In this recipe from central Louisiana, both apples and cider are used to flavor the sausages.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh pork sausage
- 1 pound fresh beef sausage
- 1 cup red apple, diced
- 1 cup green apple, diced
- 1 cup apple cider
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup onion, diced
- ½ cup celery, diced
- ½ cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 cup chicken stock
- ½ cup green onions, sliced
- salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a toothpick or fork, prick sausage skin once or twice at 3-inch intervals. In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add sausages and cook to a golden brown on all sides. Remove sausages and set aside. Into the same skillet, add onion, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chicken stock and apple cider and bring to a low boil. Return sausages to the pan and top with apples and green onions. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Cover the skillet with a tight-fitting lid or aluminum foil and bake for 45 minutes. To serve, place sausage links in the center of a round platter and surround with honeyed apple rings (see recipe).

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

A "No Labor" Labor Day Menu - End of Summer Island Luau

SALAD:

Mandarin Orange Poppy Seed Salad

ENTREE:

Teriyaki Pork Loin with Mango Chutney Sauce and Polynesian Stir-Fry over Coconut Rice

DESSERT:

Luau Key Lime Pie

INGREDIENTS FOR SALAD:

Dole Spinach-In-A-Bag
Dole Mandarin Oranges
Pepperidge Farm Classic Cut Onion & Garlic Croutons
La Martinique Original Poppy Seed Dressing

INGREDIENTS FOR ENTREE:

Smithfield Teriyaki-Flavored Pork Loin Filet
Pataks Original Sweet Mango Chutney
Birdseye Sugar Snap Stir-Fry
Taste of Thai Coconut Ginger Rice

INGREDIENTS FOR DESSERT:

Mrs. Smith's Authentic Key Lime Pie

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Joseph Ionadi's Hot Italian Sausage

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

MAKES: 160 (6-inch) links

COMMENT:

Joseph Ionadi was born in Calabria, Italy and moved to Toronto, Canada in 1958. Today, he owns Donnalina Fruit Market on Jane Street in the city. He sells a variety of fruits, vegetables and specialty Italian items such as pasta and olive oil. If anyone has a question about authentic Italian foods, give Joe a call at (416) 744-7276. Joe was good enough to come to Louisiana and share his recipe for hot Italian sausage, further flavored with his magnificent red pepper sauce.

INGREDIENTS:

- 50 pounds ground pork butt
- 1 quart hot red pepper sauce (see recipe)
- 2 1/4 ounces red peppers, dried and crushed
- 2 1/2 ounces cracked black pepper
- 9 1/2 ounces salt
- 1 ounce fennel seed

METHOD:

The pork butt should be ground through a 3/8-inch die to achieve the perfect-sized grind. Combine all of the above ingredients and stuff into a 38mm hog casing available from your local butcher shop. This will make approximately 160 (6-inch) links. Grill or pan sauté with smothered onions and peppers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

John's "Guaranteed To Be Tender" Baby Back Ribs

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Most grilling experts will prepare their barbecued ribs using the long and slow method, cooking them over indirect heat for 3-4 hours. However, this method requires constant attention, whereas my "guaranteed to be tender" recipe includes more free time for the cook.

INGREDIENTS:

4 (2-2 1/4 pound)s slabs baby back ribs
 1 onion, quartered
 1 celery stick, chopped
 5 cloves garlic
 1/2 tsp red pepper flakes
 salt to taste

METHOD:

Using a sharp knife, cut each slab of ribs into 2 equal parts creating 8 portions. Place the ribs in a large dutch oven along with the onion, celery, garlic, pepper flakes and salt. Cover with water by 1 inch and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook 1 1/2-2 hours. Ribs should be fork tender, but not falling apart. Remove ribs, place on a large cookie sheet and allow to drain and dry thoroughly, approximately 30 minutes. While ribs are draining, heat barbecue pit according to manufacturer's directions. Add a few pieces of your favorite smoke wood for enhanced flavor. Place ribs on the pit, bone side down, when coals have subsided to medium heat. Turn every 2-3 minutes to achieve a golden brown color and smoky flavor. Once the ribs are brown, glaze with my oriental barbecue sauce on each side.

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

1/2 cup ketchup
 1/2 cup soy sauce
 1/2 cup hoisin sauce
 1/2 cup oyster sauce
 1/2 cup honey
 1/2 cup brown sugar
 1/2 cup Steen's cane syrup
 1/2 cup cream sherry
 2 tbsps fresh ginger, finely grated and peeled
 2 tbsps black bean garlic sauce
 6 garlic cloves, minced
 1/2 tsp Chinese five-spice powder

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients in a medium sauce pot and bring to a simmer. Blend well. Sauce may be used immediately or placed in a ceramic bowl, covered and refrigerated for up to one week. NOTE:

Black bean garlic sauce is available at your local Asian market or in the Asian foods section of many supermarkets.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Garlic-Rosemary Pork Tenderloin served with Sweet Potatoes, Asparagus Tips, Mustard Greens and a Prune Gastrique

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

2 pork tenderloins
 3 sweet potatoes
 2 tbsps unsalted butter
 12 asparagus tips
 2 tbsps unsalted butter
 1 bunch mustard greens
 1 tbsp rendered bacon drippings
 7 garlic cloves
 2 tbsps fresh chopped rosemary
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1/4 tsp salt
 1/2 tsp cracked black pepper
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 8 pitted prunes, halved
 1 1/3 cups water
 2/3 cup sherry wine vinegar
 1 cup chicken stock
 1/2 cup sugar
 2 tbsps sherry wine vinegar
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Peel and boil sweet potatoes in lightly sweetened water until tender. Drain and mash with 2 tbsps unsalted butter. Season potatoes to taste using salt and pepper and keep warm. Poach asparagus tips in lightly salted boiling water for 3 minutes. Drain and submerge in ice water. Remove the cold asparagus and place in a sauté pan with 2 tbsps unsalted butter. Set aside for later. Stem mustard greens and rinse 2 to 3 times under cold water to remove any grit or sand. In a large sauté pan, melt bacon fat over medium-high heat. Add mustard greens and stir 3 to 5 minutes to wilt the leaves. Remove from heat and set aside. Using a paring knife, remove silver skin from tenderloins. Season meat with salt and pepper. Place on a large cookie sheet and set aside. Using a small food processor, form a paste by pulsing garlic and rosemary with olive oil and salt and pepper. Rub 2 tbsps of paste on each side of the tenderloin and reserve remaining paste. In a sauté pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sear meat on each side until golden brown. Roast the meat uncovered for 15 to 20 minutes, or until center reaches 130 degrees, for medium-rare. Remove from oven and cover with foil to keep warm. In a saucepan, combine prunes, water, sherry vinegar, chicken stock and sugar. Stir mixture until sugar dissolves and begins to boil. Reduce heat to medium and cook until sauce is syrupy, about 20 minutes. Add remaining vinegar, remove from heat and season to taste using salt and pepper. Keep warm. Add remaining garlic paste to the mustard greens, return to heat and cook

until wilted, approximately 5 to 7 minutes. Place asparagus tips on medium-high heat to melt butter, warming the asparagus. Do not overcook. Slice the tenderloin. When ready to serve, place an equal amount of the sautéed greens in the center of 4 serving plates. Place an equal portion of the sweet potatoes next to the greens. Surround the greens with 3 slices of the roasted tenderloin, and an equal portion of the prune gastrique. Garnish with asparagus tips.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Porche's Famous Hog Crackling

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

MAKES: 70 - 80 (1-lb) bags

COMMENT:

This recipe comes from Don Porche of Porche's Sausage at Colyell Bay. Porche's specializes in homemade sausage, smoked meats, fresh pork, tasso, jerky, andouille, hogs head cheese, red and white boudin and cracklings.

INGREDIENTS:

5 gallons hog lard
70 - 80 pounds hog fat
salt to taste

METHOD:

In a 20 gallon pot, add 5 gallons of hog lard. Heat over a butane burner until lard is melted. Add 60 to 70 pounds of hog fat and cook on low-medium heat for 1 to 1 1/2 hours until grease covers crackling, making sure to stir pot every 5 to 10 minutes. Turn fire off for 30 minutes and place lid on pot . Relight fire and reheat grease taking care to stir often. From this stage, crackling should be ready in 15 minutes. As the grease begins to smoke, crackling will rise to the surface. Remove quickly and season to taste with salt.

(Note: For hot crackling, mix together 1 cup vinegar, salt and red pepper to taste. Dip fresh crackling in mixture and enjoy.)

Porche's Sausage
Don & Linda Porche - Owners
17415 LA Hwy. 16
French Settlement, LA 70733
(225) 698-6229

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Chef John Folse's "Nuttin' But Kickin'" Boudin

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 - 3 Hours

YIELDS: 70 (6-inch) links

COMMENT:

Boudin is one of the oldest sausages in Louisiana. Every community has its own unique recipe. I've tasted many types of boudin as I've traveled throughout Louisiana, but when I get the urge to whip up a batch, this is the recipe I use. You'll make a large batch using this recipe, but boudin freezes well. Put it away, or remember the tradition of the boucherie and share it with neighbors and friends.

INGREDIENTS:

- 20 pounds fresh picnic shoulder, cut 1 1/2 inch thick
- 3 pounds pork liver
- 8 large yellow onions, peeled and diced
- 5 cups medium-grain rice
- 6 bunches green onion tops, thinly sliced
- 5 ounces salt
- 2 ounces black pepper
- 1 cup chopped red bell pepper, finely diced
- 32-35mm hog casing

METHOD:

Cook 5 cups of medium grain rice in lightly salted water, stirring occasionally until tender, approximately 30 minutes. Cool rice in a colander under cold running water, drain and set aside. In a large stock pot, place picnic shoulder and cover with water by approximately 4 inches. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 1 1/2 hours. Be sure to add water as necessary to retain volume. Add pork liver and cook 30 additional minutes. Remove meat and liver. Allow to cool slightly. In the same liquid, add onions and cook 20 minutes. When onions are done, strain onions from stock and add to the meat. Measure out 12 level cups of stock and set aside. Debone meat and in a home-style meat grinder, grind meat, liver and yellow onions. Add cooked rice and green onion tops, blending well into the meat mixture. Blend salt, pepper and red bell pepper in with the stock, and pour into the meat mixture, once again blending well. Using a home-style stuffer or meat grinder attachment, stuff the mixture into hog casing and tie into 6-inch links. When ready to serve, steam the boudin or poach in 190 degree water until casing is cooked, approximately 10 - 15 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Fried Boudin Balls

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

YIELDS: 4 servings

COMMENT:

This traditional sausage is normally poached and served hot as a breakfast or luncheon item. Today, we even see boudin grilled and placed on hot French bread as a sandwich specialty. My favorite way to serve boudin is to deep fry a breaded , golf ball-size portion and serve hot with a glass of ice-cold beer.

INGREDIENTS:

2 links boudin
 2 cups oil
 2 cups corn flour
 pinch of thyme
 pinch of basil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oil to 375 degrees F. Season flour using salt, pepper, thyme and basil. Cut casing of boudin into two inch slices and roll to for a small ball. Dust in flour, shaking off all excess. Fry ball approximately 3 - 5 minutes, or until golden brown. Serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Hazel's Cajun Boudin

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

YIELDS: 45 pounds

COMMENT:

This recipe originated at Veillon's Meat Market in Sorrento Louisiana. I could never decide if this recipe was my all-time favorite, but it was definitely number 1 or 2. The interesting thing about this recipe is that the boudin is put together raw then stuffed into the casing and steamed, creating a wonderful flavor and crispy skin.

INGREDIENTS:

22 pounds Boston butt, cubed
 7 pounds pork liver
 2 pounds green onions
 2 pounds parsley
 1 pound salt
 3 tbsps cayenne pepper
 .2 tbsps black pepper
 12 pounds cooked rice
 10 pounds water
 2 cups pimentos, chopped
 32-35mm hog casing for 50 pounds of meat, approximately
 133 feet

METHOD:

In a large pan, combine meat, liver, green onions and parsley. Run the ingredients through the fine plate of a meat grinder, alternating each of the ingredients. When ground, add salt, peppers, rice, water and pimentos. The mixture will be very moist and a bit messy to the novice cook, but have no fear. This is exactly what it is supposed to look like. Using the sausage stuffing attachment or a hand stuffer, stuff the mixture into 32-35 mm natural hog casing. You may wish to tie the links off into 6-inch sections. Place 2 inches of water in the bottom of a steamer or a large rice cooker and steam the boudin for approximately 1 hour, covered.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Hogs Head Cheese

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

YIELDS: 4 (1 pound) trays

COMMENT:

Many cooks today feel that hogs head cheese is a country rendition of the more classical daube glace. Though similar in nature, I feel head cheese is the by-product of sausage making such as boudin, and has been around for hundreds of years

INGREDIENTS:

1 hog head, split and cleaned
 4 pig feet, scraped and cleaned
 4 pounds pork butt
 3 cups onions, finely diced
 3 cups celery, finely diced
 2 cups bell pepper, finely diced
 1/2 cup garlic, finely diced
 2 whole bay leaves
 1 tsp dry thyme
 1/4 cup peppercorns, whole
 1/2 cup green onions, finely sliced
 1/2 cup parsley, finely diced
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, finely diced
 1/2 cup carrots, finely diced
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 3 envelopes unflavored gelatin, dissolved

METHOD:

In a 4-gallon stock pot, place all of the above ingredients up to and including the whole peppercorns. Add enough water to cover the contents by 3 inches and bring to a rolling boil. Using a ladle, skim all foam and other impurities that rise to the surface during the first half hour of boiling. Continue to cook until meat is tender and pulling away from the bones, approximately 2 1/2 hours. Remove all meat from the stock pot and lay out on a flat baking pan to cool. Reserve 10 cups of the cooking stock and return to a low boil. Add all remaining ingredients, except gelatin and salt and pepper, boil for 3 minutes and remove from heat. Season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Add dissolved gelatin and set aside. Once meat has cooled, remove all bones and finely chop in a food processor. Place equal amounts of the meat in four trays and ladle in hot seasoned stock. The mixture should be meaty with just enough stock to gel and hold the meat together. Cover with clear wrap and place in refrigerator to set overnight. Head cheese is best eaten as an appetizer with croutons or crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Grillades

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The origin of grillades has been the subject of many arguments in Bayou Country. It is believed that the dish originated when the country butchers preparing the boucherie sliced thin pieces of fresh pork and pan-fried these with sliced onions. The cooking took place, most feel, in black iron pots over the boucherie fires. The grillades were then eaten over grits or rice throughout the day. Today, grillades and grits are a tradition on many Sunday brunch menus. Most recipes call for veal round pounded lightly and smothered in its natural juices. One of the things I find most interesting about grillades is that it is one of those dishes that has a place on all rungs of the social ladder. Grillades may be found on the sharecropper's breakfast table or on the grand buffets of New Orleans.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 medium-size round steaks
- 1 cup flour
- 1/4 cup shortening or bacon drippings
- 1 cup onions, finely diced
- 1 cup celery, finely diced
- 1/2 cup bell pepper, finely diced
- 1 cup tomatoes, diced
- 1 cup green onions, finely diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 3 cups beef stock
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 1/4 cup parsley
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Cut round steak into 3-inch square cubes. Season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Dust pieces generously in flour and set aside. In a heavy-bottom dutch oven, heat oil or shortening over medium-high heat. Sauté round steaks until brown on all sides. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, tomatoes, green onions and garlic. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add beef stock, bring to a low boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cover Dutch oven and allow grillades to cook slowly for approximately 45 minutes. Stir occasionally to keep seasonings from scorching. Once tender, add mushrooms and parsley. Adjust seasonings if necessary and cook 10 additional minutes. Serve over grits as a breakfast item or over rice as an entrée.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Smothered Pork Sausage in Apple Cider

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Although the early settlers did not find apple trees growing in Louisiana, many families cherished the flavor and always had a tree or two. In North and Central Louisiana, they were more prominent than in the South and thus, this wonderful recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds fresh pork sausage links
 1/2 cup chicken stock (see recipe)
 1 cup onions, chopped
 1/2 cup celery, chopped
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
 1 tbsp garlic, diced
 1 cup apples, diced
 1 cup apple cider
 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a fork, prick sausage at intervals and place in a heavy black iron skillet. Add stock and cook over medium high heat, covered, turning sausage occasionally until fat is rendered. Once browned, remove sausage and pour all but 1/4 cup of the drippings from the skillet. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and apples. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Return sausage to the skillet and add cider, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Cover, place in oven and bake 30 to 45 minutes. Serve on a large platter surrounded by honeyed apple rings.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Grandma Blizek's Lithuanian Sausage

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: Approximately 12 - 15 (6-inch) links

COMMENT:

I first tasted this dish when Kathy McWhorter of the Chef John Folse & Company Research and Development Department gave me a sample. I loved it! My only addition was a bit of spice to give it a Louisiana flair.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds boneless pork butt
 1/2 pound pork fat
 2 pounds boneless smoked ham
 2 onions, diced
 2 1/2 tsps ground Allspice
 8 tsps garlic, minced
 2 tsps salt
 2 tsps black pepper
 1/2 cup ice water
 32 - 35mm sausage casings for stuffing

METHOD:

Note: 32 - 35mm natural hog casings may be purchased from Targill's Butcher Supply at (337) 942-6276, or from any butcher shop or specialty sausage market. Ask the butcher for enough casing to stuff 4 pounds of pork sausage.

Grind pork and ham through a 3/8" plate. Mix together all remaining ingredients until thoroughly blended, approximately 5 minutes. Add ice water to keep fat in sausage congealed. This also adds moisture to the sausage. Stuff the mixture into the casings and twist into 6-inch links. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. In a 2-gallon stock pot, simmer sausage links in boiling water for 20 minutes. Serve with boiled potatoes and sautéed cabbage with onions.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Chaurice Sausage

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 9 (12-inch) Links

COMMENT:

Chaurice is a spicy pork sausage used extensively in Creole cooking. One of the few sausages seasoned with fresh vegetables, it is seen time and time again in different presentations on the Creole table. It is related to the Spanish chorizo which is commonly used in paella, the forefather of our own jambalaya. Chorizo was also used to flavor garbanzo beans. Today in South Louisiana, chaurice is seen most often as a pan-fried side dish for white or red beans. Although much more common in Creole cooking, chaurice is used from time to time by the Cajuns as well.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pounds pork butt
- 2 pounds pork fat
- 2 cups onions, finely diced
- 1 cup celery, finely diced
- 1/2 cup garlic, finely diced
- 2 cups green onions, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp dry thyme
- 1/4 cup cracked black pepper
- 2 tbsps cayenne pepper
- 3 tbsps salt
- 1/2 cup ice water
- 12 feet pork casing

METHOD:

Cut pork butt into 1 1/2-inch pieces. Using a meat grinder with a coarse chopping plate, grind pork and pork fat. In a large mixing bowl, combine all remaining ingredients. Blend well to ensure that all pieces are evenly distributed throughout the sausage. Add ice water to keep fat in sausage congealed. This will also add moisture to the sausage. Once ingredients are well blended, use the sausage attachment on your meat grinder to stuff into casings. You should section the sausage at 1-foot intervals by twisting the casing as it fills. Tie off the sausage at each end using a heavy gauge twine. The sausage may then be frozen. To cook, place chaurice in a heavy-bottom sauté pan with approximately 1/4 cup cold water. Bring to a low simmer and cover. Cook approximately 30 minutes, adding water if necessary. Uncover pan and raise temperature to medium-high. Continue cooking until sausage is brown on all sides, approximately 15 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Smoked Sausage

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: Approximately 12-15 (6-inch) links

COMMENT:

I use the same basic recipe to make smoked sausage as I do to make platines. The only exception is that the meat mixture is stuffed into sausage casings.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pounds ground pork butt
- 1 pound pork fat
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 1/2 cup green onions, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp paprika for color
- 1/2 cup ice water
- 32 - 35mm sausage casing for stuffing

METHOD:

Note: 32 - 35mm natural hog casings may be purchased from Targill's Butcher Supply at (337)942-6276, or from any butcher shop or specialty sausage market. Ask the butcher for enough casing to stuff 4 pounds of pork sausage.

Combine all of the above ingredients except salt and pepper until thoroughly blended. When totally mixed, add salt and pepper to taste. Add ice water to keep fat in sausage congealed. This also adds moisture to the sausage. I suggest cooking a small piece of the mixed sausage and tasting for flavor prior to finishing the dish. Stuff the mixture into the casings and twist into 6-inch links. Smoke the sausages in a home-style smoker with pecan wood flavoring until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees F. I suggest smoking temperatures of approximately 140 degrees. They will keep 3-4 days in the refrigerator or up to 6 months frozen.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Platines

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: Approximately 15 patties

COMMENT:

Platines are a highly seasoned pork sausage that are normally formed into a round, burger-like patty prior to cooking. Unlike sausage, platines are wrapped in caul fat rather than stuffed into sausage casings. This was yet another creative dish developed by the Cajuns to make an extravagant meal out of simple ground pork.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds ground pork butt
 1 cup onions, diced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced
 2 tbsps garlic, minced
 1/2 cup green onions, thinly sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and black pepper to taste
 1 tbsp paprika for color
 1/2 cup ice water
 caul fat (optional)

METHOD:

Note: Caul fat is a very thin, veil-like web fat that may be purchased from any butcher shop or specialty sausage market. Ask the butcher for enough caul fat to wrap 3 pounds of pork patty sausage.

Combine all of the above ingredients except salt and pepper until thoroughly blended. When totally mixed, add salt and pepper to taste. Add ice water to keep fat in sausage congealed. This also adds moisture to the sausage. I suggest cooking a small piece of the mixed sausage and tasting for flavor prior to finishing the dish. Divide the mixture into equal 4-ounce portions or approximately the size of a hamburger patty. Form the mixture into patties 3/4-inches thick and 3-inches in diameter. If desired, wrap each patty with caul fat to hold the meat in shape during cooking. Platines may be fried or grilled as a breakfast sausage or simmered in a rich, brown gravy or tomato sauce, and served over rice or grits.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Root Beer and Cane Syrup Glazed Ham

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

This is a wonderful recipe to create your own special holiday ham. It is quite simple to accomplish, but I guarantee you will receive rave reviews with this dish. Try adding a few of your own secret spices.

INGREDIENTS:

6 bottles root beer (high quality)
 1 red apple, sliced
 1 green apple, sliced
 1 cup red seedless grapes
 1/2 orange, sliced
 1/2 tsp cloves
 cracked black pepper to taste
 1 tsp filé (ground sassafras)

METHOD FOR BOILING HAM:

Place ham in a heavy-bottom black iron pot or dutch oven. Surround the ham with apples, grapes, orange and cloves. Add root beer and dust with cracked black pepper and filé. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Boil approximately 1 hour, turn ham over and continue boiling until root beer is reduced to a thick syrup. Remove ham and set aside. Continue to reduce syrup until it is the consistency of molasses. **CAUTION:** Do not scorch. Remove syrup and place in a mixing bowl. Allow to cool and reserve for later.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (5-10 pound) smoked ham
 1/2 cup root beer syrup (reserved)
 1 cup Creole mustard
 1/2 cup brown sugar
 1/2 cup Steen's Cane syrup
 1/4 cup pineapple juice
 1/4 cup cracked black pepper
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 pinch of allspice
 pinch of ground clove

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. In a mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients except the ham. Using a wire whisk, blend all spices into the mustard mixture until well incorporated. Place ham in center of a Dutch oven and coat completely with the sweet mustard mixture. Bake uncovered for 1 hour. You may wish to decorate the

ham for the table centerpiece. If so, use a sharp paring knife to cut slits an eighth inch deep diagonally across the ham. Continue in the same pattern from the opposite side until even triangles appear from the cuts. Stuff with cloves and, using toothpicks, secure pineapple slices or fresh strawberries to the top of the ham before baking.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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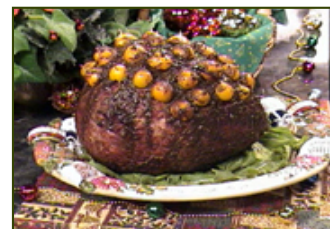
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Root Beer and Kumquat Glazed Ham**Prep Time:** 1 Hour**Yields:** 8-10 Servings**Comment:**

This is a wonderful recipe to create your own special holiday ham. It is quite simple to accomplish, but I guarantee you will receive rave reviews with this dish. Try adding a few of your own secret spices.

**Ingredients for boiling:**

- 1 (5-10 pound) smoked ham
- 6 bottles root beer (high quality)
- 12 kumquats, halved
- ½ tsp cloves
- cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 tsp filé (ground sassafras)

Method for boiling ham:

Place ham in a cast iron pot or heavy-bottomed Dutch oven. Surround with kumquats and cloves. Add root beer and dust with cracked black pepper and filé. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Boil approximately 1 hour, turn ham over and continue boiling until root beer is reduced to a thick syrup. Remove ham and set aside. Continue to reduce syrup until it is the consistency of molasses. CAUTION: Do not scorch. Remove root beer syrup and place in a mixing bowl. Allow to cool and reserve for use in the glaze.

Ingredients for glaze:

- ½ cup root beer syrup (reserved)
- 1 cup Creole mustard
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup Steen's Cane syrup
- ¼ cup pineapple juice
- ¼ cup cracked black pepper
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of nutmeg
- pinch of allspice
- pinch of ground clove
- kumquat halves, optional

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a mixing bowl, combine syrup, mustard, sugar, cane syrup and pineapple juice. Whisk all spices into the mustard mixture until well blended. Place ham in center of a Dutch oven and coat completely with the mustard mixture. Bake uncovered for 1 hour. NOTE: Before baking, you may wish to decorate the ham

for the table centerpiece. If so, use a sharp paring knife to cut slits 1/8-inch deep diagonally across the ham. Continue in the same pattern from the opposite side until diamond shapes appear from the cuts. Stud with a clove at the point of each diamond and, using toothpicks, secure kumquat halves to the top of the ham.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Chopin's Polish Sausage

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Frederic Chopin was born on March 1, 1810 near Warsaw, Poland in the village of Zelazowa Wola, a town known for its sausage-making. This is a simple version of Polish sausage that is great for even a Louisianian's palate.

INGREDIENTS:

5 lbs. ground pork butt
 2 tbsp sugar
 1 tbsp marjoram
 1 tsp allspice
 1 tsp savory
 1/2 cup garlic, minced
 3 tbsps salt
 3 tbsps black pepper
 1 cup ice water

METHOD:

Have your butcher double grind the pork butt and supply you with enough hog sausage casing to stuff 5 lbs of pork. A home-style electric grinder with sausage stuffing attachment will work perfectly, or you may wish to have your sausage maker stuff the ingredients for you. In a large mixing bowl, combine pork with all of the seasoning ingredients. It should be mixed thoroughly using your hands adding a little of the ice water to retain a cold temperature in the pork. Continue mixing and adding ice water until all is used up and the sausage is well blended. Stuff into casings and cook, bake or fry. This makes a wonderful Polish sausage sandwich.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Ham, Roast and Turkey Supreme

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 3-6

COMMENT:

The great thing about this dish is that it can be a filling for puff pastry shells or with the addition of milk and stock may become a rich cream soup. Begin with the same amounts you had in the previous recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups turkey, diced
 3 cups roast, diced
 3 cups ham, diced
 1/2 pound butter
 2 cups onions, diced
 1 cup celery, diced
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1/2 cup green bell pepper, diced
 2 tbsps garlic, minced
 6 tbsps flour
 1 quart chicken stock
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 1 ounce sherry
 2 cups button mushrooms, sliced
 1 cup grated cheddar cheese
 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 2 tbsps basil, chopped
 1 tbsp thyme, chopped
 salt and pepper to taste
 6 puff pastry shells

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and blend well to absorb the butter. Add the meat, blending well into the mixture. Add heavy whipping cream, blending well into the roux mixture. Add hot stock, one ladle at a time until thick, white sauce consistency is achieved. Bring to a low boil. Reduce to simmer, then add mushrooms, green onions, basil and thyme. Cook 20 - 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep from scorching. Additional stock may be needed should mixture get too thick. Add cheddar cheese and stir until melted totally into the sauce. Season to taste using salt and pepper. To serve place a ladle of the supreme into the center of a hollowed-out pastry shell as a perfect starter course, or serve two as an entree. This works well as a pot pie filling and may be made well in advance and frozen. If you wish to create a soup from this recipe, add additional stock or cream until soup-like consistency is achieved.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Smoked Tasso

PREP TIME: 2-1/2 Hours

MAKES: 3 pounds

COMMENT:

Tasso is yet another example of the Cajun and Creole desire for unique flavor in a recipe. Tasso is a dried smoked product that is seasoned with cayenne pepper, garlic and salt and heavily smoked. The word tasso is believed to have come from the Spanish work "tasajo" which is dried, cured beef. Although this delicacy is often thinly sliced and eaten alone, it is primarily used as a pungent seasoning for vegetables, gumbos and soups.

Today in South Louisiana, tasso is becoming a popular seasoning for new and creative dishes. It has also gained wide acclaim as an hors d'oeuvre served with dipping sauces or fruit glazes.

At Lafitte's Landing Restaurant, we have incorporated tasso into our cream sauces and compound butters to create a new taste unheard of in classical cooking.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pounds pork butt
- 1/2 cup Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 tbsp Louisiana Gold Pepper
- 1/4 cup fresh cayenne pepper
- 1/4 sup cracked black pepper
- 1/4 cup salt
- 1/2 cup granulated garlic

METHOD:

Cut pork butt into one half inch thick strips. Place on a baking pan and season with Worcestershire and Louisiana Gold sauces. Once liquids are well blended into meat, add all remaining ingredients. Mix well into meat to ensure that each piece is well coated with the seasoning mixture. Cover with clear wrap and refrigerate overnight. Using a home style smoker, and using briquettes flavored with pecan wood and sugar cane strips if possible, smoke tasso at 175-200 degrees F for two and a half hours. Once cooked, tasso may be frozen or used to season gumbos, vegetables or a great pot of white or red beans.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Andouille Sausage

PREP TIME: 6 Hours

SERVES: 5 (12-inch) links

COMMENT:

Andouille is the nationally famous Cajun smoked sausage of Louisiana. Made with pork butt, shank and a small amount of pork fat, this sausage is seasoned with salt, cracked black pepper and garlic. The andouille is then slowly smoked over pecan wood and sugar cane. Andouille is stuffed into the beef middle casing, which makes the sausage approximately 1 1/2 inches in diameter. When smoked, it becomes very dark, almost black in color. It was not uncommon for the Cajuns to smoke andouille for seven to eight hours at approximately 175 degrees F.



Traditionally, the andouilles from France were made from the large intestines and stomach of the pig, seasoned heavily and smoked. In parts of Germany, where some say andouille originated, the sausage was made with all remaining intestines and casings pulled through a larger casing. The sausage was seasoned and smoked, and it was served thinly sliced as an hors d'oeuvre.

It is interesting to note that the finest andouille in France comes from the Brittany and Normandy areas. It is believed that over half of the Acadian exiles who came to Louisiana in 1755 were originally from these coastal regions.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 pounds pork butt
- 1/2 pound pork fat
- 1/2 cup garlic, chopped
- 1/4 cup cracked black peppercorns
- 2 tbsps cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp dry thyme
- 2 tbsps salt
- 6 feet beef middle casing (see butcher or specialty shop)

METHOD:

Cube pork butt into 1 1/2-inch cubes. Using a meat grinder with four, 1/4-inch holes in the grinding plate, grind pork and pork fat. If you do not have a grinding plate this size, I suggest hand cutting the pork butt into 1/4-inch square pieces. Place ground pork in a large mixing bowl and blend in all remaining ingredients. Once well blended, stuff meat into casings in 1-foot links, using the sausage attachment on your meat grinder. Tie both ends of the sausage securely using heavy gauge twine. In your home style smoker, smoke andouille at 175-200 degrees F for approximately 4-5 hours. The andouille may then be

frozen and used for seasoning gumbos, white or red beans, pastas or grilling as an hors d'oeuvre.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Peach Glazed Pork Kabobs

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Other than chicken, pork is the most versatile meat in America. Since it is so often on sale at your local supermarket, pork is the perfect meat to cube and fashion into kabobs. For a different taste, try glazing the pork with different fruit, jams or jellies.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds boneless pork loin, cubed
 ¼ pound butter
 1 red bell pepper, cubed
 1 yellow bell pepper, cubed
 1 bermuda onion, cubed
 18 large, button mushrooms
 18 slices fresh peaches
 ¼ cup orange juice
 ½ cup peach preserves
 salt to taste
 cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a large bamboo skewer make kabobs by alternating mushroom, pork, peppers, onions and peaches. Once the kabobs have been made season to taste using salt and pepper. Place the kabobs on a baking sheet and in a separate bowl combine orange juice and peach preserves. Drizzle kabobs with butter and season with salt and cracked black pepper. Blend the ingredients well and using a pastry brush glaze the kabobs with the preserve mixture. Bake for 15 minutes, glaze with additional mixture and bake 10-15 minutes longer or until done. You may wish to serve with seasoned rice or pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Smothered Pork Chops Ruston-Style

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Smoking of pork was a natural thing in the early days of Louisiana cooking. Often there was no time to allow for smoking when meals were needed in a rush, so the innovative cooks of North Louisiana did the next best thing. To smother the chops with slices of heavy smoked sausage imported the flavor, and the addition of Ruston peaches made an ordinary dish spectacular.

INGREDIENTS:

6 3/4 inch, center cut loin chops
 flour for dusting
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 salt and black pepper to taste
 1 cup onions, chopped
 1 cup celery, chopped
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, chopped
 1/4 cup chopped yellow bell pepper
 1 tbsp garlic, diced
 1 link heavy, smoked sausage
 3 peaches, sliced
 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
 dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 dried thyme and basil to taste

METHOD:

Have your butcher cut 3/4 inch chops from the center of a pork loin. The heavy chops will hold up under the long braising period. Season the chops with salt and pepper and dust lightly in flour. In a large black iron skillet, with lid, heat oil over medium high heat. Sauté chops on both sides until golden brown. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic, sauté until vegetables are wilted. Slice the smoked sausage and add to the chops. Add sliced peaches and mushrooms, reduce heat to simmer, cover and allow to cook until chops are tender. Add a little water or chicken stock as needed to keep from sticking or drying out. Add green onions, parsley and season to taste using Louisiana Gold, thyme and basil. Once chops are tender, remove to a serving platter and top with the sausage and peach sauce. You may wish to serve with pasta or seasoned rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Black-Eyed Pea Jambalaya - (Hopping John)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Although the origin of the name "Hopping John" is a bit obscure, many food historians debate that the name originated from Confederate soldiers describing the action of the peas hopping in a pot of boiling water during the cooking process. Black-eyed peas were brought to America by the Africans and, regardless of whether eaten in a jambalaya or as a side dish, the peas are indeed a Southern delicacy.

INGREDIENTS:

2 (16-ounce) cans of black-eyed peas
 6 bacon strips
 1 cup onions, diced
 1 cup celery, diced
 ½ cup red bell peppers, diced
 ½ cup yellow bell peppers, diced
 ¼ cup garlic, chopped
 1 pound ham, cubed
 ½ pound smoked sausage, sliced
 2 cups long-grain rice
 3 cups chicken stock
 ½ cup green onions, sliced
 ½ cup parsley, chopped
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large cast iron Dutch oven, fry bacon over medium-high heat to render fat. Once fat is rendered, remove bacon, chop and set aside for later use. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic to the bacon fat. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ham and smoked sausage. Cook 3-5 additional minutes. Add black-eyed peas, chicken stock and season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. You should slightly over-season because the rice will need additional seasoning for flavor. Add rice, green onions and parsley. Blend well into the mixture, bring to a rolling boil, cover and reduce to simmer. Cook for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to sit covered for 15 minutes prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Creole Jambalaya

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

The main difference between Cajun and Creole Jambalaya is the addition of tomato sauce and fresh tomatoes. Since tomatoes are American in origin, they did not play a role in international cuisine until the discovery of this country. It was the innovative Creoles who elected to give this paella-like dish a touch of class with the addition of vine-ripe Creole tomatoes.

INGREDIENTS:

¼ pound butter
 1 lb andouille sausage, sliced
 1 lb ham, diced
 1½ cups onions, chopped
 1½ cups celery, chopped
 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1½ tbsp garlic, chopped
 3 cups Uncle Ben's rice, raw
 2 cups cooked chicken, diced
 5 cups chicken stock
 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
 1 Creole tomato, diced
 1 bay leaf
 ½ tsp thyme
 ¼ tsp cumin
 1 tbsp basil
 salt and pepper to taste
 2 lbs 50-count shrimp, peeled
 1 cup sliced green onions

METHOD:

In a large Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add andouille and ham and continue to cook until lightly caramelized on the bottom of the pot, 10-15 minutes. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Continue to sauté until vegetables are wilted, 3-5 minutes. Stir in rice and chicken, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Add chicken stock, tomato sauce, tomatoes and spices. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook on low heat, covered, for 30 minutes. Take care that heat is low enough to prevent scorching. Add shrimp and green onions, stirring well into the mixture, cover and cook 10 additional minutes or until shrimp are done. Serve as a main course or as a stuffing for chicken or seafood.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Soul Pork Roast

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The word soul is used to describe not only the music created in the slave quarters and cotton fields of the South, but a cooking style as well. To best describe it, one would say it takes a whole lot of soul to create something out of nothing. Lesser cuts of meat, trimmings and leftover vegetables were often thrown into a black iron pot in a slave cabin to create a dish that far surpassed an entree in the "main house." The flavor of soul is evident in this wonderful pork roast.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (5-pound) Boston Butt roast
 1/4 cup garlic, diced
 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
 1 tsp thyme
 1 tsp basil
 2 jalapeno or cayenne peppers, diced
 4 tbsp salt
 4 tbsp cracked black pepper
 1/4 cup oil
 2 cup onion, chopped
 1 cup celery, chopped
 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
 6 garlic cloves, chopped
 6 carrots, sliced 1 inch
 1 quart beef or chicken stock
 1 cup green onions
 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
 dash of hot sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a small mixing bowl, combine diced garlic, green onions, thyme, basil, jalapeno or cayenne peppers, salt and pepper. Using a paring knife, pierce approximately ten, 1-inch holes through the roast and season each pocket with an equal amount of the mixture. This will give great internal flavor to the roast. Season the outside of the roast completely with salt, pepper and hot sauce to taste. In a heavy-bottomed dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Sear 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Surround roast with onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and carrots. Pour in stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cover, place in oven, and allow to cook 2 to 2 1/2 hours or until roast is tender. Add green onions, parsley and a dash of hot sauce. Remove roast and place on a serving platter. Allow to rest 15 minutes prior to slicing. Serve over steamed white rice with a generous portion of the pan drippings and a slice of corn bread.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Cajun Stuffed Chaudin

PREP TIME: 1-1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Just about every culture has found some interesting method of stuffing the stomach of a butchered animal. Possibly none is more famous than the haggis of Scotland, but having eaten both haggis and chaudin, I'll take chaudin any day!

INGREDIENTS:

1 medium size chaudin (pork stomach)
 2 quarts cold water
 4 tbsps soda
 1/2 cup vinegar
 1/2 cup butter
 1 cup chopped onions
 1/2 cup chopped celery
 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms
 1/2 cup ground andouille sausage
 1/2 pound ground beef
 3 pounds ground pork
 1 cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
 2 eggs
 1/2 cup chopped green onions
 1/2 cup chopped parsley
 Salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 2 small sliced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 2 cups sliced mushrooms
 3 cups chicken stock
 Salt and cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

Have your butcher clean one chaudin properly for you. Place chaudin in a large bowl with water, soda and vinegar. Allow to set for 1 hour. In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat butter over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, mushrooms and andouille and sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ground beef and pork. Continue to cook until meat is well browned and separated, about 45 minutes. Once browned, add bread crumbs, eggs, green onions and parsley. Cook an additional 3 minutes and season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Remove from heat and set aside. Remove chaudin from soda water and rinse under tap 2 to 3 times. Using a large metal spoon, stuff chaudin with ground meat dressing until completely full. Secure open ends with toothpicks and heavy gauge twine. In a heavy-bottomed dutch oven, heat oil over medium

high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, carrots and mushrooms approximately 2 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chaudin and brown well on all sides. Add chicken stock, bring to a low boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cover dutch oven and allow chaudin to cook approximately 1 hour turning occasionally. Season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Once cooked, slice into 1/2-inch slices and serve with natural sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Bayou Teche Pork and Yam Breakfast Sausage

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 25 - 30 (3-ounce) patties

COMMENT:

Normally, pork is served with fruit or fruit-flavored sauces to help enhance the taste -- crown roast with apple sauce, pork chops with stewed apples, and my favorite, pork sausage with candied yams. In this recipe the cubed yam is added to the sausage prior to cooking for not only flavor, but eye appeal.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 pounds ground pork
- 2 tsps dried thyme
- 1 (16 ounce) can Bruce's yams, drained
- 1 tbsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp black pepper
- 2 tsps salt
- 1 1/2 tsps rubbed sage
- 1 1/2 tsps granulated garlic
- 1 tsp ginger
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1 1/2 tsps nutmeg
- 1 cup iced water

METHOD:

When making sausage of any type, it is always best to keep the meat chilled to 35-40 degrees F. The iced water in the recipe maintains the cold temperature in the meat and sets the fat in the sausage. Slice the drained yams and dice into 1/4-inch cubes. Place the cubes on a cookie sheet and freeze for later use. In a large mixing bowl, combine all of the above ingredients except yams. Using your hands, mix the sausage well, turning and pushing the meat 10-15 minutes to ensure proper blending. Gently fold in the frozen yams. NOTE: Freezing the yams will guarantee a solid 1/4-inch cube which will be visible in the finished sausage. Roll the sausage into 3-inch patties or stuff into hog casing and tie off into 6-inch links. Cook in the same method as any other breakfast sausage or you may wish to grill the links over charcoal.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Pork and Sausage Jambalaya

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Jambalaya has become the most famous rice dish in America. The origin of this dish cannot be disputed. When the early Spanish settlers came to New Orleans in the early 1700s, they brought with them the recipe for their famous paella. Since the ingredients for paella were not to be found in South Louisiana, their recipe was quickly adapted to the products at hand. Oysters and crawfish replaced clams and mussels in the recipe, while andouille took the place of ham. Because the main ingredient in the dish was rice, the dish was named "Jambon a la yaya." Yaya is the African word for rice, and there is no argument that the "black hand in the pot" had a tremendous influence on our jambalaya. Today, many variations of the dish are made with whatever ingredients are available. However, the most popular combination is pork, chicken and andouille.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pounds pork, cubed
- 2 pounds andouille, sliced
- 1/4 cup Crisco or bacon drippings
- 2 cups onions, chopped
- 2 cups celery, chopped
- 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup garlic, diced
- 8 cups beef or chicken stock
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and cayenne pepper
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- 5 cups long grain rice

METHOD:

In a 7-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat Crisco or bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Sauté cubed pork until dark brown on all sides and some pieces are sticking to the bottom of the pot, approximately 30 minutes. This is very important as the brown color of jambalaya is derived from the color of the meat. Add andouille and stir fry an additional 10-15 minutes. Tilt the pot to one side and ladle out all oil, except for one large cooking spoon. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Continue cooking until all vegetables are well caramelized. However, be very careful as vegetables will tend to scorch. Add beef or chicken stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cook all ingredients in stock approximately 15 minutes for flavors to develop. Add mushrooms, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. I suggest that you slightly over-season since the rice tends to require a little extra seasoning. Add rice, reduce heat to very low, cover and cook 30-45 minutes, stirring at 15 minute intervals. Do not uncover except to stir.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Vivaldi's Eggplant and Italian Sausage Casserole

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Antonio Vivaldi was born on March 4, 1678 in Italy. His father was a barber and was apparently a fine violin player. Vivaldi took up the violin and soon, became a better player than his father and by age 25 was teaching music. Throughout Italy, during this period, eggplant was showing up in many dishes and with the combination of sweet Italian sausage, made a casserole that tastes like the violin sounded.

INGREDIENTS:

4 large eggplants, peeled and sliced 1/4-in thick
 2 lbs Italian sausage
 1/4 cup virgin olive oil
 2 cups onions, diced
 1 cup celery, diced
 1 cup bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, chopped
 4 (8 oz) cans tomato sauce
 2 cups water
 1 1/2 tsps garlic powder
 1 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
 1/2 cup pimento olives, chopped
 4 hard boiled eggs, sliced
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Sprinkle salt over eggplant slices and place in a large colander with a weight on top to help squeeze water from the eggplant. Let drain for 1 hour. In a heavy 5-qt dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Remove 1 lb of the Italian sausage from the casing and brown in oil as you would ground meat. When brown add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Blend well into the sausage mixture. Saute 3 to 5 minutes. Add tomato sauce, water and season lightly with salt and pepper. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 45 minutes. Rinse the eggplant slices under water and pat dry, brush with olive oil and place on a cookie sheet and bake for approximately 30 minutes to tenderize, but do not allow to fall apart. When tomato sauce is ready, place a ladle of sauce in the bottom of a 9 x 13 casserole dish. Cover with a layer of eggplant and sprinkle with a small amount of cheese, olives and boiled eggs. Continue layering until all is used up to create a lasagne-type casserole. Pour any excess sauce on top of the casserole and surround with remaining Italian sausage cut in 1-in links and top with remaining Parmesan. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Bayou Teche Pork and Yam Breakfast Sausage

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 25–30 (3-ounce) Patties

Comment:

Normally, pork is served with fruit or fruit-flavored sauces to enhance the taste. In this recipe cubed yams are added to pork sausage prior to cooking to create tremendous flavor and presentation.

Ingredients:

- 5 pounds ground pork
- 1(16-ounce) can Bruce's Yams, drained
- 2 tsps dried thyme
- 1 tbsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp black pepper
- 2 tsps salt
- 1½ tsps rubbed sage
- 1½ tsps granulated garlic
- 1 tsp ginger
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1½ tsps nutmeg
- 1 cup iced water
- hog casing (optional)

Method:

Dice yams into ¼-inch cubes then place in a single layer on a cookie sheet and freeze for later use. Freezing the yams will guarantee a solid cube that will be visible in the finished sausage. In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except for yams. Using your hands, mix the meat well, turning and pushing for 10–15 minutes to ensure proper blending. Gently fold in the frozen yams. Roll the sausage into 3-inch patties or stuff into hog casing and tie off into 6-inch links. Cook in the same method as any other breakfast sausage or grill the links over charcoal.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Rosemary Stuffed Leg of Pork

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 6-8 Servings

Comment:

The fresh pork ham has been a tradition on the New Year's Day table for generations in Louisiana. Normally, the ham is stuffed with fresh seasonings and spices prior to roasting. Various fruits and glazes may be added during baking to enhance this delicious holiday centerpiece.

Ingredients:

1 (5-7 pound) fresh pork ham
 1/2 cup chopped rosemary
 1/4 cup chopped thyme
 1/4 cup chopped basil
 1/4 cup chopped sage
 1/2 cup chopped green onions
 1/2 cup chopped parsley
 1/2 cup minced garlic
 1/2 cup melted butter
 3 apples, quartered
 1 large onion, quartered
 10 garlic cloves
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Have your butcher remove the heavy skin covering the outer portion of the leg. You may wish to remove the lower portion of the shank to ensure that the roast will fit in a home-style oven. Using a sharp paring knife, cut approximately 15-20 (1-inch) slits throughout the roast. In a small mixing bowl, combine rosemary, thyme, basil, sage, green onions, parsley and garlic. Season the mixture generously with salt and pepper. Blend all ingredients well and stuff a generous portion of the seasoning mixture into each slit. Place the roast in a large baking pan and drizzle with melted butter. Coat the roast with remaining seasoning mixture. Surround with apples, onions and garlic. Sprinkle the entire roast with additional salt, pepper and hot sauce. Cover with foil and bake approximately 2½ hours, until internal temperature reaches 145°F. Remove cover and allow roast to brown until internal temperature reaches 165-170°F. Allow to sit 30 minutes prior to slicing.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Pork Tenderloin with Creole Mustard Cream Sauce

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 2 Servings

Comment: The big trend in weight loss right now is low-carbohydrate diets. During this healthy eating month, a low carb recipe is a perfect dish. With a lot of people making New Year's resolutions to lose weight, we thought we would help out a little bit. This pork tenderloin is low in carbs (only 5 grams per serving) and high in flavor. This entrée will fill you up and leave you extremely satisfied.



Ingredients:

- 1 (1 pound) whole pork tenderloin cut into 2 (5-inch) sections
- 2 tbsps Creole mustard
- 2 tbsps butter
- 2 tbsps minced onions
- 2 tbsps minced celery
- 2 tbsps minced red bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 cup reduced sodium chicken broth
- ½ cup sour cream
- salt and black pepper to taste
- minced fresh dill for garnish

Method:

In a heavy skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add pork and cook 5 minutes on each side until browned. Remove pork from skillet, cover and keep warm. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, and garlic to skillet and cook for about 30 seconds. Add chicken broth and blend in vegetables well. Simmer liquid 2-3 minutes to reduce. Remove skillet from heat and slowly whisk in sour cream and mustard. Return pork to skillet along with any juices that have accumulated. Cook pork over medium-low heat for 2-3 additional minutes. Transfer pork to a platter and pour sauce over the meat. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and minced dill. Serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

New Year's Day Jambalaya

Prep Time: 1 hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment: This delectable dish is perfect for your New Year's celebration because it includes the two traditional ingredients: black-eyed peas and cabbage. The tradition states that black-eyed peas bring good luck and cabbage brings financial good fortune.

Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 pound cubed ham
- 1 pound sliced smoked sausage
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 medium head cabbage, chopped
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can stewed tomatoes
- 1 (15.8-ounce) can black-eyed peas
- 1 cup uncooked white long grain rice
- 1 cup water
- Creole seasoning to taste
- salt and pepper to taste



Method:

In a 5-quart Dutch oven heat oil over medium-high heat. Add ham, sausage, onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Stirring often, cook 5-10 minutes or until ham and sausage are browned. This browning process gives the finished dish its golden-brown color. Add cabbage, tomatoes, black-eyed peas, rice and water. Stir until well combined. Season with Creole seasoning, salt and pepper. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally for 35-40 minutes or until rice is tender.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Cochon de Lait Sandwiches

Prep Time: 3 Hours**Yields:** 6-8 Servings**Comment:**

Try this recipe with either pork butt or a fresh pork ham cut to size by your local butcher. Cooking times will vary depending on the size of the roast. Just remember to cook until fork tender. Cook the pork one day in advance then slice to make the perfect sandwich meat.

Ingredients:

1 (5-6 pound) pork butt
 6 cloves garlic, chopped
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 1/8 tsp thyme
 1/8 tsp basil
 1 tsp salt
 1 tsp red pepper flakes
 1 jalapeño pepper, chopped
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 1 onion, quartered
 2 ribs celery, chopped
 1 carrot, chopped

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a small mixing bowl combine garlic, green onions, thyme, basil, salt and peppers. Using a paring knife, pierce eight (1-inch) holes evenly across the roast and fill each with an equal amount of seasoning mixture. Season the roast completely on the outside with additional salt. In a 12-quart Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Brown roast on all sides. Add onions, celery and carrots. Cover pot, place in oven and bake 2½-3 hours or until fork tender. When the roast is tender, remove the cover and brown 15-20 minutes. The next day, slice meat and serve on bread for a delicious pork sandwich.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Slow Cooker Barbecue Country Ribs

Prep Time: 7 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment: Slow cooking these ribs makes them ideal for the working mother. She can put them in the crock-pot before heading to work, and by the time she returns home, the ribs will be perfect. They are so juicy and tender that every one will think she was in the kitchen all day.



Ingredients:

- 4 pounds boneless country-style pork ribs
- salt and black pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1/3 cup diced green bell peppers
- 1 cup light brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1 cup apple butter
- 1 cup Heinz Kick'r Ketchup
- ½ cup lemon juice
- ½ cup orange juice
- 2 tbsps A1 Bold and Spicy steak sauce
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsps Jack Daniels whiskey
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tsps salt
- 2 tsps black pepper
- Creole seasoning to taste

Method:

Season ribs liberally with salt, black pepper and granulated garlic. In a medium bowl, blend onions, bell peppers, brown sugar, apple butter, ketchup, lemon juice, orange juice, steak sauce, minced

garlic, whiskey, Worcestershire, salt, pepper and Creole seasoning to taste. Pour half of sauce mixture into a 5-quart slow cooker. Add ribs and remaining sauce. Cover and cook on high for 7 hours. If desired, a thicker sauce can be achieved by removing ribs from sauce and pouring it into a saucepan. Boil until it reaches desired consistency. Serve sauce over ribs.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Father's Day Baby Back Ribs

Prep Time: 4 Hours**Yields:** 6-8 Servings**Comment:**

This recipe for pork baby back ribs is sure to impress Dad. On Father's Day, show him how much he is appreciated by cooking these tender, juicy ribs.

Ingredients for Dry Rub:

- 2 slabs baby back pork ribs
- 8 tbsps light brown sugar, tightly packed
- 3 tbsps kosher salt
- 1 tbsp chili powder
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp chipotle chili powder
- ½ tsp old bay seasoning
- ½ tsp ground thyme
- ½ tsp granulated onion
- ½ tsp granulated garlic

Method for Dry Rub:

Preheat oven to 250°F. Place each slab of ribs on dull side of a sheet of heavy-duty aluminum foil. In a mixing bowl, combine all dry rub ingredients and mix well. Sprinkle each side of ribs generously with dry rub and pat into meat. Wrap and refrigerate for a minimum of 1 hour.

Ingredients for Braising Liquid:

- 1 cup white wine
- 2 tbsps white wine vinegar
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsps honey
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped

Method for Braising:

In a small saucepan, combine all liquid ingredients. Bring to a simmer then remove from heat. Place ribs in foil on baking sheet. Open one end of foil packet of each slab and pour half of braising liquid into each. Tilt baking sheet in order to equally distribute liquid. Braise ribs in oven for 2½ hours. Remove ribs from oven. Pour braising liquid into a medium saucepot. Bring to a simmer and reduce by half until a thick syrup consistency is achieved. Brush glaze onto ribs. Place ribs under broiler until glaze caramelizes lightly. Slice each slab into 2 rib bone portions. Place remaining hot glaze in a bowl. Toss ribs in glaze for extra flavor.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Seasoned Ground Beef and Pork

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Yield: 12 Pounds

Comment:

This large batch of fresh seasoned meat can be divided into portions and frozen for later use. The meat can be used for meatballs, meatloaf, hamburgers, stuffed bell peppers, lasagna, dressing etc.

Ingredients:

6 pounds ground chuck
 4 pounds lean ground pork
 3 cups minced onions
 2 cups minced celery
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1 cup chopped parsley
 6 eggs
 1 cups heavy whipping cream
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except salt, pepper and hot sauce. NOTE: Eggs and cream may be left out until ready to cook meat. Blend mixture well then season with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Use meat immediately or divide into 12 (1-pound) packs and freeze. Each pack will serve 4-6 people. After thawing meat, add any other desired ingredients to season specifically for your dish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Pan Fried Pork Chops and Wild Pears

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 4–6 Servings

Comment: Combining Louisiana cooking pears with meat was common in early Cajun homes. The pears are grown in abundance in the area, and they are often used for canning.

Ingredients:

- 6 thin pork chops
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 tsps granulated garlic
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 4 slices apple wood smoked bacon, chopped
- 1 cup minced onions
- ½ cup minced celery
- 2 cups peeled, cored and diced cooking pears
- 1 tbsp Louisiana cane syrup
- 2 cups chicken stock
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup finely chopped parsley

Method:

Season chops well using salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Set aside. In a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven over medium-high heat, add vegetable oil and bacon. Cook until bacon becomes transparent. Add chops and sauté until golden brown on all sides. Once browned, remove and keep warm. In same oil, sauté onions, celery and pears 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add cane syrup and chicken stock. Bring to a rolling boil. Add green onions and chops. Cover Dutch oven and allow chops to cook 1–1½ hours. Season with salt and cracked black pepper. Add parsley and continue cooking until pork chops are completely tender.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Seasoned Meatloaf

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

While this meatloaf is superb fresh out of the oven, it also makes for great leftovers. Slice a piece of the meatloaf and make a cold sandwich with it for lunch the next day.

Ingredients:

2 pounds ground chuck
 1 pound lean ground pork
 1 cup diced onions
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup thinly sliced green onions
 ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup diced garlic
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 ¼ cup chopped basil
 3 eggs
 1/3 cup heavy whipping cream
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 ½ cup Italian bread crumbs
 4 cups favorite tomato sauce

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine ground chuck, pork, onions, celery, green onions, bell peppers, garlic, parsley and basil. Using your hands, mix ingredients until all seasonings are well blended. Add eggs, whipping cream, salt, pepper, hot sauce and bread crumbs. Mix well and mold into a loaf. Place loaf in a casserole dish with sides high enough to hold juices. NOTE: Meatloaf should not touch sides of dish. Top with sauce and sprinkle with a pinch of salt and pepper. Bake uncovered 1–1½ hours or until internal temperature reaches 160°F.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Triple Sausage Pirogues

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 3 Servings

Comment:

These meat-filled pirogues are perfect for a meal at home or a snack at the big game. For portable sandwiches, stuff bread, enclose in plastic wrap and eat as-is or toast bread on a grill.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound ground chuck
- 1 pound bulk Cajun green onion sausage
- 1 pound bulk Italian sausage
- ¼ cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- Worcestershire sauce to taste
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste
- 1 cup Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup Swiss cheese
- 1 large French bread

Method:

NOTE: If you cannot find bulk sausage, buy 6 links of each and remove meat from casing. Preheat oven to 350°F. Cut French bread into thirds. Cut each third into halves then scoop out center. Set aside. In a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven, heat oil over medium heat. Sauté onions, celery bell peppers and garlic 5–7 minutes. Add ground chuck, sausage meats and Worcestershire. Cook 20–30 minutes or until meat is browned. Season mixture with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Stir in cheeses and blend until melted. Stuff an equal amount of meat mixture into bottom halves of hollowed-out bread. Place top half on meat and wrap sandwiches in foil. Place wrapped bread on a pan and bake 8–10 minutes or until brown and crispy.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Slow Cooker Barbeque Pork Roast Quesadillas

Prep Time: 7 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

The only thing the Cajuns love more than Creole cooking is Mexican cuisine. Here, the Cajuns take one of their favorite barbeque pork dishes and turn it into a great meal for game day. Cook the pork roast the night before, that way the only thing you have to worry about while tailgating is assembling the quesadillas.

Ingredients for Roast:

1 (4–5 pound) boneless pork roast
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1/3 cup diced green bell peppers
 1 cup light brown sugar, firmly packed
 1 cup Heinz® Kick'r ketchup
 1 cup Pace® piquante sauce
 ½ cup lemon juice
 2 tbsps A1® Bold and Spicy steak sauce
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 tbsps Jack Daniels® whiskey
 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
 2 tsps salt
 2 tsps cracked black pepper
 Creole seasoning to taste

Method:

Season pork roast liberally with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. In a medium mixing bowl, blend onions, bell peppers, brown sugar, ketchup, lemon juice, steak sauce, minced garlic, whiskey, Worcestershire, salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. Pour half of sauce mixture into a 5-quart slow cooker. Add pork roast and remaining sauce. Cover and cook on high 7 hours. If desired, a thicker sauce can be achieved by removing roast from sauce and pouring it into a saucepan. Boil until it reaches desired consistency. Allow roast to cool and shred meat.

Ingredients for Assembly:

8 (6-inch) flour tortillas
 ½ cup barbecue sauce reserved from cooked pork roast
 ½ cup chopped cilantro
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1 cup shredded Mexican four-cheese blend

2 tbsps butter or margarine, softened

Ingredients for Toppings:

sour cream
sliced green onions
barbecue sauce
chopped cilantro

Method:

Mix shredded pork with reserved sauce, cilantro and green onions. Spoon pork mixture evenly on 1 side of each tortilla. Sprinkle with cheese. Fold tortilla in half, pressing gently to seal. Spread butter on both sides of quesadilla. Heat a large cast iron skillet over medium heat and cook quesadilla 1–2 minutes on each side or until browned. Cut each quesadilla in half for entrée servings or in quarters for appetizers. Serve with desired toppings.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

TAILGATERS CREOLE BOULETTE PO'BOY

Prep Time: 1½ Hours**Yields:** 4 Servings**Comment:**

These tasty meatballs are great on a po'boy or in your favorite gravy. If using in gravy or sauce, drop in meatballs uncooked and let simmer 30 minutes.

Ingredients:

1 pound ground chuck
 1 pound ground pork
 ½ cup minced onions
 ½ cup minced celery
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup minced green bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 2 eggs
 ½ cup seasoned bread crumbs
 2 tbsps chopped basil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 ¼ cup olive oil
 4 cups tomato sauce (prepared spaghetti sauce works well)
 4 loaves French bread

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, combine ground meats, onions, celery, green onions, bell peppers, garlic and parsley. Using your hands, mix ingredients until well blended. Add eggs, breadcrumbs, basil, salt and pepper. Form mixture into small boulettes. In a large Dutch oven or skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Cook boulettes, a few at a time, until golden brown. Drain well on paper towels. Pour tomato sauce in Dutch oven and heat. Add boulettes to sauce and cook 15 minutes, stirring often until thoroughly heated. Slice French bread in half and spoon boulette mixture evenly into sandwich. You may want to top with slices of provolone or your favorite cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

SKILLET PORK CHOP, TURNIP & SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Pork chops are often served with sweet fruit or vegetable sauces or sides to enhance the flavor of the meat. Here, the chops are smothered with sweet potatoes to create an easy, yet delicious one-pot meal.

Ingredients:

- 4 (½-inch thick) pork rib chops
- 2 turnips, cubed 1 inch
- 3 medium sweet potatoes, cubed 1 inch
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 tsps granulated garlic
- ¼ cup flour
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 4 carrots, sliced 1 inch thick
- ½ cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1 cup chicken stock

Method:

Season pork chops with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Dust chops in flour and shake off any excess. In a large cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add chops and brown well. Drain excess oil from skillet. Top meat with potatoes, carrots, onions, bell peppers, celery, green onions, garlic and parsley. Pour chicken stock over meat and vegetables. Cover and cook over medium-low heat 1–1½ hours or until pork and vegetables are fork tender.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

After Mardi Gras Spicy Pork Roast

Prep Time: 3½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

To spice up things after all the Mardi Gras excitement is over, cook up this pork roast. The spicy flavor infused in the roast and vegetables will keep dinner guests satisfied and the party going.

Ingredients:

- 1 (5–7 pound) Boston butt
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- 3 chile peppers, minced
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 2 tsps salt
- 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- ½ cup lard or bacon fat
- 1 dozen pearl onions
- 1 dozen new potatoes, peeled
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 (8-ounce) package sliced button mushrooms
- 2 cups water

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In medium mixing bowl, combine green onions, chiles, garlic, 2 teaspoons salt and 1 tablespoon pepper. Blend well. With a paring knife, cut 12 (1–1½ inch) slits throughout roast. Stuff each slit with an equal amount of mixture, until all is used. Season outside well with salt and pepper. In a 9-quart Dutch oven over medium-high heat, melt lard or bacon fat. Add roast to Dutch oven and sear 3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Remove lard or bacon fat. Add all vegetables to Dutch oven. Add water until bottom of pot is covered. Cover and bake 2½–3 hours or until tender. Serve over steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

BRAISED SHRIMP AND SAUSAGE STUFFED PORK CHOPS

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Most people stuff center cut pork chops with rice or cornbread stuffing. Often, even boudin can be found in these dishes. My favorite stuffing is to buy a garlic or green onion fresh sausage and blend it with shrimp, crawfish or crab—whatever’s in season. I then braise it in a black skillet. Wow, what a dish!

Ingredients:

- 4 (1¼–1½ inch thick) center cut pork loin chops
- 4 (6-inch) links fresh, green onion pork sausage
- 1 cup (60–70 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste
- ½ cup melted butter
- ¼ cup minced onions
- ¼ cup minced celery
- ¼ cup minced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup Italian bread crumbs
- 1½ cups chicken stock
- ¼ cup vegetable oil

Method:

Have your butcher cut a pocket into center of chop, where stuffing will eventually be placed. Season pork chops inside and out using salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Set aside. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add shrimp and green onions. Sauté 2–3 minutes or until shrimp are pink and curled. Remove from skillet onto cookie sheet to allow to cool to room temperature. Remove casing from sausage. In a medium mixing bowl, place sausage and cooled shrimp mixture. Blend well and sprinkle in bread crumbs. Blend and season lightly with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. NOTE: Remember that the sausage is already seasoned. Place an equal amount of stuffing in each pork chop and secure opening with a toothpick to keep it closed while cooking. In a cast iron skillet, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Brown pork chops well on both sides then add chicken stock. Bring stock to a rolling boil, cover, remove from heat and place in preheated oven for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

AFTER THE BARBECUE PULLED PORK PO'BOYS

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Often after a holiday barbecue, there are bits of country ribs, brisket and chicken left over destined for the refrigerator, and ultimately, the garbage can. This recipe turns leftovers into a masterpiece of a sandwich.

Ingredients:

4 cups pulled country rib meat or other barbecue
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 1 cup coarsely chopped onions
 ½ cup chopped celery
 ¼ cup thinly sliced garlic
 ½ tsp red pepper flakes
 1½ cups barbecue sauce
 ½ cup water or beef stock
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 6 po'boy loaves or hamburger buns

Method:

NOTE: You should pull meat from bones of barbecue prior to refrigerating, thus making the job easier. Coarsely chop meat into ¼-inch chunks, and mixing varieties is acceptable. In a Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add pepper flakes and chopped meat, blending well into vegetables. Blend in barbecue sauce and water. Bring to a simmer, reduce to low and allow to cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. A little water may be added to retain moisture. Season with salt and pepper, add parsley and cook 5 additional minutes. When meat is tender and stringy, remove from heat for sandwiches or to package for the freezer. When ready to serve, heat po'boy bread or hamburger buns in a 300°F oven until warm. Top with a generous serving of hot barbecue. You may wish to dress the sandwich with lettuce and tomatoes or coleslaw.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

SMOKED ACADIAN BACON WITH CAJUN GLAZE

Prep Time: 24 Hours

Yields: 1 (10-pound) Pork Loin

Comment:

Most butcher supply companies will sell a brown sugar cure for hams. I prefer to use Art's Brown Sugar Cure, which can be purchased from Targil Seasoning & Butcher Supply in Opelousas, La. You can contact them at (337) 942-6276.

Ingredients for Pork Loin:

- 1 (10-pound) boneless pork loin
- 1 (1½-pound bag) Art's Brown Sugar Cure
- 3 gallons cold water
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ¾ cup Louisiana cane syrup
- 1 tbsp cracked black pepper

Method:

In a 5-gallon pot or plastic pail, blend brown sugar cure, water, brown sugar, cane syrup and pepper. Whisk together thoroughly. Using a large meat syringe, inject pork loin on each side (in 6–10 places) with cure mixture. It must be injected with an amount of cure equivalent to 10 percent of its weight. Place pork loin in remaining cure (brine) and allow to marinate 48 hours. Preheat smokehouse or home-style smoker to 120°F. When ready to cook, remove from brine and pat dry. Make Cajun Glaze below. Coat thoroughly with glaze then place in a cheesecloth or "ham sock." NOTE: Cheesecloth suitable for smoking pork can be purchased at any butcher supply company such as Targil. Place pork loin in preheated smokehouse. With drafts open, cook 6 hours. Increase temperature to 140°F and add pecan wood or hickory chips. With drafts half open, cook 4 hours. Close drafts completely and increase temperature to 165°F. Add smoke wood and cook until internal temperature reaches 152°F. Remove and cool at room temperature 6–8 hours prior to refrigeration. Serve hot or chilled. It may be frozen for later use.

Ingredients for Glaze:

- 1 cup cane syrup
- 1 cup Creole mustard
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground cloves
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp filé powder

Method:

In a stainless steel mixing bowl, combine all ingredients. Blend well and brush over pork loin prior to smoking.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

ROCKIN' ROLLIN' MEATLOAF SANDWICH

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 8–10 Servings

Comment:

Sloppy Joes will take a back seat to this meatloaf with a twist! This juicy version, made jellyroll style, can even be made ahead of time. Sliced on a Kaiser roll, and topped with a sauce of onions, mushrooms and marinara, this sandwich will make your kids say, "Sloppy who?"

Ingredients:

1 pound ground beef
 1 pound ground pork
 2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
 ½ cup Italian bread crumbs
 ¼ cup minced onions
 ¼ cup minced celery
 2 tbsps minced green bell peppers
 2 tbsps minced red bell peppers
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 tbsps sliced green onions
 2 tbsps chopped parsley
 2 eggs
 1½ tsps salt
 1½ tsps black pepper
 2 medium red onions, thinly sliced
 8 ounces fresh button mushrooms, sliced
 2 cups prepared marinara sauce
 8 Kaiser rolls

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine meat, bread crumbs, onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic, green onions, parsley, eggs, salt and pepper. Mix well. On a sheet of wax paper, shape meat mixture into a ½-inch thick rectangle. Spread cheese over meat, leaving a ¾-inch border around edges. Roll meat in a jellyroll fashion to enclose filling and form a pinwheel loaf. Press both ends to enclose cheese. Place in a 10" x 15" baking pan. Top with red onions, mushrooms and marinara. Cover and cook 1 hour or until internal temperature reaches 160°F. Cut meatloaf into 1-inch thick slices. Place 1 meatloaf slice on each roll and top with onions, marinara and mushrooms.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Bacon Cheeseburger Meatloaf

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 8–10

COMMENT: This recipe is especially great for picky kids. When the kids are tired of Mom's same old meatloaf, try this tasty, juicy variation. This rolled meatloaf is filled with bacon and cheese, which is sure to make any kid smile.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds ground beef
- ½ cup Italian bread crumbs
- ¼ cup minced onions
- ¼ cup minced celery
- 2 tbsps minced green bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced red bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsps sliced green onions
- 2 tbsps chopped parsley
- 2 eggs
- 1½ tsps salt
- 1½ tsps black pepper
- 2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup bacon, cooked and crumbled



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine beef, bread crumbs, onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic, green onions, parsley, eggs, salt and pepper. Mix well. On a piece of wax paper, shape meat mixture into a ½-inch thick rectangle. Spread cheese over the meat, leaving a ¾-inch border around the edges. Sprinkle bacon over cheese. Roll the meat in a jellyroll fashion to enclose the filling and form a pinwheel loaf. Press both ends to enclose the cheese. Place in a 10" x 15" baking dish and bake for 1 hour or until internal temperature reaches 160°F. Once baked, sprinkle with additional cheese or ketchup and mustard. Any leftovers make great sandwiches for the next day.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

THE PERFECT GRILLED STEAK

Comment:

Steak! One simple word that spells a whole lot of pleasure. Tender and juicy on the inside and cooked to perfection is the mark of the master griller.

RULES OF THE GRILL:

1. Choose the right steak.

The high, dry heat of grilling requires a tender cut of meat. It should be well-marbled (fat content within the grain of the meat). Thin (1 inch) is always better than thick (more than 3 inches).

2. Build the right fire.

Steaks need high heat to sear the meat and form a crust. To cook a thick steak such as a porterhouse or center cut rib-eye, you will also need a moderate heat zone to one side to finish the cooking without burning the outside. This is done by lighting your coals in the center of the pit. Once the coals are completely lit, rake a double thick layer over to one side of the grill and a single layer over to the other side. You should start cooking the steak when you can hold your hand over the hot zone for 2-3 seconds and over the moderate zone for 5-6 seconds. For gas grills, just turn one side down to medium.

3. Season to taste.

With steaks, you should keep the seasoning simple. Coarse salt, freshly ground black pepper from a mill and granulated garlic is best. However, some steaks such as flank or sirloin do well with flavorings such as herbs, soy sauce, Worcestershire, etc.

4. Know when and how to turn the steak.

Place the steaks on the grill at a 45° angle to the bars. Grill for 2 minutes, then rotate the steak 90° without turning over. This makes a nice crosshatch grill mark. You will know to flip the steak when you see tiny beads of blood beginning to form on the top, approximately 4-6 minutes for a 1" steak or 8-10 minutes for a 2" steak. The proper way to turn is with tongs or spatula. Never, ever, stab the meat with a fork, as this will cause all the juices to run onto the coals and create a flavorless, dry steak.

5. Never desert your post.

Remember, you're only grilling for a short time. Great steaks demand constant attention. Once they hit the grill, stay with them. Never forget the fact that, like polish on a mahogany table, a steak needs a pat of butter anointing it immediately upon leaving the grill. This rounds out the flavor, and it is a great time to re-season the meat with just a small pinch of salt & pepper. Try my herb butter for grilled steaks at the bottom of the page for a flavorful finish on the perfectly grilled steak.

6. Let it rest.

All steaks need to rest a few minutes before serving. The high heat tends to tighten the protein. Transferring the steak to a warm platter and letting it rest for 3 minutes will allow the juices to return to the center of the meat as it sits.

BEST STEAKS FOR GRILLING:

Rib-eye - Juicy and well-marbled.

Rib steak - A bone-in rib-eye, thicker than a normal rib-eye, but you all know how much more flavorful a steak on the bone can be.

Strip steak - Lean, meaty and firm texture.

Sirloin - Rich, red and meaty. Flavorful, but tends to be tough. Slice thinly when serving.

Porterhouse - Two steaks in one: a firm strip sirloin and a succulent tenderloin. Normally 2-3" thick.

T-bone - Similar to a Porterhouse, but the tenderloin is smaller.

Filet Mignon - Lean and tender; you can cut it with a fork.

Flank or Skirt Steak - From the underbelly of the steer. Highly flavorful, but tough and stringy. Cook medium rare; slice against the grain.

Herb Butter for Grilled Steaks

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Sauerbraten, Louisiana-Style

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6–8

COMMENT:

Sauerbraten, or sweet and sour roast beef, is normally made with a beef top or rump roast. When the Germans settled Louisiana, they altered the recipe slightly in some neighborhoods and used cubed beef rather than whole roast in the recipe. I have had sauerbraten made with cubed pork here in the bayous of Louisiana as well.

INGREDIENTS:

5 pounds beef rump roast, cubed
 2½ cups water
 1½ cups red wine vinegar
 1 tbsp brown sugar
 1 tbsp salt
 ¼ tsp ground ginger
 10 whole cloves
 6 bay leaves
 6 whole peppercorns
 1 purple sliced onion
 2 lemon slices
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 1 cup diced onion
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup sliced carrots
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 1 cup broken Ginger Snap cookies
 ¼ cup raisins
 hot buttered noodles
 ½ cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a crock or large bowl, combine water, wine vinegar, sugar, salt, ginger, cloves, bay leaves, peppercorns, onion and lemon slices. Stir well to incorporate all spices. Add beef, coat well with marinade and refrigerate overnight, turning meat occasionally. In a large heavy-bottomed dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Remove meat from the liquid and reserve marinade. Place meat in the dutch oven and brown well. Add onions, celery, carrots, garlic and green onions. Sauté into the meat mixture for 3–5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add reserved marinade, bring to a rolling boil, cover and reduce heat to simmer. Allow meat to cook approximately 2 hours, checking occasionally for tenderness. Add additional liquid, beef or chicken stock to help flavor the sauce. Using a slotted spatula, remove meat from the liquid and set aside. Stir in ginger snaps and raisins and cook until sauce is thickened. Return meat to the pot and

blend well into the mixture. Season to taste with salt and cracked black pepper. Serve over hot noodles and garnish with parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Lafitte's Landing 25th Anniversary Veal Forestière

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

In the shadow of the Sunshine Bridge, Lafitte's Landing Restaurant was one of the most renowned eateries in South Louisiana. The restaurant was located in the old Viala Plantation house where the son of pirate Jean Lafitte was married. Chef John Folse acquired the restaurant in 1978 and restored the property to its original condition. In October 1998, the historic home was destroyed by fire. The new Lafitte's Landing is housed at Bittersweet Plantation, Folse's former home of 20 years. The restaurant features four dining rooms named in honor of family members or local historical figures

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 (2-ounce) veal medallions
- 1 cup chanterelles or other wild mushrooms
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 4 tbsps butter
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 2 tbsps minced shallots
- 1 ounce brandy or cognac
- 1 cup prepared demi glace
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large sauté pan, heat oil and butter over medium-high heat. Season medallions with salt and pepper to taste and dust lightly in flour, shaking off any excess. Sauté medallions for 2-3 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Remove to a plate and keep warm in the oven until ready to serve. To the same sauté pan add shallots and garlic and sauté for 2-3 minutes or until slightly golden brown. Add mushrooms and sauté for an additional 3-5 minutes or until softened. Deglaze the pan with the brandy or cognac, being careful of possible flame-ups. Add demi-glace and heat through until smooth. Stir in heavy cream and add salt and pepper to taste. To serve place 2 medallions of veal on the plate and top with a small amount of the sauce. Garnish with the fresh herb of your choice such as thyme or rosemary.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Beef Tenderloin with Pinot Noir Shallot Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 16

COMMENT: Beef tenderloin is the richest and most tender cut of meat you can buy. We have dressed up this exquisite piece of meat with fresh thyme and caramelized shallots in a rich red wine sauce to push this dish over the edge of decadence.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (6-pound) beef tenderloin, trimmed
- 1 pound shallots, peeled and halved lengthwise
- 1 cup Pinot Noir wine
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp pepper
- 1 tbsp salt
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsps granulated onion
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsps granulated garlic
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsps pepper
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsps chopped fresh thyme leaves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil
- 3 cups beef broth
- 2 tbsps all-purpose flour
- 3 tbsps water
- 3 tbsps butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp pepper



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 500 degrees F. Toss shallots and 2 tbsps oil in a bowl; stir in $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp pepper. Set aside. Stir together 1 tbsp salt, onion powder, garlic powder, $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsps pepper and thyme. Rub tenderloin with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup olive oil. Sprinkle seasoning mix over top and sides of tenderloin, rubbing to cover the entire loin. Place loin in a large greased roasting pan; arrange shallots around the loin. Bake uncovered for 20 minutes. Use meat thermometer inserted into thickest part of the loin, the loin is done when it reads 130 degrees F for medium rare or 145 degrees F for medium. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, stir together beef broth and Pinot Noir. Bring to a rolling boil and hold at a boil for 6-8 minutes or until liquid is reduced to 2 cups. Remove tenderloin to a serving platter and cover with aluminum foil; reserve shallots and drippings in pan. Add wine mixture to pan, and place over medium heat, stirring to release the browned bits from the bottom of the pan. In a small bowl, whisk together flour and water until smooth, then stir into the sauce in the roasting pan. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until slightly thickened. Add butter,

stirring just until melted. Stir in ¼ tsp pepper. Thinly slice roast and serve with shallot sauce. Garnish with whole sprigs of fresh thyme.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Confederate Soldier's Beef Stew

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

A lot of one-pot meals were made during the time of the Civil War, because of the lack of time, cooking area and variety of ingredients. Soldiers received salt pork, fresh or salted beef, coffee, sugar, salt, vinegar, hardtack, dried fruit and dried vegetables. If the meat was poorly preserved, the soldiers would refer to it as "salt horse." Sometimes they would receive fresh vegetables such as carrots, cabbage and potatoes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-4 pound) beef roast, cut into 1-inch cubes
- ½ cup bacon drippings
- 2 cups diced onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- 3 quarts water
- 4 medium potatoes, diced
- 3 large carrots, sliced
- 4 cups chopped cabbage
- 2 tps salt
- 1 tsp pepper

METHOD:

In a 5-quart Dutch oven, melted bacon drippings. Add beef and brown completely. Add onions and celery and sauté until onions are slightly browned, about 5-10 minutes. Add water and bring to a boil. Boil meat at a continuous rolling boil for about 1½ hours or until beef is tender. Skim any foam that forms on the surface of the water and discard. Add potatoes, carrots, cabbage and seasonings and simmer until potatoes start to break up and thicken the stew, about 15-20 minutes. If stew is a little too thin for your taste, mix 1 tbsp of flour and ¼ cup of water until dissolved and add to the stew while it is simmering. Season to taste with more salt and pepper if necessary.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Mike Graham's Pepper Laced Beef Rib Roast

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The method for stuffing and cooking this roast was originally done with a pork roast. However, I loved it so much that I tried it on a Prime Rib roast, and it was just as good if not better.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (8 bone) Prime Rib, bone-in
- 6 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/8 tsp dried thyme
- 1/8 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 cup cayenne and jalapeno peppers, sliced
- 1/4 cup oil
- 2 cups onion, diced
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/4 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup parsley
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a small mixing bowl combine garlic, green onions, thyme, basil, salt and pepper. Pierce holes through the roast and fill each cavity with mixture. Follow with the peppers, leaving approximately 2-inches of the peppers exposed. (This will give flavor to the roast.) Season the roast completely with salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. In a 12-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sear roast in hot oil on both sides. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and parsley. Cover and bake until tender, approximately 3 hours.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Ole South Country Fried Steak

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT: This dish can be found on any home-style diner menu. The saltine crackers in the crust give the coating a little extra crunch, and the gravy is absolutely sinful. In the South, chicken-fried steak, also referred to as country-fried steak, is the ultimate comfort food.

INGREDIENTS FOR STEAK:

- 4 (6-8 ounce) cube steaks or round steaks, tenderized
- 2 cups crushed saltine crackers
- 1 cup flour
- ½ tsp baking powder
- ¾ cup milk
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup peanut oil
- salt, black and cayenne pepper to taste



METHOD FOR STEAK:

In a medium bowl, combine cracker crumbs, flour, baking powder, and season to taste using salt and peppers. In a separate bowl, whisk together milk and eggs. Set aside. In 12-inch cast iron skillet, heat ½ cup oil over medium-high heat. Season steaks lightly using salt and peppers. Dredge seasoned steaks into the flour mixture; dip into egg wash and then dredge in flour mixture again. Fry one steak at a time in hot oil for 5-7 minutes on one side, turn and continue to fry 4-5 minutes or until golden brown. Remove steak to an oven-safe pan to keep warm. Continue to fry steaks one at a time using the same procedure, adding oil as necessary until all are done. Keep steaks warm in a low oven until ready to serve. Carefully drain hot oil, reserving cooked bits and 1 tbsp of drippings in skillet to begin gravy.

INGREDIENTS FOR WHITE GRAVY:

- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 cup chicken stock
- ¼ cup flour
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper

METHOD FOR WHITE GRAVY:

In the same skillet with the pan drippings, heat over medium-high heat. In a mixing bowl, whisk together milk, chicken stock, flour, salt

and pepper. Pour mixture into hot skillet, whisking constantly. Cook for 5-10 minutes or until thickened. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Serve a generous portion of gravy over the steaks.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Bleu Cheese Burgers

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

When the weather is nice and we're enjoying our friends and families in the back yard, grilling outdoors is an American tradition. These tasty burgers have a surprise middle that will add even more flavor to the classic version.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 ounces Bleu cheese
- 10 ounces chuck, trimmed and cut into 1½ inch cubes
- 10 ounces sirloin, trimmed and cut into 1½ inch cubes
- ¼ cup minced onions
- 1½ tsps minced garlic
- 2 tsps chopped parsley
- 1 egg
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- ¼ cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- 6 sourdough, onion or Kaiser rolls

METHOD:

Light a charcoal or gas grill according to manufacturer's directions. When using charcoal, arrange the coals on one side of the pit prior to lighting. When the coals are white hot, spread them evenly over that half side. If using a gas grill, set one burner on high and one on low.

In separate batches, pulse the chuck and the sirloin in a food processor 10 times. Combine the chuck, sirloin and seasonings in a large bowl. Gently and briefly blend the meat mixture. Avoid overworking the mixture as this will toughen the meat; an under-worked burger will retain its tender, juicy texture. Divide the meat into 6 equal portions and split each portion in two. Flatten each patty, place bleu cheese in the middle and top with the second patty. Pinch the edges to seal. Before grilling, I arrange all my fixings which include lettuce leaves, tomato slices (fresh and ripe at room temperature) and dill pickles. Also have available your favorite condiments such as ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise. Place the burgers over the hot coals or burner and, using a spatula, flip the burgers after 2 minutes. Do not press down on the meat as this will only squeeze out the juices. Continue to flip every 2 minutes until the burgers are done to your liking. I suggest 7 minutes for rare, 10 minutes for medium and 14 minutes for well done. Serve on toasted rolls with your favorite fixings and grilled herb potatoes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Grilled Veal Chop with Morel Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

When asked by a reporter, "What is the best steak at Ruth's Chris Steak House?" owner Ruth Fertel stated, "The sirloin, but my favorite cut of meat here is the veal chop!"

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 veal chops
- 2 ounces dry morel mushrooms
- 1/4 cup shallots, chopped
- 1 tbsp thyme leaves
- 3 tbsps butter
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 1 cup brown veal stock
- 1/2 cup whipping cream (minimum 35% fat)
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Carefully wash the morels in cold water and allow them to soak for 3 hours. Remove and dry thoroughly. Leave them whole if they are small, cut them up if they are large. In a small sauté pan, melt butter over a medium-high heat. Add shallots and thyme leaves and sauté 2-3 minutes. Add mushrooms and cook an additional 2-3 minutes. Deglaze with white wine, then add veal stock. Reduce to 1/2 volume and season to taste using salt and pepper. Add cream and continue to cook until sauce is thick enough to coat the back of a spoon. Heat your grill according to manufacturer's directions until coals are white hot. You might wish to add a handful of your favorite smoke wood. Season the chops well with salt and pepper. Grill to your desired doneness. Chops should cook 3-5 minutes on each side for medium-rare. Serve with a generous portion of morel sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Wood Grilled Sirloin

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

As with the steaks grilled at Ruth's Chris Steak House this cut should always be prime. Prime has the most marbling and is therefore the juiciest. I always recommend bringing the steaks to room temperature before grilling. This not only cuts the cooking time, it helps with tenderizing.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 (12-ounce) dry-aged Prime sirloins
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary, roughly chopped
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme, roughly chopped
- 3 cups red wine
- 1/4 cup shallots, chopped and peeled
- 1 cup veal stock (demi-glace)
- 2 tbsps butter
- salt and pepper to taste
- wood chips for grilling

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine vegetable oil, garlic, rosemary and thyme. Rub the steaks in this mixture and allow to sit at room temperature for 4 hours prior to grilling. While meat is marinating, combine red wine and shallots in a small saucepan. Simmer over high heat until reduced to 1/2 cup. Add veal stock and continue to reduce until mixture is approximately 1 cup in volume. Remove from heat and set aside. Heat barbecue pit according to manufacturer's directions. When coals are white hot, add your favorite wood chips. Season the steaks with salt and pepper and grill until done to your taste, approximately 3-5 minutes on each side for medium. When ready to serve, bring sauce to a simmer and whisk in 2 tbsps of butter. Serve each steak with a generous portion of the red wine sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Stuffed Crown Roast of Beef

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Although this roast is mostly seen on holiday tables, it is excellent year-round either spit-roasted on a barbecue pit or roasted slow and low in the oven. I prefer bone-in for extraordinary flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (5-7 pound) bone-in beef rib roast
- 6 cloves garlic, chopped
- 2 cups green onions, sliced
- 1/8 tsp dried thyme
- 1/8 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp black pepper
- 1/4 cup cayenne and jalapeno peppers, sliced
- 6-8 sprigs of rosemary
- 1/4 cup oil
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/4 cup bell pepper, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 1/4 cup parsley
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. In a small mixing bowl combine garlic, green onions, thyme, basil, salt and pepper. Pierce holes through the roast and fill each cavity with mixture. Follow with the peppers and rosemary, leaving approximately 1-inch of the rosemary exposed. (This will give flavor to the roast.) Season the roast completely with salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. In a 12-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sear roast in hot oil on both sides. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, carrots and parsley. Bake uncovered until tender, 25 minutes per pound for rare to medium-rare. Allow roast to rest 30 minutes prior to slicing.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Rolled Vegetable and Potato Meatloaf

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

The Creole settlement of Natchitoches is famous worldwide for its meat pies. Slow braised meat, flavored with vegetables and herbs, made into a loaf or pie is traditional in many cultures. However, in this old Louisiana settlement it is more than a tradition - it is a way of life.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds ground chuck
 1 pound lean ground pork
 1/2 cup onions, minced
 1/4 cup celery, minced
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, minced
 2 tbsps garlic, diced
 1/4 cup green onions, finely sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 3 whole eggs
 1/3 cup heavy whipping cream
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 1/2 cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
 1/4 cup basil, chopped
 1/2 cup white potatoes, diced
 1/2 cup cooked whole kernel corn
 1/2 cup crawfish tails, shrimp or crabmeat, optional
 4 cups favorite tomato sauce or Salsa Pomodoro Basilico (see recipe)

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine ground chuck, pork, onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, green onions and parsley. Using your hands, mix the ingredients thoroughly until all seasonings are well blended. Add eggs, whipping cream, salt, pepper, Louisiana Gold and breadcrumbs. Continue to blend until well incorporated. On a large sheet of wax paper, press the ground meat mixture to a rectangle, 12" x 10". Make sure that the rectangle is of equal height throughout, approximately 1/4-inch. Beginning 1/2-inch from the edge of the meat, top evenly with basil, potatoes, corn and crawfish, shrimp or crabmeat. Using the tips of your fingers, gently press the ingredients into the meat. Using the wax paper, roll the meat like a jelly roll from the 10" side until it is thoroughly sealed. Place in a large casserole dish, top with the Salsa Pomodoro and sprinkle with a pinch of salt and cracked pepper. Bake, uncovered, approximately 1-1 1/2 hours or until internal temperature reaches 160 degrees F.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Corned Beef and Cabbage

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I remember when corned beef and cabbage was considered a "winter dish." Today I can think of nothing better than a platter of this delicacy, especially when the cabbage and fixings are slowly simmered in the corned beef poaching liquid.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (5-6 pound) corned beef
- 1 (3 pound) cabbage
- 3 large onions, quartered
- 6 carrots, peeled and halved
- 3 celery sticks, halved
- 6 whole cloves
- 12 black peppercorns
- 2 bay leaves
- 12 new potatoes
- 6 carrots, peeled and halved
- 12 whole cloves of garlic
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- chopped parsley for garnish

METHOD:

In a large stock pot, place corned beef, onions, carrots, celery, cloves, peppercorns and bay leaves and season to taste with Louisiana Gold. Cover the contents by 4 inches with lightly salted water. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce heat to simmer and cook until beef is tender, approximately 2 1/2 hours. Remove and keep warm. Strain broth and return it to the stock pot. Add potatoes, carrots and garlic. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and allow to cook approximately 10 minutes. Slice the cabbage into 6 equal wedges and add to the stock. The vegetables and cabbage should be cooked perfectly in 20-30 minutes. To serve, arrange the beef on a warm serving platter and surround with cabbage and vegetables. Ladle hot broth over the beef and vegetables and garnish with chopped parsley. I always serve a sauce boat of horseradish cream with this dish.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Tournedos of Beef Marchand de Vin

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

Filet mignon is the most tender of meats and the tournedos are 3-ounce medallions cut from the center of the filet. The wine merchant's sauce, best known of the New Orleans meat sauces, is normally served with filet. This is the classic rendition of both.

INGREDIENTS:

4 (3-ounce) medallions of filet mignon
 1/4 cup unseasoned flour
 1/4 cup butter
 1/4 cup shallots, diced
 1 tbsp garlic, minced
 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
 1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1/2 cup Burgundy wine
 3 cups beef consommé or 2 cups prepared brown gravy or sauce
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Season medallions lightly with salt and pepper and dust in flour, shaking off all excess. Sauté in butter until golden brown on each side, but do not burn the butter. Move the medallions over to one side of the skillet then add shallots, garlic, green onions and mushrooms. Sauté 2-3 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add red wine to deglaze pan and reduce to 1/4 cup. Add beef consommé, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to approximately 1 cup, turning beef occasionally. Season sauce with salt and pepper. For a varied flavor, I often use Louisiana fruit to finish the dish, such as fig preserves or kumquats.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Braised Beef Short-Ribs

PREP TIME: 2 ½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Braising is a method used on tougher cuts of meat that guarantees tenderness. In addition, this slow-cooked method imparts a wonderful flavor due to the longer cooking time with vegetables, herbs and stock.

INGREDIENTS:

6 pounds beef short-ribs
 8 slices bacon, chopped
 2 large onions, quartered
 3 stalks celery, quartered
 3 carrots, sliced
 8 cloves garlic, smashed
 6 cups beef stock, bouillon or water
 1 cup dry red wine
 3 sprigs fresh thyme
 6 leaves fresh basil
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Season short-ribs well using salt and pepper. In a 10-quart Dutch oven, brown bacon to render fat over medium-high heat. Do not burn. Remove crisp bacon and set aside. In the bacon fat brown short-ribs, 4 at a time, taking care not to burn bacon fat. Once all the ribs are brown add onions, celery, carrots and garlic. Sauté 2-3 minutes to tenderize vegetables. Add beef stock and red wine. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add cooked bacon, browned short-ribs, thyme and basil. Season stock with additional salt and pepper if necessary. Return the mixture to a rolling boil, cover and place in pre-heated oven. Cook 1 1/2 hours, checking for tenderness. When ribs are fork-tender, remove from stock and set aside. Reduce stock by half. When ready to serve, strain stock, return ribs to the pot along with the sauce and re-heat in pre-heated oven. Ribs may be prepared up to 3 days in advance and remain in the stock until ready to serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Mama Fresina's Lasagna - (Something New)

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

With a name like Mama Fresina's Lasagna, there's no debate what culture this recipe represents! Italians are known for their great cooking and so many famous Louisiana dishes can be traced back to humble Italian beginnings in bayou country. This reduced fat recipe is perfect for anyone watching their waistline. You won't even have to sacrifice flavor!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound extra lean ground beef
- 1 pound extra lean ground turkey
- 1 (8-ounce) package lasagna noodles
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 tsp oregano
- 2 tsps parsley
- 2 tsps sweet basil
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp salt substitute
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 3 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce, no salt added
- 2 (6-ounce) cans tomato paste, no salt added
- 1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup fat-free cottage cheese
- 1 cup fat-free Ricotta cheese
- 2 cups frozen spinach, drained
- 2 cups low-fat Mozzarella cheese, shredded

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. In lightly salted water, boil lasagna noodles according to package directions. Drain, rinse well to keep from sticking and set aside. In a 5-quart cast iron Dutch oven, brown ground meat and turkey over medium-high heat. Continue to chop and cook meats until they separate, grain for grain. After meats are well browned, approximately 20-30 minutes, add onions and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Drain the excess fat. Season with oregano, parsley, basil, garlic powder, salt substitute and pepper. Add tomato sauce and tomato paste. Blend well into the meat mixture and bring to a low simmer. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, 15-20 minutes. Remove from heat and adjust seasonings if necessary. Add cottage cheese, Ricotta and spinach to the mixture. Once all is well blended, place a layer of sauce in the bottom of 9" x 13" baking dish. Add one layer of noodles and top with sauce and shredded Mozzarella. Repeat 3 times, leaving approximately 1/2-inch at the top of the dish for overflow. Sprinkle the top layer evenly with Mozzarella cheese. Bake, uncovered, for 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Pecan Rice Dressing

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 8-10 Servings

COMMENT:

Pecan rice dressing is found on most holiday tables in South Louisiana. It incorporates the best ingredients of Bayou Country including seafood, meat and nuts. This recipe has been a tradition in our family for more than 150 years.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 chicken livers
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 pound ground pork
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced green bell peppers
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 1 pint select oysters in liquid
- 6 cups cooked white rice, hot
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- ½ cup chopped pecans
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a small sauté pan, poach chicken livers in lightly salted water. Remove and set aside to cool. Once cool, chop and set aside. Retain poaching liquid. In a large, heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add ground beef and pork and sauté until golden brown and grains of meat are totally separated, approximately 30 minutes. Add chopped chicken livers, onion, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Continue to sauté an additional 30 minutes or until vegetables are totally cooked. You may need to add the poaching liquid from the livers to keep the mixture moist during cooking. Add oysters and oyster liquid and continue to cook until oysters have almost cooked away. As the oysters cook, chop into the meat mixture with the edge of a cooking spoon. Season the mixture to taste using salt and pepper. Add hot, cooked rice, stir well into the mixture and garnish using green onions, parsley and pecans. Adjust seasonings if necessary using salt and pepper. Serve as a rice casserole or use this recipe to stuff a turkey or duck.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Boiled Brisket with Vegetables

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

One of the simplest, yet tastiest, of all boiled meat and vegetable dishes can be attributed to the English. This dish is similar to corned beef which is found on most St. Patrick's Day tables. The major difference is you eliminate the cabbage and add a multitude of fall vegetables. This is a perfect cold weather dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (5-pound) corned beef, trimmed
- 1 tsp ground allspice
- 1 tsp dried thyme
- 2 tbsps black peppercorns
- 3 bay leaves, crushed
- 3 whole cloves
- 6 cloves of garlic
- 1 large onion, quartered
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 8 tiny new potatoes
- 2 yams, 1-inch cubed
- 16 (1-inch long) carrots, peeled
- 4 turnips, peeled and quartered

METHOD:

Place the trimmed brisket in a large dutch oven with enough water to cover by 3 inches. If a seasoning pack was included with your brisket, add the package to the water. Add allspice, thyme, peppercorns, bay leaves, cloves, garlic, quartered onion, celery and carrots. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to a low boil and cook 2 1/2-3 hours or until brisket is tender at the thickest part. The meat is fully cooked when the fibers begin to loosen and a fork can be inserted easily into the meat. Do not rush this process, as a tender brisket is imperative. Remove the brisket from the pot and place on a large baking pan. Strain the poaching liquid into a stockpot and discard the poaching ingredients. Return the poaching liquid to the dutch oven and add potatoes, yams, carrots and turnips. Bring the stock to a boil, reduce to simmer and cook until vegetables are tender to the fork and have absorbed the flavor of the brisket, approximately 20 minutes. When ready to serve, slice the brisket into 1/4-inch serving pieces across the grain. Transfer the sliced meat to a large serving platter and surround with the freshly poached vegetables and a generous serving of the hot poaching liquid. This boiled brisket is also excellent as a corned beef sandwich served on rye with a bit of English mustard.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Cowboy Steak with Chipotle Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This steak originated on the cattle drives near the Rio Grande border when Texas cowboys flavored beef-steaks with Mexican spices. This dish is thought to be the origin of Texas barbecue.

INGREDIENTS FOR STEAK:

- 4 (10-ounce) rib-eye steaks, center cut
- 2 tbsps adobo spice
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 2 tsps ground ginger
- 2 tsps dried thyme
- 1 tbsp granulated garlic
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a small mixing bowl, combine all spices except salt and pepper. Blend well and set aside. Season the steaks on each side with salt and pepper to taste and then coat with an equal amount of the blended spices. These spices will form a nice, crisp coating on the steak when grilled and help to keep the meat juicy. Allow steaks to sit at room temperature for 1 hour. Preheat barbecue pit according to manufacturer's directions. I recommend using mesquite wood for a true Rio Grande flavor. When the grill is ready, cook steak on each side for 2-3 minutes, turning occasionally, until done to your liking. A steak of about 1 inch in thickness will take approximately 3 minutes per side.

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

- 8 ounces beef gravy or demi-glace
- 2 tbsps canned chipotles in sauce
- 2 tbsps butter
- ¼ cup onions, minced
- ¼ cup celery, minced
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 2 tbsps tequila
- ½ tsp cumin
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Adobo sauce may be purchased in a can and is merely chipotle peppers minced in sauce. This may be found at most grocery stores or Mexican markets. In a sauté pan melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery and garlic. Sauté 2-3 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chipotles and sauce and deglaze with tequila. Add beef gravy or demi-glace and cumin. Bring to a rolling boil, cook 2-3 minutes and season lightly with salt and pepper. When

steak is done, serve with generous portion of chipotle sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Smothered Seven Steaks

PREP TIME: 3 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

4 pounds seven steaks
 4 tbsps cooking oil
 1 cup onions, chopped
 1/2 cup celery, chopped
 1/4 cup red bell peppers, chopped
 1/4 cup garlic, diced
 1 quart beef stock
 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
 1/2 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and black pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste



METHOD:

In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add seven steaks and sear until golden brown. Remove and keep warm. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Return steaks to skillet and add stock and Worcestershire. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, cover and cook for approximately 2 1/2 hours. Add green onions and parsley and season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. This dish is also excellent baked. Bake for 2-2 1/2 hours at 375 degrees F. Serve over rice or mashed potatoes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Twice-Cooked Beef Short-Ribs

PREP TIME: 2 ½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Chefs are always looking for ways to complicate a simple dish! Every now and again, this 'mad scientist' approach turns out a pretty darn good dish. This is one such recipe and it incorporates three of Louisiana's best products: Abita Beer, Steen's Cane Syrup and Zatarain's® Creole mustard.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 lbs beef short-ribs
- 8 slices bacon, chopped
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- ¼ cup garlic, minced
- 4 cups beef stock or boullion
- 1 bottle Abita Amber Beer
- ¼ cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- ¼ cup Zatarain's® Creole Mustard
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp allspice
- ½ tsp Zatarain's® Creole Seasoning

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. In a 10-quart dutch oven over medium-high heat, brown bacon to render fat. Remove crisp bacon and set aside. In the same pot, brown short-ribs, 4 at a time, being careful not to burn the bacon fat. Remove the ribs and keep warm. Once all the ribs are brown add onions, celery and garlic into the same pot. Sauté 2 to 3 minutes or until vegetables begin to caramelize. Add cooked bacon and all remaining ingredients. Stir well to blend all ingredients then bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add short-ribs. Cover and bake for 1 ½ hours or until tender. Do not allow ribs to overcook and fall apart, but be sure they are tender to the fork. (NOTE: This may be done 1 day in advance of barbecuing.) Remove ribs and discard liquid. When ready to barbecue, prepare grill according to manufacturer's directions. Place the tender ribs over a medium fire with your favorite smoked wood. Allow the ribs to heat thoroughly and pick up the smoke flavor while brushing generously with your favorite barbecue sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Traditional Southern Burger

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

When making burgers, I prefer 85 percent lean, ground chuck. It offers a great balance of taste and juiciness. If the ground chuck in your grocery store is labeled 80 percent lean, ask the butcher to grind an 85 percent lean especially for you. Normally, they will. Additionally, don't panic when reading the ingredients listed below. Although most burgers call for ground meat, salt and pepper only, you will prefer the flavor of this recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2½ pounds ground chuck
- ½ cup minced onions
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1 whole egg
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- ½ cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- salt and fresh ground pepper to taste
- 3 tbsps melted butter

METHOD:

Light a charcoal or gas grill according to manufacturer's directions. When using charcoal, arrange the coals on one side of the pit prior to lighting. When white hot, spread them evenly over that half side. If using a gas grill, set one burner on high and one on low.

To mix the burgers, place the meat along with all other ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Gently and briefly blend the meat and seasonings to avoid overworking, which tends to toughen the burger. An under-worked burger will retain its tender, juicy texture. Divide the meat into 6 equal portions and form the patties about 4 inches in diameter. Before grilling, I arrange all of my fixings which include 6 leaves of lettuce, 6 fresh, ripe tomato slices at room temperature, 12 dill pickle slices and your favorite condiments such as ketchup, mustard and mayonnaise.

Prior to placing the burgers on the grill, brush one side with melted butter. Place the butter-side down over the hot coals or burner and, using a spatula, flip the burgers after 2 minutes but do not press down on the meat as this will only squeeze out the juices. Continue to flip every 2 minutes until the burgers done to your liking. I suggest 7 minutes for rare, 10 minutes for medium and 14 minutes for well done. If you wish to coat the burgers with a unique and creative sauce, I suggest brushing them during the last 2 minutes of cooking with my root beer barbecue sauce (see recipe). When the burgers are cooked, move them over to the opposite side of the grill to keep

warm and toast the hamburger buns over the hot side. If you wish to have cheeseburgers, place the cheese on top of the burgers once they have been moved to the cool side of the grill.

Root Beer Barbecue Sauce

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Steak and Oyster Pie

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

MAKES: 2 (9-inch) pies

COMMENT:

Each month, employees of Chef John Folse & Company celebrate the foods from other countries and cultures. Each person does their own research and prepares a dish for a potluck lunch that one would see on the tables of that country. This month's theme was Irish, and this traditional pie was prepared by corporate executive chef, Jay Kimball.

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound beef stew meat, cubed
 1 pint oysters in liquor
 2 tbsps butter
 1/2 cup onions, chopped
 1/2 cup celery, chopped
 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
 2 tbsps flour
 1 quart beef broth
 3 red potatoes, diced
 6 button mushrooms, sliced
 1 tbsp parsley
 salt and pepper to taste
 2 (9-inch) pie crusts, with tops

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a cast iron dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Season beef with salt and pepper and sear until brown on all sides. Remove from pot and set aside. Add onions, celery and garlic and sauté five minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until roux is achieved. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add beef broth and meat and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat and simmer until beef is tender, approximately 20 minutes. Add potatoes and mushrooms and cook an additional 10 minutes. Add oysters and parsley and adjust seasonings to taste using salt and pepper. Spoon mixture into 2 (9-inch) pie crusts. Place pies on a large baking sheet and bake in oven for 35 minutes until golden brown. Serve while hot and bubbly.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

MEATS

➤ Appetizers

➤ Soups

➤ Salads

➤ Game

➤ Meats

➤ Seafood

➤ Vegetables

➤ Pasta

➤ Poultry

➤ Breads

➤ Desserts

➤ Beverages

➤ Breakfast & Brunch

➤ Rouxs

➤ Stocks & Sauces

➤ Seasoning Cast Iron

➤ Misc

Wiener Schnitzel**PREP TIME:** 30 Minutes**SERVES:** 6**COMMENT:**

This recipe is from Chef Gunter Preuss of Broussard's Restaurant in New Orleans. It is a traditional holiday dish enjoyed each year by the German community in South Louisiana.

INGREDIENTS:

6 (4-ounce) slices of veal top round
 2 tbsps lemon juice
 1 cup flour
 3 eggs, beaten
 1 cup breadcrumbs
 4 tbsps margarine
 salt and white pepper to taste

METHOD:

Pound veal slices until thin and season with salt and white pepper. Sprinkle lightly with lemon juice. Dredge seasoned veal rounds in flour, dip in egg wash and dredge in breadcrumbs. In a cast iron skillet, heat margarine over medium-high heat. Add veal rounds and sauté on both sides until golden brown. Arrange on warm dinner plates and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Jimmy Johnson's Killer Hot Tamales

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

COMMENT:

This recipe was shared with us by Jimmy Johnson on Stirrin' It Up. The tamales can be frozen and reheated in a microwave oven or re-steamed.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 lbs ground beef
- 1 extra large onion, chopped
- 4 oz chili powder
- 1 tbs oregano
- 2 tbsps salt
- 1 1/2 tbsps garlic powder, unsalted
- 1 1/2 tbsps cumin
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 (10 oz) can Rotel tomatoes with juice
- 1 (16 oz) can tomatoes with juice, peeled and chopped
- 3 cups water
- 2 cups Masa Harina
- 1 cup beef stock from ground meat

METHOD:

In a 1 gallon stock pot, saute onions over medium high heat. Add ground beef and brown, drain stock and reserve. Add all ingredients except Masa and reserved stock. Cook for 45 to 55 minutes. When ready, the spices mix into a deep blood red liquid that does not separate. Take care that the mixture doesn't scorch while cooking. Stir frequently. Remove from stove and drain juices from meat. Set aside and add Masa to meat mixtue. Mix thoroughly while slowly adding beef stock. You may adjust the consistency by adding a little more Masa or beef stock as needed to get a moist dough-like consistency. Roll into tamale papers and fold one end. NOTE: Papers must be moistened first. Stack each tamale in a double boiler with the open end up. Add enough water in the boiler, but take care not to let tamales sit in the water. Ladle a little juice into the open end of each tamale. Steam for 45 minutes on low heat. Remove from cooker and allow to cool for about 10 minutes. Serve with remainder of juice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)





FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

TWICE-COOKED BARBECUE BEEF BRISKET

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 10-12 Servings

Comment:

Most back yard cooks shy away from brisket because they fear the tough nature of the meat will come back to ruin a great holiday affair. In this recipe, the brisket is first simmered to tenderness then finished over a smoky wood fire to guarantee the great freshness and that wonderful outdoor pit flavor.

Ingredients:

1 (5-9 pound) beef brisket
 1 tbsp kosher salt
 1 tbsp black pepper
 2 onions, quartered
 2 stalks celery, quartered
 1 head garlic, halved
 3 bay leaves
 ¼ cup Zatarain's Crab Boil

Ingredients for Rub:

1 tbsp kosher salt
 1 tbsp chile powder
 2 tbsps brown sugar
 1 tsp black pepper
 1 tsp ground cumin
 1 tbsp granulated garlic
 ¼ cup Worcestershire sauce

Method:

In a large stockpot, combine brisket with kosher salt, black pepper, onions, celery, garlic, bay leaves and crab boil. Add cold water to cover brisket by 6 inches. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 1½-2 hours or until brisket is fork tender but not falling apart. When tender, remove from stock and cool. This may be done one day prior to grilling. When ready to grill, place coals on one side of the barbecue pit and light according to the manufacturer's directions. This will leave the opposite side of grill cool to place brisket during smoking. Soak an ample supply of your favorite smoked wood in water and set aside. In a small bowl, combine all dry rub ingredients and blend well. Place brisket on a large cookie sheet and coat each side in Worcestershire sauce. Spread seasoning mixture evenly over each side of brisket. Using a pair of tongs, place seasoned brisket directly over hot coals to sear meat and set flavor, approximately 3-5 minutes on each side. When meat has been seared and browned, move it to cool side of pit and place a few handfuls of smoked wood over hot coals. Close lid and allow brisket to smoke off direct heat 1 hour or until full flavored and heated thoroughly. Slice and serve with your favorite barbecue sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Cajun Muffaletta

TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Muffuletta is an Italian sandwich created in the late 1800's. The sandwich originated when Italian merchants working in the markets of New Orleans placed a mixture of broken green and black olives, found on the bottom of olive barrels, on a loaf of round Italian bread known as "muffs." Over this mixture, they layered slices of ham, salami and Provolone cheese. The most famous of all muffuletta sandwiches are found at Central Grocery on Decatur Street in New Orleans.

INGREDIENTS:

OLIVE SALAD:

- 1/4 cup black olives
- 1/4 cup green olives
- 1/4 cup pimentos
- 1/4 cup capers
- 1/4 cup cocktail onions
- 1/4 cup chopped celery
- 1 small can artichoke hearts
- 1 tsp celery seed
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tbsps chopped garlic
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 2 tbsps red wine vinegar

METHOD:

In a food processor combine all above ingredients and chop coarsely, scrape into a bowl and set aside.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 loaf round Italian bread
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1/4 lb ham, thinly sliced
- 1/4 lb Genoa salami, thinly sliced 1/4 lb Provolone cheese, thinly sliced
- 1/4 lb Mortadella (Italian Bologna), thinly sliced
- 3 slices mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup prepared olive salad (see above)

METHOD:

Split the bread lengthwise and drizzle the olive oil on each side. On bottom layer spread some of the above prepared olive salad and arrange with layers of thinly sliced meats and cheeses. Cover with top layer of the bread, cut and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Michaela's Leaning Tower of Pizza

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 50 Minutes

SERVES: 16

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 pkgs (9 1/2-oz size) piecrust mix
 8 large ripe tomatoes
 6 tbsps butter
 2 cloves of garlic, crushed
 3/4 tsp salt
 3/4 dried oregano leaves
 4 cups onions, thinly sliced
 1/2 cup pitted ripe olives, sliced
 1/2 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1 pkg. pepperoni slices
 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Prepare piecrust mix as package directs. Shape into a ball and divide in half. On a lightly floured surface, roll out half to a 13-inch circle. Place dough in a 12-inch pan and prick with a fork. Refrigerate until ready to use. Repeat with other half of dough. Peel the tomatoes, cut into thick slices and remove the seeds. In a separate bowl, crush tomatoes with a potato masher. In a large skillet, heat 3 tbsps butter over medium-high heat. Add garlic and sauté until golden brown, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add crushed tomatoes, salt and oregano. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally until mixture is thick, approximately 45 minutes. Set aside. Place crusts in oven and bake for 10 minutes. In a large skillet, heat remaining 3 tbsps butter over medium-high heat, add onions and sauté until wilted, approximately 10 minutes. Top with tomato mixture, onions, olive slices, mushrooms and pepperoni slices. Sprinkle cheese over toppings and bake 25 to 30 minutes or until bubbly and heated .

NOTE: Michaela York is not a licensed chef, prepare dish at your own risk!

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Fricassee of Veal and Ham with Artichokes

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Veal is one ingredient found in many Creole recipes. In fact, veal grillades are much more popular than the original pork version. The addition of ham is a gift from the Germans who settled the Crescent City, and the artichokes were decorative garden items from the Italian immigrants. This recipe is an excellent example of Creole cuisine.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds boneless veal stew meat, cubed
 1 pound diced ham
 12 artichoke bottoms
 3/4 cup vegetable oil
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 1 ½ quarts beef stock (see recipe)
 ½ pound sliced mushrooms
 2 tbsps fresh thyme, chopped
 1 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
 ½ cup Marsala wine
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 1/4 cup butter
 Salt and black pepper to taste
 3/4 cup flour
 1 cup diced onions
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell pepper
 ½ cup diced yellow bell pepper

METHOD:

In a large cast iron dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir until dark brown roux is achieved (see recipe). Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Saute 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add veal and diced ham, blend well into the roux mixture and cook an additional 2-3 minutes. Add beef stock, 1 cup at a time, until stew-like consistency is achieved. Bring mixture to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cover and cook 30 minutes. Add mushrooms, thyme, basil and Marsala wine and cook an additional 30 minutes or until veal is tender. Additional stock may be necessary to retain a stew-like consistency. Season to taste using salt and pepper. It is best to cook this dish one day prior to serving and allow it to set overnight in the refrigerator in order for flavors to enhance. When ready to serve, return veal fricassee to a simmer. Rinse artichoke bottoms well under cold running water. In a saute pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add artichoke bottoms and saute until thoroughly warmed. Place 2 artichoke bottoms on the bottom of a 10-inch serving plate and top with a ladle of the fricassee. Garnish each dish with fresh parsley. I enjoy serving steamed artichokes with this dish. Not only are the leaves excellent

for decorating the plate, but the fricassee becomes a wonderful dipping sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Veal Daube

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

COMMENTS:

Although a less-tender and inexpensive cut of beef, daube is commonly found on the tables in South Louisiana at Christmas time or on the Réveillon table. The slow cooking process combined with the many vegetable seasonings tends to make this dish a very full-flavored entrée. In this recipe version I have substituted veal eye-of-the-round roast for beef shoulder roast.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (1 1/2-pound) veal eye-of-the-round roasts
- 2 tbsps salt
- 2 tbsps cracked black pepper
- 1/2 pound bacon
- 1/4 cup garlic, finely diced
- 1/2 cup bacon drippings or vegetable oil
- 2 cups onions, chopped
- 2 cups celery, chopped
- 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- 2 cups carrots, diced
- 1 cup dry red wine
- 5 cups beef stock
- 1 sprig rosemary
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 4 onions, quartered
- 6 carrots, halved
- 8 new potatoes

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees. Cut 2 strips of bacon into 1/4-inch strips about 1 1/2 inches long. Combine salt and pepper with the garlic. Using a sharp paring knife, cut 6 - 8 (1-inch deep) slits into the veal roasts. Roll bacon and place one roll in each slit. Continue until all slits have been stuffed. Season roasts well on all sides using salt and cracked black pepper. In a cast iron Dutch oven, heat bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Brown roast well on all sides. When golden brown, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato sauce, carrots and red wine, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Add beef stock and rosemary, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cover Dutch oven and allow roasts to simmer 3 1/2 hours. Wrap onions topped with 1 tbsp of butter in aluminum foil and bake 1 hour. When the roasts are tender remove from stock and strain. Discard vegetables and return stock to the pot. Return roasts to pot with carrots and potatoes. Bring to a boil and cook until vegetables are tender. Serve by placing a portion of the onions, potatoes and vegetables with the roast in a soup bowl and top with stock. Eat as you would vegetable soup. It is always best to cook daube the day

before and reheat the day of service.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Daube Glace

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

COMMENTS:

Daube Glace is the most classical of the Creole hors d'oeuvres. Usually made with leftover daube, further cooked with additional seasonings, this dish is also found in most retail markets around the City of New Orleans.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-pound) cooked daube
- 2 quarts beef stock
- reserved sauce for pre-cooked daube
- 1/2 cup onions, finely diced
- 1/2 cup celery, finely diced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, finely diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1/2 cup carrots, finely diced
- 1/2 cup parsley, finely minced
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 3 envelopes gelatin, dissolved

METHOD:

Cut cooked daube into one inch cubes. In a cast iron dutch oven, bring beef stock and sauce from cooked daube to a light boil. Add cooked meat, onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Reduce heat to simmer and allow to cook until meat begins to string apart. Strain all ingredients from liquid through a fine sieve and set aside. Return liquid to heat and reduce to one and a half quarts. Add carrots and parsley. Season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Using a wire whisk, blend dissolved gelatin into sauce. Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly. Break the meat into small pieces and place equal amounts in two terrine molds. Include all cooked vegetables from the original sauce. Ladle stock over the meat, cover with clear wrap and allow to gel in the refrigerator. Daube glace is best when allowed to sit for 24 hours for flavors to develop. The Daube Glace should be sliced and served with garlic croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Finger-Licking Honey Ribs

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Before you yell how absurd it is for one to consider baking ribs in the oven rather than barbecuing them on the grill, well just calm down for a minute and put this to the John Folse test. Simply grill one according to your normal pit recipe and try the second slab according to this recipe. And then give me a call!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup chili sauce
- 1/2 cup honey
- 1/2 cup onion, minced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp dry red wine
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp Soy Sauce
- 1 tsp liquid smoke
- 1 tsp Dijon-style mustard
- 2 - 2 lbs slab babyback ribs
- Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a sharp pairing knife, trim the ribs of the excess silver skin. In a small sauce pot, combine all ingredients except ribs and salt and pepper. Then bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Reduce heat and simmer 5 minutes. When done, remove and set aside. While sauce is cooking, sprinkle ribs with salt and pepper, season according to taste. Place the ribs in a large baking pan or cookie sheet with 1-inch lip. Cover tightly with foil and bake 45 minutes. Bake 1 hour uncovered, brushing with sauce every 15 minutes, until ribs are fully cooked and tender. When ribs are fully cooked, the rib bone should be exposed approximately 3/4 inch at the end. Cut ribs into serving portions and serve with remaining sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Prime Rib of Beef

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 12-14

INGREDIENTS:

1 prime rib roast (18 - 22 lbs),
oven-ready
4 medium onions, quartered
1/2 bunch celery, sliced
6 cloves of garlic
1 lb carrot, sliced
salt and black pepper to taste
granulated garlic to taste
2 cups red wine
1 quart beef stock



METHOD:

Preheat oven at 400° F. Place roast in large roasting pan with two inch sides. Season to taste using salt, pepper and granulated garlic. You may wish to cut 1 inch slits in the roast with a pairing knife and force a quarter teaspoon of each seasoning into each one of the slits to ensure the meat is flavored internally. Surround the roast with the chopped fresh vegetables and cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil. Place in oven and reduce temperature to 350° F. Cook for 1 1/2 hours and check for doneness. An internal temperature reading of 130° F at the center of the meat will be medium rare, 145° F will be medium, and 155° F will be med-well. Remove the rib roast from oven and set aside on large serving platter. Allow the drippings in the roasting pan to rest for 30 minutes and then slowly tilt pan and remove the grease rising to the surface of the natural drippings. Return the pan to the stove on medium high heat. Once the vegetables begin to sizzle add the red wine to deglaze the pan. Allow the red wine to reduce to 1/2 volume. Add beef stock and continue to boil until flavors have blended well. Then strain the sauce discarding the vegetables and serving along side the roast.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Yorkshire Pudding

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 45 minutes

SERVES: 6 to 8

INGREDIENTS:

2 eggs
 1/2 tsp. salt
 1 cup all-purpose flour
 1 cup milk
 2 tbsp. oil

METHOD:

In the blender jar, combine eggs, salt, flour and milk. Blend at high speed for 2 to 3 seconds. Turn the machine off, scrape down the side of the jar and blend again for 40 seconds. Refrigerate for at least one hour.

Preheat oven at 400° F. In a roasting pan, heat fat over moderate heat until it splutters. Briefly beat batter again and pour into pan. Bake in the middle of the oven for 15 minutes, reduce the heat to 375° F and bake for 15 minutes longer or until the pudding has risen over the top of the pan and is crisp and brown. With a sharp knife, divide the pudding into portions, serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Natchitoches Meat Pies

PREP TIME: 1-1/2 Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Natchitoches, Louisiana is the oldest town in the Louisiana Purchase. In addition, it is home to the oldest and largest Creole settlement outside of New Orleans. We believe the meat pies, a tradition on Christmas Eve, were brought to Louisiana by the Cajuns upon their exile from Nova Scotia in 1750.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ pound ground meat
- ½ pound ground pork
- ½ cup cooking oil
- ½ cup chopped onions
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup chopped green bell pepper
- ¼ cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 2 cups beef stock (see recipe)
- 2 9-inch pie shells
- 1 egg
- ½ cup water
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat oil over medium high heat. Sauté beef and pork until golden brown, stirring constantly, until all liquid has evaporated. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. This should cook slowly for about one hour, adding beef stock to mixture to prevent sticking. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Roll pie dough into circles and cut into halves. Spoon a generous portion of the cooked meat mixture into the pie shells. Brush a little egg-wash around the edge of the shell, fold over and press the edges with a fork similar to apple turnover. Place on a greased cookie sheet or pan. Make small slits in dough to vent steam, egg-wash entire pie and bake thirty minutes at 400 degrees. Pie may also be deep-fried.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Fricot

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Fricot is a thick soup that may have in some way influenced gumbo, the premier soup of Cajun Country. The dish is made with beef or chicken and thickened with potatoes as opposed to the dark brown roux of Bayou Country. The Cajuns of Nova Scotia brought Fricot to Louisiana, however, somewhere along the way it was put aside in favor of Corn & Shrimp Soup and Seafood Gumbo.

INGREDIENTS:

2 lbs. beef chuck roast, diced 1/4-inch
 1/4 cup Crisco
 3 cups diced onions
 1 cup chopped chives
 3 cups diced potatoes
 1 cup diced celery, optional
 1 cup diced bell pepper, optional
 1/4 cup chopped garlic, optional
 salt and pepper to taste, optional
 Louisiana Hot Sauce to taste, optional

METHOD:

In a large cast iron pot, melt Crisco over medium high heat. Add beef and sauté until golden brown. Add onions and continue to cook until vegetables are wilted. NOTE: Although the original Fricot contained only beef, onions, chives and potatoes, I have taken the liberty to recommend additional vegetables and spice to give the dish some Cajun Country flair. You may add the optional ingredients at this time, however I recommend trying the original version to get a feel for authenticity. Add cold water to the pot to cover beef by two inches. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until beef is tender, approximately 45 minutes. Add chives and potatoes and continue to cook until potatoes are tender and the soup is slightly thickened with the potato starch. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Additional water may be necessary in order to maintain a soup-like consistency.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

SEC Championship Chili

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8

HEAT SCALE: Medium to Hot

COMMENT:

Glen Dickey of Arlington, Texas, walked away with the trophy in 1997 from the International Chili Competition with this recipe. His secret -- the use of the first and second seasoning technique.

INGREDIENTS:

Meat and Liquids:

- 2 ½ pounds cubed chuck roast
- 1 - 2 (14 ½ ounce) cans Swanson beef broth
- 1 (8 ounce) can Hunt's Tomato Sauce

First Seasonings:

- 2 tbsps paprika
- 1 tbsp beef bouillon crystals
- 1 tbsp Pendery's Fort Worth light chili powder
- 1 tbsp granulated onion
- 1 tsp chicken bouillon crystals
- 1 tsp ground cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp jalapeno pepper powder
- ½ tsp salt

Second Seasonings:

- 2 tbsps Gebhardt's chili powder
- 2 tbsps Pendery's Fort Worth light chili powder
- 2 tbsps R.T. chili powder
- 1 tbsp ground cumin
- 1 tbsp powdered garlic
- ½ tsp white pepper

METHOD:

Brown meat in a heavy pot and drain off fat. Simmer meat in beef broth and tomato sauce for 40 minutes. Combine first set of seasonings, stir into meat and cook over medium heat until meat is tender. Total cooking time needed to tenderize meat should be approximately an 1-1 ½ hours. One half hour before serving, combine second set of seasonings and add to the pot. Simmer 30 minutes and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Chili Con Carne

PREP TIME: 5 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

To ensure the best chile flavor, I recommend toasting whole dried chiles and grinding them with a mini-chopper or spice-dedicated coffee grinder, all of which takes only ten (very well-spent) minutes. Select dried chiles that are moist and pliant like dried fruit. Count on trimming one-half to a full pound of waste from your chuck roast, so start with a four-pound roast to end up with three to three and a half pounds of beef cubes. For hotter chili, boost the heat with a pinch of cayenne or a dash of hot pepper sauce near the end of cooking. Serve the chili with any of the following side dishes: warm pinto or kidney beans, corn bread or chips, corn tortilla or tamales, rice, biscuits, or just plain crackers, and top with any of the following garnishes: chopped fresh cilantro leaves, minced white onion, diced avocado, shredded cheddar cheese or sour cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tablespoons ancho chili powder or 3 medium pods (about ½ ounce), toasted and ground
- 3 tablespoons New Mexico chili powder or 3 medium pods (about ¾ ounce), toasted and ground
- 2 tablespoons cumin seeds, toasted in a dry skillet over medium heat until fragrant, about 4 minutes, and ground
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano, preferably Mexican
- ½ cup water
- 1 4-pound beef chuck roast, trimmed of excess fat and cut into 1 inch cubes
- 2 teaspoons salt, plus extra for seasoning
- 8 ounces bacon (7 or 8 slices), cut into ¼ inch pieces
- 1 medium onion, minced (about 1 cup)
- 5 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 4-5 small jalapeno chile peppers, cored, seeded, and minced
- 1 cup canned crushed tomatoes or plain tomato sauce
- 2 tablespoons juice from 1 medium lime
- 5 tablespoons masa harina or 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- Ground black pepper

METHOD:

Mix chili powders, cumin, and oregano in small bowl and stir in ½ cup water to form thick paste; set aside. Toss beef cubes with salt; set aside. Fry bacon in large, heavy soup kettle or Dutch oven over medium-low heat until fat renders and bacon crisps, about 10 minutes. Remove bacon with slotted spoon to paper towel-lined plate; pour all but 2 teaspoons fat from pot into small bowl; set aside. Increase heat to medium-high. Sauté meat in four batches until well-browned on all sides, about 15 minutes per batch, adding additional 2 teaspoons bacon fat to pot as necessary. Reduce heat to medium, add 3 tablespoons bacon fat to now-empty pan. Add onion; sauté until softened, 5 to 6 minutes. Add garlic and jalapeno; sauté until

fragrant, about 1 minute. Add chili paste; sauté until fragrant, 2 to 3 minutes. Add reserved bacon and browned beef, crushed tomatoes or tomato sauce, lime juice, and 7 cups water; bring to simmer. Continue to cook at a simmer until meat is tender and juices are dark, rich, and starting to thicken, about 2 hours. Mix masa harina with 2/3 cup water (or cornstarch with 3 tablespoons water) in a small bowl to form smooth paste. Increase heat to medium; stir in paste and simmer until thickened, 5 to 10 minutes. Adjust seasoning generously with salt and ground black pepper. Serve immediately, or preferably, cool slightly, cover, and refrigerate overnight or for up to 5 days. Reheat before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Stern's Cincinnati-Style Five-Way Chili

PREP TIME: 90 Minutes

SERVES: 4

HEAT SCALE: Mild

COMMENT:

In Cincinnati, chili bears no resemblance to the con carne style seen in Texas and most of the rest of the world. Here, chili is a layered meal, normally served in a large oval bowl. The chili sauce is often ladled over spaghetti and then topped with a spicy, sautéed ground beef mixed with kidney beans. The whole bowl is then topped off with mounds of grated cheddar and garnished with oyster crackers.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound ground beef
- 2 medium onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup thick barbecue sauce
- ½ cup water
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½ ounce unsweetened chocolate, grated
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin
- ¼ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon turmeric
- ¼ teaspoon allspice
- ¼ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ teaspoon ground coriander
- ¼ teaspoon ground cardamom
- ½ teaspoon salt
- tomato juice, as needed
- 9 ounces spaghetti, cooked and lightly buttered
- 1 (16-ounce) can kidney beans, heated and drained
- 1 pound cheddar cheese, finely shredded
- oyster crackers (garnish)

METHOD:

Brown meat with half the chopped onion and the garlic, stirring to keep it loose. (Set the remaining onion aside to top the chili when it's done.) Drain any fat from the pan. Add barbecue sauce and water and bring the mixture to a boil. Add all spices. Cover pan, reduce heat to low and simmer 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. The chili will thicken as it cooks. Add tomato juice as necessary to create a brew that ladles up easily. Allow the chili to "rest" at least 30 minutes in a covered pan at room temperature. (Chili can be refrigerated and reheated to serve.) To serve, put a layer of spaghetti on each plate, top spaghetti with hot chili, then a few beans, then the reserved chopped onions (to taste). Pat on the cheese so the chili's heat can begin to melt it. Serve immediately with oyster crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Breast of Veal with Potato Spinach Stuffing

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 12

INGREDIENTS FOR STUFFING:

- 3 ¾ lbs russet potatoes, peeled, cut into 1-inch pieces
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 4 cups chopped onions
- 1 lb ground veal
- 6 ounces fresh spinach leaves (about 6 cups packed), chopped
- ½ cup matzo meal
- 2 large eggs, beaten to blend

METHOD:

Ask the butcher to cut a large pocket in the veal to hold the stuffing. For a veal breast this size, use a deep roasting pan that's at least 18 by 12 inches. Cook potatoes in large pot of boiling salted water until tender, about 20 minutes. Drain, return potatoes to same pot and mash. Heat oil in heavy, large skillet over high heat. Add onions and sauté until beginning to brown, about 10 minutes. Add ground veal and sauté until no longer pink, breaking up meat with back of spoon, about 5 minutes. Add spinach and sauté until well wilted, about 2 minutes. Add veal mixture to potatoes and blend well. Mix in matzo meal. Season stuffing to taste with salt and pepper. Add eggs and blend well into the stuffing mixture. (Can be prepared 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.)

INGREDIENTS FOR VEAL:

- 1 (11½-pound) whole breast of veal with pocket for stuffing
- 4 shallots, chopped
- 2 celery stalks, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped
- 1 tbsp tomato paste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Season veal pocket with salt and pepper. Spread 5 cups of stuffing in pocket. Close pock with small metal skewers or toothpicks. Sprinkle outside of veal with salt and pepper. Place veal in large roasting pan, bone side down. Sprinkle shallots, celery and carrot around veal; add tomato paste. Cover pan with heavy-duty foil. Spoon remaining stuffing into oiled baking dish. Cover dish with foil; chill. Roast veal 3 hours. Uncover veal. Place covered dish of stuffing in oven. Cook stuffing until hot and continue to roast until top is well browned and veal is very tender, about 45 minutes. Transfer veal to large platter. Let stand 15 minutes. Pour pan juices into large measuring cup. Spoon off fat. Puree pan juices and vegetables in processor until almost smooth; season with salt and pepper. Transfer gravy to dish. Slice veal. Serve with gravy and extra stuffing.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Beef in Barbeque Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

Western cooks may consider Oriental cooking beyond their reach. This simple Beef in Barbecue Sauce recipe will allow the novice to create the unique flavor of Chinese food in a Wok or skillet right in your home kitchen, and best of all, the ingredients may be found in the specialty food section of any large supermarket or Oriental store.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ lb. beef sirloin, thinly sliced
- 4 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 2 cups pea pods
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 ½ tablespoon soy sauce
- 1 ½ tablespoon barbecue (Sa Tsa) sauce
- ½ tablespoon sugar
- ½ tablespoon soy sauce (cooking wine)

METHOD:

Blend 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil, ½ tablespoon of soy sauce and 1 tablespoon cornstarch with sliced beef to prevent meat from sticking during frying. In a wok or large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon vegetable oil. Briefly stir-fry pea pods and water; remove from wok or skillet and keep warm. To the hot wok, add 2 additional tablespoon vegetable oil. Add beef and stir-fry to desired tenderness. Drain the oil. Add mixture of soy sauce, barbecue sauce and sugar; stir and mix well. Place over fried pea pods and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Beef in Oyster Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

Western cooks may consider Oriental cooking beyond their reach. This simple Beef in Oyster Sauce recipe will allow the novice to create the unique flavor of Chinese food in a Wok or skillet right in your home kitchen, and best of all, the ingredients may be found in the specialty food section of any large supermarket or Oriental store.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ pound beef sirloin, thinly sliced
- 5 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 cups asparagus spears, halved
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- 6 slices fresh ginger
- 2 tablespoons water
- ¾ tablespoon soy sauce
- ¾ tablespoon oyster sauce
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon corn starch
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 1 teaspoon sesame oil
- ½ tablespoon sesame seeds

METHOD:

Season meat to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Blend 1 tablespoon of the vegetable oil with the sliced beef to prevent the meat from sticking together during frying. In a wok or large skillet heat 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Add the asparagus and stir-fry 2 - 3 minutes, then remove and keep warm. To the hot wok, add 2 additional tablespoons oil. Add green onions and ginger. Stir-fry two minutes, then add beef and continue to cook, stirring often, 5 to 7 minutes, or until beef reaches desired doneness. In a small mixing bowl combine 2 tablespoons of water with soy sauce, oyster sauce, sugar, corn starch, cayenne pepper and sesame oil. Blend well and add to the skillet stirring constantly until a nice thick brown sauce is achieved. Add asparagus and sesame seeds, heat thoroughly, and serve over steamed rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Beef with Spinach

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

Western cooks may consider Oriental cooking beyond their reach. This simple Beef with Spinach recipe will allow the novice to create the unique flavor of Chinese food in a Wok or skillet right in your home kitchen, and best of all, the ingredients may be found in the specialty food section of any large supermarket or Oriental store.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ lb. of beef sirloin, thinly sliced
- ½ tablespoon soy sauce (cooking wine)
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 4 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1/3 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon water
- ½ lb. spinach
- 6 sections green onion (1 inch long)
- 1 tablespoon shredded ginger

METHOD:

Blend 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil, soy sauce and cornstarch with sliced beef to prevent the meat from sticking together during frying. In a wok or large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon vegetable oil. Briefly stir-fry spinach, salt and water; remove and place in bowl and keep warm. To hot wok, add 2 additional tablespoons vegetable oil. Stir-fry green onions and ginger, add beef and stir-fry to desired tenderness. Add spinach to wok. Stir constantly to mix well.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Grilled Steak Oriental

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

Western cooks may consider Oriental cooking beyond their reach. This simple Beef with Spinach recipe will allow the novice to create the unique flavor of Chinese food in a Wok or skillet right in your home kitchen, and best of all, the ingredients may be found in the specialty food section of any large supermarket or Oriental store.

INGREDIENTS:

2 10-12 ounce T-Bone steaks
 2 tablespoons minced garlic cloves
 2 tablespoons minced coriander
 1½ tablespoons butter
 1 tablespoon soy sauce
 1 teaspoon sesame oil
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Mix garlic, coriander, butter, soy sauce, salt, pepper and sesame oil. Place the steaks in marinade and let sit for 1 hour room temperature. Place on grill and cook to desired temperature.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Black Pepper Beef

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 2

COMMENT:

Western cooks may consider Oriental cooking beyond their reach. This simple Beef with Spinach recipe will allow the novice to create the unique flavor of Chinese food in a Wok or skillet right in your home kitchen, and best of all, the ingredients may be found in the specialty food section of any large supermarket or Oriental store.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ lb. beef sirloin, cut in long strips
- ½ tablespoon soy sauce (cooking wine)
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch
- 4 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 2 cups cucumber (cut in strips)
- 2 cups carrot (cut in strips)
- 4 tablespoons water
- 3 sections green onion (1 inch long)
- 1 tablespoon shredded ginger
- 5 garlic cloves, sliced
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire Sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch

METHOD:

Blend 1 tablespoon of vegetable oil, soy sauce and cornstarch with beef to prevent meat from sticking together during frying. In a wok or large skillet, heat 1 tablespoon vegetable oil. Add cucumbers and carrots and stir-fry 2-3 minutes, then remove and keep warm. To hot wok, add 2 additional tablespoons vegetable oil. Add green onions, ginger and garlic cloves. Stir-fry, stirring often 5 to 7 minutes, or until beef reaches desired doneness. In small mixing bowl, combine 3 tablespoons water with Worcestershire sauce, salt, pepper, cornstarch. Blend and add to the skillet stirring constantly until all ingredients are well incorporated. Add cucumber and carrots and blend well.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Creole Dirty Rice

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

This dish is much better known in New Orleans than in the bayous. The name dirty rice was given to the dish because of its dark color, once the liver and giblets are added. It is truly a unique Creole dish and definitely worth trying.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 pound chicken giblets
 1/2 pound chicken livers
 1/2 cup melted butter
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced bell pepper
 2 tbsp diced garlic
 1 cup chicken stock
 6 cups cooked rice
 1/2 cup sliced green onions
 1/2 cup chopped parsley
 Salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a small saucepot, poach chicken giblets in lightly salted water until tender, approximately 45 minutes. Once cooked, remove and cool. Using a sharp paring knife, chop the giblets into tiny pieces, removing all tough membrane. Set aside and reserve poaching liquid. In a large heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat butter over medium high heat. Sauté chicken livers until golden brown on all sides, approximately 15 to 20 minutes. Remove chicken livers from sauté pan and place on a chopping board to cool. Into the same sauté pan, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Once vegetables are done, coarsely chop chicken livers and return with giblets to the sauté pan. Add chicken stock and a small amount of the poaching liquid, bring to a low boil and cook until volume of liquid is reduced to approximately 1/4 cup. Add cooked white rice, blending well into the meat mixture and garnish using green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Beef Short Ribs with Ale & Vegetables

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Oregon is the micro-brewing capital of the Northwest. Many different lagers, ales and stouts are produced and consumed daily. Each micro-brewery boasts of delicious recipes to accompany its brew. I've added Cajun flair to this recipe using many of my favorite Louisiana products such as Abita Beer, Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup and Zatarain's Creole Mustard.

INGREDIENTS:

6 pounds beef short ribs
 2 cups Abita Beer, Amber
 2 cups diced carrots
 2 cups diced celery
 8 small new potatoes, halved
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 8 slices of bacon
 2 cups diced onions
 2 tbsp Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup
 1/4 cup Zatarain's Creole Mustard
 1/2 tbsp salt
 1/2 tbsp black pepper
 1/2 tbsp allspice
 4 cups beef stock

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. In a 10-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add short ribs, three to four at a time, and cook until golden brown. Remove and keep warm. Discard all oil except 1 tablespoon. Add bacon and cook 2-3 minutes to render fat. Return ribs to the pot. Add onions, Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup, Zatarain's Creole Mustard, salt, pepper, allspice, beef stock and Abita Beer. Bring mixture to a rolling boil. Cover and braise in oven for 1 1/2 hours. Remove from oven and add carrots, celery and potatoes. Return pot to the oven and bake until vegetables are tender, approximately 45 minutes. Serve hot with fresh Indian Fry Bread.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Chisholm Trail Spoon Steak Chili

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Chisholm Trail cowboys referred to a great bowl of chili as "spoon steak," while Texans called it a "bowl of red." Some say chili con carne had its start in Texas in the early 1800s. Frank Talbut's Bowl of Red book ends with this prayer: "Chili eaters is some of YOUR chosen people. We don't know why YOU so doggone good to us. But Lord God, don't think we ain't grateful for this chili we about to eat. Amen."

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds ground beef
 1 large onion, chopped
 3/4 tsp flour
 1 quart tomato juice
 1 package chili seasoning
 2 tsp chili powder
 1/2 cup ketchup
 3 cans chili beans
 2 cans beef consommé

METHOD:

In a 5-quart cast iron dutch oven, place ground beef over medium-high heat. Sauté until meat is brown and separated grain for grain, approximately 30 minutes. Add onion and sauté 10 additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend well into the meat mixture. Add tomato juice, chili seasonings, ketchup, beans and consommé. Bring mixture to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Allow chili to cook a minimum of 1 hour, stirring occasionally. You may wish to adjust seasonings using a pinch of salt and pepper. Serve warm.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Cincinnati Style Chili

PREP TIME: 2-3 Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This is a recipe collected by my good buddy Joe Cahn during his Tailgating Across America Tour. The recipe was given to Joe by Rick Prewitt, a tailgating fan from Centerville, Ohio. Another option for the recipe is to serve the chili over rice, substituting two cups of rice for the 12 ounces of spaghetti.

INGREDIENTS:

2 lbs of VERY LEAN ground beef
 1 packet of Cincinnati style chili spices
 2 (6 oz. cans) tomato paste
 10 cans water (use the empty tomato paste cans)
 12 oz spaghetti
 3 tbsp chili powder
 1 tbsp ground cinnamon
 1 tbsp ground cloves
 1 tbsp allspice
 1 tbsp cumin seed
 1 tbsp cayenne pepper
 16 oz fine shredded mild cheddar cheese
 2 cans of kidney beans
 bag of oyster crackers
 bottle of favorite hot sauce
 large onion, fine chopped
 1 tbsp white pepper
 1 tbsp ground cocoa powder
 1 tbsp garlic powder
 1/2 tbsp curry powder
 1/2 tbsp ground ginger
 1/2 tbsp ground nutmeg

METHOD:

Add ground beef, tomato paste and water to large pot, DO NOT BROWN MEAT! Add these 3 ingredients and bring to a boil. Add seasoning packets and/or all the other spices. Slow simmer until the chili mixture is very thick. Add water as necessary, will probably need to simmer 2-3 hours. Add fresh ground pepper and salt to taste. Add more chili powder and other spices to taste.

Cook the chili the day before and refrigerate. Also cook spaghetti day before and refrigerate. The morning of your tailgate party, put chili in cast iron Dutch oven and heat thru. Wrap the Dutch oven in towels and put in a box to transport to game--it will stay warm. At the tailgate site: Heat a pot of water on a camp stove and add the cooked spaghetti--you just need to warm it. Meanwhile, open the cans of beans to a small pot and heat thru on the camp stove.

Arrange all of the other ingredients (cheese, chopped onions, oyster crackers, hot sauce) and let your tailgaters serve themselves!!!

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Joe Cahn's Jambalaya

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

This is one of Joe Cahn's favorite tailgate recipes, because you can put just about anything in it - if it walks, crawls, swims or flies - it can be thrown into the jambalaya. Everything goes into one pot, so clean up's a breeze.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 lbs boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch pieces
- Salt and ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 1/2 lbs sausage, cut in 1/4-inch slices
- 4 cups chopped onion
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 2 cups chopped green bell pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 5 cups chicken stock (or water flavored with chicken bouillon)
- 2 tbsp Kitchen Bouquet (browning agent)*
- 2 tbsp seasoning salt
- 4 cups uncooked long grain white rice
- 2 cups sliced green onion

METHOD:

Season chicken with salt and pepper; brown in hot oil in 8-quart Dutch oven or stockpot over medium-high heat. Add sausage; cook 5 to 7 minutes. Remove chicken and sausage from pan; set aside. Add onions, celery, green peppers and garlic; cook, stirring 7 to 10 minutes or until vegetables begin to wilt. Stir in chicken stock, reserved chicken and sausage, seasoning salt and Kitchen Bouquet. Bring to a boil; add rice and return to a boil, cover and reduce heat to simmer. Cook 10 minutes; remove cover and stir. Replace cover and cook 15 to 20 minutes or until liquid is absorbed and rice is tender. Stir in green onions.

*For red jambalaya, substitute two tablespoons paprika.

Four Tips:

1. Use 1 cup of rice for every 2 cups of vegetables (onions, celery, bell pepper).
2. Use 1 1/4 cups liquid for every 1 cup of uncooked rice.
3. 1 cup of uncooked rice will make 3 cups of cooked rice, season accordingly.
4. Cook jambalaya for a total of 25 to 30 minutes, stirring well after 10 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Ouachita Stuffed Peppers

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

The Indians of Louisiana were instrumental in helping to develop the cuisines of the Cajuns and Creoles. Corn, squash, beans and cornmeal were part of their daily repertoire and quickly found their way into the black iron pots. Here, we combine the Native American ingredients with beef to create an entree out of this world.

INGREDIENTS:

4 each red, green and yellow bell peppers
 8 pounds ground beef
 1/2 cup butter
 2 cups chopped onion
 2 cups chopped celery
 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
 1/2 cup diced yellow bell pepper
 1/2 cup diced garlic
 2 cups beef stock
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1/2 cup chopped parsley
 2 cups whole kernel corn
 4 cups crushed corn bread
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 8 cups prepared tomato sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large black iron skillet, melt butter over medium high heat. Add beef and cook until golden brown, approximately thirty minutes. Drain off all but two tablespoons of oil. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add beef stock to keep mixture moist while meat is sautéing. Once tender, add green onions, parsley and corn. Sprinkle in crushed corn bread and blend well into meat mixture. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Remove the top from the bell peppers and clean all pulp from the inside. Stuff with the meat dressing, place in a large casserole dish and surround with a prepared tomato sauce. Bake for thirty minutes or until peppers are tender.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Old-Fashioned Beefy Vegetable Stew

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

This recipe is my good friend Holly Clegg's from her book Trim & Terrific One-Dish Favorites. This traditional stew makes a rich, dark gravy that is wonderful served over rice, and is sure to please your family in a hurry! If you have leftovers, store them in an air-tight container and freeze. You'll have another great meal for a busy day in which you simply have no time to cook.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds sirloin tips, cut into 2-inch chunks
 1 onion, sliced
 Salt and pepper to taste
 2 (10 1/2-ounce) cans beef consommé'
 3/4 cup red wine
 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 1/2 cup dry bread crumbs
 1 (16-ounce) bag baby carrots
 1 (10-ounce) package frozen peas
 4 cups cooked rice

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Place the meat, onion, salt and pepper, consommé' and wine in a large, heavy pot. Combine the flour and bread crumbs in a bowl and stir into the meat mixture thoroughly. Cover and bake for 30 minutes. Reduce the heat to 300 degrees F and cook 1 1/2 hours longer, or until the meat is tender. Add the carrots and peas during the last 30 minutes of baking. Serve over the cooked rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Doc's Primo Chili - (Something Old)

PREP TIME: 3½ Hours

SERVES: 15–20

COMMENT:

Chili is one of my favorite dishes. I always have most of the ingredients stored in my pantry or freezer. With a little preparation, the meal simmers for a few hours while I cook something else. What makes this dish even better for working families is that you have a meal for today and several future dinners to stock in the freezer. This recipe comes from my cookbook, "Something Old & Something New."

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 pounds ground chicken gizzards
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 3 large onions, diced
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell peppers
- 1/4 cup minced garlic
- 1 (28-ounce) can tomatoes
- 1 (28-ounce) can V-8 juice
- 1 cup beef stock or bouillon
- 3 tbsps liquid smoke
- 1/2 cup beer
- 3 tsps cumin
- 6 ounces chili powder*
- 2 tsps paprika
- 2 tbsps apple spice
- 6 tbsps ground fennel seed*
- 1 tsp cocoa powder
- 1 tsp salt
- black pepper
- hot sauce
- 3 jalapeno peppers, seeded and diced



METHOD:

In a 12-quart cast iron pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add ground gizzards and cook until golden brown, stirring occasionally. While meat is browning, place onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic into the bowl of a food processor. Chop until vegetables are almost to a liquid state. When meat is golden brown, add contents of food processor to the pot. Continue to sauté until all vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes, V-8, beef bouillon, liquid smoke and beer. Blend well into the vegetable mixture, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add cumin, chili powder, paprika, apple spice, fennel and

cocoa. Stir well into the tomato liquid. Season lightly using salt, pepper, hot sauce and jalapenos. Reduce heat to simmer and cook 4 hours, stirring often. Naturally, the longer chili cooks, the better it tastes. If you like your chili with beans, feel free to add one can of cooked kidney beans 10 minutes prior to serving. Adjust seasonings if necessary.

***Note:** If you prefer a less spicy chili, use half of what is called for, then add more as needed.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Doc's Primo Chili - (Something New)

PREP TIME: 3 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 15-20

COMMENT:

Who says Mamma's cooking can't be healthy? This modified version of Doc's Primo Chili (Something Old) reduces the sodium, cholesterol and carbohydrate content without changing the flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

3 pounds ground chicken gizzards
 3 pounds ground chicken
 3 large onions, diced
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1 (28-ounce) can tomatoes, no salt added
 1 (28-ounce) can V-8 juice, low sodium
 3 ounces defatted beef bouillon
 3 tbsps liquid smoke
 1/2 cup beer
 3 tsps cumin
 6 ounces chili powder
 2 tsps paprika
 2 tbsps apple spice
 6 tbsps ground fennel seed
 1 tsp cocoa powder
 salt substitute
 black pepper
 hot sauce
 3 jalapeno peppers, seeded and diced

METHOD:

In a 12-quart cast iron pot, heat gizzards and chicken over medium-high heat. Cook until golden brown, stirring occasionally. While meat is browning, place onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic into the bowl of a food processor. Chop until vegetables are almost to the liquid state. When meat is golden brown, add contents of food processor to the pot. Continue to sauté until all vegetables are incorporated and wilted. Add tomatoes, V-8, beef bouillon, liquid smoke and beer. Blend well into the vegetable mixture, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add cumin, chili powder, paprika, apple spice, fennel and cocoa. Stir well into the tomato liquid. Season lightly using salt substitute, pepper, hot sauce and jalapenos. Reduce heat to simmer and cook 4 hours, stirring often. Naturally, the longer chili cooks, the better it tastes. If you like your chili with beans, feel free to add one can of cooked kidney beans, 10 minutes prior to serving. Adjust seasonings, if necessary.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Flavored Ground Meat for Meatloaf, Meatballs, Hamburger Steak, Hamburger Patties, Lasagna or Rice Dressing

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 40 Individual Portions

COMMENT:

This Creole settlement of Natchitoches is famous worldwide for its meat pies. Slow braised meat, flavored with vegetables and herbs, made into a loaf or pie is traditional in many cultures. However, in this old Louisiana settlement it is more than a tradition - it is a way of life.

INGREDIENTS:

6 pounds ground chuck
 4 pounds lean ground pork
 3 cups finely diced onions
 2 cups finely diced celery
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1 cup finely sliced green onions
 1 cup chopped parsley
 6 whole eggs
 1 cup heavy whipping cream
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine ground chuck, pork, onions, celery, garlic, green onions and parsley. Using your hands, mix the ingredients thoroughly until all seasonings are well blended. Add eggs, whipping cream, salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Continue to blend until the liquids are well incorporated. Divide mixture into desired portions for later use. Freeze up to three months. To defrost, place in refrigerator overnight.

NOTE: This is a base meat for meatloaf, meatballs, hamburger steak, hamburger patties, lasagna or rice dressing.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Paella Del Caribe

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

My Spanish ancestors considered paella one of the most elegant dishes that could be placed on a table. Naturally, every region of the world has its interpretation of this rice dish. This recipe is a favorite of most people living on the Spanish-speaking islands.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup conch
 1/2 cup (70-90 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 2 (7-ounce) fish fillets, cubed
 1 cup breast of chicken, diced
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1 tsp saffron
 1 cup onions, diced
 1 cup tomato, diced
 1 cup carrots, diced
 2 cups long grain rice
 12 young okra, whole
 1 quart chicken stock
 1 bay leaf
 2 whole cloves
 2 sprigs of thyme
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 1 tbsp lime juice
 salt and black pepper

METHOD:

In a 15-inch cast iron skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add seafoods and chicken, a little at a time, until all are sautéed and cooked approximately medium-rare to medium. Add saffron, onions, tomato and carrots. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. The saffron will give the dish a wonderful golden color and unique flavor. Add okra, chicken stock, bay leaves, cloves and thyme. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, blend well into the seasonings and meat, and reduce heat to simmer. Add green onions, parsley and lime juice. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Stir in long grain rice, blending well into the seafood mixture. Cover and cook 30-45 minutes, stirring at 15-minute intervals. Serve as a main dish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

World-Champion Brisket - (From John Willingham's World Champion Bar-B-Que cookbook)

PREP TIME: 8 - 10 hours

SERVES: 10 - 12 people

COMMENT:

This recipe is for serious cooks only. The procedure is time-consuming, no argument there, but if you follow the recipe exactly, you will finish in the top 10 percent in any brisket competition -- unless the other guy uses the same recipe! In that case, presentation will be the winning factor because people eat with their eyes first. Taking the time to prepare this brisket proves the adage that anything worth doing is worth doing right. Remember to establish good, steady heat inside the cooker. A cold brisket is a lot like a stubborn jackass, sometimes you have to hit el burro in the head with a two-by-four to get his attention. A brisket is the same about giving up its cold until it is overpowered by the initial and sustained heat that causes the pores to open, allowing the cold to escape rapidly. The most important thing to do after cooking and resting is to slice the meat across the grain into pieces about 1/4 inch thick.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 6- to 9-pound brisket
- 1/2 cup All-Purpose Marinade or W'ham Marinade
- 1/2 cup beer, cola or club soda
- 3/4 cup Mild Seasoning Mix or W'ham Mild Seasoning
- 1/2 cup packed dark brown sugar

SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:

- Stiff-back boning knife, sharpened
- 1 roll 16-inch-wide plastic wrap
- 1 roll 18-inch-wide aluminum foil
- Meat thermometer
- Long-blade carving knife, sharpened

METHOD:

Remove all the fat and sinew from the brisket, leaving 1/4 inch of fat extending from the top of the brisket point. Cutting at a right angle to the grain, trim the corner of the brisket point. This will serve as a guide later when it is time to slice the brisket. This will also be important should you decide the direction to cut prior to pulling the brisket.

Rub the meat all over with the marinade and set aside, covered, for 20 minutes in a cool place.

In a bowl, combine the beer, seasoning mix and brown sugar. Rub the meat all over with the mixture, massaging it in with your fingertips. Cover and refrigerate for at least 12 hours and preferably

for 24 hours.

Start the cooker, allow it to reach a temperature of 250 degrees F. Let the cooker remain at that temperature for 30 minutes to establish and ensure a uniform thermal inertia in the cooking tower or chamber. A brisket resists giving up its massive cold, so the fire must have a strong supply of base heat to overpower and then to draw the cold from the meat. Once the dominance of the fire is established, the brisket will become a willing part of the cooking process.

Cook for 8 to 10 hours, maintaining a temperature of 210 degrees F. The brisket is done when the temperature reaches 180 degrees to 185 degrees F internally or when a fork slides easily in and out of the meat. Remove and allow the brisket to rest for about 10 minutes. Wrap tightly with foil and put in the cooker part of the cooking chamber when the temperature is approximately 150 degrees F. Let it rest until you are ready to serve it, or for about 1 hour. Serve it, sliced across the grain, basted with any accumulated juices.

NOTE: The brisket can rest in an insulated cooler that has been filled with very hot water, drained and dried. Cover the cooler with the brisket inside.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Black and Blue Sugar Steak

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 2 steelworkers Or 4 regular guys

COMMENT:

The term "black and blue" is used to describe a steak that has been charred on the outside while remaining rare on the inside. In the city of Pittsburgh the steelworkers, after completing their 8 to 10 hour shifts, would rush into the bars for rest and relaxation. Their favorite food and beverage was a sirloin steak "Pittsburgh Style," which was the black and blue method, chased down with a "boiler maker," a shot of whiskey and a bottle of beer! Here in the South, brown sugar or Steen's Cane Syrup is added to the marinade to create a unique and magnificent flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 2 1/2 pound Porterhouse Steak
- 2 teaspoons dried basil leaves
- 1/4 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- 2 teaspoons dried tarragon leaves
- 1/4 cup fresh squeezed orange juice
- 1 teaspoon dried thyme leaves
- 3 tablespoons Lea & Perrins Worcestershire
- 2 teaspoons granulated garlic
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- salt to taste

METHOD:

Create a marinade by combining all of the above ingredients except the steak. Whisk well to blend all ingredients. Pour the marinade into a glass jar and allow to develop flavors overnight. Heat grill according to manufacturer's directions. Pour the marinade over the Porterhouse and turn two or three times to coat evenly. Allow the steak to sit at room temperature, turning occasionally, 1 to 2 hours. Grill on high heat, turning occasionally, until inside temperature reaches 125 degrees and outside is browned well and slightly charred around the edges. If you prefer your steak cooked to medium or well done, cook on a lower heat, turning occasionally, to desired doneness.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Ray's Cajun Hot Brisket

PREP TIME: 5 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This recipe comes from the Cajun Grill Master, Ray Guidry of Percy Guidry Manufacturing in Lafayette, Louisiana. Their Cajun Grill is one of the hottest pieces of outdoor cooking equipment on the market. Additionally, Ray has written a great cookbook, The Cajun Grill Cookbook, to accompany the grill which makes it just that much easier to succeed at that backyard barbecue.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 beef brisket
- 1 cup of jalapeno peppers, chopped
- 2 large onions
- chopped salt, cayenne pepper, and celery salt to taste
- 2 sweet green peppers
- chopped vinegar or zesty Italian salad dressing
- 5 large cloves of garlic, minced

METHOD:

Combine all seasonings in a large bowl. Trim excess fat off brisket. Lay the brisket flat on a table. Cut a slice in the meat on one of the long ends of the brisket to create a pocket. Put all of the seasonings in the pocket. Reserve the seasoning juices. Sew the pocket closed with a string. Create a rub of dry salt, cayenne pepper, and celery salt. Spread this evenly on the outside of the brisket. Place the brisket on the Cajun Grill with a full hot bed of coals with the coal tray at the highest position and with the cover of the Cajun Grill left open. Cook in this position for 30 - 40 minutes on each side or until the brisket becomes blackened. When this is done take the brisket off and lay it in an aluminum baking pan. Pour the reserved seasoning liquid over the brisket and cover with aluminum foil. Place it back on the Cajun Grill with the coal tray in the very lowest position, air controls completely closed, and cover closed for an additional 4 hours. Take the brisket off the grill at about the 3 1/2 hour mark and cut into thin strips with electric knife. Make sure to cut against the grain of the meat. Place the strips of brisket back into the pan which is full of juices and put it back on the Cajun Grill for the additional 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)





FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Jeff's Oven Smoked Bones

PREP TIME: 5 Hours

SERVES: 6 to 8

COMMENT:

This tasty recipe is from Chris Schlesinger and John Willoughby's new book License to Grill. Although the recipe is completely prepared oven-style, your guests would never believe they weren't done on the pit out back. This technique will save many a garden party if the weather decides not to cooperate.

INGREDIENTS For the Rub:

- 1/2 cup freshly cracked black pepper
- 1/4 cup ground cumin
- 1/4 cup lightly packed brown sugar
- 1/4 cup kosher salt
- 1/4 cup paprika

INGREDIENTS For the Sauce:

- 1 cup bourbon
- 1/3 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 cup minced shallots
- 1/2 cup cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic Salt
- freshly cracked black pepper to taste
- 1/2 cup catsup

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 pounds beef ribs

METHOD:

Make the rub. Combine all of the ingredients in a small bowl and mix well. Rub the ribs generously with this mixture. Lay the ribs on a baking sheet that has been covered with foil and bake them in a 200 degree F oven for 5 hours. While the ribs are cooking, make the sauce: heat the bourbon in a small saucepan over medium-low heat for just 1 minute to warm it up. Now, be careful for this next part. Roll a piece of paper up into a tube or get one of those long fireplace matches, light it, and hold it inside the pan right over but not touching the bourbon; the bourbon should ignite. Once the bourbon has stopped flaming (about 1 minute), add the shallots and cook for 3 to 4 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the shallots are soft. Add the rest of the sauce ingredients, reduce the heat to low, and simmer for 15 minutes. The sauce would be slightly thickened. Remove it from the heat, cover to keep warm, and set aside. Remove the ribs from the oven, cut them into individual ribs, and grill them over a medium-hot fire for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the rub develops a crusty appearance. Remove from the fire, brush generously with the warm

bourbon sauce, and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

John's "Tender & Juicy" Spaghetti and Meatballs

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

Nothing is worse than sitting at the table ready to enjoy a plate of Spaghetti and Meatballs, and the meatballs are tough and dry. I actually had to travel to Italy to learn the secret of juicy, tender meatballs.

INGREDIENTS: MEATBALLS

1 pound ground chuck
 1 pound ground pork
 6 eggs
 1 cup minced onion
 1 cup minced celery
 1/4 cup chopped garlic
 1/4 cup chopped basil
 1 3/4 cup Italian breadcrumbs
 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 2 tbsps salt
 2 tbsps pepper

METHOD: MEATBALLS

In a large mixing bowl, combine ground beef and ground pork. Using your hands (washed well), blend beef and pork thoroughly. Add eggs, onion, celery, garlic, basil, breadcrumbs and cheese. Again, using your hands, blend thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper. I recommend frying a small patty of the meat mixture in a sprinkle of extra virgin olive oil to test for seasoning. Correct if necessary. Roll the meatballs into the desired size. I recommend meatballs slightly larger than a golf ball. Place the rolled meatballs on a cookie sheet, cover and refrigerate. This will make approximately 20 meatballs.

INGREDIENTS: SAUCE

4 35-ounce cans Italian plum tomatoes with juice
 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1/4 cup minced garlic
 1/4 cup chopped basil
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD: SAUCE

Drain the Italian plum tomatoes through a sieve, retaining the juice. Chop the tomatoes into 1/4-inch pieces. Return tomatoes to the juice and set aside. In a 3-gallon saucepot or large Magnalite pot, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery and garlic and sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes in juice and chopped basil. Bring to a low boil, reduce to a simmer and

cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add raw meatballs, dropping gently into the sauce. Return sauce to a simmer. Do not stir for the first 10 minutes of simmering, or you will break the meatballs. When stirring, use a wooden spoon and move the meatballs gently through the sauce. Simmer for one hour, adding a little water or chicken stock, if the sauce becomes too thick. Season the sauce to taste using salt and pepper.

When ready to serve, cook spaghetti according to package directions. Place cooked spaghetti in a large serving bowl and top with six to eight ounces of the finished sauce. Toss well to coat spaghetti. Pour spaghetti in the center of a large serving platter. Arrange meatballs on top of pasta, top with additional sauce and Parmesan cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

The Great American Hamburger

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

What makes a great hamburger? First, there's the meat. You want to use a flavorful cut, like sirloin (for uptown burgers) or chuck or round (if you're feeling more democratic). The meat should be ground twice—first through the course plate of the grinder, then through the fine plate, and it shouldn't be too lean. 15-20 percent of fat is ideal.



I adhere to the "less is more" school when it comes to making hamburgers. Namely, the fewer ingredients you add to the meat, the better. Oh, I know how tempting it is for cooks to want to season the meat with onion, garlic, spices and condiments, but to taste a burger at its best, keep it utterly simple. The garnishes will add all the flavor you need.

One final bit of advice: handle the meat as little as possible; anything more will rob the burger of its juiciness and primal flavor.

INGREDIENTS FOR BURGERS:

2¼ pounds ground round, chuck or sirloin
 2 tbsps unsalted butter, melted or olive oil
 salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
 6 hamburger buns
 6 slices (½-inch thick) Vidalia onion or other sweet onion (optional)

INGREDIENTS FOR THE TOPPINGS: (ANY OR ALL)

Iceberg lettuce leaves
 sliced, fresh, ripe tomatoes
 sliced dill or sweet pickles
 cooked bacon, 2 strips per burger
 ketchup
 mustard
 mayonnaise

METHOD:

Preheat the grill to high. Divide meat into 6 equal portions. Lightly wet your hands with cold water, and then form each portion of meat into a round patty, 4 inches across and of even thickness. When ready to cook, oil the grill grate. Brush 1 side of the patties and the onion slices lightly with melted butter and season with salt and

pepper. Arrange both the burgers and onion slices butter side down on the hot grate and grill until nicely browned, about 4 minutes. Brush the other side lightly with more melted butter and season with more salt and pepper. Turn with a spatula and continue grilling until nicely browned and cooked to taste, about 4 minutes for medium. Brush the cut sides of the buns with the remaining melted butter and place cut side down, on the grill for the last 2 minutes. Set out toppings. Place the burgers and onion slices on the buns, garnish to your liking and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Beef and Pork Bourguignon

Prep Time: 3 hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment: This traditional French dish is the perfect meal for a cold, wet Louisiana day. It can definitely be made ahead of time and doesn't require a lot of attention once it's simmering. Normally, it would only contain beef, but we've added pork for an extra layer of flavor.



Ingredients:

- 2 pounds beef chuck roast, trimmed and cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 pounds pork Boston Butt roast, trimmed and cut into 1-inch cubes
- ¼ pound thick cut bacon, cut into ½-inch pieces
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ cup flour
- 12 pearl onions, peeled
- 2 cups peeled baby carrots
- 2 cups celery, sliced ½ inch thick
- ¼ cup slivered garlic
- 2 cups whole button mushrooms
- ½ cup brandy
- 2 cups dry red wine (preferably Burgundy)
- 4 cups low-sodium canned beef broth
- 1½ tsp tomato paste
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 sprigs thyme
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- 1 tbs chopped thyme
- salt and black pepper

Method:

Season beef and pork well with salt and black pepper. Dredge in flour, shaking off excess. In a heavy Dutch oven over medium heat, sauté bacon in olive oil until lightly browned and beginning to crisp. Remove from pot and set on paper towels. Brown meat well in bacon fat in batches, being careful not to burn. When all meat is browned, add onions, carrots, celery, garlic and mushrooms. Cook 8-10 minutes or until vegetables are caramelized. Deglaze with brandy, scraping all brown bits from bottom of pan. Add wine, broth, tomato paste, bay leaves, sprigs of thyme and reserved chopped bacon and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer, cover and cook slowly for 2½-3 hours, or until meat is very tender. Add chopped parsley and thyme and

adjust seasoning with salt and black pepper. Serve hot with crusty French bread.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Spicy Baked Beef Brisket

Prep Time: 3½ Hours**Yields:** 12 Servings

Comment: Man, I've been dying for a beef brisket sandwich all day! This delicious and tender brisket is fantastic on a sandwich or eaten alone. It takes a little time and patience, but it is well worth the effort.

**Ingredients:**

- 1 (6-7 pound) beef brisket, rinsed and patted dry
- 2 cups celery, roughly chopped
- 1 onion, roughly chopped
- 1 (3-inch) piece ginger, peeled and roughly chopped
- ½ cup chopped garlic
- ¼ cup Creole mustard
- ½ cup dry red wine
- 1 (12-ounce) can Coca-Cola
- 1 cup ketchup
- ¼ cup honey
- ¼ cup cider vinegar
- ¼ cup soy sauce
- ½ cup olive oil
- ¼ tsp ground cloves
- 2 tsps coarsely ground black pepper
- 1 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- salt and black pepper to taste
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp ground chili powder

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Add all ingredients except the brisket to a food processor. Process until all ingredients are smooth. Season the brisket lightly with salt and black pepper. Place brisket fat side up in a large heavy bottom-baking pan and pour puréed ingredients on top. Cover the pan tightly with aluminum foil and cook 2½ hours. Turn brisket over and bake covered for an additional hour or until fork tender. Uncover and allow to brown 15-20 minutes. Remove brisket from the sauce. Strain the sauce into a separate bowl. Allow brisket and sauce to cool then refrigerate overnight. Preheat oven to 350°F. Transfer the brisket to a cutting board and remove the fat. Slice brisket against the grain with a sharp knife. Skim the fat from the top of sauce. Transfer sauce to a pot, bring to a boil then season with salt, pepper, cumin and chili powder. Return sliced meat to the baking pan and cover with sauce. Warm brisket in 325°F oven for approximately 1 hour or until thoroughly heated. Serve thinly sliced on hot French bread.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Beef Tamales

Prep Time: 5 Hours

Yields: 60 Tamales

Ingredients for beef filling:

- 2 pounds ground round
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 (4-ounce) can diced green chilies
- 1 (14-ounce) can low-sodium beef broth
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 1 (1.23-ounce) package chili seasoning mix
- 1 tsp ground cumin
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 1 tsp chipotle chili powder
- 2 tbsps jalapeño peppers, seeded and diced
- 1 tbsp chili powder
- 2 tsps black pepper
- 2 tsps salt

Method:

In a skillet, brown ground beef over medium-high heat. Mix in all remaining ingredients. Cover and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Uncover and cook until mixture is just slightly saucy.

Ingredients for batter:

- 3½ cups masa harina
- 2¼ cups low-sodium chicken broth or water, warm
- 1 1/3 cups solid shortening or lard
- 2 tsps baking powder
- 2 tsps salt
- 1 1/3 cups low-sodium chicken broth

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, combine masa harina and 2¼ cups warm chicken broth or water. Mix well then set aside. In an electric mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, combine shortening, baking powder and salt. Beat until light and fluffy. Add 1 cup masa mix and 1/3 cup stock and beat until thoroughly combined. Continue adding 1 cup masa mix with 1/3 cup stock beating after each addition until entire mixture is light and fluffy. The batter should be soft and able to hold its shape in a spoon. Refrigerate at least 1 hour.

Ingredients for assembly:

- 2 packages corn husks
- beef filling (see above)

tamale batter (see above)

Method:

Place cornhusks in a saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil then transfer husks and water to a large bowl. Cover with a plate to keep husks submerged and allow to soak 1 hour. Remove husks from water. Unroll one large piece and tear lengthwise along the grain to make ¼-inch wide strips, 1 per tamale. Remove another large piece and lightly pat dry. Place flat on work surface with pointed end away from you. Spread ¼ cup tamale batter onto the middle of the husk. Place 1-2 tablespoons of filling on top of batter. Pick up the long sides of husk so batter incases filling. Bring sides together to form a cylinder. Fold the pointed end under and the flat end up to meet it. Finish by tying rolled tamale with a ¼-inch husk strip. Repeat process, tearing more strips as necessary.

To Steam Tamales:

Line bottom of steamer basket with cornhusks. Set basket in steamer pot. Lay tamales in steamer basket. Cover tamales with additional cornhusks. Cover pot. Steam on high heat until steam puffs out, then reduce to medium. Steam 1 hour adding more water if necessary. Test the tamales by unwrapping one. It is done when the dough comes free from wrapper and feels soft. If dough sticks to wrapper, rewrap and steam 15-20 minutes more. Remove from heat and let stand 15 minutes before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Bourbon Street London Broil

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Many cooks would consider an exotic-sounding recipe such as this one beyond their level of skill. This simple London Broil recipe marinated in Jack Daniels Bourbon and cane syrup will allow even a novice cook to prepare a flavorful meal. All of the ingredients can be found in your local supermarket.

Ingredients for Marinade:

- 2 pound London Broil steak
- 4–6 crushed garlic cloves
- 1½ ounces Jack Daniels Bourbon
- 1 tsp cane syrup vinegar
- 1 tsp Steen's cane syrup
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp finely chopped rosemary
- 1 tsp finely chopped parsley
- ½ tsp finely chopped thyme
- 1 cayenne pepper, thinly sliced
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil

Method:

In a glass mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except for steaks and vegetable oil. Mix well to create a marinade. In a gallon-sized plastic zipper bag, add steak and cover with whisked marinade. Seal bag and turn several times to coat meat with marinade. Refrigerate 8–24 hours, turning bag at least once. Remove steak from bag and discard marinade. In a cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add steak and cook to desired doneness. For medium-rare, cook 7–10 minutes per side. Do not overcook. Remove from skillet and let rest a minimum of 10 minutes to retain natural juices. Slice thinly across the grain. Serve with Bourbon Herb Butter if desired.

Ingredients for Bourbon Herb Butter:

- 6 ounces butter, softened
- 4 chopped garlic cloves
- 1 tsp chopped parsley
- 1 tsp thyme
- ¼ tsp Jack Daniels Bourbon

Method:

In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well. Keep at room temperature. Top each steak with a portion of herb butter before

serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Carpetbagger Tournedos

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

This recipe is named for the carpetbaggers present in the South during Reconstruction who carried all of their belongings around in a carpet sack. These tournedos are stuffed full of good eats!

Ingredients:

- 4 (3–4 ounce) beef tournedos
- 4 shucked oysters
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- ½ cup thinly sliced green onions
- 1 tbsp fresh minced garlic
- 2 tbsps butter or olive oil
- 1½ cups fresh sliced mushrooms
- 2 cups red wine
- 1 cup demi glace or beef broth
- toothpicks for securing meat

Method:

NOTE: Larger steaks can be used, and this will allow several oysters to be stuffed inside pockets. Season steaks with salt and pepper. Cut a small pocket in side of each tournedos, being careful not to cut in half. Insert 1 oyster, a small amount of green onions and garlic inside each. Fasten pocket together with toothpicks. In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat butter or oil on medium-high heat. Add tournedos and sauté 3–4 minutes on each side or until cooked to your liking. Remove steaks and keep warm. In same skillet, combine mushrooms, wine and demi glace. Reduce to half volume. Plate tournedos and spoon sauce over meat. Serve with potatoes or any vegetable. Steaks may also be grilled or cooked in an oven.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Braciolini

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6 Servings



Comment:

The Italians moved upriver from New Orleans in the late 1800s to work on sugar plantations. Many of these Italian families later opened grocery stores, vegetable stands and meat markets. Italian cooking was an important influence on shaping the cuisine of America.

Ingredients for Seasoning:

- 2 large round steaks
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 cup bulk Italian sausage
- ½ cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ½ cup sliced pimento olives
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup pine nuts
- ¼ cup golden raisins
- ½ cup Italian bread crumbs
- 2 boiled eggs diced

Method:

Place 1 round steak between 2 large sheets of wax paper and gently pound with a mallet to flatten and tenderize meat. Repeat with second steak. Place steaks on a large work surface and overlap them by 2–3 inches to form a large rectangle. The 2 pieces combined should be approximately 1 foot wide. Season meat with salt and pepper. Press Italian sausage over meat. NOTE: If bulk sausage cannot be found, simply cut the casing off of the links and mix together well. Spread remaining ingredients evenly over steaks. Roll meat in jellyroll fashion and secure with butcher's twine or toothpicks to keep intact during cooking process.

Ingredients for Cooking:

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 cup diced onions
1 cup diced celery
1 cup diced bell peppers
¼ cup minced garlic
1 cup sliced carrots
1 (35-ounce) can Italian plum tomatoes, chopped
1 cup dry red wine
1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
1 quart chicken stock
Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

In a large heavy-bottomed Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Brown steak well on all sides, turning occasionally. Add remaining ingredients and 2 cups chicken stock. Bring mixture to a rolling boil then reduce to simmer. Cover and cook 1½ hours. Chicken stock may be added as needed to retain volume. Once meat is tender, season sauce with salt, pepper and hot sauce. If sauce is watery, remove meat to a serving platter and reduce sauce over medium-high heat until proper consistency is achieved. When ready to serve, slice braciolini into 6 portions and top with tomato sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Scarecrow Chili

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

No bones about it, this chili is frighteningly delicious. Feed it to the little ghosts and goblins before they head out to trick-or-treat.

Ingredients:

3 pounds ground chuck
 1½ cup chopped onions
 1 cup chopped celery
 1 cup chopped green bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 (28-ounce) can diced tomatoes, undrained
 1 (15-ounce) can thick and zesty tomato sauce
 1 (16-ounce) can red kidney beans, rinsed and drained
 4 tbsps chili powder
 2 tbsps brown sugar
 1 cup beef stock
 1 tsp cumin
 1 tsp oregano
 1 tsp red pepper flakes
 2 bay leaves
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 2 cups elbow macaroni, cooked and drained
 Cheddar cheese
 chow mein noodles

Method:

In a large Dutch oven, sauté ground chuck over medium heat. Cook 10 minutes or until meat has lost its raw color, stirring frequently to break up any clumps. Pour off and discard fat that has accumulated in pot. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 5 minutes or until vegetables are translucent. Add diced tomatoes, tomato sauce, kidney beans, chili powder, brown sugar, beef stock, cumin, oregano, red pepper flakes, bay leaves, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and simmer 1 hour. Discard bay leaves before serving. Ladle chili atop cooked macaroni and garnish with cheese and noodles. The chow mein will resemble dry hay, giving the chili a scarecrow appearance.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

Beef Bourguignonne à la Bacchus

Prep Time: 2½ Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

This recipe is typical of the country French techniques recreated in early New Orleans. As a tribute to Bacchus, the god of wine, Burgundy wine is used in this dish for both flavoring and tenderizing the meat.

Ingredients:

2½–3 pounds sirloin, cubed 1 inch
 salt and black pepper to taste
 1/3 cup flour
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 4 slices bacon, diced
 2 cups diced onions
 ½ cup grated carrots
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 cup sliced mushrooms
 1 dozen pearl onions
 3 cups Burgundy wine
 4 cups beef broth
 1 tbsp tomato paste
 ½ tsp dried thyme
 1½ cups sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped parsley

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large mixing bowl, season meat with salt and pepper. Coat well with flour, shaking off excess. In a cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Sauté bacon 2–3 minutes or until golden brown, without burning bacon fat. Remove and keep warm. Add meat in 3 separate batches. NOTE: It is very important to add meat in separate batches to avoid overcrowding Dutch oven. Brown meat on all sides and allow it to caramelize in bottom of pot. Remove and keep warm. Sauté onions, carrots and garlic 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in mushrooms, pearl onions, wine, broth and tomato paste. Scrape bottom of pot to release caramelized flavor. Return meat to Dutch oven. Add bacon and thyme. Bring pot to a rolling boil, add green onions and parsley. Cover and place in preheated oven 2 hours or until meat is tender. Adjust seasonings if necessary, and serve over extra-wide egg noodles.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

STEAK FROM HELL

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

For best results, use 2 cups mesquite wood chips soaked for one hour in cold water. This recipe, from "The Barbecue Bible," comes from a steakhouse in Juarez, Mexico called Mitla, which literally means, "hell."

Ingredients:

4 (½-inch thick) T-bone steaks
 2–4 dried hot red chiles
 2 large tomatoes
 ½ small onion, sliced
 1 clove garlic, sliced
 3 tbsps coarsely chopped cilantro
 1–2 tbsps fresh lime juice
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 4 large flour tortillas

Method:

Preheat grill to high. NOTE: If using a gas grill, add wood chips to smoker box before preheating. In a small mixing bowl, soak chiles in warm water 20 minutes or until pliable. Set each tomato directly on stove burner to roast over high heat 6–8 minutes or until skins are charred and blistered. Transfer to a plate to cool. Drain chiles and remove seeds if a milder salsa is desired. In a blender, process chiles, tomatoes, onions, garlic and cilantro until coarse paste consistency is achieved. Add lime juice, salt and pepper. NOTE: Salsa should be highly seasoned. Transfer to a serving bowl. If using charcoal grill, place wood chips on coals. When ready to cook, oil grill grate. Salt steaks generously on one side. Place on hot grill, salt side down. Cook, turning once with tongs, 2–3 minutes each side for medium-rare. Remove steaks to a platter and let sit 3 minutes. Arrange tortillas on grill and cook 20 seconds per side or until soft and pliable, but not browned. Serve steaks with tortillas and salsa on the side.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MEATS

PIMIENTO CHEESE BURGERS

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

This recipe is courtesy of John T. Edge's newest book, *Hamburgers & Fries: An American Story*. Edge warns readers and cooks not to upset the balance of condiments with this burger. He says that chili, ketchup and mustard are all forbidden, as all the flavor you need is included in the pimiento cheese topping.

Ingredients for Pimiento Cheese:

24 ounces shredded extra sharp Cheddar
 1 (4-ounce) jar diced pimientos, drained
 1 tsp dried, rubbed sage
 1 tbsp black pepper
 2 tbsps chopped scallions
 pinch of sugar or to taste
 1/3 cup mayonnaise

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, combine cheese, drained pimientos, sage, pepper, scallions and sugar. Stir in mayonnaise until a chunky paste forms. If not using immediately, chill pimiento cheese. Remove from refrigerator just prior to cooking burgers because it will need a few minutes to soften.

Ingredients for Burgers:

1 pound ground chuck
 1 tsp salt
 1 tsp black pepper
 4 buns
 4 leaves lettuce
 1 tomato, sliced

Method:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine meat, salt and pepper. Form into 4 equally sized patties. Heat a heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Place patties in skillet and cook 3–4 minutes per side for medium rare. Slather buns with pimiento cheese, add patties, lettuce and tomato.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Oktoberfest Cabbage and Bratwurst

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 6 Servings

COMMENT:

Bratwurst is a traditional German meat that is synonymous with Oktoberfest. Cabbage is not far behind Brats on German menus. We have added a Cajun twist to this traditional German dish by adding heavily-smoked andouille sausage to lend its smoky flavor to our Cabbage and Brats.

INGREDIENTS:

1 large head of cabbage
 6 or 12 links Bratwurst
 ½ pound sliced andouille sausage
 ½ cup bacon drippings
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1½ cups chicken stock
 salt and cracked black pepper



METHOD:

Cut cabbage in quarters and discard the center heart and all large, exterior leaves. Chop quarters into 2-3 pieces and separate the leaves. In a 4-quart saucepot, melt bacon drippings over medium heat. Add Bratwurst and brown on all sides. Remove from pot and set aside. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic, green onions and andouille to the drippings. Sauté approximately 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add cabbage and blend well into vegetable mixture. Continue to sauté until cabbage leaves are wilted. Add Bratwurst and chicken stock and reduce heat to simmer. Cover pot and allow to cook, stirring occasionally, for approximately 45 minutes. Season to taste using salt and pepper and continue cooking until cabbage is well smothered. This dish, similar to snap beans, will be overcooked by most standards; however, this is the method preferred by both Cajuns and Creoles.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Summer Vegetable Frittata

PREP TIME: 35 Minutes

YIELDS: 6 Servings

COMMENT:

A frittata is like a quiche without the crust or an omelette without the hassle. This recipe combines a variety of seasonal vegetables that can be found in your garden or at the grocery store. This dish is an easy, healthy meal all in one skillet.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup zucchini, halved lengthwise and cut in ¼-inch slices
- 1 cup diced potatoes, cooked completely
- ½ cup halved grape tomatoes
- 2 tbsps sliced black olives
- 6 eggs
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ tsp chopped fresh basil
- pinch cayenne pepper
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- ½ cup minced onions
- ¼ cup minced yellow bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced red bell peppers
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 2 Roma tomatoes, sliced
- ½ cup shredded mozzarella



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 450°F. In a medium mixing bowl, beat eggs with salt, pepper, basil and cayenne. Set aside. In a non-stick frying pan with an ovenproof handle, heat the oil. Add onions, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté until vegetables are tender but not browned. Add zucchini and continue cooking, stirring occasionally, until al dente. Stir in potatoes, and cook until they are heated thoroughly. Add grape tomatoes and black olives, stirring until combined, then turn off the heat. Pour beaten eggs over the vegetables and arrange sliced tomatoes on top of the mixture. Sprinkle mozzarella cheese over the surface of the frittata. Put the entire pan into the oven and cook for 10–15 minutes or until the center of the frittata is completely firm and the cheese has slightly browned. Allow to cool for 5 minutes. Remove the frittata from the pan and place on a cutting board. Cut into wedges and serve with a small tossed salad.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Petit Marché Veggie Panini

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

On July 19, 2003, Petit Marché will open at Baton Rouge's Main Street Market. Chef John Folse will offer ice cream, cheese, soups, salads and sandwiches along with bottled and jarred gift items. Panini, a grilled sandwich, will be offered on three different types of bread with four different fillings including beef brisket, roasted pork, fried turkey and this wonderful grilled, marinated mix of vegetables.

INGREDIENTS FOR SANDWICH:

8 slices of your favorite home-style bread
 2 cups red wine vinaigrette (see recipe below)
 2 Portobello mushrooms
 2 yellow bell peppers
 2 red bell peppers
 2 yellow squash, sliced lengthwise
 2 zucchini, sliced lengthwise
 4 slices provolone cheese
 spring mix or lettuce
 tomato slices
 mayonnaise



METHOD FOR SANDWICH:

Heat grill according to manufacturer's directions. Spray or brush grill with vegetable oil. On the hottest spot, grill mushrooms, squash and zucchini for 2–3 minutes on each side or until well-defined grill marks appear. Do not overcook. Over the open flame of a gas stove or in the oven on broil, cook red and yellow bell peppers until the entire skin turns black. Place in a mixing bowl, cover tightly with plastic wrap and allow to cool slightly before removing the charred skin. Once cooled, peel off all of the black skin and run under cold water to remove any remaining bits. Cut peppers in half and remove the stem and seeds. Slice peppers and mushrooms into thick strips. In a large mixing bowl, toss all of the grilled vegetables with red wine vinaigrette and allow to marinate for at least 30 minutes. **NOTE:** You may use a bottled red wine vinaigrette, or you can make your own using the recipe below. Dress your sandwich in whichever way you like and divide the vegetables evenly among 4 sandwiches. Grill the prepared sandwich for a few minutes on each side until bread is slightly toasted. A double-sided grill such as a George Foreman grill will be useful in this recipe because it will press the sandwich as it grills.

INGREDIENTS FOR RED WINE VINAIGRETTE:

1 cup red wine vinegar
1 cup vegetable oil
½ tsp minced onion
½ tsp minced garlic
4 tsps sugar
salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD FOR RED WINE VINAIGRETTE:

In a 1-quart mason jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine all ingredients and shake well. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mississippi River Shrimp Stuffed Bell Peppers

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Long before lake and gulf shrimp were available to Louisianans, river shrimp were in great supply. Almost everyone I know in South Louisiana has a vegetable garden, and by the middle of summer, we all have an abundance of fresh bell peppers, eggplant and tomatoes. Instead of canning or giving away your extras, make dinner! Nothing tastes better than vegetables at their peak of ripeness. This dish is most commonly eaten as an entrée. However, try cutting each pepper in half and serving in place of a vegetable and starch side dish.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 whole green bell peppers
- 2 whole yellow bell peppers
- 2 whole red bell peppers
- 2 whole orange bell peppers
- 4 eggplants, peeled and cubed
- 4 cups river shrimp tails, cooked
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 cup onions, diced
- ½ cup celery, diced
- ½ cup red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ cup garlic, minced
- ½ cup tomatoes, diced
- ½ pound ground pork
- ½ pound ground beef
- 1 cup rich chicken stock
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1½ cups seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
- ¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut and discard the tops from the bell peppers and clean the pulp from inside. In a large pot, cover bell peppers by 2 inches with lightly salted water. Bring to a low boil and cook 5-8 minutes. Remove peppers from pot and cool under cold tap water. In the same pot, boil diced eggplant until tender, approximately 10-15 minutes. Strain and reserve stock for later use. In a 4-quart saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and tomatoes approximately 10-15

minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ground pork and ground beef and slow cook until golden brown and each grain of meat is well separated. Add small amounts of chicken stock if the meat mixture becomes too dry during cooking. When mixture is browned, add eggplant and cook an additional 30 minutes until vegetables, meat and eggplant are completely tender and well blended. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Gently fold in river shrimp and sprinkle breadcrumbs into the mixture to absorb most of the liquid. Stuff mixture into bell peppers, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and a small amount of additional breadcrumbs and place on a large baking sheet. Bake 15-20 minutes or until peppers are heated thoroughly. You may wish to cook the stuffed peppers in a casserole dish topped with your favorite tomato or marinara sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Eggplant-Stuffed Bell Peppers

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 hours

Serves: 12

COMMENT:

Almost everyone I know in South Louisiana has a vegetable garden and by the middle of summer we all have an abundance of fresh bell peppers, eggplant, zucchini and tomatoes. Instead of canning or giving away your extras, make dinner! Nothing tastes better than vegetables at their peak of ripeness.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 eggplants, diced
- 3 whole green bell peppers
- 3 whole yellow bell peppers
- 3 whole red bell peppers
- 3 whole orange bell peppers
- 1 pound ground ground pork
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
- 2 tbsps diced garlic
- 2 cups beef stock
- 1 cup claw crab
- 1 cup (90-110) shrimp
- 4 cups cooked rice
- salt and black pepper, to taste
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut the tops from the bell peppers and clean the pulp from inside. In a large pot, place bell peppers and top by 2 inches with lightly salted water. Bring to a low boil and cook 5-8 minutes. Remove peppers from pot and cool under cold tap water. In the same pot, boil diced eggplant until tender, approximately 10-15 minutes. Strain and reserve stock for later use. In a 5-quart cast iron dutch oven, cook ground pork over medium-high heat. Continue to stir and chop until meat begins to brown and render juices. Once meat is golden brown, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add stock as needed to retain moisture. Add boiled eggplant, blend well into the meat mixture and cook 15-20 additional minutes. Add shrimp and cook until they just turn pink. Gently fold in crab meat and green onions. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Stuff the mixture into the bell peppers, place on a large baking sheet. Bake 15-20 minutes or until peppers are heated thoroughly. You may wish to cook the stuffed peppers in a casserole dish, topped with your favorite tomato or marinara sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Black-Eyed Pea Jambalaya - (Hopping John)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Although the origin of the name "Hopping John" is a bit obscure, many food historians debate that the name originated from Confederate soldiers describing the action of the peas hopping in a pot of boiling water during the cooking process. Black-eyed peas were brought to America by the Africans and, regardless of whether eaten in a jambalaya or as a side dish, the peas are indeed a Southern delicacy.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (16-ounce) cans of black-eyed peas
- 6 bacon strips
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- ½ cup red bell peppers, diced
- ½ cup yellow bell peppers, diced
- ¼ cup garlic, chopped
- 1 pound ham, cubed
- ½ pound smoked sausage, sliced
- 2 cups long-grain rice
- 3 cups chicken stock
- ½ cup green onions, sliced
- ½ cup parsley, chopped
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large cast iron Dutch oven, fry bacon over medium-high heat to render fat. Once fat is rendered, remove bacon, chop and set aside for later use. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic to the bacon fat. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ham and smoked sausage. Cook 3-5 additional minutes. Add black-eyed peas, chicken stock and season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. You should slightly over-season because the rice will need additional seasoning for flavor. Add rice, green onions and parsley. Blend well into the mixture, bring to a rolling boil, cover and reduce to simmer. Cook for 30 minutes. Remove from heat and allow to sit covered for 15 minutes prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Creole Tomato Basil Pie

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

I remember one Saturday afternoon when Patti Fullilove, owner of Fullilove Herb Farm in Shreveport, Louisiana, and I spent time discussing her famous tomato and basil pie. She remarked that any Cajun addition to the pie would make it better. I never knew the origin of the dish until I found a similar version served at Magnolia Plantation in Natchitoches. It's definitely Creole.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 - 6 medium size ripe Creole tomatoes
- 1/2 cup torn basil leaves
- 1 cup grated Monterrey Jack cheese
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup julienned andouille sausage
- 1 cup crawfish tails
- 1/2 cup cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
- 1 small Bermuda onion, sliced
- salt and cracked pepper, to taste
- 1 cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
- 1 - 9 inch pre-baked pie shell

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut tomatoes into one quarter inch slices. Drain for approximately one hour on paper towels. You must remove the excess liquid, otherwise the pie will be soggy. Generously layer Monterrey Jack into the bottom of the pre-baked crust. Place a layer of sliced tomatoes, paint with olive oil and sprinkle with basil, andouille, crawfish, cheddar and Parmesan cheese. Season with salt and pepper. Add two to three slices of Bermuda onion and continue until the pie is filled. Once the top layer has been added, sprinkle generously with a mixture of bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese. Add the remaining Monterrey Jack and basil. Bake fifteen to twenty minutes or until cheese is melted and bread crumbs are well browned. Allow pie to cool slightly before serving. You may place the finished pie in the refrigerator and serve cold or freeze for later use.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Giant Mushrooms Stuffed with Crawfish & Tasso Cardinal

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Normally when you hear of stuffed mushrooms, you immediately have visions of a breaded seafood or vegetable stuffing heavily layered into a mushroom cap. This is an unappetizing thought! This stuffed mushroom is somewhat "smothered" in a rich sauce flavored with crawfish and the smoky, spiced meat of the Cajuns...tasso! This sauce may also be served over chicken, fish or pasta.

INGREDIENTS:

24 large mushroom caps, stems removed
 1 pound crawfish tails, cooked
 1/2 cup tasso ham, diced
 1/4 cup butter, melted
 1/2 cup onions, minced
 1/4 cup celery, minced
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, minced
 1/4 cup garlic, minced
 1/4 cup tomatoes, diced
 5 tbsps flour
 1 ounce sherry
 1/4 cup tomato sauce
 2 cups crawfish stock
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
 salt and black pepper to taste
 Creole seasoning to taste
 hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Brush any dirt or grit from the mushroom caps and place 4 in the center of 6 au gratin-style baking dishes. In a heavy bottom sauté pan, heat butter over medium-high heat. Add tasso, onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add 1/2 of the crawfish tails and tomatoes. Blend well into the vegetable mixture and sauté 2-3 additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, stir to create a white roux. Add sherry and tomato sauce. Add fish stock and cream and continue stirring until cream-type sauce is achieved. Add green onions and simmer sauce for 5-10 minutes, adding additional liquid as needed to retain consistency. Add remaining crawfish and season to taste using salt, pepper, Creole seasoning and hot sauce. Cook 3 additional minutes then distribute evenly over the mushrooms. Bake until sauce is bubbly and mushrooms are al dente, approximately 15-20 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Eggplant Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Typical of most vegetables served in South Louisiana, the eggplant is also prepared casserole style. By combining meats, seafoods and vegetables, the Cajuns and Creoles are able to create a much heartier dish for the table.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 medium size eggplants, peeled and cubed
- 1/2 pound ground beef
- 1/2 pound (150-200 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1/2 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1 cup rich chicken stock
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 cups seasoned Italian breadcrumbs

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Boil eggplant in lightly salted water until very tender and to the point of being mushy. Drain and set aside. In a 4-quart saucepot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic approximately 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ground beef and slowly cook until golden brown and each grain of meat is totally separated, approximately 25-30 minutes. Once mixture is browned, add chicken stock, a little at a time, if the meat has become too dry during cooking. Add cooked eggplant and shrimp and continue cooking approximately 30 minutes longer or until all vegetables, meat and eggplant are well blended. Season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Remove from heat and sprinkle in one cup of bread crumbs to absorb most of the liquid. Place eggplant mixture in a baking dish and top with remaining breadcrumbs. Bake until breadcrumbs are golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Smothered Cabbage and Andouille

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This dish may be found on the New Year's Day table of every home in south Louisiana. Tradition has it that cabbage eaten on January 1st will ensure financial security in the upcoming year.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large head of cabbage
- 1/2 pound andouille sausage, sliced
- 1/2 cup bacon drippings
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 1/2 cups chicken stock
- salt and cracked black pepper

METHOD:

Cut cabbage in quarters and discard the center heart and all large, exterior leaves. Chop quarters into 2-3 pieces and separate the leaves. In a 4-quart sauce pot, melt bacon drippings over medium heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, green onions and andouille. Sauté approximately 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add cabbage and blend well into vegetable mixture. Continue to sauté until cabbage leaves are wilted. Add chicken stock and reduce heat to simmer. Cover pot and allow to cook, stirring occasionally, for approximately 45 minutes. Season to taste using salt and pepper and continue cooking until cabbage is well smothered. This dish, similar to snap beans, will be overcooked by most standards. However, this is the method preferred by both Cajuns and Creoles.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mirliton Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 2 Pies

INGREDIENTS:

- 5-6 medium mirlitons
- 1 stick unsalted butter, melted
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup Bisquick
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 deep dish piecrusts

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Cut mirlitons in half and place in boiling water. Boil until tender. Scoop pulp from shells into a large mixing bowl and mash until all lumps are removed. Discard shells. Add all remaining ingredients and mix until well incorporated. Pour mirliton mixture into piecrusts and place in oven. Bake for one hour or until cooked through.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mirliton & Shrimp Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

4 medium mirlitons
 2 tbsps crab boil (liquid)
 4 tbsps margarine
 1 cup green onions, chopped
 1 large onion, chopped finely
 ½ cup parsley, chopped
 1 pound shrimp, peeled and deveined
 garlic salt to taste
 salt to taste
 pepper to taste
 ½ cup bread crumbs

METHOD:

Boil mirlitons until tender in salty water to which 2 tbsps of crab boil were added. Peel and cube the pulp. Sauté green onions, onions and parsley in margarine. Add shrimp and cook 10 minutes. Add mirliton, garlic salt, salt and pepper to taste and mix well. Pour into 9x13-inch casserole, sprinkle with bread crumbs and bake 30 minutes at 350 degrees F.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

CRABMEAT AND SHRIMP STUFFED MIRLITON

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 6 Serving

Comment:

Mirliton, which originated in Mexico, is known by many Americans as "chayote squash" or "vegetable pear" and by the French as "christophene." The vegetable was brought to Bayou Country by the Canary Islanders, called "Los Isleños," who relocated to Louisiana when Spain took ownership of New Orleans from France. This South Louisiana delicacy is wonderful when stuffed with shrimp and crabmeat.

Ingredients:

6 mirlitons, sliced lengthwise
 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
 1 pound (70–90 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 ¼ pound butter
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 tbsp chopped basil
 salt and black pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 2 cups Italian bread crumbs
 12 pats butter

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Boil sliced mirlitons in lightly-salted water 30–40 minutes or until meat is tender enough to scoop from shells. Once tender, remove from water and cool. Using a teaspoon, remove seeds and gently scoop all meat out of shell, being careful not to tear shell. Discard excess liquid accumulated while scooping meat. Reserve meat and save shells for stuffing. In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and basil 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in shrimp and cook 2–3 minutes or until pink and curled. Mix in reserved meat from mirlitons and chop large pieces while cooking. Cook 15–20 minutes, stirring until flavors develop. After most of liquid has evaporated, remove from heat and season with salt, pepper, hot sauce and parsley. Fold in crabmeat, being careful to not break lumps. Sprinkle in approximately 1½ cups of bread crumbs to absorb any excess liquid and to hold stuffing intact. Divide mixture into 12 equal portions and stuff into hollowed-out shells. Place stuffed mirlitons on baking pan and sprinkle with remaining bread crumbs. Top each mirliton with 1 pat of butter. Bake 30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve 1 mirliton half as a vegetable or 2 halves as an entrée.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Creole Culture Casserole

PREP TIME: 40 Minutes

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

This casserole, merging the many foods and spices that make up the Creole culture can be found in Panderina Soumas' Soumas Heritage Creole Cookbook. Like the culture itself, the ingredients are all mixed together to create a special dish. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 loaf French bread, cut or broken into pieces
- 1 (10 ounce) can black beans, drained
- 1 (10 ounce) can kidney beans, drained, or 1 cup left-over red beans
- 1 (10 ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 cup okra, chopped or frozen
- 3 - 4 fresh tomatoes, or 1 small can of whole stewed tomatoes, chopped
- 1 small (5 ounce) package dried shrimp, soaked, dried and chopped
- 1 pound of your favorite link sausage, sautéed and drained
- 2 tsps Soumas Creole Soul Seasoning*
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1/2 stalk celery, chopped
- 4 - 5 cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 (10 ounce) can cream of celery soup
- 1 (10 ounce) can cream of shrimp soup
- breadcrumbs for topping

METHOD:

NOTE: You may wish to add a little water to thin the cream of celery and shrimp soups. Combine all ingredients except breadcrumbs in a large bowl and mix well. Pour mixture into a large casserole dish sprayed with a non-stick spray and spread evenly. Sprinkle breadcrumbs over the top and bake in a 325 degree oven for 30 - 35 minutes or until top has formed a nice cultural crust.

* You can find Soumas Soul Creole Seasoning and all of Panderina's Creole products at Soumas Heritage Creole Creations. Simply call (318) 747-4068.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Aubergines Á La Biterproise - (Stuffed Eggplants)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The French are famous for stuffing vegetables. Often, a combination of meat and seafood is used along with the vegetable as a stuffing mixture. In this case, smoked ham and bacon are mixed with fresh sausage and then combined with the vegetable to create a wonderful stuffed eggplant entrée.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 small, firm eggplant
- 1 cup stale bread, diced
- ¼ cup milk
- ½ cup olive oil
- ½ pound ham, finely chopped
- ½ pound cooked bacon, finely chopped
- 1 pound pork sausage
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ cup garlic, minced
- 2 purple shallots, minced
- 2 eggs
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
- 1/8 tsp powdered bay leaves
- 3 cups tomatoes, diced
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 2 tbsps basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp oregano, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Purchase eggplants that are preferably round, about the size of a baseball, or smaller oblong, purple eggplant. Cut the eggplant in half and scoop out the flesh, taking care not to break the skin. You should have 12 halves. In a bowl, soak stale bread in milk and set aside. In a large sauté pan, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add chopped ham and bacon and sauté, approximately 2 to 3 minutes. Add pork sausage and chop well into the meat mixture. When sausage is lightly browned, pour off all but 3 tbsps fat. Add onion, celery, bell pepper, garlic and shallots to meat mixture and sauté 3 to 5 minutes, blending well. Add meat from hollowed-out eggplant and cook 15 to 20 minutes to create a stuffing. Squeeze the milk from the bread and add bread to mixture. Remove from heat and stir in eggs, cloves, thyme and powdered bay leaf. Blend well and season to taste using salt and pepper. Stuff the mixture into eggplant halves and place in a large baking pan with a 1-inch lip. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

While oven is heating, place tomatoes into a sauce pot with garlic, basil and oregano. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and season to taste with salt and pepper. Remove from heat and ladle an equal amount of sauce over each eggplant, pouring remainder into bottom of baking pan. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 30 minutes. Remove foil and brown, approximately 10 to 15 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Undeafated Red Beans with Sausage

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound dried kidney beans
- 1/2 cup shortening or bacon drippings
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1/2 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 2 cups smoked ham, diced
- 6 (3-inch) links smoked sausage
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- salt and hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

The cooking time of red beans will be cut by about 1/3 if the beans are soaked overnight in cold water. This will help soften the outer shell and naturally the cooking time will be shortened. In a 4-quart sauce pot, melt shortening or bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, green onions and smoked ham. Sauté approximately 5 - 10 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add smoked sausage and beans. Blend well with vegetables and cook 2 - 3 minutes. Add enough cold water to cover beans by approximately 2 inches. Bring to a rolling boil and allow to cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to avoid scorching. Reduce heat to simmer and cook approximately 1 hour or until beans are tender. Stir from time to time, as beans will settle to the bottom of the pot as they cook. Add chopped parsley and additional green onions. Season to taste using salt and hot sauce. Using a metal spoon, mash approximately 1/3 of the beans against the side of the pot to create a creaming effect. Once the beans are tender and creamy, they are ready to be served. In order for the maximum flavor to develop, this dish should be cooked one day before it is to be served.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Undeafated Red Beans, Rice and Sausage Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This dish has become a favorite among my tailgating friends. Not only is it very similar to jambalaya .. which everyone loves .. it is further flavored with Louisiana red beans and will surely feed the crowd. Another great thing about this dish, any type of meat, game or seafood may be substituted in the recipe. It's a great clean out the freezer dish.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds cubed chicken meat
 1 pound sliced smoked sausage or andouille
 1 12-ounce can cooked red kidney beans
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1/2 cup diced green bell pepper
 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
 1/4 cup chopped garlic
 5 cups chicken stock
 1 8-ounce can tomato sauce
 2 cups sliced mushrooms
 3 cups Uncle Ben's rice, raw
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1/2 cup chopped parsley
 salt and pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a 10-quart Dutch Oven heat oil over medium high heat. Add cubed chicken and smoked sausage, sauté until sausage is well browned and fat has been rendered. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chicken stock, tomato sauce, and sliced mushrooms. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, and cook 10 to 15 minutes for seasonings to develop. Add cooked red beans, green onions, parsley and rice. Stir well to blend thoroughly. Season stock to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce heat to low, cover and cook approximately 45 minutes stirring only once after 30 minutes of cooking time.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Calabrian White Beans with Smoked Ham and Sausage

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

Unlike Tuscan beans, the Calabrian white beans are further flavored with a variety of smoked pork products making them quite similar to Cajun-style white beans.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lbs cannellini or Great Northern white beans
- 1 gallon chicken stock
- 1/2 lb smoked ham, diced
- 1 lb salt meat, diced
- 3 links Italian sausage
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh oregano
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a heavy-bottom pot, boil white beans in stock with ham and salt meat until beans are tender, but still slightly chewy and unbroken. Do not overcook. Once beans are cooked, strain the liquid from the beans, reserve and add Italian sausage, olive oil, garlic, oregano, green onions and season slightly with salt and pepper. Ladle in just enough of the liquid to bring the level up to, but not covering the beans in the pot. Cover tightly with aluminum foil and bake for 45 minutes. When beans are extremely tender, strain and serve as a vegetable or starter course.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Vivaldi's Eggplant and Italian Sausage Casserole

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Antonio Vivaldi was born on March 4, 1678 in Italy. His father was a barber and was apparently a fine violin player. Vivaldi took up the violin and soon, became a better player than his father and by age 25 was teaching music. Throughout Italy, during this period, eggplant was showing up in many dishes and with the combination of sweet Italian sausage, made a casserole that tastes like the violin sounded.

INGREDIENTS:

4 large eggplants, peeled and sliced 1/4-in thick
 2 lbs Italian sausage
 1/4 cup virgin olive oil
 2 cups onions, diced
 1 cup celery, diced
 1 cup bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, chopped
 4 (8 oz) cans tomato sauce
 2 cups water
 1 1/2 tsps garlic powder
 1 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
 1/2 cup pimento olives, chopped
 4 hard boiled eggs, sliced
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Sprinkle salt over eggplant slices and place in a large colander with a weight on top to help squeeze water from the eggplant. Let drain for 1 hour. In a heavy 5-qt dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Remove 1 lb of the Italian sausage from the casing and brown in oil as you would ground meat. When brown add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Blend well into the sausage mixture. Saute 3 to 5 minutes. Add tomato sauce, water and season lightly with salt and pepper. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 45 minutes. Rinse the eggplant slices under water and pat dry, brush with olive oil and place on a cookie sheet and bake for approximately 30 minutes to tenderize, but do not allow to fall apart. When tomato sauce is ready, place a ladle of sauce in the bottom of a 9 x 13 casserole dish. Cover with a layer of eggplant and sprinkle with a small amount of cheese, olives and boiled eggs. Continue layering until all is used up to create a lasagne-type casserole. Pour any excess sauce on top of the casserole and surround with remaining Italian sausage cut in 1-in links and top with remaining Parmesan. Bake uncovered for 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Chef John Folse's All-Time Favorite Sandwich

PREP TIME: 5 Minutes

MAKES: 1 masterpiece

COMMENT:

I remember vividly, standing on a cypress, ladder-back chair strategically positioned between Mamere and Papere on the "long side" of the kitchen table at Cabanocey Plantation. I was getting my first lesson in making the perfect sandwich. Today it only takes 5 minutes to make, but then on Cabanocey in my grandparent's kitchen it was an event that lasted what seemed a lifetime. It's still one of my greatest memories today. Enjoy my creole tomato sandwich.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 slices of Creole tomatoes, 1/4-inch thick
- 2 tbsps mayonnaise
- 1 razor thin slice of a sweet Vidalia onion
- 1/8 tsp red wine vinegar
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 slices of white bread

METHOD:

Place 2 slices of white bread on a cutting board, topping each slice with a heaping spoonful of mayonnaise. Slather evenly across the bread. Place the 4 Creole tomato slices evenly from edge to edge over one of the bread slices. Drizzle the red wine vinegar over the tomatoes. Top with sliced onion and season to taste using salt and pepper. Cover with remaining slice of bread. Cut diagonally from end to end, wrap loosely in a double coating of paper towels to catch tomato drippings and bite down.

Note: I would recommend eating this sandwich alone...after all it can become a bit messy!

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spring Rolls

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 5

COMMENT:

This recipe comes from Amy Bau of Koto Oriental Restaurant

MARINATING SAUCE INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 T. soy sauce
- 1/2 t. corn starch
- 1/2 T. wine
- Corn Starch Paste
- 1/2 T. corn starch
- 1/2 T. cold water

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 oz. lean pork shredded
- 3 oz. bean sprouts
- 1/4 lb. cabbage, shredded
- 10 spring roll skins
- 6 c. peanut oil
- 1 egg
- 1/2 T. soy sauce
- 1/2 T. salt
- 1/4 c. cold water

METHOD:

1. Marinate pork with marinating sauce for about an hour.
2. Heat 5 T. oil in a frying pan. Stir fry the pork about 30 seconds, drain and put aside. Stir fry the shredded cabbage, add soy sauce, salt and water; cover with lid. Cook about 2 minutes. Add bean sprouts, stir fry for another 30 seconds over high heat, stir in the corn starch paste until thicken. Add pork, mix well and then remove to a bowl.
3. Place 2 T. filling on a spring roll skin about 1-inch from the edge that is toward you. Roll once or twice, then fold right side toward center, then left side toward center. Continue rolling into a tight roll. Stick outer edge of skin to roll with egg (beaten). Place with this side face down to hold tightly and to keep its shape until time for frying.
4. Heat oil in pan to 350 degrees. Fry spring rolls for about 3 minutes or until golden and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Shrimp Stuffed Mirliton

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The Chayote squash or vegetable pear, as some may know it, is known here in South Louisiana as mirliton. It was brought here by the Cajuns from South America in 1755. Today, it is the premier vegetable of the Cajuns and Creoles.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 mirlitons, sliced lengthwise
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1/2 pound diced ham
- 1 cup 150-200 count shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup rich chicken stock
- 1/4 pound butter
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1-1/2 cups seasoned Italian bread crumbs
- 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
- 6 pats chipped butter
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Boil mirlitons in lightly salted water until meat is tender enough to scoop from the shells. Once tender, remove and cool under tap water. Using a metal spoon, remove seeds from the center of the mirlitons and gently scoop all meat out of the shells. Reserve meat and save shells for stuffing later. In a four quart sauce pot, melt butter over medium high heat. Sauté onions, celery, bell pepper, green onions, garlic and diced ham. Cook approximately fifteen minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chicken stock should vegetable mixture becomes too dry during cooking. Add mirlitons and shrimp, and continue cooking approximately twenty-five to thirty minutes or until mixture is well incorporated. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt, cracked black pepper and parsley. Sprinkle in seasoned bread crumbs to absorb any excess liquid. Stuff mirliton mixture into the shells, dividing equally into six portions. Place stuffed mirlitons on a baking pan and top with one pat of chipped butter and remaining bread crumbs. Bake until golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Stuffed Red Cabbage Leaves

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

Recipes for stuffed cabbage leaves can be found in many cultures, but when served with apples they are distinctly German.

Ingredients:

- 1 small red cabbage
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 pound ground pork
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 2 cups diced onions
- ½ cup green onions
- 3 tbsps minced garlic
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell peppers
- 1 cup steamed white rice
- 1 tsp caraway seeds
- 2 eggs
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 2 Granny Smith apples, cut, peeled and diced
- ½ pound sliced mushrooms (optional)
- 4 tbsps flour
- 2 cups beef stock or broth

Method:

Clean cabbage and remove main stem. In a large kettle, blanch cabbage leaves in boiling salted water until soft and pliable. Repeat 2–3 times until all cabbage is blanched. Heat canola oil in a heavy-bottomed Dutch oven over medium heat. Add 1 cup onions, green onions, garlic and bell peppers. Sauté 5 minutes or until transparent. Remove from heat and allow to cool 10 minutes. In a medium bowl, add pork, beef, rice, caraway seeds, eggs, cooled vegetables, salt and pepper. Lay cabbage leaves, rib side down, on a flat work surface. Spoon approximately 3 tablespoons of filling into center of each leaf. Roll into a cylinder, tucking in sides. Heat remaining vegetable oil in a Dutch oven. Add cabbage rolls and sauté gently. Add remaining onions, apples and mushrooms. Dissolve flour in beef stock and add to mixture in Dutch oven. Cover and cook gently over low heat 40 minutes, stirring occasionally. Place on a warm serving dish and spoon apple-mushroom sauce over cabbage rolls.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Scalloped Potato and Turkey Casserole

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Use up all of your holiday leftovers by making this wonderful casserole. Your family won't even realize they are eating turkey again.

Ingredients:

3 cups cooked potatoes, peeled and sliced
 1 pound leftover turkey, cubed
 5 tbsps butter
 1½ cups thinly sliced onions
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced bell peppers
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 2 eggs
 2 tbsps flour
 1¾ cups half-and-half or milk
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 parsley for garnish
 Parmesan cheese for garnish

Method:

In a large skillet, over medium-high heat, melt 4 tablespoons butter. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, green onions, parsley and garlic. Cook 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add potatoes and cook approximately 10 minutes. Preheat oven to 425°F. With remaining 1 tablespoon of butter, grease a 2-quart casserole dish. Place half of sliced potatoes and all of vegetable mixture in bottom of casserole. Top with turkey and add remaining potatoes. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, flour, half-and-half, salt and pepper. Pour egg mixture over potato layers. Place casserole dish into a larger baking pan. Pour hot water into baking pan to a depth of 1 inch of casserole dish. Bake 30–35 minutes or until browned and custard is set. Garnish with parsley and cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spicy Creole Tomato Grits

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

While basic boiled grits are perfect in their simplicity for breakfast, additional ingredients are often added to the grain at bigger meals. Here, ripe Creole tomatoes and cheese are used to give flair to plain grits.

Ingredients:

1 cup yellow stone-ground grits
 2 large Creole tomatoes, chopped
 ½ cup bacon, chopped
 ¼ cup butter
 ¼ cup sliced garlic
 3 cups water
 ½ cup heavy whipping cream
 1 tsp salt
 2 tbsps canned chopped green chiles
 ¼ cup shredded mild Cheddar cheese

Method:

In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, cook bacon until crisp. Reserve drippings in pan. Add tomatoes, butter and garlic. Sauté until garlic is tender. Mix in water, cream, salt and chiles then bring to a boil. Gradually stir in grits, blending well. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and cook 15–20 minutes, stirring occasionally until thickened. Remove from heat then blend in cheese until melted. Pour grits into a shallow baking dish until ½ inch–¾ inch thick. Place in refrigerator until grits are cool and set. With a 3-inch round cookie cutter, cut out grits patties. Set on a plate and top with crawfish étouffée, shrimp Creole or eggs Benedict with hollandaise sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

PORTABELLA MUSHROOM PANINI WITH FLEUR-DE-LIS

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Olive bread made with plump kalamata or niçoise olives creates an intense, delicious flavor to enhance this panini.

Ingredients:

4 medium (4-inch diameter) portabella mushroom caps, cleaned and stemmed
 2 (4-ounce) wheels Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Fleur-de-Lis triple cream cheese, sliced
 8 large slices olive bread
 softened butter
 ½ tsp garlic salt
 ¼ tsp cracked black pepper
 4 tbsps pesto
 8 large radicchio leaves
 4 plum tomatoes, sliced

Method:

Brush butter over both sides of mushrooms and season with garlic salt and pepper. Place in a panini press and cook 3–4 minutes. Spread pesto on 4 slices of bread. Build each panini by topping with 1 ounce sliced cheese, 1 radicchio leaf, mushroom, tomatoes, 1 radicchio leaf, 1 ounce sliced cheese and remaining bread. Brush outsides of bread with butter. Cook sandwiches in a preheated panini press 3 minutes or until golden brown and cheese is melted. NOTE: Sandwiches may be cooked in a preheated ridged grill pan or skillet over medium heat. Place a heavy skillet on top of sandwiches to flatten; cook 3 minutes. Turn; replace skillet and continue to cook 3–4 minutes or until golden brown and cheese is melted.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

EGGPLANT WITH CAYENNE BEER BATTER AND SPICY ROASTED BELL PEPPER DIP

Prep Time: 1½ Hours**Yields:** 12 Servings**Comment:**

What better way to trick Dad into eating vegetarian this Father's Day than by adding beer to the recipe. With his favorite beer and just the right amount of spice, he is sure to be pleased if this is on the table.

Ingredients for Eggplant:

3 pounds eggplant, unpeeled, sliced ¾-inch thick
 4 eggs
 1 (12-ounce) beer
 3 cups flour
 2 tbsps baking powder
 2 tbsps grated lemon zest
 1 tsp cayenne pepper
 1 tsp paprika
 ½ cup olive oil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 vegetable oil for frying
 ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
 ½ cup chopped fresh parsley

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, whisk eggs. Add beer, 1½ cups flour, baking powder, lemon zest, cayenne pepper and paprika. Whisk until smooth. Cover with plastic wrap and set aside at least 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 350°F. Brush eggplant with olive oil, and season with salt and pepper. On a baking pan, place eggplant in a single layer. Bake 10–12 minutes or until just tender. Remove and let cool. In a home-style deep fryer such as a FryDaddy, heat vegetable oil to 375°F. Dip a few slices of eggplant into remaining 1½ cups of flour to coat lightly then dip in batter, coating well. Carefully slip eggplant into deep fryer, and cook until golden brown. Turn with a fork to brown all sides. Remove fried eggplant and drain on a plate lined with paper towels. Keep warm while preparing remaining eggplant. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and parsley. Serve with Spicy Roasted Bell Pepper Dip.

Ingredients for Dip:

3 large red bell peppers
 4 Roma tomatoes
 6 tbsps olive oil
 1/8 tsp crushed red pepper
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 450°F. Place bell peppers and tomatoes on a baking

pan, and rub with 2 tablespoons olive oil. Roast 10–20 minutes or until charred on all sides, turning often. Remove from oven, and place peppers and tomatoes in a plastic bag to steam and loosen skins. When cool enough to touch, rub off skins. NOTE: Do not rinse under water. Remove cores and seeds. Cut peppers and tomatoes in large pieces, and place them in a food processor. Add remaining olive oil and crushed red pepper. Blend until smooth. Season with salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

WHITE SQUASH WITH SHRIMP

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

The white squash is similar to the pattypan squash found throughout America. It is grown in abundance here in the bayous and is normally the only squash seen on tables in South Louisiana.

Ingredients:

5 medium white squash
 1 cup (150–200 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 ¼ pound butter
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 1 cup Italian bread crumbs

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Peel squash, remove all seeds from center then dice. Boil in lightly-salted water 15–20 minutes or until tender. Remove and cool under tap water, then set aside. In a 10-inch heavy-bottomed sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic, green onions and shrimp. Sauté 5–10 minutes or until vegetables are wilted and shrimp are pink. Stir squash into vegetables and cook approximately 15 minutes longer. Remove from heat and season with salt and pepper. Add parsley and mix in bread crumbs to absorb excess liquid. Place cooked squash in baking dish and top with remaining bread crumbs. Bake until golden brown. NOTE: Mixture may be stuffed into hollowed-out squash halves and baked for a unique presentation.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Baked Beans Abita Root Beer Style

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

MAKES: 6 Servings

COMMENT:

These baked beans were shared with us by Abita Brewing Company. Unlike most root beer manufacturers, Abita sweetens its brew with pure Louisiana cane sugar instead of high fructose corn syrup.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 ounces Abita® root beer
- 1 pound bacon, diced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 2 (12-ounce) cans baked beans
- ¼ cup barbecue sauce
- ½ tsp dry mustard

METHOD:

In a saucepan over medium heat, cook bacon. Remove and drain. Sauté onions 3–5 minutes or until translucent. Add bacon and remaining ingredients. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce heat to simmer and cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

German Potato Dumplings

PREP TIME: 1½ hours

SERVES: 6–8

COMMENT:

Chef Fritz Blumberg and his wife Erika came to visit from Florida recently, and we made these wonderful dumplings together. We wanted to share the recipe for these light and airy little pillows with the rest of the world.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 pounds potatoes
- 3 pounds flour
- 3 eggs
- salt, pepper and nutmeg to taste
- 1 small onion, peeled
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 whole cloves
- vegetable oil

METHOD:

Bake potatoes in a 350° F oven for 1 hour or until soft in the center. Allow the potatoes to completely cool and peel and mash well. In a saucepot bring 2–3 quarts water to a boil. Add just enough vegetable oil to cover the entire surface of the water by 1/8 of an inch. Peel the small onion and attach the bay leaves to the onion by pressing the cloves through the bay leaf into the onion. Add the onion to the boiling water. In a large mixing bowl mix together the potatoes, flour and eggs and blend well. Do not over mix. Shape the dumplings with the palms of your hands or with two spoons. Reduce the heat under the water to bring to a simmer. Drop a few of the dumplings into the simmering water at a time. When the dumplings float, they are done. Remove and keep warm.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mike Graham's Potato Latkes

PREP TIME: 25 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Latkes are potato pancakes made from grated potato mixed with seasonings and then pan fried. The frying oil reminds us of the oil that burned eight days, giving origin to the Festival of Lights, Hanukkah, and the menorah.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds potatoes, peeled and finely shredded
- 2 large eggs
- salt
- oil for frying

METHOD:

Place shredded potatoes in a colander and run under cold water. Drain and squeeze them dry by pressing them with your hands. This is to remove the starchy liquid, which could make the latkes soggy. In a small bowl, beat the eggs lightly with salt, add to the potatoes and blend well. Put enough oil in a frying pan to just barely cover the bottom of the pan. Take serving spoonfuls, or as much as ¼ cup, of the mixture, and drop into the hot oil. Flatten a little, and lower the heat so that the cakes cook through evenly. When one side is brown, turn over and brown the other. Lift out and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mike Graham's Steamed Asparagus with Hollandaise Sauce

PREP TIME: 20 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Steamed asparagus and Hollandaise sauce are a very traditional pairing. Mike Graham's favorite vegetable is asparagus, so I did this dish because the simplicity of it would allow the flavors to stand out more predominately.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large bunch of asparagus
- 4 egg yolks
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon water
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- ½ pound butter, melted and warm

METHOD:

Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Trim the asparagus. Place the asparagus in the water and blanch for about 4 to 6 minutes. Remove the asparagus from the water and season with salt and pepper. While the asparagus are blanching, prepare the sauce. In a stainless steel bowl set over a pot of simmering water over medium heat, whisk the egg yolks with the lemon juice, water, and mustard together. Season with salt and cayenne. Whisk the mixture until pale yellow and slightly thick. Be careful not to let the bowl touch the water. Remove the bowl from the pot and whisking vigorously, add the butter, 1 teaspoon at a time, until all is incorporated. Place the asparagus on a platter and spoon the Hollandaise sauce over the top.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Crawfish Corn Maque Choux

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4-6

COMMENT: Here we are in the peak of crawfish season, and I have a great recipe to utilize all of our wonderful Louisiana crawfish. You can use this dish as a side or as a main dish over rice. You can also make this dish into a warm and hearty soup by adding stock.



INGREDIENTS:

- 8 ears fresh corn
- 1 pound crawfish tails
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 2 cups coarsely chopped tomatoes
- 2 tbsps tomato sauce
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Select tender, well-developed ears of corn and remove husks and silk. Using a sharp knife, cut lengthwise through the kernels to remove them from the cob. Scrape each cob using the blade of the knife to remove all milk and additional pulp from the corn. This is important because the richness of the dish will depend on how much milk and pulp can be scraped from the cobs. In a 3-quart cast iron dutch oven, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Sauté corn, onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic approximately 15-20 minutes or until vegetables are wilted and corn begins to tenderize. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce and crawfish. Continue cooking until juice from the tomatoes and crawfish are rendered into the dish, approximately 15-20 minutes. Add green onions and season to taste using salt and pepper. Continue to cook an additional 15 minutes or until full flavor of corn and crawfish is developed into the dish. Serve as a vegetable or add stock to create soup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Cajun Ratatouille

TIME: 1 ½ Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Ratatouille is the most famous vegetable casserole in Italy and the South of France. It is often made with a combination of vegetables and other local seasonings. Here in bayou country, we add a Cajun twist by incorporating boudin into the dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup diced eggplant
- 1 cup diced zucchini
- 1 cup diced yellow squash
- 1 cup diced tomato
- ½ cup sliced black olives
- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 pound boudin, sliced
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 cup chopped celery
- ¼ cup chopped red bell pepper
- ¼ cup chopped yellow bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced garlic
- 2 cups tomato sauce
- ¼ cup chopped thyme
- ¼ cup chopped basil
- ¼ cup fresh oregano
- salt and black pepper to taste
- dash of hot sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a 14-inch heavy bottom skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Sauté boudin until golden brown. Remove and set aside. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add eggplant, zucchini, squash, tomatoes, black olives and boudin. Blend well into the vegetable mixture. Sauté 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep from scorching. Once eggplant mixture is wilted, add tomato sauce, thyme, basil and oregano, stirring into vegetable mixture. Season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. Continue to cook 10-15 minutes. Remove from heat and spoon ratatouille into an oven-proof baking dish. Bake, uncovered, for 30 minutes. Serve as a vegetable casserole or as a stuffing for chicken and game birds.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

CHOUCROUTE GARNI

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

Sauerkraut is one of the most underrated dishes in the South. Most southerners are reminded of the sour, bitter kraut they were served during their elementary school days, rather than the richly-garnished sauerkraut of Alsace Lorraine, France. Olga Hirsch brought this recipe from that region when she moved to Donaldsonville in the 1940s. It is a classic and well worth the effort!

Ingredients:

2 (32-ounce) jars Vlassic® sauerkraut
 ½ pound bacon, cubed
 3 links heavy smoked sausage, sliced
 1 ham steak, bone-in and cubed
 3 pieces smoked pork hocks
 6 (6-inch) links Bratwurst
 2 cups diced onions
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1½ tbsps flour
 1 quart chicken stock
 1 (12-ounce) bottle beer
 1 cup dry white wine
 6 juniper berries
 salt and black pepper to taste
 2 small bay leaves
 8 small potatoes, halved

Method:

The secret to great sauerkraut is removing the sour brine from cabbage. Prior to cooking, rinse product under cold running water 2–3 times and drain well. In a cast iron pot, sauté bacon over medium-high heat until fat is rendered. Do not brown. Add smoked sausage and cook 2–3 minutes longer. Add onions and garlic and sauté 3–5 minutes. Stir in flour then add chicken stock, beer, wine and juniper berries. Bring to a rolling boil, then season with salt and pepper. Blend in sauerkraut. Return to a rolling boil. Reduce heat to simmer. Add ham and bone, pork hocks and Bratwurst. Season with bay leaves. Cover and simmer 1½ hours, stirring occasionally. Stir in potatoes and continue to cook 15–20 minutes or until tender. Serve sauerkraut with equal portions of meat.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spinach Madeleine

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 5-6 Servings

Comment:

This traditional Louisiana recipe was first presented in River Road's cookbook from the Junior League of Baton Rouge. It is safe to say that this single recipe made the book world famous. In the late 1990s, Kraft foods did away with their jalapeño cheese roll which was originally used in the recipe. Recently, an alert customer informed us that Kraft's Velveeta line introduced a similar Mexican cheese.

Ingredients:

- 2 packages chopped spinach, frozen
- 4 tbsps butter
- 2 tbsps flour
- 2 tbsps chopped onions
- ½ cup evaporated milk
- ½ cup reserved spinach liquor
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ¾ tsp celery salt
- ¾ tsp garlic salt
- 6 ounces Velveeta Mexican cheese, sliced into ¼-inch cubes
- salt and red pepper to taste
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

Method:

Cook spinach according to directions on package. Drain and reserve liquid. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Add flour, stirring until blended and smooth, but not brown. Add onions and sauté 3-5 minutes or until wilted. Add evaporated milk, spinach liquor and Worcestershire sauce slowly, stirring constantly to avoid lumps. Cook mixture until smooth and thick, stirring constantly. Add seasonings and cubed cheese. Stir until melted and combine with cooked spinach. This may be served immediately or put into a casserole and topped with buttered bread crumbs. The flavor is improved if the latter is done and kept in refrigerator overnight.

This traditional dish can be spruced up for the holidays by adding ¼ cup diced red bell peppers when the onions are sautéed.

There are other great dishes that can be made with this versatile recipe, such as:

Spinach & Crabmeat Bisque: Add 1 pound of jumbo lump crabmeat and 1 quart of half and half (or more to bring to a soup-like consistency) and season to taste with salt and pepper. Simmer for approximately 20 minutes.

Crawfish Spinach Dip: Add 1 pound of Louisiana crawfish tails when you add the cheese and serve warm with tortilla chips or crackers.

Oyster-Stuffed Artichokes Rockefeller: Add 1 tbsp of Herbsaint liqueur and ½ cup of Italian breadcrumbs when you add the spinach to the cheese mixture. Then, using canned artichoke bottoms, place one oyster in the center of each artichoke. Cover each oyster with a heaping teaspoon of Spinach Madeleine and bake in a 350-degree oven until bubbly.

Spinach Madeleine Cauliflower Casserole: In a 3-quart casserole dish, place 1 large head of precooked cauliflower florets. Top with Spinach Madeleine and seasoned Italian breadcrumbs and bake until crumbs are golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Latkes

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 8

COMMENT:

Latkes are potato pancakes made from grated potato mixed with seasonings and then pan fried. The frying oil reminds us of the oil that burned eight days, giving origin to the Festival of Lights, Hanukkah, and the menorah.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups peeled, grated potatoes
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1½ tsps salt
- 2 tbsps flour
- 2 eggs
- pepper to taste
- ¼ cup vegetable oil



METHOD:

Wash, peel, and grate the potatoes. Squeeze out liquid. Combine with onion, salt, flour, and pepper. Lightly beat the egg, and stir into the mixture.

Heat the oil in a skillet, and spoon in tablespoons of the mixture to make medium sized patties. Brown on one side, turn and brown lightly on the other. Repeat with the rest of the mixture.

Serve with applesauce, cottage cheese, yogurt, sour cream, or Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Savory Leek and Apple Wood Bacon Tart

PREP TIME: 20 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Savory tarts are a favorite during the holiday season. They are great as a side dish or as a simple brunch or lunch item. Savory tarts are a favorite during the holiday season. They are great as a side dish or as a simple brunch or lunch item.

INGREDIENTS FOR PASTRY CRUST:

- 1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 7 tbsp unsalted butter, chilled and cut into pieces
- ¼ tsp salt
- 4 tbsp ice water, or more as needed

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

To make the flaky butter crust with a food processor, combine the flour, butter and salt in the bowl of a food processor. Pulse for 10 seconds and add the ice water. Pulse quickly 5 or 6 more times until the dough comes together.

Remove the dough and place on a floured surface. Using your hands, work the dough into a ball and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes before using.

Prepare the tart shell. Roll out the dough to an 11-inch circle on a lightly floured surface. Transfer to a 9-inch tart pan with a removable bottom and trim the edges. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Line the pastry with parchment paper and fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake until the crust is set, about 12 minutes. Remove the paper and weights and bake until golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from the oven and cool on a wire rack.

INGREDIENTS FOR LEEK TART:

- 4 slices apple wood-smoked bacon, or other aromatic, thick cut bacon, diced
- 8 leeks, white portions only
- 4 tbsp unsalted butter
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- Pinch ground nutmeg
- 2 large eggs

1/4 cup heavy cream
1/2 cup grated Parmesan
1/2 cup grated Gruyere

METHOD:

Cut the leeks in half lengthwise and then crosswise into 1/4-inch thick half circles. Place in a bowl and rinse well in 2 changes of water. Drain.

In a medium skillet, cook the bacon over medium-high heat until crisp and fat is rendered, about 5 minutes. Remove and drain on paper towels. Add butter to the fat remaining in the pan. When foamy, add the drained leeks, garlic, salt, pepper and nutmeg. Stir well to combine. Reduce the heat to low, cover and cook until the leeks are very soft but not browned, 15 minutes. Remove from the heat and drain in a fine mesh strainer.

Combine the eggs and the cream in a medium bowl and whisk well. Add the prosciutto, Parmesan and Gruyere, and whisk well. Add the leeks and whisk to combine. Pour into the tart shell and bake until golden brown, 40 to 45 minutes.

Remove from the oven and cool for at least 20 minutes on a wire rack before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Baked Corn Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I was first introduced to Silver Queen corn by my good friend, Fred Miller. Fred lived on Lake Bruin in Tensas parish, Louisiana. Knowing that I loved boiled corn, he delivered a sack of his fresh-picked Silver Queen to my doorstep. I'll never forget his words, "John, now you'll find out what real corn tastes like!" Well, Fred was right. I'll always remember him for introducing me to the best corn in the world.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (15-ounce) can cream-style corn, no salt added
- 2 (15-ounce) cans whole kernel corn, drained and no salt added
- 3/4 cup egg substitute
- 1/2 cup low-fat Swiss cheese, grated
- 1/4 cup corn meal
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 tbsp lite margarine, melted
- salt substitute
- cayenne pepper
- vegetable spray
- 1/4 cup reduced-fat Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 325 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine cream-style corn, whole corn and egg substitute. Using a wooden spoon, blend well to incorporate all ingredients. Add Swiss cheese and corn meal, mixing well after each addition. Fold in bell pepper, parsley, green onions and margarine. Season to taste using salt substitute and pepper. Pour contents into a 2-quart casserole dish coated with vegetable spray. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and bake, covered, 40-45 minutes. Remove cover and brown slightly

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Simple and Delicious Holiday Yams

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Most holiday yam recipes contain numerous spices and a marshmallow topping. However, this recipe is a simple and delicious version. Although it may seem that so few ingredients might create a lackluster dish, think again. It's magnificent!

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 Louisiana yams
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tbs vanilla

METHOD:

Choose 8 yams of identical size, guaranteeing that they will cook at about the same time. I prefer a smaller yam for this recipe. Peel yams and place in a large stainless-steel pot with enough water to cover the yams by approximately one inch. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cover. Cook until yams are fork tender, approximately 30 minutes. When tender, there should be no more than 1/2 inch of water remaining in the bottom of the pot. If there is more, remove the excess. Add butter, sugar and vanilla and continue to simmer until sugar is dissolved and a simple syrup is achieved. Simmer over low heat until yams have absorbed most of the simple syrup but are not falling apart. Do not overcook. Serve one sweet potato per guest with an equal serving of the simple syrup.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Broccoli and Cauliflower Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Broccoli and cauliflower were commonly found on the Creole tables of New Orleans. However, the Cajuns did not actually use these vegetables until the late 1950s when they became available in the stores and markets around the bayous.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 head broccoli
- 1 head cauliflower
- ½ cup butter
- ¼ cup onion, diced
- ¼ cup celery, diced
- ¼ cup red bell pepper, diced
- ¼ cup garlic, minced
- ¼ cup tasso, diced
- ½ cup mushrooms, sliced
- ½ cup flour
- 3 cups heavy whipping cream
- salt and white pepper to taste
- pinch of nutmeg
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- ½ cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Cut broccoli and cauliflower into florets and boil in lightly salted water until tender but firm. Do not overcook. Remove, cool under tap water and set aside. In a 1-quart saucepot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onion, celery, bell pepper, garlic, tasso and mushrooms approximately 5-10 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, stir until white roux is achieved. Do not brown. Add heavy whipping cream, stirring constantly to form white cream sauce. Do not scorch. Season to taste using salt, white pepper and nutmeg. Place cooked broccoli and cauliflower in a baking dish and top with cream sauce. Sprinkle generously with Parmesan cheese and breadcrumbs. Bake on center oven rack until casserole is bubbly and slightly brown on top. You may wish to use grated cheddar cheese in place of Parmesan for a milder taste.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Holiday Carrot Soufflé

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Piccadilly Cafeterias, headquartered in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, first created this wonderful recipe. Over the years it has become one of the most sought after recipes in the history of cooking. Although it may be prepared year-round, it is exceptional on the holiday table.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds carrots, chopped
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1 cup white sugar
- 3 tbsps all purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- Pinch nutmeg
- Pinch cinnamon
- 3 eggs beaten
- 1 tbsp confectioners' sugar for dusting

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add carrots and cook until tender, about 15 minutes. Drain carrots and then place in a large mixing bowl. Mash carrots and add melted butter, white sugar, flour, baking powder, vanilla extract, nutmeg, cinnamon and eggs. Using a wire whisk, blend well and transfer to a 2-quart casserole dish and sprinkle with confectioners' sugar. Bake for 30 minutes. Serve as a side dish to any main course or use as a filling for pies, tarts or turn-overs.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Beet Marmalade

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Because beets are grown as both a winter and a summer crop in Louisiana, it is obvious that there are many recipes for this versatile vegetable. This marmalade allows the beets to be used not only as a vegetable, but also as a wonderful sweet relish or other unique side dish.

INGREDIENTS:

8 medium beets, peeled and julienned
 2 cups reserved beet stock
 1/4 cup sugar
 1/4 cup honey
 1/2 tsp salt
 1 1/2 tbsps cornstarch, dissolved in water
 cracked black pepper to taste
 1/8 tsp ginger
 1/4 cup red wine vinegar

METHOD:

Place beets in a one-quart sauce pot and cover with water by one inch. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until beets are tender, approximately 10-15 minutes. Do not overcook. Beets should be tender but al dente. Strain and reserve 2 cups of the poaching liquid, then cool beets in a colander under cold running water. Set aside to drain. In a heavy-bottom sauté pan, combine beet stock, sugar, honey and salt. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and add dissolved cornstarch, pepper, ginger and red wine vinegar. Continue to simmer 5-10 minutes. When ready to serve, add boiled beets to the sauce, stirring gently into the mixture. Do not mash the beets while stirring. Once beets are heated thoroughly, serve in a crystal bowl displaying the beautiful purple color.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Slammin' Sauerkraut

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Sauerkraut is one of the most underrated dishes in the South. Most southerners are reminded of the sour, bitter kraut they were served during their elementary school days, rather than the richly garnished sauerkraut of Alsace Lorraine, France. This recipe is from Olga Hirsch, who brought it with her from that region when she moved to Donaldsonville in the 1940s. It is a classic and well worth the effort!

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (32 ounce) jars Vlassic sauerkraut
- 1/2 pound bacon, cubed
- 3 links heavy smoked sausage, sliced
- 1 ham steak, bone-in and cubed
- 3 pieces smoked pork hocks
- 6 links Polish sausage
- 2 cups onion, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 1/2 tbsps flour
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1 (12-ounce) bottle beer
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 6 juniper berries
- 2 small bay leaves
- 8 small potatoes, halved
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

The secret to great sauerkraut is complete rinsing the product prior to cooking, 2-3 times minimum, under cold, running water. It is imperative that this step be completed to remove the sour brine from the cabbage. Drain well. In a heavy-bottom cast iron pot, sauté bacon over medium-high heat until fat is rendered. Do not brown. Add smoked sausage and cook 2-3 minutes longer. Add onion and garlic and sauté 3-5 minutes. Add flour, blending well into the seasoning mixture. Add chicken stock, beer, wine and juniper berries. Bring to a rolling boil and season stock to taste using salt and pepper. Add sauerkraut, blending well into the mixture. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and top with cubed ham steak, smoked pork hocks and Polish sausage. Add bay leaves, cover and simmer 1 1/2 hours stirring occasionally. Add potatoes and continue to cook 15-20 minutes or until tender. Serve sauerkraut with equal portions of meat.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Butter Beans with Ham

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6 8

COMMENT:

Lima beans, or butter beans as they are known here in South Louisiana, are often cooked casserole-style with different smoked meats. This recipe, however, is from my grandmother and she preferred to cook butter beans slowly, cream-style.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh butter beans
- 1/2 cup shortening or bacon drippings
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup red bell peppers, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1/2 pound smoked ham, cubed
- 2 smoked ham hocks
- 1 cup green onions, chopped
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Rinse beans, removing any that are hard or discolored. The beans will cook faster if they are soaked in cold water overnight in the refrigerator. When ready to cook, rinse beans once again in cold water. In a 2-quart saucepot, melt shortening or bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and smoked ham. Sauté approximately 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ham hocks and cook 5 additional minutes. Add lima beans and enough cold water to cover beans by approximately 2 inches. Add green onions and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and allow to cook for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep vegetables from scorching. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until beans are tender, approximately 1 hour. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Using a metal spoon, mash approximately 1/4 of the beans against the side of the pot to create a creaming effect. Garnish with parsley. Beans should be tender and of a butter consistency when ready to serve. Butter beans may be served on top of cooked white rice or as a side vegetable.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Quick and Smoky Cajun Baked Beans

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6 to 8

COMMENT:

Not everyone has time to make baked beans from scratch. This recipe begins with canned Great Northern beans, but the smoke of the grill and the sweet flavor of brown sugar and cane syrup will surprise even your resident baked bean expert.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (15-ounce) cans Great Northern beans
- 2 (15-ounce) cans pinto beans
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1/2 pound bacon, cubed
- 1 cup sugar cured ham, diced
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 1 cup red bell peppers, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, grated
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1/2 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1/2 cup barbecue sauce
- 1/4 cup ketchup
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp dried mustard powder
- 1 tbsp prepared mustard
- 1 tbsp cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Light grill according to manufacturer's directions. Prepare 2 or 3 pieces of your favorite smoke wood to add to the pit once the bean pot has been placed over the coals. This recipe may also be prepared in your oven by baking at 350 degrees F for approximately 30 minutes. In a heavy-bottomed cast iron pot, place butter over medium-high heat. Add bacon and stir occasionally until fat is rendered and bacon is crispy, but not overcooked. Add ham, onions and bell peppers. Cook 5 to 7 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add all remaining ingredients except beans, stirring to blend well after each addition. Add beans, stir and bring mixture to a simmer. Place on the barbecue grill for 30 to 45 minutes stirring occasionally or until beans have picked up a nice smoky flavor.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Charlie's Creole Connection Carrots

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This dish comes straight from one of my favorite cookbooks, Panderina Soumas' Soumas Heritage Creole Cookbook. Additionally, the recipe honors Panderina's grandfather, Charles James Soumas - her Creole connection. Legend tells that when "Grandpa Charlie" returned from sea, he would catch a cab home from the French Market docks. He would be sure to wear his cap tightly over his head so as not to show the soft, but kinky, blonde locks of hair underneath. After hailing a cab he would go on and on about the "black woman" he was going to see and how much he missed her. Little did the cab driver know that Charlie was ensuring his safety by passing for a white man, and the "black gal" was his wife Ollie.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 - 8 fresh carrots, washed, peeled and sliced or packaged baby carrots
- 1/4 pound butter
- 2 cups water, must cover carrots
- 1 tsp Soumas Creole Soul Seasoning*
- 2 tbsps brown sugar
- 1 small (4 ounce) can mandarin orange slices in juice (optional)
- 1 tsp fresh ginger, grated
- 1 tsp Steen's Cane syrup or honey (optional)

METHOD:

Place all ingredients in a medium saucepan. Simmer over low-medium heat for 10 to 15 minutes or until carrots are tender. Do not overcook to the mush stage. If you wish to make a thick sauce, add approximately 1/2 tsp cornstarch at the end of cooking. NOTE: Try steaming the carrots first, then incorporate the other ingredients.

* You can find Soumas Creole Soul Seasoning and all of Panderina's Creole products at Soumas Heritage Creole Creations. Simply call (318) 747-4068.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Corn Maque Choux

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Although Maque Choux is normally thought of as a corn soup, the River Road Cajuns cooked a similar vegetable flavored with the freshwater shrimp of the Mississippi River. Here is their version of that dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 ears fresh corn
- 2 cups (150-200 count) shrimp, peeled and de-veined
- 1/4 cup andouille, finely diced
- 1/2 cup bacon drippings
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, chopped
- 1/2 cup green bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 2 cups tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsps tomato sauce
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Select tender, well-developed ears of corn and remove shucks and silk. Using a sharp knife, cut lengthwise through the kernels to remove them from the cob. Scrape each cob using the blade of the knife to remove all milk and additional pulp from the corn. This is important because the richness of the dish will depend on how much milk and pulp can be scraped from the cobs. In a 3-quart cast iron Dutch oven, melt bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Sauté corn, onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and andouille approximately 15-20 minutes or until vegetables are wilted and corn begins to tenderize. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce and shrimp. Continue cooking until juice from the tomatoes and shrimp are rendered into the dish, approximately 15-20 minutes. Add green onions and season to taste using salt and pepper. Continue to cook an additional 15 minutes or until full flavor of corn and shrimp is developed into the dish. Serve as a vegetable or add stock to create soup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Fried Green Tomatoes

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

3 green tomatoes
 1½ cups oil
 1 cup flour
 1 tbsp chopped basil
 1 cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
 1 cup milk
 1 egg
 1 cup water
 salt and black pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold pepper sauce

METHOD:

In a 10-inch cast iron skillet, heat oil to 350 degrees F. Slice tomatoes ½-inch thick and drain on a paper towel. Season flour with salt and pepper. Add chopped basil to the bread crumbs. Prepare egg wash by combining milk, egg and water. Blend well using a wire whisk. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Dredge tomato slices first in flour, next in egg wash and finally in bread crumbs. Pan fry, a few at a time, until golden brown on each side. Remove and drain well. Eat as a salad topped with a remoulade or tartar sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Braised Savoy Cabbage

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6 - 8

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups savoy cabbage, cleaned and thinly sliced
 3 tbsps olive oil
 2 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
 2 tbsps butter, diced
 1/2 cup chicken stock
 2 ounces demiglace
 1 tbsp marjoram, chopped
 kosher salt to taste
 crushed red pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a saute pan heat oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic and cook until transparent, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Add butter and cabbage and saute an additional 3 - 4 minutes. Deglaze with chicken stock and cook 4 - 5 minutes. Add demiglace, adjust seasonings and serve alongside roast boar.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Wild Mushroom Stew

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6 - 8

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 lbs wild mushrooms, diced
- 4 ounces olive oil
- 3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup onion, diced
- 3 ounces butter, diced
- 2 tbsps sage, chopped
- 1/2 tsp red crushed pepper
- 5 ounces red wine
- 2 tbsps salt and pepper
- 12 ounces ripe tomatoes, diced
- 5 ounces veal stock
- 1 tsp rosemary, minced

METHOD:

In a saute pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add garlic and onions and saute until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 - 5 minutes. Add butter, sage, mushrooms and pepper and cook for 4 - 6 minutes. Add wine and cook until evaporated. Season to taste with salt and pepper, add tomatoes and stock and cook for 3 - 5 minutes. Add rosemary and cook an additional 1 - 2 minutes before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Grilled Herb Potatoes

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

These potatoes take on the smoky flavor of the grill and are a natural accompaniment to any grilled meal. I recommend serving these with bleu cheese burgers.

INGREDIENTS:

- 14 B-size red creamer potatoes, quartered
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tbsp fresh parsley, finely chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh basil, finely chopped
- 2 tsp fresh thyme, finely chopped
- 1 tsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped
- 1 tsp fresh tarragon, finely chopped
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Parboil quartered potatoes in water or chicken stock for 7 minutes. Toss potatoes in a large bowl with oil, desired amount of herbs, salt and pepper. Grill potatoes in batches over low heat, allowing marks to show on cut sides. Grill for approximately 10 minutes or until potatoes are tender. You can use any left over herbs to season other meals.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Boiled Corn

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I remember my grandfather saying that you should never boil sweet corn. If corn was tender and sweet enough to boil, it should either be eaten raw off the cob or warmed just long enough in hot water to melt butter. Well, I guess my Papere' was right, but I still like to boil my sweet corn 3 to 5 minutes simply because I didn't grow it myself like he did and I'm not quite sure how tender it's going to be. The addition of sugar and cream in this recipe gives the corn a full sweetness.

INGREDIENTS:

6 ears of corn, husked & cleaned
 2 quarts water
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 stick butter
 salt and pepper, to taste

METHOD:

In a large pot, combine water with heavy whipping cream, sugar and 1/2 stick of butter. Over high heat, bring to a rolling boil. Add corn and cook 3 to 5 minutes. Using a pair of tongs or slotted spoon, remove corn to a stainless steel bowl, season lightly with salt and pepper and remaining 1/2 stick butter. Toss the bowl gently to coat the corn with melted butter and seasoning. Butter will melt as it comes in contact with the hot corn. Serve hot. Retain the poaching liquid as the perfect stock for a corn and shrimp soup. This stock may be frozen for 6 months.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Eggplant Parmesan

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

When the Italian restaurateur of Toronto, John Arena, first cooked this dish for me, I thought it to be one of the simplest yet best appetizers I had ever tasted. The simplicity of fresh vegetables and herbs, topped with grated Parmesan then baked must be tasted to be understood.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large eggplants, sliced
- 1 cup Parmesan cheese, fresh grated
- 2 cups seasoned flour
- 3/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1/4 cup jalapeno, chopped
- 3 cups tomatoes, diced
- 1/2 cup fresh basil
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Cut eggplant into 12-14 (1/2-inch) slices. In a large sauté pan, heat 1/4 cup olive oil over medium-high heat. Dredge eggplant in seasoned flour, shaking off the excess. Sauté 4-5 slices at a time until golden brown on each side. Remove, drain and set aside. Continue to fry eggplant, adding a little olive oil as needed to the skillet. In a separate saute pan, heat 1/4 cup olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, garlic and jalapeno. Saute 2-3 minutes. Add tomatoes and basil and continue to cook until tomatoes render their juices and are cooked to a fresh tomato sauce, approximately 15 minutes. Do not overcook. Season to taste using salt and pepper. When ready to serve, pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Place eggplant in a 9 x 13-inch baking dish and spoon an even amount of tomato sauce over each slice. Sprinkle generously with Parmesan cheese and bake until cheese is completely melted.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Polenta laced with Truffle

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6 - 8

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsps truffle butter
- 2 cups cornmeal
- 1 tbsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups chicken broth
- 3 tbsps Parmesan cheese
- heavy cream as needed

METHOD:

Place cornmeal, salt, pepper and milk in a saucepan and heat over medium-high heat. Stir constantly to prevent lumps. When mixture begins to thicken add chicken broth. Mix well and cook over low heat. When mixture is smooth and thick, fold in cheese and butter. Adjust seasoning, add cream if needed and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Cajun Black-eyed Peas

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Black eyed peas may sometimes be referred to in the South as field peas. Whatever you may wish to call them is fine with me, but I suggest you try cooking them in the following fashion for a truly new experience.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound dried black eyed peas
- 1 pound heavy smoked pork sausage
- 1/2 pound smoked ham, cubed
- 1/2 cup shortening or bacon drippings
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1 tsp dry basil
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

It is always best to presoak any hard-shell bean in cold water overnight before cooking. This will cut the cooking time by 1/3. Drain peas from soaking water and rinse in cold tap water. In a 1-gallon stock pot, melt shortening or bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, basil, ham and smoked sausage. Sauté approximately 10 to 15 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add bay leaf and peas. Add enough cold water to cover peas by 2 inches and bring to a low boil. Cook for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to simmer and continue cooking approximately 45 minutes or until tender. Stir from time to time, as peas will settle to the bottom of the pot and tend to stick. Once tender mash about 1/3 of the peas on the side of the pot using a metal cooking spoon. This will give the peas a creamy texture. Season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Add green onions and parsley and continue cooking until peas are tender and creamy.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Leah Chase's Old Style Greens and "Pot Likker"

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4 - 6

COMMENT:

Collard and Turnip Greens have always been an important southern staple. These greens tend to grow in poor soil and are often found growing along a roadside or in a hilly, rocky place where little else grows. Many people complain that these greens are tough to wash, so they wrap them in a pillowcase and toss them in the clothes washer. "Pot Likker" is the delicious juice that comes from the greens as they are cooked. I like to eat this juice separately with cornbread. That's what I call down-home Southern food!

INGREDIENTS:

4 pounds turnip or collard greens, stemmed Freshly
ground black pepper to taste
1/4 pound fatback (salt pork) or streak-o'-lean
Salt to taste

METHOD:

Rinse the greens thoroughly several times, then put them in a large pot of boiling water and boil for 2 minutes. Drain, discarding the water to remove the bitter taste. Fill the pot again with water and bring to the boil. Place the greens back in the pot. Cut into the fatback in several places without slicing it into pieces, and add to the pot. Bring to the boil, cover, turn down to a simmer, and cook 2 - 3 hours. Taste and add salt and pepper as desired. Serve greens with their juices or serve "pot likker" separately as a soup with cornbread.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Onion Cake

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8 to 10

INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

8 oz. butter, chipped
2 cups all-purpose flour

METHOD:

Gently mix ingredients and refrigerate until dough can be handled. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Roll out dough and place in a greased pie tin. Place in oven and bake for 10 minutes.

INGREDIENTS FOR BATTER:

4 large onions, diced
8 oz. Swiss cheese, grated
2 eggs
1 egg yolk
1 1/2 tsps chives, chopped
6 strips crisp bacon
3/4 cup sour cream
1/4 tsp caraway seeds

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a medium saucepan, saute onions until wilted. Mix onions together with eggs and egg yolk, bacon, cheese, sour cream and chives. Pour into prepared pie crust and add caraway seeds and salt and pepper to taste. Place in oven and bake for 12 to 15 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

John Folse's Honey and Bacon-Glazed Barbecue Beans

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Nothing is better in baked beans than the flavor of smoked ham and the addition of sweetness brought about by honey. In my recipe, I have added Community Coffee and Bourbon to add to the interest as well as taste in this barbecue accompaniment.

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 thick slices of bacon, chopped
- 1/2 cup honey
- 3 (1 pound) cans of pork and beans
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
- 1 cup brewed Community Coffee
- 1 tbsp Zatarain's® Creole mustard
- 1 (15 1/2 ounce) can tomato sauce
- 2 tbsp Jack Daniels®

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 275 degrees F. In a 7-quart Dutch oven, sauté bacon pieces over medium heat stirring occasionally until crispy. Do not over brown or bake the drippings. Once bacon is crispy, remove the pieces and drain on a paper towel. Into the bacon drippings, add onions, bell peppers and garlic. Cook over medium-high heat until vegetables are wilted, 3-5 minutes. Add pork and beans, honey, coffee, Creole mustard and tomato sauce. Stir to incorporate all ingredients. Once well blended, bring to a low simmer. Remove from heat and stir in bourbon and cooked bacon. Bake uncovered for approximately 2 hours, checking occasionally to make sure beans are not drying out. Additional coffee or water may be added to retain proper consistency.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Onion Phyllo Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I use a mixture of red and sweet onions to fill this light, summer pie. Just serve with green and tomato salads for great outdoor food. Do cook this in a tin and not a ceramic pan, or the base will never begin to crisp. It is very rich, so serve in small portions.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 sweet onions, sliced
- 2 red onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup peanut oil
- 1 hot red chile, seeded and finely chopped
- 5 to 6 lime leaves, shredded or finely grated
- 1 stalk lemongrass, bruised and finely chopped
- 2 oz flaked coconut
- salt to taste
- 2 tbsps soy sauce
- 10 to 14 sheets phyllo pastry, depending on size

METHOD:

Soften onions in a cast iron skillet in 3 tbsps of the oil. Add chile, lime leaves and lemongrass and cook slowly for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the onions are softened. Stir in coconut, add salt to taste and allow to cool slightly. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Blend remaining oil and soy sauce together. Arrange most of the phyllo sheets in a buttered, deep 8-inch round pan, overlapping the sides of the pan and forming a pastry case at least 3 layers thick. Brush each sheet with oil and soy sauce to keep them moist. Press onion mixture into the lined pan and cover with 2 or more sheets of phyllo, folded in half. Turn pastry edges in over the pie, score the top of the pastry with a sharp knife, then brush generously with the remaining oil and soy sauce. Place pie on a baking sheet and bake for about 30 minutes, until pastry is crisp and deep golden brown. Cool slightly before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Squash Pudding

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

How imaginative of the Cajuns and Creoles to substitute squash in the place of French bread for an interesting dessert! By leaving out most of the sugar, the pudding was easily transformed into a vegetable casserole.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound yellow squash, diced
- 1 pound zucchini, diced
- 4 tbsps butter
- 1/2 cup onions, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3/4 cup bread crumbs
- 1 1/4 cups milk
- 1/2 cup cream
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon, ground
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg, ground
- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 tbsps parsley, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/3 cup golden raisins
- 1/2 tsp baking powder

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add squash, zucchini, onions and garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Remove and place in a large stainless steel mixing bowl. Purée 1/2 of the vegetable mixture and return to the bowl. Soak bread crumbs in milk and add to bowl. Add remaining ingredients and mix together until all ingredients are incorporated. Place in a greased round casserole dish (9" x 4".) and bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Baked Cushaw Squares

PREP TIME: 1 ½ hours

YIELD: 6-8 squares

COMMENT:

Cushaw, the striped crooked neck pumpkin, is commonplace along the highways of Louisiana. Although this pumpkin is normally peeled, boiled and cooked casserole-style with brown sugar for the holiday table, this simple recipe is good all year long.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 medium cushaw
- 5 cups sugar
- 1/2 pound butter
- 1/4 cup cane syrup
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp allspice
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of nutmeg
- candy corn for decoration

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Place 5 cups of sugar in a stockpot with approximately 1 gallon water. Using a wire whisk, dissolve the sugar and bring the water to a rolling boil. Using a very sharp butcher knife, cut cushaw in half and remove the seeds and stringy pulp. Cut each half into three inch squares, leaving the hard shell intact. Place cushaw squares in boiling water and cook until tender but not mushy, remembering that the pumpkin must still be baked. Using a fork, test for tenderness. Once tender, remove and place the squares on a large cookie sheet or pan. Set aside. In a heavy bottom sauce pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add syrup, brown sugar and spices. Bring to a low boil, stirring constantly until a bubbly syrup is achieved. Do not scorch. Top the cushaw pieces with the sugar mixture. Bake until thoroughly heated. When eating, scoop the sweetened meat from the shell as a snack or serve as a starch accompaniment to any entree. The cushaw squares may be further decorated with the candy corn once they have been removed from the oven.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Honey Mint Glazed Carrots

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

Carrots are often ignored as a vegetable of choice because most cooks think of them as bland, health food. Well, this carrot recipe is not only good for your eyesight, it's great for the taste buds as well. The addition of mint with the sweetness of honey gives this everyday carrot recipe a touch of holiday flair.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups diagonally sliced carrots
- 3 slices cooked bacon, crumbled
- 3 tbsps butter
- 3 tbsps honey
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of nutmeg
- 3 tbsps freshly chopped mint
- ½ ounce brandy
- sprig of mint (optional)

METHOD:

In a one quart sauce pot, poach carrots in lightly salted water six to eight minutes or until tender. Remove from heat, strain one half cup of the poaching liquid and set aside. Cool carrots under cold running water. In a heavy bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Add honey, blending well into the butter. If mixture becomes too thick, you may add two or more tablespoons of the poaching liquid. Add bacon, cinnamon and nutmeg. Once blended, add brandy.

NOTE: When pouring brandy into a hot pan, you may wish to remove it from any open flame, as it may flare up for ten to fifteen seconds before extinguishing itself.

Stir well to incorporate the flavors. Stir in mint and carrots and toss gently until glazed. Continue to cook until thoroughly heated. Place in a serving bowl and garnish with a sprig of fresh mint.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Baked Pumpkin Lafourche - Madewood Plantation

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Pumpkin is certainly more American than apple pie. One of the first vegetables given to the early colonists by the Native American Indians was pumpkin. In those days, the seeds were as important as the entire pumpkin. These seeds were the snack foods for the children. This candied pumpkin recipe is one of my favorites.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large pumpkin or cushaw
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 3 large peeled apples, diced
- 1/2 cup Louisiana cane syrup
- 1/2 cup honey
- cinnamon to taste
- nutmeg to taste
- allspice to taste
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 1 ounce sherry
- marshmallows (optional)

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a sharp butcher knife or cleaver, cut the pumpkin into three inch cubes, peeling on. Scoop out all of the seeds and stringy pulp from the cubes. In a two gallon stock pot, place pumpkin in enough water to cover by two inches. Add sugar, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cook until pumpkin is tender to the touch. Remove from heat and strain one cup of poaching liquid. Cool pumpkin under cold running water. Using a paring knife or large spoon, scrape the softened pulp into a large mixing bowl. Once all the pulp has been removed, drain off excess water and set aside. In a heavy bottom black iron pot, melt butter over medium high heat. Add apples and sauté two to three minutes. Add pumpkin, cane syrup, honey, cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice. Stir to blend all of the ingredients well. Add raisins and sherry and cook on medium high heat until mixture is heated thoroughly. Ladle a small amount of the poaching liquid as needed to keep the mixture moist. Once well blended, pour the mixture into an oven-proof casserole dish and top with marshmallows. Cover and bake twenty to thirty minutes or until slightly browned around the edges. Serve as a starch accompaniment to any entree or add three whole eggs and use as a pie or turnover filling.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Brandied Sweet Potatoes

PREP TIME: 40 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This sweet potato dish is a favorite for Thanksgiving Dinner.

INGREDIENTS:

1 (40 oz) can sweet potatoes OR 2 ½ lbs. fresh sweet potatoes, cooked & peeled
 ½ cup packed brown sugar
 ¼ cup butter or margarine, melted
 3 tbsp. brandy or 1 tsp. brandy extract
 2 tbsp. frozen orange juice concentrate
 2 tbsp. water
 1 tsp. vanilla extract
 ½ tsp. salt
 2 eggs, slightly beaten

INGREDIENTS Topping:

½ cup brown sugar
 2 tbsp. flour
 ¼ tsp. ground cinnamon
 ¼ cup chopped nuts
 In a medium-size bowl, combine brown sugar, flour & cinnamon. Blend in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add nuts and mix well.
 2 tbsp. butter

METHOD:

In a large bowl, mash sweet potatoes. Add brown sugar, melted butter, brandy, orange juice concentrate, water, vanilla and salt. Beat until combined. Add eggs and beat until smooth. Transfer to a 2 quart rectangular baking dish.

Prepare topping as directed. Sprinkle over sweet potato mixture. Bake in 350 degree F oven for 35 to 40 minutes. Serves 6.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

White Rice

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

YIELD: 3 Cups

COMMENT:

Rice is second in importance only to the roux in Cajun and Creole cooking. In South Louisiana, we begin the day with rice for breakfast. Riz jaune or yellow rice, two eggs cracked over fried rice and season with boudin blanc, is considered a mainstay in many homes. Throughout the day, rice continues to find its place on the table. You will find rice everywhere, served with gumbo, etouffee, sauce piquante, crawfish bisque, and of course, our famous red beans. Even in dessert, we incorporate rice. One of the finest desserts in Cajun country is rice pudding, cooked rice blended into vanilla custard and served warm. Rice was a natural for the hard-working Cajun is one who can look over a rice field and calculate how many gallons of seafood gumbo it will take to cover it. From time to time, we in bayou country may eat potatoes, pasta or grits, but nothing will ever take the place of rice in Cajun cuisine.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup long grain rice
- 1½ cups water
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp butter

METHOD:

Wash rice a minimum of two times in clear cold water. This process will remove all excess dust and starch from the outside of the grains. Drain well. In a heavy bottom sauce pot, combine all of the above ingredients. Place sauce pot on medium high heat and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce temperature to simmer, cover sauce pot and cook for thirty minutes. During the thirty minute cooking time, it is imperative that you do not remove the cover or attempt to stir the rice. One cup of raw rice will yield approximately two and a half to three cups of cooked rice. I suggest one half cup of cooked rice per serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spicy Grilled Corn on the Cob**PREP TIME:** 20 Minutes**SERVES:** 6**HEAT SCALE:** Medium to Hot**COMMENT:**

Spicy, corn on the coals, so to speak, can be achieved in less than a half hour by brushing corn with a variety of seasonings and grilling over hot mesquite or other woods. This is a great alternative to boiled or roasted ears.

INGREDIENTS:

6 large ears of fresh corn
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
 2 tablespoons Texas-style chili powder
 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon chile
 caribe (crushed red pepper flakes),
 mild, medium, or hot (to taste)

METHOD:

Remove husks and silk from corn. Wash corn and pat dry with paper towels. Combine remaining ingredients in a non-reactive bowl; whisk until well mixed. Set aside while coals are heating. Brush corn with basting mixture and place on oiled rack about 3 inches above medium-hot coals. Grill for about 20 minutes, or until corn is fully cooked, turning each ear of corn a quarter turn every 5 minutes and basting corn each time you turn it. Serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Grilled Corn with Spicy Cilantro Butter

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Cilantro is one of those herbs that requires getting used to! The pungent flavor of this Italian parsley is excellent as an ingredient to marinades and compound butters. When cilantro butter is brushed lightly over grilled corn, a dish inspired by the outdoor cooks of Trinidad, this accompaniment to seafood or steaks will be the hit of the barbecue.

INGREDIENTS:

8 large ears of Silver Queen Corn
 1/4 pound salted butter, softened
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 3 tbsps finely chopped cilantro
 1/4 cup finely sliced green onions
 salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Shuck corn and remove any silk and rinse thoroughly under cold running water and set aside. Into a food processor place butter, garlic and a pinch of salt and pepper. Process until smooth. Transfer the butter to a ceramic bowl and fold in the cilantro and green onions. Cover and set aside. When ready to cook, brush oil onto the hot grill and cook the corn, turning occasionally, 10 to 12 minutes. As the corn cooks, brush it occasionally with the cilantro butter. When ready to serve, brush once more with the butter. Serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

String Bean Bundle

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Right when you thought there was nothing new to do with green beans, here I come with a great new recipe. Try adding some of your own flavorings such as herbs or mustards to add a twist.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh string beans
- 1 bunch green onions
- 1 cup flour
- pinch of thyme
- pinch of basil
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- egg wash (1 egg, 1 cup milk, 1 cup water, blended)
- 2 cups oil
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom sauté pan, heat oil over medium high heat. Season flour with thyme, basil, salt and pepper. Place 6 to 8 green beans into a bundle and tie with the top of a green onion. Dip green bean bundles into egg wash, then into flour, shaking off the excess. Deep fry until golden brown. Remove to drain and keep warm. Sprinkle parmesan cheese over hot bundles and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Fried Eggplant

PREP TIME:

SERVES:

COMMENT:

This recipe is also great for Mushroom and Zucchini.

INGREDIENTS FOR SEASONING MIX:

- 1 1/8 tsps salt
- 3/4 tsp paprika
- 2 tsp white pepper
- 3 tsp onion powder
- 3 tsp garlic powder
- 3 tsp cayenne pepper
- 3 tsp black pepper
- 3 tsp dried thyme
- 3 tsp dried basil

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup raw eggplant, peeled and chopped
- 2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 cup bread crumbs
- 2 cup milk
- 1 egg
- Oil for frying

METHOD:

In a small bowl, combine the ingredients for the seasoning mix, mixing thoroughly. Sprinkle 2 teaspoon of the mixture evenly on the eggplants. Place the flour in a small bowl and the bread crumbs in a second bowl. Add 1 teaspoon of the seasoning mix to the flour and 1 teaspoon of the mixture to the bread crumbs, mix well. In a separate small bowl combine the milk and egg, blend well. Heat 1-inch of oil in a cast-iron french fryer to 350 degrees. Dredge the eggplant in the seasoned flour, shaking off the excess. Then coat the eggplant with the milk mixture, and then dredge in the bread crumbs, shaking off the excess. Fry the eggplant approximately 2-3 minutes or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Eggplant Casserole Bilello

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 8-10 Servings

Comment:

Salvatore Mancuso arrived in New Orleans with his young wife in 1870. After working for many years on White Plantation, he saved enough money to buy his own farm and had a family of his own. One of his daughters, Vita, married Antonio Bilello and they started a family eventually consisting of seven sons. Since there were no girls in the family, the second oldest boy, Salvatore, was responsible for helping with the children and cooking while the oldest son worked on the farm. Salvatore soon became an accomplished cook and, when he grew up, opened his own restaurant in Thibodaux. Today, Bilello's Restaurant is a landmark on Bayou Lafourche.



Ingredients:

- 6 large eggplants, peeled and sliced 1/4-inch thick
- 1 tbsp peanut oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 cup diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 2 cups water
- 3 cups tomato sauce
- 2 tsp chopped oregano
- ¼ cup chopped basil
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 1½ tsps granulated garlic
- 1½ cup Parmesan cheese
- 6 hard boiled eggs, sliced

Method:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Sprinkle salt over eggplant and place in a large bowl or colander, with a heavy weight on top to help squeeze the water from the vegetable. Set aside for approximately 1 hour. In a 5-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add water, tomato sauce, oregano and basil. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Cook for approximately 45 minutes, stirring occasionally. Place drained eggplant slices on a pre-greased cookie sheet and bake for 30 minutes. Divide eggplant into 3 equal parts and place a third of the slices in the bottom of a 9" x 13" casserole dish. Sprinkle with a small amount of granulated garlic and cheese. Spoon

a third of the gravy on top of eggplant and finish with 8-10 slices of egg. Continue the layering process until all is used up. Pour any excess sauce over the top of the eggplant and sprinkle with remaining Parmesan cheese. Bake, uncovered, for 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mamere's Favorite Candied Yams

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

No one made yams better than Mamere. She often substituted seasonal fruit at different times of the year to give the yams that special touch. Her favorite was a combination of red and green apples spiced with golden raisins.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (24-ounce) cans Bruce cut yams, reserve syrup
- 1 cup golden raisins
- 1 1/2 tbsps corn starch
- 1 red apple, cubed
- 1 green apple, cubed
- 4 tbsps butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tbsp Spice Island orange peel

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Drain yams and reserve the juice of 1 1/2 cans. Layer the yams in a 9 x 13" ceramic baking dish and top with raisins. Dissolve the corn starch in one cup of the yam syrup and set aside. Using a paring knife, cube the apples, skin-on, into 1/4-inch cubes. Submerge the apples in water to retain their color. In a cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium high heat. Add remaining yam syrup and dissolve corn starch, brown sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg and orange peel. Bring to a rolling boil, stirring constantly, until mixture resembles a thickened syrup. Lower heat, add diced apples and cook approximately 5 minutes. Ladle the apple syrup over the yams until the juice reaches the top of the yams. Cover and bake 1 1/2 hours.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables

- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Quick and Smoky Cajun Baked Beans

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6 to 8

COMMENT:

Not everyone has time to make baked beans from scratch. This recipe begins with canned Great Northern beans, but the smoke of the grill and the sweet flavor of brown sugar and cane syrup will surprise even your resident baked bean expert.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (15-ounce) cans Great Northern beans
- 2 (15-ounce) cans pinto beans
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1/2 pound bacon, cubed
- 1 cup sugar cured ham, diced
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 1 cup red bell peppers, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, grated
- 1/2 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
- 1/2 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1/2 cup barbecue sauce
- 1/4 cup ketchup
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp dried mustard powder
- 1 tbsp prepared mustard
- 1 tbsp cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Light grill according to manufacturer's directions. Prepare 2 or 3 pieces of your favorite smoke wood to add to the pit once the bean pot has been placed over the coals. This recipe may also be prepared in your oven by baking at 350 degrees F for approximately 30 minutes. In a heavy-bottomed cast iron pot, place butter over medium-high heat. Add bacon and stir occasionally until fat is rendered and bacon is crispy, but not overcooked. Add ham, onions and bell peppers. Cook 5 to 7 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add all remaining ingredients except beans, stirring to blend well after each addition. Add beans, stir and bring mixture to a simmer. Place on the barbecue grill for 30 to 45 minutes stirring occasionally or until beans have picked up a nice smoky flavor.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Sweet Potato Pones - Ardoyne Plantation

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

The term "pone" normally refers to a baked cornbread or biscuit stick. These four to six inch sticks are baked in a special pan and served hot with butter. Here, the pone is more of a turnover and the name was given to this dish over 100 years ago, so who are we to change it!

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 sweet potatoes
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 2 tsps cinnamon
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 2 sticks butter
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 2 tsps salt
- 2 1/2 cups flour

METHOD:

In a one gallon stock pot, boil potatoes until soft enough to mash. Peel and place in food processor with butter, salt, sugar, cinnamon and lemon juice. Blend on high speed until all ingredients are well incorporated. Remove and set aside. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, cream together butter and sugar. Beat one egg with vanilla, cinnamon and salt. Add to the sugar mixture and blend well to incorporate. Add flour and mix well to form dough. Knead three to four times to blend all ingredients thoroughly. Once the dough ball has formed nicely, cover with clear wrap and chill for up to three hours or overnight. Remove and roll out one eighth inch thick dough on a floured surface. Cut into five inch circles. Place a generous spoonful of potato mixture in the center of each circle and fold in a turnover fashion. Seal the edges with a fork, prick to allow steam to escape and bake until golden brown, approximately fifteen to twenty minutes. Serve either hot or cold. The pones work well as an accompaniment to any entree or as a late night snack.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Louisiana Candied Sweet Potatoes

PREP TIME: 20 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

The use of canned sweet potatoes in this recipe ensures ease of preparation. Often when making candied yams, the cook will blend butter and brown sugar to create a simple glaze for the baked yams. Steen's Cane Syrup has modified that traditional technique by substituting their wonderful cane syrup which infuses a more interesting flavor into the sweet potatoes. Try them..you'll love them.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1/2 cup Steen's Syrup
- 1 (1-pound) can sweet potatoes

METHOD:

Melt butter in skillet or pot; stir in syrup. Pour the can of potatoes in skillet or pot; turn to coat with syrup mixture. Cook over medium heat until glazed, about 15 minutes, turning and basting occasionally.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Sweet 'n' Sassy Beans

PREP TIME: 3 - 4 hours

SERVES: 10 People

COMMENT:

A backyard bar-b-que would not be complete without some tasty bar-b-que beans. The great news is that this recipe begins with some plain ol' canned pork and beans that you can buy in the store. This recipe is best when cooked on the pit, but can also be finished in your oven at 350 degrees.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 pound breakfast sausage or bacon
- 1 cup diced onions
- celery to taste
- bell pepper to taste
- garlic to taste
- 1/4 pound chopped bar-b-que pork (you can substitute andouille or smoked sausage)
- 4 16-ounce cans pork and beans
- 1/4 cup sweet bar-b-que sauce
- 1/2 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 tablespoon mild seasoning mix
- 1/2 teaspoon liquid smoke (optional)

METHOD:

Heat up a large cast iron skillet or dutch oven. Begin by adding a quarter pound of breakfast sausage like Jimmy Dean, or you can use 1/4 pound bacon if you prefer. Sizzle the meat over a medium high heat, then add the onions, celery, bell pepper, and garlic. Sauté these ingredients, then add the bar-b-que pork, andouille or smoked sausage, whichever you prefer. Blend in the pork and beans and bring to a rolling boil. Add the bar-b-que sauce, Steen's Cane Syrup, and seasoning mix. Add the liquid smoke if you are not going to cook the beans on the pit. Stir well. Cook on the cooker, uncovered, for 3 ½ hours, or in the oven, covered, for 2 ½ hours until hot and bubbling and the flavors are well blended.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Canned Whole Tomatoes With Basil and Garlic

PREP TIME: 3 hours

Yield: 4 quarts

COMMENT:

I have seen every variety and color of tomato canned here in Louisiana. Every culture has added their own flavoring touch such as the Italians with their garlic and basil. Personally, I like to can the Roma Tomatoes because of their size, but any variety will do just fine in this recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 pounds Roma Tomatoes
- 16 whole cloves of garlic
- 8 tablespoons lemon juice
- 4 teaspoons salt
- 8 fresh Basil leaves
- 4 teaspoons Louisiana Hot Sauce

METHOD:

Place 4 quart jars or 8 pints along with the two-piece caps in hot, soapy water. Rinse well and drain. Heat jars and lids in simmering water (180 degrees) and allow them to stand there until ready to use. Select fresh Roma Tomatoes at their peak of quality. Use firm tomatoes, free of cracks and spots. Remove the stem and using a paring knife make a small "X" cut through the skin on the top of the tomato. Place large stock pot on the stove filled with water and bring to a rolling boil. Place the tomatoes in a wire basket and lower them into the boiling water. Blanch tomatoes 30 to 60 seconds or until the skin at the top of the tomato starts to peel away from the "X" mark carved into the top. Dip the tomatoes immediately into cold water to stop the cooking process. Once again using the paring knife, slip the skins off the tomatoes beginning at the "X" mark and leave the Roma Tomatoes whole. Place the peeled tomatoes into another large sauce pot adding just enough water to cover by one inch. Bring the water to a rolling boil and cook tomatoes 5 minutes. While tomatoes are cooking, remove the canning jars from the hot water along with the lids and place on a towel. Add 2 tablespoons of lemon juice in each jar. Carefully pack the hot tomatoes into the jar placing 2 Basil leaves and 4 cloves of garlic into each jar at alternating levels for eye appeal. Carefully ladle the hot cooking liquid over the tomatoes leaving one half inch of head space. Top with 1 teaspoon each of salt and Hot Sauce. Move the jar gently to remove any air bubbles that may have formed around the tomatoes. Repeat two or three times. Screw down the lid and rim firmly onto the jar and place in a simmering water bath for approximately 45 minutes. Remove from hot water and set aside to cool. Once cool, check lids for proper sealing, label and store in a cool, dark place.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Cheese Garlic Grits Soufflé

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

While Basic Boiled Grits are perfect in their simplicity for breakfast, at bigger meals Cheese Grits are more likely to appear. Adding cheese is the first "company" thing we do to grits when it's time to show off a little. Grits and garlic have an ancient affinity in the South. Cooks who wouldn't use garlic in any other form have been slipping a bit into Cheese Grits for years. Many cooks slip in a lot more garlic by roasting it first and often refer to it as their "secret ingredient." Cheese Grits Soufflé is usually served as a brunch or luncheon dish and is very much like a sharply flavored spoonbread.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 recipe Basic Boiled Grits, made with half water and half milk
- 1 large clove garlic, crushed through a garlic press
- 1/2 teaspoon ground white pepper
- Dash of Tabasco sauce, or to taste
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce, or to taste
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 1/2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 4 large eggs, separated

METHOD:

Prepare the grits. When they are fully cooked, stir in the garlic, pepper, sauces and cheeses. Let cool slightly. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a deep 2-quart baking dish. Beat the egg yolks lightly with a fork and stir them into the grits. Whip the egg whites until soft peaks form and fold them into the grits. Pour the batter into the prepared baking dish and bake until lightly browned and well puffed, about 30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Double Fried French Fries

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

As simple as they are good French fries can be one of the toughest dishes to cook. Here is a successful formula.

INGREDIENTS:

Peanut or other vegetable oil, for frying
 2 pounds baking potatoes, like russets
 Salt, to taste

METHOD:

Pour oil in a deep fryer or heavy saucepan to reach halfway up the sides of the pan. Heat to 325 degrees F; use a deep fry thermometer to determine this. While the oil is heating, peel the potatoes and push through a French fry cutter to form uniform sticks. As you go, place the cut potatoes in a bowl of ice water to release some of the starch and to keep them from browning.

Dry the potato strips thoroughly; this will keep the oil from splattering. Fry the potatoes in batches so the pan isn't crowded and the oil temperature does not plummet. Cook for 3 minutes until they are soft but not browned. Remove the potatoes with a long-handled metal strainer and drain on brown paper bags.

Bring oil temperature up to 375 degrees F. Return the par-fried potatoes to the oil in batches and cook a second time for 4 minutes until golden and crispy. Drain on fresh brown paper bags then place in a serving bowl lined with paper towels. Salt and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Sour Cream, Bacon and Chive Stuffed Potato

PREP TIME: 30 minutes + baking

Serves: 10

COMMENT:

Potatoes are very versatile. They can be used as a side item or stuffed with as many items as the imagination allows for a main course. This recipe is the basis for your personal creativity.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 medium russet potatoes, baked
- ¼ cup unsalted butter
- ¾ cup heavy whipping cream
- ½ cup crispy bacon, finely chopped
- 6 tbsp sour cream
- ¼ cup chives, finely sliced
- ¼ cup mild cheddar cheese, shredded
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 1/4 tsp pepper
- ½ tsp granulated garlic

METHOD:

It is best to brush potatoes with olive or vegetable oil and sprinkle with kosher salt before baking. Cut baked potatoes in half lengthwise. Scoop the middle from 10 halves, leaving a ¼ inch thick shell. Peel the last two halves and add the flesh to the others. Mash the potato flesh by hand or with an electric mixer. Add butter to hot potatoes and allow to melt. Mix in whipping cream, bacon, sour cream, chives, cheddar cheese and seasonings and blend well. Put filling mixture in a piping bag fitted with a star tip and fill potato halves. Place on a cookie sheet and bake at 425 degrees for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Serve with a dollop of sour cream. Feel free to change the ingredients to suit your tastes. Chop some cooked spinach and mix with feta cheese for a Greek potato. Or use Jalapenos and cheddar cheese for a Southwestern potato.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mock Oyster Fries

PREP TIME: 3 1/2 hours

MAKES: 6

COMMENT:

While both the northern and southern armies established and operated commissary departments to see to the acquisition and distribution of food stuffs to the men in the ranks during the Civil War, there was never any attempt to impose an orderly, uniform, or nutritious control over how such things were prepared.

Mock Oyster Fries: This was a common meal in the South when food was scarce and only the most basic ingredients were available

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup flour
- Pinch of salt to taste
- Pinch pepper
- 2 cups of whole-kernel corn

METHOD:

Beat the eggs and add the flour gradually, mixing until smooth. Add the seasoning and corn; mix thoroughly. If the mixture is too thick, add a little water. Separate the mixture into balls and flatten into oyster shapes. Heat some oil in a skillet and fry the "oysters" until slightly brown on both sides.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Chinese Fried Rice

PREP TIME: 20 Minutes

SERVES: 4-6

COMMENT:

Every Chinese restaurant has its own version of fried rice. Here is a basic recipe that you can change to suit your taste.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tbsps peanut oil
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten with a pinch of salt
- 4 scallions (white and green), thinly sliced
- 1/4 cup minced carrot
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- Pinch red chile flakes
- 1 tsp fresh ginger peeled, minced
- 2 tbsps soy sauce
- 1 tsp toasted sesame oil
- 3 cups cooked long-grain rice
- 1 cup cooked meat cut in 1/2-inch cubes, such as pork, beef, chicken or small shrimp
- 1/2 cup frozen peas, defrosted in a strainer at room temperature
- 1 tbsp sesame oil

METHOD:

Heat 1 tablespoon of the peanut oil in a well-seasoned wok or large non-stick skillet over medium-high heat. Swirl to coat the skillet. Pour in the eggs, swirl the pan so the eggs form a large thin pancake. (Lift the edge of the eggs to allow any uncooked eggs to run to the center.) As soon as the eggs have set, turn it out of the pan onto a cutting board. Cool, chop into small pieces.

Wipe out the skillet with a paper towel and heat the remaining peanut oil over high heat. Add the scallions and carrots and stir-fry for 1 1/2 minutes. Add the garlic, chile and ginger, stir-fry for 1 minute more. Add the soy sauce, sesame oil and rice and stir-fry for 2-3 minutes. Add the meat, peas and reserved eggs. Cook, stirring until heated through, about 2 -3 minutes. Serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta

- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Fall Squash Succotash

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment: Traditionally, succotash is a mixture of beans and corn. We have taken various fall and winter squash and combined them to turn this traditional dish upside down. With all of the flavor, color and texture in this dish, it is definitely not a “suffering” succotash.

Ingredients:

- 1 cup diced pumpkin, peeled and seeded
- 1 cup diced acorn squash, peeled and seeded
- 1 cup diced butternut squash, peeled and seeded
- 1 cup diced mirliton, peeled and pitted
- 1 cup diced sweet potatoes, peeled
- 2 quarts chicken stock
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ cup diced tasso
- ½ cup sliced andouille sausage
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced shallots
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 2 cups diced tomatoes, peeled and seeded
- 1 cup diced yellow squash
- 1 cup diced zucchini
- 1 (15-ounce) can whole kernel corn, drained
- 1 (15-ounce) can red kidney beans with liquid
- 1 (15-ounce) can white navy beans with liquid
- salt, pepper and Creole seasoning to taste
- ½ cup sliced green onions



Method: In a saucepot, bring chicken stock to a rolling boil. One variety at a time, poach the pumpkin, acorn squash, butternut squash, mirliton and sweet potatoes in the stock until just tender, about 5 minutes each. Remove from poaching liquid and set aside reserving liquid for later use. In a large skillet or saucepot, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. When the oil is hot, sauté the tasso and andouille for approximately 2 minutes. Add the onions, celery, bell peppers, shallots and garlic and sauté 5 minutes or until wilted. Add tomatoes and sauté for an additional 3–5 minutes. Add the poached squash, yellow squash, zucchini, corn, red beans, white

beans, and 1 cup of the reserved poaching liquid and sauté until all vegetables are tender but not falling apart. Season with salt, pepper and Creole seasonings and add sliced green onions. Serve on an oversized platter and garnish with fresh parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)



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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

David Dawson's Asparagus Soufflé

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

David Dawson, a cardiovascular perfusionist and amateur chef, got top marks in our Stirrin' It Up for the Holidays recipe contest for this easy-to-fix, delicious asparagus dish. This soufflé can be served as an entrée or as an appealing side dish for your holiday meals.

Ingredients:

- 2 cans chopped asparagus, drained
- 6 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese
- 1 cup shredded Mozzarella cheese
- 2 cups crushed Ritz crackers
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 2 tbsp butter

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large bowl, using a wire whisk, beat eggs. Add milk, cheeses, crackers, asparagus, salt, and pepper. Mix well with a fork. Spoon mixture into a 9" x 11" casserole dish. Melt butter and drizzle evenly over the soufflé. Bake 35 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)



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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Maple Ginger Sweet Potatoes

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment: With only 5 grams of carbs per serving, this sweet side dish goes well with almost any low carb entrée. The maple and ginger glaze gives the sweet potatoes a wonderful flavor. Sweet potatoes are a nutrient dense carb, therefore it would be best to only have this side dish every once in a while.

Ingredients:

4 sweet potatoes, peeled
 1/3 cup sugar-free maple syrup
 1 ½ tsps grated fresh ginger
 3 tbsps butter, cut in small pieces
 butter for greasing pan

Method:

Heat oven to 350°F. Cut potatoes in 1-inch slices and cook in lightly salted boiling water 8 minutes until almost tender. Drain well. While potatoes are cooking, heat syrup and ginger in a small saucepan. Cook 3 minutes on low to allow flavors to blend. Set aside. Butter a 2.5-quart casserole dish and arrange potatoes in a single layer. Pour syrup mixture over potatoes. Dot with butter. Cover with foil and bake 35 minutes, or until potatoes are very soft.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)



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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mashed Potatoes with Leeks

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Leeks are mild and sweet vegetables that have a more subtle flavor than their other onion relatives. The addition of leeks to the classic mashed potatoes gives the dish a unique taste. Use green onions if leeks are unavailable in your market. The potatoes are pictured at right with beef and pork bourguignon.



Ingredients:

- 5 medium potatoes, peeled and largely diced
- 2 medium leeks, thinly sliced (white and pale parts only)
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- ¼ pound butter
- ½ cup fresh cream
- salt and white pepper to taste

Method:

Put potatoes in a large pot, season well with salt and white pepper. Cover potatoes with 1-inch water and boil until tender. While potatoes are boiling, wash leeks in running water then drain in a colander. In a saucepan, melt butter then add leeks and garlic. Cook 3-5 minutes or until wilted. When potatoes are done, drain and place them along with leek mixture in a large bowl. Add cream and mash well. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)



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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Broccoli, Cheese and Bacon Rice

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This quick-to-fix creamy rice recipe is a great side dish for any buffet.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (64-ounce) bag of Chef John Folse's Broccoli, Cheese and Bacon Soup
- 1½ cups uncooked long grain rice
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups frozen broccoli florets (optional)
- 2 cups diced chicken (optional)



METHOD:

Take one 64-ounce bag of soup and heat according to package directions. In a 5-quart saucepot, combine contents of bag, rice and water. Bring soup to a boil, reduce to low heat, cover and cook for 25-30 minutes or until rice is done and most of the water has cooked out. Uncover and allow steam to escape. NOTE: You can add 2 cups of frozen broccoli florets or 2 cups of chicken to spruce it up even more.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Golden Home Fries

PREP TIME: 20 Minutes

YIELDS: 3 Cups

COMMENT:

This homeade french fry recipe will delight everyone, while showing that some dishes always taste better when made from scratch.

INGREDIENTS:

1½ pounds small red potatoes, thinly sliced
 4 tbsps butter, unsalted
 1 tbsp chopped rosemary
 4 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a 3-quart saucepot, parboil potatoes in salted water or chicken broth. Drain well. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add potatoes and sauté for 3-5minutes or until golden brown. Turn potatoes with a spatula and fry for an additional 3-5 minutes or until golden brown. Add rosemary and garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

VEGETABLES

Oven-Roasted New Potatoes

Prep Time: 40 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

This potato side dish is a perfect accompaniment to any roasted meat. Try it alongside our [Herb-Crusted Leg of Lamb](#) for a special Easter dinner.

Ingredients:

12-15 new potatoes, halved
 6 cups chicken broth or water
 ¼ cup melted butter
 1 tsp granulated garlic
 3 tsps chopped rosemary
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a saucepan, blanch potatoes in chicken broth over medium-high heat for approximately 5 minutes then drain. In a mixing bowl, toss potatoes with butter, garlic, rosemary, salt and pepper. Arrange potatoes on a baking sheet. Bake 15-20 minutes or until golden brown and tender.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Lemon-Butter Roasted Asparagus

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

This asparagus dish is a perfect accompaniment to any roasted meat. Try it alongside our [Herb-Crusted Leg of Lamb](#) for a special Easter dinner.

Ingredients:

2 pounds asparagus, trimmed, rinsed and dried
 1 tbsp olive oil
 2 tbsps melted butter
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 1 tbsp freshly squeezed lemon juice

Method:

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a small mixing bowl, toss asparagus with olive oil and butter. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Arrange asparagus on a baking sheet. Bake 15-20 minutes or until asparagus are tender. Sprinkle with lemon juice and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Asparagus au Gratin

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

While rushing to prepare your major holiday dishes of lamb or ham, don't forget that simple vegetable sides can really make the meal special. This asparagus and mushroom dish is quick and easy to make, and it will be a wonderful addition to your Easter table.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound fresh asparagus spears, trimmed
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 8 ounces sliced mushrooms
- 2 tbsps butter
- ¼ cup flour
- 1 cup milk
- ¼ cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 tsps lemon juice
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Method:

Preheat oven to 225°F. Add asparagus to a pan large enough to hold them lying flat. Cover asparagus with boiling water, and add salt to taste. Cover and simmer 10-15 minutes or until tender. Carefully lift asparagus with a spatula, and transfer to paper towels to drain. Reserve ¼ cup of cooking liquid. Arrange asparagus with tips all pointing in one direction on a warm, ovenproof serving dish. Cover and keep warm in oven. Simmer mushrooms in 2 tablespoons of reserved asparagus liquid for 2 minutes or until tender. Drain and arrange over bottom half of asparagus. Cover and continue to keep warm while making sauce. In a small saucepan over low heat, melt butter and stir in flour until smooth. Continue to cook and stir 1-2 minutes or until golden. Remove from heat. Slowly stir in milk, cream, remaining asparagus liquid and lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Return sauce to heat; simmer and occasionally stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Pour over mushrooms and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Asparagus tips should remain exposed. Cover exposed portion of asparagus with foil, and place dish under broiler 2-3 minutes or until sauce is browned.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Dauphinoise Potatoes

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

YIELDS: 8 Servings

COMMENT:

This classical potato preparation is updated and regionalized with the addition of Louisiana sweet potatoes. When cut into triangles or circles, an elegant side dish is created. Dauphinoise potatoes can be a great accompaniment to your favorite meat, fish or fowl dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 eggs
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- ½ cup Parmesan cheese
- 1 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 pound baking potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
- salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a mixing bowl, combine eggs and whipping cream. Mix well. Line a 9"x 9" baking dish with parchment paper and coat with non-stick cooking spray. Place a layer of sweet potato slices on the parchment. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle in a layer of Parmesan. Add a layer of baking potato slices. Season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle another layer of Parmesan. Repeat process until layers reach ½-inch from top of baking dish. Pour cream mixture over potatoes and allow to soak through all layers. Top with remaining cheese. Cover and bake at 350° for 60 minutes or until potatoes are tender and custard is set. Uncover and bake 10-15 minutes until lightly browned. Allow to cool overnight. Turn potatoes onto a cutting board and remove parchment paper. Cut into squares, triangles or circles. Microwave or heat at 350° for 15 minutes to warm before serving.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Shrimp-Sauced Cauliflower

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

The fusion of shrimp and cauliflower creates a unique and flavorful dish. It is the perfect side dish to any beef, pork or poultry dish.

Ingredients:

½ pound (70-90 count) shrimp, cooked
 2 pounds cauliflower
 3 tbsps butter
 ¼ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced onions
 ¼ cup diced bell peppers
 3 tbsps flour
 2 cups milk
 1 cup grated American cheese
 2 tsps prepared horseradish
 granulated garlic to taste
 salt and white pepper to taste

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Trim stems from cauliflower and cut into serving pieces. In a 5-quart saucepot, place cauliflower and enough lightly salted water to cover by 2 inches. Bring to a rolling boil and cook 10-12 minutes or until cauliflower is tender. Drain and keep warm. In a 3-quart saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add celery, onions and bell peppers. Sauté until tender. Whisk in flour, stirring constantly until a white roux is achieved. Pour in milk and continue to blend until sauce is smooth and thickened. Stir in ½ cup of cheese and continue cooking until melted. Stirring constantly, add horseradish and granulated garlic. Season with salt and white pepper. Fold in shrimp and stir until thoroughly heated. Place cauliflower in a casserole dish and top with shrimp sauce. Sprinkle remaining cheese on top. Cover and bake for 10-15 minutes or until bubbly. Garnish with paprika and chopped parsley.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Rice Pilaf

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Ingredients:

2 tbsps butter
 ½ cup diced onion
 ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup diced green bell peppers
 ¼ tsp salt
 2 cups long grain rice
 2¾ cups chicken broth
 2 strips orange zest
 pinch of saffron strands, bloomed in ¼ cup hot water
 1 bay leaf
 1½ cups frozen peas, thawed

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a heavy-bottomed pan with a wide lid, melt butter over medium-low heat. Add onions, bell peppers, and salt. Sweat vegetables, stirring constantly, until onions are translucent. Blend in rice and continue stirring until rice is light brown. Add chicken broth, orange zest, saffron with water, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil. Stir once, then cover pan with moistened dish towel. Fold towel corners over lid. Bake 15 minutes. Remove from oven and let sit, covered, 10-20 minutes. In a medium saucepot, simmer peas in salted water until heated. Remove lid from rice and turn out onto a platter. Add peas and fluff with a large fork. Serve as an accompaniment to shish kebabs.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spinach-Herb Creole Cream Cheese Quiche

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 12 Servings

Comment:

The seemingly strange array of ingredients in this cake is surprisingly delicious. This savory spinach cake is perfect for a wine and cheese party.

Ingredients:

- 4 cups shredded fresh spinach, loosely-packed
- 1 tbsp chopped dill
- 1 (11.5-ounce) package of Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- 3 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 2 large Creole tomatoes, sliced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp salt
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsp cracked black pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cups pine nuts or pecans, toasted
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cups Italian bread crumbs
- 1 stick plus 2 tbsps butter, melted
- 1 (8-ounce) package Feta cheese, crumbled
- 3 large eggs
- 2 cloves garlic, pressed
- 2 tbsps flour

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Sprinkle tomato slices with $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper. Drain on paper towels approximately 30 minutes. Grind pine nuts or pecans in a food processor. In a small bowl, combine nuts, bread crumbs and melted butter. Press into bottom of a 9-inch springform pan. Bake 10 minutes then cool in pan on wire rack. In an electric mixer, blend Creole cream cheese and cream cheese on medium speed. Blend in feta and eggs. Add spinach, garlic, flour, dill and remaining salt and pepper. Continue to blend until mixed. Pour spinach mixture into prepared crust. Lower oven temperature to 325°F and bake 20 minutes. Top with tomato slices then bake an additional 40 minutes or until set. Turn off heat and leave cheesecake in oven 20 minutes. Cool on a wire rack 10 minutes. Gently run knife along edge of cheesecake and carefully remove sides of pan. Cool 10 more minutes. Serve warm or cold.

[print this page >>](#)

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➤ Appetizers

➤ Soups

➤ Game

➤ Meats

➤ Seafood

➤ Vegetables

➤ Pasta

➤ Poultry

➤ Breads

➤ Stuffings & Dressings

➤ Desserts

➤ Beverages

➤ Breakfast & Brunch

➤ Rouxs

➤ Stocks & Sauces

➤ Seasoning Cast Iron

➤ Misc

VEGETABLES

Sauerkraut River Road Style (Choucroute Garni)

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

Sauerkraut is one of the most underrated dishes in the South. Most southerners are reminded of the sour, bitter kraut they were served during their elementary school days, rather than the richly-garnished sauerkraut of Alsace Lorraine, France. Olga Hirsch brought this recipe from that region when she moved to Donaldsonville in the 1940s. It is a classic and well worth the effort!

Ingredients:

- 2 (32-ounce) jars Vlassic® sauerkraut
- ½ pound bacon, cubed
- 3 links heavy smoked sausage, sliced
- 2 cups diced onions
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 1½ tbsps flour
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1 (12-ounce) bottle beer
- 1 cup dry white wine
- 6 juniper berries
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 ham steak, cubed (reserve bone)
- 3 pieces smoked pork hocks
- 6 links Polish sausage
- 2 small bay leaves
- 8 small potatoes, halved

Method:

The secret to great sauerkraut is removing the sour brine from cabbage. Prior to cooking, rinse product under cold running water 2–3 times and drain well. In a cast iron pot, sauté bacon over medium-high heat until fat is rendered. Do not brown. Add smoked sausage and cook 2–3 minutes longer. Add onions and garlic and sauté 3–5 minutes. Stir in flour then add chicken stock, beer, wine and juniper berries. Bring to a rolling boil, then season with salt and pepper. Blend in sauerkraut. Return to a rolling boil. Reduce heat to simmer. Add ham and bone, pork hocks and Polish sausage. Season with bay leaves. Cover and simmer 1½ hours, stirring occasionally. Stir in potatoes and continue to cook 15–20 minutes or until tender. Serve sauerkraut with equal portions of meat.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

➤ Appetizers

➤ Soups

➤ Game

➤ Meats

➤ Seafood

➤ Vegetables

➤ Pasta

➤ Poultry

➤ Breads

➤ Stuffings & Dressings

➤ Desserts

➤ Beverages

➤ Breakfast & Brunch

➤ Rouxs

➤ Stocks & Sauces

➤ Seasoning Cast Iron

➤ Misc

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Cauliflower Macque Choux

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

To add a little flavor to your holiday table, serve this cauliflower and corn side dish. It is rich with nutrients, low in fat and calories, and it's a creative way to eat your daily vegetables.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium (2-pound) cauliflower, cut into 1-inch wide florets
- 1 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 1 (15-ounce) can white hominy, rinsed and drained
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 2 tbsps butter
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- ½ cup diced smoked sausage
- ¾ cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced green bell peppers
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup tomatoes, seeded and diced
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- ½ tsp dried red pepper flakes
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup chicken stock or broth
- 1 cup fresh corn or thawed frozen corn
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

In 5-quart saucepot, place cauliflower and lemon juice with enough lightly salted water to cover by 2 inches. Bring to a boil and cook 8–10 minutes or until tender. While cauliflower is cooking, bring hominy and cream to a simmer in a 1½-quart heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat. After 3–5 minutes, remove from heat and let cool to room temperature, stirring occasionally. Drain and rinse cauliflower under cold water. Drain again and set aside. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, heat butter and olive oil over medium-high heat. Add smoked sausage and sauté 5 minutes. Stir in onions, bell peppers, tomatoes, garlic, red pepper flakes and bay leaf. Cook 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Preheat oven to 350°F. Add chicken stock and simmer uncovered 12–15 minutes or until liquid is reduced by half. Fold in hominy mixture, corn, cauliflower, green onions, parsley, salt and cracked black pepper. Stir well and remove bay leaf. Transfer to a 2-quart casserole dish, cover and bake 20–25 minutes.



FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

QUICK AND SMOKY CAJUN BAKED BEANS

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment:

Not everyone has time to make baked beans from scratch. This recipe begins with canned great Northern beans, but the smoke of the grill and the sweet flavor of brown sugar and cane syrup will make the dish taste homemade.

Ingredients:

2 (15-ounce) cans great Northern beans
 2 (15-ounce) cans pinto beans
 ¼ cup butter
 ½ pound bacon, cubed
 1 cup diced sugar-cured ham
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 tbsp grated fresh ginger
 ½ cup firmly packed brown sugar
 ½ cup Louisiana cane syrup
 ½ cup barbecue sauce
 ¼ cup ketchup
 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
 1 tbsp dry mustard
 1 tbsp prepared mustard
 1 tbsp cider vinegar
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

Light grill according to manufacturer's directions. Prepare 2 or 3 pieces of your favorite smoke wood to add to pit once bean pot has been placed over coals. In a cast iron pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add bacon and stir occasionally until fat is rendered and bacon is crispy. Stir ham, onions and bell peppers into bacon fat. Cook 5–7 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. One at a time, blend in all remaining ingredients except beans, stirring well after each addition. Once blended, mix in beans and bring to a simmer. Place pot on grill 30–45 minutes, stirring occasionally until beans have picked up a nice smoky flavor. This dish may also be prepared in your oven by baking at 350°F for approximately 30 minutes.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Cole Slaw Burger Topper

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

I have modified my my favorite coleslaw recipe to use as a burger topper. You can "cheat" and use this dressing with a pack of pre-cut coleslaw vegetables from the supermarket. This way hardly takes any time to prepare.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- 1 cup fresh tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced
- 1 tbsp minced parsley
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3 tbsps cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup salad dressing (Miracle Whip)
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1/4 tsp dry mustard
- 1/8 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp celery seed
- salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

METHOD:

Toss cabbage, onion, carrot, tomatoes and parsley until well mixed. In a small bowl, mix the oil, vinegar, mayonnaise, sugar and seasonings. Stir to mix well. Pour the dressing over the cabbage mixture and toss gently to mix. Chill for at least 2 hours before serving.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Cabbage Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

Cabbage has been grown for hundreds of years by most of the cultures settling Louisiana. It is especially revered by the Germans who smother it, stuff it in rolls or bake it as a casserole. This is one of their favorite recipes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 large heads of cabbage, cored and chopped
- 1 pound ground beef
- 1 pound smoked sausage, finely diced
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1 cup bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 2 cups chicken stock or bouillon
- 1 (8-oz) can tomato sauce
- 1 (10-oz) can Rotel tomatoes
- 3 cups cooked rice
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs

METHOD:

In a large dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add ground beef and ground pork and brown, stirring occasionally for 15 to 20 minutes. When well browned, remove all but 1/2 cup rendered fat. Into the same pot add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Continue to cook until vegetables are wilted, approximately 10 to 15 minutes. Add chopped cabbage, stirring well into the meat mixture. Add chicken stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally for 30 minutes. At this point the cabbage should be cooked and slightly browned. Add tomato sauce and Rotel, blend well into the cabbage and season to taste with salt and pepper. Continue to simmer until approximately 1 cup of the liquid remains in the pot. Fold in cooked rice. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Pour the cabbage-rice mixture into a 9" x 13" baking pan. Top with breadcrumbs and bake until lightly browned around the edges, approximately 20 minutes. Serve as an entrée or as a side dish to accompany beef or chicken.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Low-Fat Creamy Coleslaw

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

6 cups cabbage, thinly sliced
 1/2 cup plain low-fat yogurt
 2 tbsps Dijon mustard
 1 tbsp water
 2 tsps low-fat mayonnaise
 2 tsps fresh lemon juice
 4 medium carrots, shredded
 1 cup red onion, thinly sliced
 1/2 tsp dill seed

METHOD:

Whisk together yogurt, mustard, water, mayonnaise and lemon juice in a large bowl. Add remaining ingredients and toss to combine well. Season coleslaw with salt and pepper. Coleslaw may be made 1 day ahead, chilled and covered.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Vinegar and Oil Quick Pepper Slaw

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8 to 10

INGREDIENTS:

5 cups green cabbage, shredded
 1 cup Spanish onion, thinly sliced
 1 each sweet yellow pepper, thinly sliced
 1 sweet green pepper, thinly sliced
 1 sweet red pepper, thinly sliced
 1/4 cup white wine vinegar
 3 tbsp olive oil
 1 tbsp granulated sugar
 3/4 tsp dry mustard
 3/4 tsp salt
 1/2 tsp pepper

METHOD:

In a large ceramic bowl, toss together shredded cabbage, onion and yellow, green and red peppers. In a small saucepan, bring vinegar, oil, sugar, mustard, salt and pepper to a rolling boil. Stir until sugar is dissolved. Pour over cabbage mixture and toss to coat. Let cool at room temperature for 1 hour and serve. (Slaw can be refrigerated in airtight container for up to 24 hours.

NOTE: to shred cabbage, cut head in half, then into quarters; core and thinly slice crosswise.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Mardi Gras Slaw

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

This good-looking fruit- and vegetable-filled coleslaw tastes unbelievable with barbecued ribs, shredded pork, you name it! Always make more than you think you will need because you are sure to eat more than you plan to. Do not let the slaw sit for too long before serving or the apples and avocados may darken. Once it is dressed, lemon juice will retard this process.

INGREDIENTS FOR DRESSING:

- 1 cup poppy-seed dressing, store bought
- 1 cup lemon juice or apple cider vinegar, freshly squeezed
- 1 tsp black pepper, freshly ground
- 1 tsp salt

INGREDIENTS FOR SLAW:

- 1 large head purple or green cabbage, cored, halved, sliced 1/2 to 3/4-inch thick, chopped
- 2 cups whole seedless red and green grapes
- 2 avocados, pitted, peeled and sliced
- 2 tart apples, peeled and chopped
- 3/4 cup pecans
- 5 to 6 green onions, chopped
- 2 tbsps cilantro, chopped

METHOD:

To make the dressing, whisk poppy seed dressing with lemon juice. Season with pepper and salt. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour and up to 6 hours. To make the slaw, toss the cabbage, grapes, avocados, apples and pecans in a large glass or ceramic bowl. Pour the dressing over the slaw. Add onions, cilantro and mix gently. Serve immediately or cover and refrigerate.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Caponata

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

This recipe was given to me by the world-famous Italian restaurateur, John Arena. John created this recipe and uses it as a salad, antipasti or even as a base for fried eggs. I'm sure in any presentation, the flavors are fantastic.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
 1/3 cup corn oil
 8 whole cloves garlic
 1 medium white onion, thinly sliced
 1/2 yellow bell pepper, sliced
 1/2 red bell pepper, sliced
 1/4 cup jalapeno pepper, diced
 2 cups yellow squash skin-on, sliced
 2 cups zucchini skin-on, sliced
 2 cups eggplant skin-on, diced
 2 cups tomatoes, peeled and diced
 1/4 cup basil leaves
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large sauté pan, heat oils over medium-high heat. Add 8 whole cloves garlic, 1 medium onion and 1/2 each yellow and red bell peppers and cook 2-3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add 1/4 cup jalapeno peppers, 2 cups squash, 2 cups zucchini and 2 cups eggplant and cook until all ingredients are al dente, stirring occasionally for approximately 15 minutes. Add 2 cups tomato and 1/4 cup basil and continue to cook an additional 5-7 minutes. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Caponata is perfect for jarring or canning by following simple directions found in most cookbooks. You may wish to refrigerate and eat cold or serve warm as a vegetable or side dish.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Hot German Potato Salad

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

The Germans arrived in Louisiana in 1725, and settled an area outside of New Orleans called Destrehan. Not only were they fabulous farmers and dairy men, they were excellent cooks and have given us many of our most often used recipes. This is a perfect example.

INGREDIENTS:

- 20 unpeeled small red new potatoes
- 4 hard-boiled eggs, peeled and chopped
- 8 slices bacon, diced
- 1 cup white onions, diced
- 2 tbsps Creole seasoning
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup chicken stock
- ¾ cup vinegar
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup green onion tops, chopped

METHOD:

Cook the potatoes in a large pot of water about 5 minutes or until tender from the time the water starts to boil. Drain and cool under cold running water. Slice the potatoes ¼-inch thick and place them in a large bowl. Add the eggs, mix well and set aside. Sauté the bacon in a 10-inch skillet over high heat until browned, about 7 minutes. Remove the bacon from the skillet with a slotted spoon and set aside. Pour off all but 2 tbsps of the bacon fat and return the skillet to high heat. Add the onions and cook, scraping the bottom of the skillet occasionally until the onions are golden, about 3 to 5 minutes. Add Creole seasoning, then whisk in the flour. Slowly add the stock, vinegar and sugar, whisking constantly. Cook, whisking frequently, until the mixture is thick, about 5 to 6 minutes. Remove from heat. Fold the dressing into the potato and egg mixture, add the green onion tops and cooked bacon and combine thoroughly.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Easter Egg Potato Salad

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4 - 6

COMMENT:

With its pastel yellow color, this dish looks great on any Easter Sunday table. Made with left over Easter eggs, you may cut your prep time in half by boiling the potatoes and eggs in the same pot. Additionally, it serves as the perfect side dish for seafood soups and gumbos. Of course there are 364 other days in a year to enjoy a great potato salad, especially at outdoor cooking events such as barbecues and fish fries.

INGREDIENTS:

2 large white baking potatoes, peeled and 1-inch cubed
 4 eggs
 ½ cup mayonnaise
 1 tbsp yellow mustard
 1/4 cup celery, finely minced
 ¼ cup sweet pickle relish
 1 tbsp lemon thyme, chopped
 1 tbsp chives, minced
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large saucepot over medium-high heat, cook potatoes in lightly salted water until fork tender, approximately 12 to 15 minutes. It is important to remember that potatoes should be tender, not mushy or overcooked. While potatoes are cooking, boil eggs in a separate pot for 12 to 15 minutes. When potatoes are done, strain and lightly cool. Peel eggs, and in a large mixing bowl separate whites from yolk. Using a paring knife, dice egg whites. In a smaller bowl, mash yolks with a fork and combine with egg whites. Add mayonnaise and mustard, blending well. Add celery, pickle relish, thyme and chives and potatoes, combining all ingredients with a large mixing spoon, making sure to keep potatoes chunky. Season to taste with salt and pepper and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Nice and Spicy Coleslaw

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

This is my favorite coleslaw recipe. You can "cheat" and use this dressing with a pack of pre-cut coleslaw vegetables from the supermarket. This way hardly takes any time to prepare.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 cups cabbage, shredded
- 1 small onion, grated
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- 1 tbsp parsley, minced
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 3 tbsps cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup salad dressing (Miracle Whip)
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1/4 tsp dry mustard
- 1/8 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp celery seed
- salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

METHOD:

Toss cabbage, onion, carrot and parsley until well mixed. In a small bowl, mix the oil, vinegar, mayonnaise, sugar and seasonings. Stir to mix well. Pour the dressing over the cabbage mixture and toss gently to mix. Chill for at least 2 hours before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Asparagus with Olive Oil and Lemon

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

SERVES: 12

INGREDIENTS:

3 lbs asparagus, ends trimmed
 1/2 cup olive oil
 3 tbsps fresh lemon juice

METHOD:

Cook asparagus in large pot of boiling salted water until crisp-tender, about 4 minutes. Drain; rinse with cold water and drain again. Pat dry. (Can be made 1 day ahead. Cover and refrigerate.) Heat oil in heavy, large pot over medium-high heat. Add asparagus to pot. Stir until heated through and coated with oil, about 5 minutes. Drizzle with lemon juice. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Arrange asparagus on platter.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Pickled Asparagus Spears

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 Jar

COMMENT:

Feel free to use this simple recipe to pickle any fresh vegetable such as green beans, okra and brussel sprouts. The vivid green color may be enhanced with the addition of one or two julienned strips of red and yellow bell pepper. Make this dish in small batches, however, because it keeps for only 6 weeks or so.

INGREDIENTS:

20 stalks trimmed asparagus spears
 2 ½ cups white wine vinegar
 10 peppercorns
 1 bay leaf
 ½ tsp grated nutmeg

METHOD:

Wash the asparagus in cold water, then soak in lightly salted water for 4 to 6 hours. Blanch the asparagus in boiling, salted water for 1-minute. Remove and drain on a clean dishcloth and cool. Place the vinegar, peppercorns, bay leaf and nutmeg in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Bring to a low boil. Cook 5 minutes. Remove and cool thoroughly. Pack the asparagus in a sterilized wide-mouth jar, standing the spears upright. Cover with the cold vinegar mixture and seal. Refrigerate and hold 2 to 3 weeks prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Sweet Potato Pecan Balls**PREP TIME:** 1 ½ hours**SERVES:** 6**COMMENT:**

It amazes me how one finds methods of presenting everyday foods in very elegant ways. These sweet potato pecan balls are not only great tasting but are a wonderful addition to any buffet table.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 baked sweet potatoes
- 2 egg yolks
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 8 tbsps melted butter
- pinch of ground cloves
- pinch of ground cinnamon
- pinch of ground nutmeg
- 12 tbsps mayhaw jelly
- 2 cups roasted, chopped pecans

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Scoop the meat from the baked sweet potatoes, place into a mixing bowl and mash. The five potatoes should produce two full cups of mashed sweet potatoes. Add egg yolks, salt, brown sugar and melted butter. Blend well into the sweet potato mixture. Add cloves, cinnamon and nutmeg, stirring well to incorporate the flavors into the potatoes. Using a large cooking spoon, divide the mixture into six equal parts and roll each into a ball shape. Once shaped, use your thumb to press a hole down into the center of the ball. Fill this indentation with one teaspoon of mayhaw jelly. Close the hole by pushing the potato over the jelly. Roll potatoes in the roasted pecans to coat evenly. Place pecan balls on a buttered cookie sheet. Bake ten to twelve minutes. Remove from oven, place on a serving plate and top each potato with an additional spoonful of the mayhaw jelly. Serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spinach Marguerite

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

"I think the dish was originally called Spinach Madeline. Chef Folse calls it Spinach Marguerite. In my family, we called it Christmas Spinach! We would serve it along with Tomato Aspic on Christmas Eve. It made a natural holiday table decoration with the red and green. Everyone would arrive at my mother's home with presents galore, in anticipation of the festive food and the many gifts! Because the spinach and aspic were served with crackers, even the children would eat it. They thought it was 'treat' and never realized that it was good for them! Though my parents are no longer living and we no longer have the large family holiday gatherings, my children still enjoy this special spinach dish." Janet Arnett, Houma, Louisiana

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (10-ounce) packages frozen spinach, thawed
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1 cup finely chopped ham or tasso
- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1/2 cup diced tomatoes
- 1/2 cup grated cheddar cheese
- 1/4 cup finely diced jalapeno peppers
- 1 tsp salt
- black pepper
- hot sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a 4-quart sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and chopped ham or tasso. Saute 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until white roux is achieved. Do not brown. Slowly add whipping cream, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Add tomatoes, cheddar cheese and jalapeno peppers. Continue cooking for an additional 5-10 minutes, stirring constantly, as mixture will tend to stick. Add a small amount of heavy whipping cream should mixture become too thick. Season to taste using salt, pepper and hot sauce. Remove from heat and add spinach, stirring well into the seasoned white sauce. Place mixture in baking dish, cover, and bake until bubbly, approximately 20-25 minutes. Serve immediately. This spinach casserole doubles nicely as a hot hors d'oeuvre when served with garlic croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Gertie's Bread & Butter Pickles

PREP TIME: 2 hours

Yield: 4 - 5 pints

COMMENT:

Nobody made better Bread & Butter Pickles than Gertrude Connell of Tulsa, Oklahoma, originally from Donaldsonville, Louisiana. Her husband Joe would grow the cucumbers and pick them young, about 3 to 4 inches long, and they would jar this delicacy for weeks at a time. Christmas just wasn't Christmas unless a jar of those pickles arrived in your stocking.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pounds cucumbers, 3 to 4 inches long
- 1/2 teaspoons celery seed
- 2 large Bermuda Onions, sliced
- 1/2 teaspoons mustard seed
- 1/2 cup kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoons ground turmeric
- 2 1/2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 3 cups cider vinegar

METHOD:

Using the slicing blade of a food processor, or a short paring knife, slice cucumbers as thin as possible. In a large ceramic bowl layer cucumbers, onions and salt, cover with water and refrigerate overnight. Drain the cucumbers well and refrigerate in a colander until ready to use. Place sugar, spices, vinegar and pepper flakes in a two-gallon sauce pan. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring occasionally until the sugar is completely dissolved. When mixture has reached a rolling boil, add the cucumber/onion mixture stirring to heat the contents evenly. As the mixture returns to a low boil, reduce heat to keep hot, but do not boil as cucumbers will become limp and overcooked. Using a slotted spoon fill hot sterilized jars to one inch from the top. Once all the jars are filled, cover with the boiling syrup almost to overflowing. Divide any remaining spices that have fallen to the bottom of the sauce pot evenly amongst the jars. Seal jars tightly and label. It is best to store pickles 60 to 90 days prior to using.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Sugar and Spicy Pickle Relish

PREP TIME: 2 hours

Yield: 4 pints

COMMENT:

There are many sweet pickle relish recipes available in cookbooks today, but this one is further enhanced with the spice of jalapeno peppers. You may also wish to add a dash of crushed, dried red peppers in the place of the jalapenos. I particularly like this recipe as an ingredient in my remoulade sauce.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 pound red bell pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon mustard seed
- 1/2 pound green bell pepper
- 3/4 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 4 jalapeno peppers
- 1 tablespoon whole cloves
- 1/2 pound diced onions
- 1 tablespoon broken cinnamon sticks
- 2 pounds cucumbers, coarsely chopped
- 1 1/2 teaspoons whole all-spice
- 3 tablespoons kosher salt
- 3/4 teaspoon cracked nutmeg
- 3 cups apple cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon Louisiana Hot Sauce
- 1/4 cup sugar

METHOD:

Using rubber gloves, peel and seed the bell peppers and jalapenos. Coarsely chop and place in the bowl of a food processor along with the onions and cucumbers. Using the pulse button, chop until the vegetables reach a coarse texture, but not pureed. Transfer the vegetables to a 4-quart mixing bowl. Blend in the salt and weight down the ingredients with a plate to keep the vegetables from floating as the brine forms. Allow to stand 12 hours or overnight in the refrigerator. Drain the ingredients well, and then rinse once or twice and drain well again. Place the mixture in a one-gallon sauce pot along with vinegar, sugar, mustard seed and turmeric. Place the cloves, cinnamon, all-spice and nutmeg into a cheese cloth bag and tie with butcher's twine. Add the spice bag and Louisiana Hot Sauce to the vegetable mixture. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer uncovered and cook 1 hour stirring occasionally. When done, remove the spice bag and ladle the relish, boiling hot, into hot sterilized jars. Seal, cool, label and store at least one month prior to serving.

Note: This recipe was originally featured in Jeanne Lesem's book Preserving Today.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Pansanella

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

I first discovered this old world delicacy while having lunch with Father John Lacari, a wonderful Italian priest, who brought this dish here from Italy. Although simple to produce, the flavors once incorporated are indescribable. Try it not only as an hors d'oeuvre, but as the perfect garnish to any Italian or Southwest dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups diced Creole tomatoes
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsps chopped fresh basil
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp chopped fresh thyme
- 25 whole basil leaves
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 25 French bread croutons, toasted
- Salt and black pepper

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except whole basil leaves and croutons. Blend well, cover and refrigerate 1-2 hours. When ready to serve, place one whole basil leaf on top of a French bread crouton and serve one heaping tablespoon of the Pansanella on top. Eat as a cold hors d'oeuvre.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Lump Crab and Artichoke Dip

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

For your next cocktail party, especially around the holiday season, no combination is better for a unique and tasty dip than crabmeat and artichokes. An interesting thing about this recipe is the many variations that may come about by simply adding more cream to create a soup or throwing in 2 cups of chopped spinach and replacing the crab meat with oysters for a fabulous Oysters Rockefeller Dip.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 2 (8 1/2-ounce) cans artichoke hearts, drained
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1/2 cup onion, diced
- 1/4 cup celery, diced
- 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
- 1/4 cup yellow bell pepper, diced
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 1/4 tsp granulated garlic
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 pint heavy whipping cream
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 2 cups Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp basil, chopped

METHOD:

Begin by rinsing artichokes well under cold water to remove the brine. Chop artichokes coarsely in a food processor, remove and set aside for later use. In a 2-quart heavy-bottom sauté pan melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onion, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add artichokes and blend well into the vegetable mixture, stir and cook 5 additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend well to form a white roux, do not brown. Add chicken stock and heavy whipping cream, one cup at a time, whisking constantly until a thick cream sauce is achieved. Reduce heat to simmer. Add white wine and season to taste using salt and pepper. Simmer approximately 15 minutes, stirring occasionally to keep from scorching. The mixture should resemble a thick cream sauce. Should it become too thick, additional whipping cream or stock may be added to reach desired consistency. Add green onions and parsley, then fold in lump crabmeat. Cook 5 minutes longer and

remove from heat. Fold in Parmesan cheese and adjust seasonings if necessary. Place the mixture in a chafing dish and serve with garlic croutons or crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Stuffed Mushrooms Dominique Youx

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Dominique Youx, a notorious general for Jean Lafitte, some say his half brother, went on to become one of New Orleans' leading politicians. He was quite a cook and this recipe is dedicated to his memory.

INGREDIENTS:

24 jumbo fresh mushrooms
 1/4 pound melted butter
 1 1/2 cups chopped mushroom stems
 1/2 cup finely diced green onions
 1/4 cup finely chopped parsley
 1 tbsp finely diced garlic
 1/4 cup diced tasso
 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
 3/4 cup white crabmeat
 1 ounce sherry
 1 tsp lemon juice
 salt and black pepper
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 1/2 cup seasoned Italian bread crumbs
 1/4 pound melted butter
 4 ounces sherry
 2 ounces dry white wine

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Wash mushrooms well and remove stems. In a sauté pan melt butter over medium-high heat. Add mushroom stems, green onions, parsley, garlic and red bell pepper. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add white crabmeat, sherry and lemon juice. Continue cooking an additional two to three minutes. Season mixture to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Add bread crumbs, a little at a time, until stuffing is of proper texture but not too dry. Using a teaspoon, fill each mushroom cap with generous serving of stuffing. Place six mushrooms in each of six au gratin dishes and top with melted butter, sherry and white wine. Bake for ten to fifteen minutes or until mushrooms are golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Quick and Spicy Black-eyed Pea Dip

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This is a wonderful recipe to create with black-eyed peas left over from lunch on New Year's Day. Feel free to enjoy it during the bowl games that evening. Should you not have left over black-eyed peas, substitute 4 cups of canned black-eyed peas, drained.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups cooked black-eyed peas including any seasonings or meat
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup onions, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 (4-ounce) can green chilies, chopped
- 8 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, cubed
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup pimento, chopped
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped

METHOD:

If using left over black-eyed peas, include any of the ham or bacon seasoning to enhance the dip. Measure out 4 cups and place in a sieve or strainer to drain for approximately 10 minutes. Removing this excess moisture from the cooked peas will guarantee a creamier dip. In a large sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery and garlic and sauté 2 - 3 minutes. Add jalapeño pepper and chopped green chilies. Cook 2 -3 additional minutes and add half of the black-eyed peas. Simmer 2 minutes, add cheese and stir until melted. Pour contents into the bowl of a food processor and blend until puréed. Transfer to a decorative serving bowl and add remaining black-eyed peas. Stir well to incorporate. Add chopped pimento and parsley for garnish. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve with warm tortilla chips or crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spinach Madeleine

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 5-6 Servings

Comment:

This traditional Louisiana recipe was first presented in River Road's cookbook from the Junior League of Baton Rouge. It is safe to say that this single recipe made the book world famous. In the late 1990s, Kraft foods did away with their jalapeño cheese roll which was originally used in the recipe. Recently, an alert customer informed us that Kraft's Velveeta line introduced a similar Mexican cheese.

Ingredients:

- 2 packages chopped spinach, frozen
- 4 tbsps butter
- 2 tbsps flour
- 2 tbsps chopped onions
- ½ cup evaporated milk
- ½ cup reserved spinach liquor
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ¾ tsp celery salt
- ¾ tsp garlic salt
- 6 ounces Velveeta Mexican cheese, sliced into ¼-inch cubes
- salt and red pepper to taste
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

Method:

Cook spinach according to directions on package. Drain and reserve liquid. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over low heat. Add flour, stirring until blended and smooth, but not brown. Add onions and sauté 3-5 minutes or until wilted. Add evaporated milk, spinach liquor and Worcestershire sauce slowly, stirring constantly to avoid lumps. Cook mixture until smooth and thick, stirring constantly. Add seasonings and cubed cheese. Stir until melted and combine with cooked spinach. This may be served immediately or put into a casserole and topped with buttered bread crumbs. The flavor is improved if the latter is done and kept in refrigerator overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Roasted Onion and Eggplant Pâté

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This recipe is great when served as a dip or in a pie shell.

INGREDIENTS:

1 large onion, quartered
 1 medium eggplant
 olive oil
 1 cup cream cheese
 1 clove garlic
 pinch of chili powder
 lemon or lime juice to taste
 salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Quarter onion and place on a baking sheet with eggplant. Season lightly and drizzle with olive oil. Roast for 45 minutes, until eggplant is blackened and the skin wrinkled. Allow to cool. Cut off and discard the end of eggplant. Place eggplant in a food processor with onion, cream cheese, garlic and chili powder and blend until completely smooth. Season pâté with salt, pepper and lemon or lime juice to taste.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Cheese and Onion Beignets

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 15

COMMENT:

These fried pastry puffs are really easy to make, but it is important to measure the ingredients accurately. Add the egg to the dough gradually - you may not need it all - you want the dough to hold its shape, so keep it quite stiff.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup Cheddar cheese, grated
 2 Creole shallots, minced
 oil to deep-fry
 4 tbsps butter
 2/3 cup water
 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
 2 medium eggs
 beatensalt and cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oil in a deep-fryer to 400 degrees F. To make the choux pastry, heat butter and water together in saucepan, over medium high heat, until the butter has melted and bring to a rolling boil. Add flour, immediately take the pan off the heat and beat vigorously until the mixture forms a ball and leaves the sides of the pan. A sturdy wooden spoon works best. Gradually add eggs, beating well between each addition. Add cheese, shallots and seasoning. Carefully drop teaspoonfuls fo the choux pastry into the hot fat and deep-fry for 3 to 4 minutes, or until golden brown. Drain thoroughly on plenty of crumpled paper towels and serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spanish Olive Tapenade

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 Cup

COMMENT:

The French love their olive spread made from lusty black Nicoise olives. The Italians choose rich Gaeta olives for theirs. However, the Spanish Manzanilla olives offer a fruitier-tasting version. These olives are small, slightly sweeter green olives available on most supermarket shelves. Blended with extra virgin Spanish olive oil, which has a smooth, sweet flavor reminiscent of fruit and almonds, the bite of the tapenade is mellowed and then brightened with the addition of lemon juice and cilantro. Spread on large croutons, brushed with oil and toasted, and serve with a Fino sherry for a perfect hors d'oeuvre. Have small bowls of almonds and dried cherries alongside to sweeten the palate.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups pitted Spanish Manzanilla olives
- 1 clove garlic, finely chopped
- 1 tsp capers, drained
- 1/4 cup extra virgin Spanish olive oil
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsps fresh cilantro leaves, chopped
- Freshly ground black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a food processor, combine olives, garlic and capers. Process until just smooth, scraping down the sides of the bowl if necessary. With the machine running, slowly drizzle in the oil and lemon juice through the feed tube and process until well combined. Transfer the mixture to a bowl and fold in the cilantro and pepper. Let rest at room temperature for 1 hour for the flavors to come out.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Poke Salad Dip

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 6 Cups

COMMENT:

"Poke, the *Phytolacca americana* of the botanists, is probably the best known and most widely used wild vegetable in America. The Indian tribes eagerly sought it and early explorers were unstinting in their praise of this succulent potherb. They carried seeds when they went back home and poke soon became a popular cultivated garden vegetable in southern Europe and North Africa, a position it still maintains. In America it is still a favorite green vegetable with many country people and the tender young sprouts, gathered from wild plants, often appear in vegetable markets, especially in the South." Stalking the Wild Asparagus, Euell Gibbons

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup poke salad, cooked and drained (or canned)
- 1 ½ cups sour cream
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 8 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup pecans
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 2 tsps herb-seasoned salt
- 1 ½ tsps oregano
- 1 tsp dried dill weed
- Juice of 1 lemon
- Salt and black pepper
- 1 large red cabbage

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine poke salad, sour cream, mayonnaise, cream cheese, pecans and green onions. Using a wooden spoon, mix thoroughly until all ingredients are well blended. Add herb seasoning, oregano, dill weed and lemon juice. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Cover bowl with clear wrap and place in refrigerator for a minimum of 2 hours. Trim core end of cabbage to form a flat base. Cut a crosswise slice from the top, making it wide enough to remove about a 1/4 of the cabbage. Lift out enough inner leaves to form a shell or bowl about 1-inch thick. Spoon dip into cavity of cabbage and serve with an assortment of fresh vegetables or croutons.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Eggplant Belle Rose

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Normally, eggplant is thought of simply as a vegetable here in Louisiana. However, once again, we are borrowing from the classical style to produce a new dish, certain to take its place as a tradition on the Louisiana table.

INGREDIENTS FOR BATTER:

1 medium size eggplant
 1/2 cup vegetable oil
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste
 1/4 cup water
 1 egg
 1 cup flour
 1/2 cup milk

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

1/4 cup melted butter
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 1 tsp diced garlic
 1/4 cup chopped mushrooms
 1 pound crawfish tails or lump crabmeat
 2 tsps chopped parsley
 1/2 ounce white wine
 1 tsp lemon juice
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste
 12 ounces brown meunière sauce
 6 ounces hollandaise sauce

METHOD:

In a sauté pan, preheat oil to approximately 350 degrees F. In a mixing bowl, combine milk, water, and egg. Season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Whisk well using a wire whip. Cut six slices from center of eggplant, approximately 1/4 inch thick. Place in egg wash and set aside. Season one cup of flour to taste using salt and pepper. Remove eggplant from egg wash, dip in flour and pan fry until golden brown and tender to the touch, approximately three minutes on each side. Drain and keep warm.

In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Sauté green onions, garlic and mushrooms approximately two to three minutes. Add crawfish tails or lump crabmeat, stir and cook one additional minute. Deglaze pan with white wine and lemon juice. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Continue cooking until crawfish or crabmeat is thoroughly hot. Place two ounces of meunière sauce in center of

serving plate and top with one eggplant medallion. Distribute an equal amount of crawfish or crabmeat on each eggplant and garnish with hollandaise sauce and chopped parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Hot Turnip Greens and Tasso Dip - Ashland-Belle Helene

PREP TIME: 1 hour

MAKES: 5-6 cups

COMMENT:

Though turnip, mustard and spinach greens were often cooked as vegetables in South Louisiana, it wasn't common for them to be used in any other fashion. Duncan Kenner, builder of Ashland, loved turnip greens and when he combined them with the tasso of the Germans from St. Charles Parish, this appetizer emerged.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 bunch fresh turnip greens
- 1-10 ounce package chopped turnips greens
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/2 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/4 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1/2 cup minced tasso ham
- 1 cup sliced mushrooms
- 1 tbsp grated orange rind
- 1 cup béchamel sauce
- 1-6 ounce package garlic cheese spread
- dash of Worcestershire Sauce
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

If tasso is unavailable in your area, you may wish to substitute ham, bacon or heavy smoked sausage. If using fresh turnip greens, wash them well and rinse at least twice. Peel the spine from the leaf and chop. Boil in lightly salted water until tender. Remove, drain and reserve one and a half cups of greens. If using frozen, cook according to package directions, drain and set aside. In a heavy bottom black iron skillet, melt butter over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tasso and mushrooms and continue to cook an additional three to five minutes. Add turnip greens and orange rind, blend well into seasoning mixture and place all ingredients from the skillet into the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade. Process until smooth. Return the ingredients to the skillet and combine with bechamel sauce, cheese and Worcestershire Sauce. Stir constantly until mixture is well blended and cheese is thoroughly melted. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. This dip should be served hot with a basket of garlic croutons, crackers or vegetable sticks.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spinach and Andouille Soufflé

PREP TIME: 1 ½ hours

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

The word soufflé will often scare the cook! However, this is one soufflé recipe that can be accomplished by even the most inexperienced chef. Since spinach is available all year long, fresh or frozen, there is no excuse not to attempt this recipe. Make it a part of your special occasion table.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pkgs frozen leaf spinach
- 1 cup minced andouille
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/4 cup minced onions
- 1/4 cup minced celery
- 1/4 cup minced red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- salt and cracked pepper to taste
- pinch of nutmeg
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 8 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup bread crumbs
- 1 cup grated Swiss cheese

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Butter a six cup soufflé mold and line the bottom with wax or parchment paper. Set aside. Thaw spinach in refrigerator overnight, drain and squeeze out all excess liquid. This is best done in a colander to make sure all liquid is removed. Place the spinach on a cutting board and using a sharp French knife, chop until almost pureed. You may wish to do this in a food processor. Do not over-chop. In a large sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until wilted. Add andouille sausage and continue to cook an additional two to three minutes.

Add spinach, blending into the vegetable mixture. Cover and cook five to ten minutes until done, stirring occasionally. Season to taste using salt, pepper and nutmeg. Remove from heat, blend in milk and add eggs slowly, stirring constantly. Once all is well blended, add bread crumbs and cheese. Continue to stir until all is well incorporated. Pour soufflé mixture into buttered mold and place in baking pan with three inch lip. Pour one inch of water into pan to form a water bath around the soufflé mold. Bake forty-five minutes to an hour or until a knife inserted into the soufflé comes out clean. You may make the soufflé and freeze it uncooked. Then cook in the same fashion but allow one and a half hours in the oven.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Spicy Cajun Caviar - Oak Alley Plantation

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 5 Cups

COMMENT:

Blackeyed peas have become a tradition on New Year's Day here in Louisiana. They are wonderful when slowly cooked with smoked ham or even fresh green beans, but I really enjoy them in this less conventional way, as a dip. Try them next January 1st and see if your luck improves.

INGREDIENTS:

2-15 ounce cans blackeyed peas
 8 strips of bacon
 1 cup finely chopped onions
 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
 1/2 cup finely chopped red bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 1/2 cup ketchup
 3 chicken bouillon cubes
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 1 tsp sugar
 2 cups chopped tomatoes
 1/4 cup chopped jalapenos
 3 tbsps flour
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom dutch oven, cook bacon strips over medium high heat until golden brown and fat is rendered. Remove bacon, chop fine and return to pot. Into the bacon drippings, add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Saute three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add ketchup, bouillon cubes, cinnamon, nutmeg and sugar. Using a wire whisk, blend until all ingredients are mixed thoroughly. Add tomatoes and jalapenos and continue to cook two to three minutes. Pour in blackeyed peas and continue to simmer for thirty additional minutes. Sprinkle in flour, blend well and cook an additional ten minutes. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Adjust seasonings to your liking, pour into a souffle dish and serve hot with French bread croutons or miniature corn bread muffins.

****LAGNIAPPE****

Few people realize that the Africans, coming to the New World, gave us not only yams and okra but also their famous congre or blackeyed peas, as we know them today. They arrived in Louisiana from the Virginias and Carolinas around the 1720's and by the Civil War, there were approximately 11,000 Africans in New Orleans. The men tended the fields and the women became cooks and housekeepers,

influencing Louisiana cooking like no other nationality.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Italian Stuffed Artichokes

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

YIELDS: 12 Servings

COMMENT:

There are as many recipes for stuffed artichokes as there are Italian families in New Orleans. This is one of those easy and traditional favorites. Feel free to remove the center leaves and stuff the cavity. Alternately, you may wish to leave them in, steam the artichoke and pull out the center leaves and eat with olive oil and vinegar.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 large artichokes
- 6 lemon slices
- ½ pound sliced smoked bacon
- 10 cups Italian bread crumbs
- 1½ cups grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese
- 1½ cups grated Pecorino Romano cheese
- 1 cup thinly sliced green onions
- ½ cup minced parsley
- ½ cup minced garlic
- 2 tbsps salt
- 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tbsp cayenne pepper
- 2 tbsps chopped basil
- 3 cups extra virgin olive oil

METHOD:

Using scissors, snip off the prickly end of each artichoke leaf. Using a paring knife, slice off the stem end of each artichoke so that it stands up straight. Rub a lemon on the cut ends to prevent browning. Fry the bacon until crisp and drain. Crumble bacon into a large bowl and add in bread crumbs, cheeses, green onions, parsley, garlic, seasonings and 1½ cups olive oil. Using your hands, blend the ingredients thoroughly. Beginning at the top of the artichoke, spread the leaves as much as possible and pack in a generous amount of stuffing. Continue around the artichoke until all leaves are completely filled to the bottom. (Note: It is always best to stuff the artichokes inside the bowl of stuffing so that the excess breading falls back into the bowl.) Tap each artichoke gently to let any loose stuffing fall off. Stand artichokes in a roasting pan or canning pot just large enough to hold them in a single layer. Add water to a depth of 1 inch. Pour ¼ cup of olive oil in a slow stream over each artichoke, allowing it to seep in. Top each artichoke with a slice of lemon. Bring the water to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, cover and steam the artichokes at least 1 hour until the leaves pull off easily. Check the water level often and add more if necessary. Serve hot or warm. The stuffed artichokes can be prepared in advance and reheated before serving. If you like, sprinkle grated Parmigiano Reggiano cheese over the top and place briefly under a broiler until cheese melts and begins to brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Ouachita Stuffed Peppers

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

The Indians of Louisiana were instrumental in helping to develop the cuisines of the Cajuns and Creoles. Corn, squash, beans and cornmeal were part of their daily repertoire and quickly found their way into the black iron pots. Here, we combine the Native American ingredients with beef to create an entree out of this world.

INGREDIENTS:

4 each red, green and yellow bell peppers
 8 pounds ground beef
 1/2 cup butter
 2 cups chopped onion
 2 cups chopped celery
 1/2 cup diced red bell pepper
 1/2 cup diced yellow bell pepper
 1/2 cup diced garlic
 2 cups beef stock
 1 cup sliced green onions
 1/2 cup chopped parsley
 2 cups whole kernel corn
 4 cups crushed corn bread
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 8 cups prepared tomato sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large black iron skillet, melt butter over medium high heat. Add beef and cook until golden brown, approximately thirty minutes. Drain off all but two tablespoons of oil. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add beef stock to keep mixture moist while meat is sautéing. Once tender, add green onions, parsley and corn. Sprinkle in crushed corn bread and blend well into meat mixture. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Remove the top from the bell peppers and clean all pulp from the inside. Stuff with the meat dressing, place in a large casserole dish and surround with a prepared tomato sauce. Bake for thirty minutes or until peppers are tender.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

VEGETABLES

Pickled Mirliton Sticks

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 12 Pickle Jars

INGREDIENTS:

- 18 large mirlitons
- 1 bag Zatarain's Dry Crab Boil Seasoning
- 2 quarts rice wine vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tbs salt
- ¼ pound dried whole cayenne peppers
- 4 pods fresh garlic, peeled
- 36-40 bay leaves

METHOD:

Slice the mirlitons lengthwise, carve out the seedpod and discard. Peel the skin from the mirlitons and cut them as you would ¼-inch thick French fries. In a large stockpot over high heat, add crab boil, rice wine vinegar, sugar and salt and bring to a rolling boil. Add sliced mirlitons, lower heat when liquid returns to a boil and simmer for 5 minutes. Taste the mirlitons for doneness. They should be slightly tender on the outside yet crisp on the inside. Remove the mirlitons from the pickling juice and reserve. Line up 12 pint-sized Mason jars and, using tongs, arrange the mirliton sticks as if standing on edge in the jars. Pack each jar tightly with mirliton sticks. Evenly divide the cayenne peppers, garlic and bay leaves into the jars. Divide the pickling juice evenly between the jars. If more liquid is needed, add water and white vinegar to ensure that all surface areas of the mirliton are immersed in juice. Cover and allow to cool. Let stand for a minimum of one week before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Dutch Oven Italian Sausage & Chicken Pasta

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 6–8 Servings

COMMENT:

It seems that everyone in south Louisiana cooks Jambalaya for tailgating parties. In this recipe, the great flavor of jambalaya is unaltered, but a twist is added by using pasta instead of rice. Keep all of those tummies full during the game with this great combination of sausage, chicken and tasso.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound fresh Italian sausage, links cut in half
- 1 rotisserie-style whole chicken, boned and shredded
- ½ pound turkey tasso, ½-inch diced
- 12 ounces penne pasta
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ¼ cup sliced garlic
- ½ cup diced onions
- ¼ cup diced celery
- ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup diced yellow bell peppers
- ½ cup diced fresh tomatoes
- 2 tbsps flour
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1 tbsp chopped thyme
- 2 tbsps chopped basil
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Creole seasoning to taste

METHOD:

In a large cast iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add sausage and cook 3–5 minutes or until browned. Add garlic and sauté until golden brown around the edges. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and tasso. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in tomatoes. Sprinkle in flour and whisk constantly until white roux is achieved. Add stock, one ladle at a time, until all has been incorporated. Season with thyme, basil, salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 5 minutes. Stir in chicken and mix well. Add green onions then fold in raw pasta. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook 20–25 minutes or until pasta is al dente and liquid has been absorbed. When ready to serve, transfer pasta to a decorative platter and arrange additional pieces of sausage and chicken across the top as garnish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Linguini Forestière

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT: Summer gardens are in bloom, and tomatoes are all around us. I have created this simple and wonderful mushroom sauce to use all of these magnificent tomatoes. Use my recipe for Homemade Tomato Sauce to make this even more special.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups fresh or rehydrated mixed mushrooms including chanterelles
 4 cups Homemade Tomato Sauce*
 ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
 ¼ cup shallots, minced
 6 cloves garlic, sliced
 1 ounce dry red wine
 salt and pepper to taste



METHOD:

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Sauté shallots and garlic for 5-6 minutes until garlic is brown around the edges. Add mushrooms and sauté for 5-10 minutes reducing any liquid by half. Deglaze the pan with red wine and add Homemade tomato sauce. Bring to a simmer and cook for 15 -20 minutes. Serve over hot pasta.

*If homemade tomato sauce is not available, this recipe can be made with canned tomato sauce. I recommend Cento brand tomato sauce with basil.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Mike Graham's Shrimp, Crawfish and Lump Crabmeat Pasta

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 4-6

COMMENT:

This pasta sauce is served often at White Oak Plantation and gets rave reviews every time. Mike Graham loves seafood, so I thought it would be a fitting dish for his feast.



INGREDIENTS:

3 cups cooked penne pasta
 1 cup shrimp, 70-90 count
 1 cup cooked crawfish tails
 1 cup jumbo lump crabmeat
 ¼ pound butter
 1 tbsp chopped garlic
 ¼ cup chopped green onions
 ¼ cup sliced mushrooms
 ½ cup diced tomatoes
 ½ cup diced andouille or bacon (optional)
 1 ounce dry white wine
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
 1 tbsp chopped parsley
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a two quart heavy bottom sauce pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Add garlic, green onions, mushrooms, tomatoes and andouille. Sauté three to five minutes or until all vegetables are wilted. Add shrimp, crawfish and crabmeat and cook for an additional two minutes. Deglaze pan with white wine and lemon juice, and continue cooking until volume of liquid is reduced by one half. Add heavy whipping cream and, stirring constantly, reduce until cream is thick and of a sauce-like consistency, approximately five minutes. Add diced red bell pepper and cook for one minute. Remove from heat, add parsley and season to taste using salt and pepper. Gently fold in cooked penne pasta and serve. May be chilled and served as a cold pasta salad.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Mediterranean Orzo Salad

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The literal Italian translation for "orzo" is "barley," but orzo pasta is rice-shaped pasta that is traditionally seen in soups. In this cold pasta salad that is as unique in taste as it is in appearance, we have combined orzo with marinated artichoke hearts, feta cheese and mixed olives to create a great-tasting salad straight from the Greek isles.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups uncooked orzo pasta
- 2 (6 ounce) cans marinated artichoke hearts
- 1 pint cherry or grape tomatoes, halved
- 1 cucumber
- ¼ cup yellow bell pepper, small diced
- 1 red onion, halved and sliced very thinly
- 1 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 1 (2 ounce) can sliced black olives, drained
- 1 cup Italian olive salad, not drained
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley
- 1 tsp fresh oregano, chopped
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Bring a large pot of lightly slated water to a rolling boil. Add pasta and cook for 8-10 minutes or until al dente. Peel cucumber, slice in half lengthwise, seed and slice each half. Drain orzo, run under cold water until completely cooled and place in a large bowl. Add artichoke hearts with liquid, tomatoes, cucumber, bell pepper, onion, feta, olives, olive salad, parsley, lemon juice, oregano and salt and pepper to taste. Chill for at least 1 hour. Serve in a large chilled bowl.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Seafood Pasta Salad

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT: Memorial Day weekend is fast approaching. This is a great picnic recipe for your family's weekend outing. Keep on ice for an easy, chilled salad that everyone will love.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 can (6 ounces) pink salmon, drained
- 1 can (6 ounces) tuna, drained
- 1 can (3.75 ounces) sardines in hot sauce, chopped (optional)
- 1 pound crawfish tails, drained
- 1 pound penne pasta, cooked
- 4 eggs, boiled
- 1¼ cup mayonnaise
- 2 tbsps yellow mustard
- 2 tbsps celery, minced
- 2 tbsps sweet pickle relish
- 2 tbsps red bell pepper, minced
- 2 tbsps yellow bell pepper, minced
- ¼ cup green onions, sliced
- 2 tbsps parsley
- 1 tbsp fresh thyme, chopped
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 tbsps Zatarain's Creole Seasoning or to taste



METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, chop eggs with a pastry cutter or potato masher until finely chopped. Add mayonnaise, mustard, celery, pickle relish, bell peppers, green onions, parsley and thyme. Mix well until all ingredients are blended. Fold in pasta, salmon, tuna, sardines, and crawfish very gently so as not to break up the fish. Add olive oil and toss to blend. Season with salt, pepper and Creole seasoning to taste and serve in a large chilled bowl. If serving this outdoors or on a buffet table, place in a bowl set in a larger bowl of ice to keep cold. Always keep covered.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Spicy Lamb Stew on Rigatoni Pasta

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

St. Patrick's Day and the making of St. Joseph's Altars always fall very close together, so we have constructed a dish that honors both of these occasions. We have put together a traditional Irish lamb stew on top of rigatoni in honor of the Italian roots of the St. Joseph's Altar.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound boneless lamb shoulder, cut into ¾-inch cubes
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ pound bacon, chopped
- 1½ cups diced onions
- ¾ cup diced red bell pepper
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ¾ cup dry red wine
- 1 (28 ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1 cup chicken stock or broth
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 bay leaf
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper
- 2 tbsps chopped fresh basil
- ¼ cup green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 pound rigatoni pasta, cooked
- Parmesan or Romano cheese for garnish

METHOD:

In a 5-quart cast iron Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the bacon and stir until fat is rendered. Add the lamb and cook, stirring occasionally, until the meat is browned well, approximately 15 minutes. Add the onions, red bell pepper and garlic and cook over moderate heat, stirring occasionally until softened, about 5-10 minutes. Deglaze the pan with the red wine and simmer until evaporated, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the casserole. Add the tomatoes, chicken stock, carrots, bay leaf, crushed red pepper and basil. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cover. Stir occasionally until the lamb is very tender, 1½ to 2 hours. Additional stock may be needed to retain liquid. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Add green onions and parsley and blend well. Discard the bay leaf. Serve the stew over cooked rigatoni and garnish with Parmesan or Romano cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Angel-Hair with Avocado Corn Cream

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

The avocado is another of the New World's gifts to the Old, cradled in Mexico along with corn. Like fresh corn, avocado is a natural thickener for a sauce, and when you put the two together, you get a heavenly golden-green cream that is beyond compare!

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 ears fresh sweet corn, kernels only
- 1 ripe avocado
- 2 tbsps garlic chives, chopped
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 4 tomatillos, parboiled*
- 1 jalapeno chili, seeded and chopped
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2-3 cups chicken stock
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1 pound angel-hair pasta, cooked al dente
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Into a blender, combine fresh sweet corn, avocado, garlic chives, lemon juice, tomatillos, jalapeno chili, olive oil and 2 cups chicken stock. Blend completely, adding remaining chicken stock as needed. Season to taste using salt and pepper. When completely blended, pour sauce into a sauté pan and bring to a low simmer, stirring frequently for approximately 5-7 minutes. Pour sauce over cooked pasta, toss and serve with a bowl of Parmesan cheese passed separately.

* Tomatillo's are South Western tomatoes that are approximately the size of a golf ball, green with a parchment type paper shell around the tomato.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Grilled Shrimp, Sausage and Creole Tomato Pasta

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

All great pasta dishes begin with a wonderful sauce! There is no better pasta topper than a sauce made with Creole tomatoes in season. The sweet juicy Creoles develop into a sauce that is without comparison in color and sweetness. The sauce recipe below may be used not only for pasta but for your favorite seafood or meat dish as well.

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 links fresh grilled Creole sausage, sliced
- 24 jumbo shrimp, peeled and devined
- 24 Creole tomatoes, peeled, seeded and diced
- 2 (16-ounce packages) De Cecco pasta
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 10 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 12 large basil leaves, chopped
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper
- 2 tbsps extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup onions, diced
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 cups fresh grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Boil pasta according package directions. When pasta is done, drizzle in olive oil and keep warm. In a stainless steel sauce pot, heat oils over medium-high heat. Using a wooden spoon, sauté the garlic slices until pale yellow or very light browned around the edges, approximately 3 minutes. Add the tomatoes and blend well into the garlic mixture. Bring to a low simmer and slowly add chicken stock to retain moisture and create the fresh sauce. Cook 8-10 minutes and add basil and cayenne pepper. Set aside. In a large sauté pan, place 2 tbsp of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add diced onions and cook 2-3 minutes or until the onions are wilted. Add Creole sausage and shrimp, blending well into the onion mixture. When shrimp are pink and curled add the fresh pasta sauce and season to taste using salt and pepper. Bring to a low simmer but do not overcook shrimp. When ready to serve, blend 1-2 serving spoons of the fresh Creole sauce into the pasta along with a generous sprinkle of Parmesan cheese. Once all is well coated, place the pasta in the center of a serving platter and top with the simmering sauce. Decoratively place the shrimp and sausage in an oval pattern on top of pasta and sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. You may wish to garnish the dish with a large boutique of fresh basil.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Sundried Tomato and Prosciutto Pasta with Clams

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Sundried tomatoes and clams are to the Italians what peanut butter and jelly is to an American kid. They are often combined with meats and other flavors to create wonderful pasta entrees in Italy.

INGREDIENTS:

1/2 cup sundried tomatoes
 1/4 cup prosciutto or ham, chopped
 3 dozen small manilla clams
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1/4 cup onions, minced
 1 tbsp garlic, minced
 1/2 cups red bell pepper, diced
 1/2 cup artichoke hearts, sliced
 1/4 cup dry white wine
 1/4 cup shellfish or chicken stock
 1/3 cup black olives, sliced
 1 tbsp fresh chopped oregano
 12 oz cooked linguini
 salt to taste
 red pepper flakes to taste

METHOD:

Pour hot water over sundried tomatoes and let soak 15 minutes to re-hydrate. Drain and chop. Prepare linguini according to package directions. Drain and rinse well under cold water. Drizzle with 1 tbsp olive oil to keep pasta from sticking. In a large saute pan, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, garlic, red bell pepper, and artichoke hearts and saute, approximately 3 - 5 minutes. Deglaze with white wine. Add shellfish or chicken stock, sundried tomatoes, prosciutto and olives. Simmer an additional 3 - 5 minutes. Season to taste using salt and red pepper flakes. Remember, the flakes are quite hot. Add clams, cover and steam to open, approximately 10 minutes. Reheat pasta under hot water until thoroughly heated and mix with the clam sauce. Serve hot.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Fleur-de-Lis Seafood Pastalaya

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Jambalaya is one of the oldest rice dishes in Louisiana. The dish traces its roots back to paella, that great Mediterranean rice dish. With the heavy Italian influence in South Louisiana, it is quite easy to understand how the ingredients of seafood jambalaya made their way onto the pasta platter.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 dozen (21-25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 pound cooked crawfish tails
- 1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 12 ounces uncooked Penne pasta
- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1/2 cup diced onions
- 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced yellow bell pepper
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 3/4 cup julienned andouille sausage
- 1/2 cup diced Creole tomatoes
- 2 tbsps flour
- 1 quart shellfish stock
- 1 tbsp chopped fresh thyme
- 2 tbsps chopped fresh basil
- 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Creole seasoning to taste
- 12 whole mussels
- 6 (21-25 count) shrimp, head-on



METHOD:

In a large cast iron dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, bell peppers, garlic and andouille sausage. Saute 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Sprinkle in flour and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until white roux is achieved. Add shellfish stock, 1 ladle at a time, until all has been incorporated. Add thyme, basil and season to taste using salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 5 minutes. Add peeled shrimp, crawfish and lump crabmeat. Gently blend seafoods into the simmering liquid. Add green onions then fold in pasta. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook pastalaya 20-25 minutes or until pasta is al dente and liquid has been absorbed. Prior to serving, line mussels and head-on shrimp across the top of the pasta, cover pot and cook until mussels open and shrimp are pink and curled,

approximately 7-10 minutes. When ready to serve, transfer pasta to a decorative platter and arrange mussels and head-on shrimp across the top as garnishes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Guy DiSalvo's Premier Marinara Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

Guy DiSalvo, simply put, is the best of the best! I can think of no Italian chef who can create a better, tastier pasta sauce with so little effort. Guy and his brother, Mario, came from the Old Country in search of a better life in America. They founded DiSalvo's Restaurant in Jeanette, Pennsylvania and later DiSalvo's Station in Latrobe. Guy and his wife, Rita, along with their son, Joey, continue to create magnificent Italian food in Pennsylvania while sharing it with the rest of the country. Often they have spent time with us here in Louisiana and honored us with a dinner and demonstration as a Visiting Chef at our Culinary Institute at Nicholls State University. His marinara is the only one served at Lafitte's Landing.

INGREDIENTS:

24 Roma tomatoes, peeled and seeded
 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 10 cloves garlic, sliced
 1 cup chicken stock
 12 large basil leaves, chopped
 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper

METHOD:

In a stainless steel sauce pot, heat oils over medium-high heat. Using a wooden spoon, sauté the garlic slices until pale yellow or very light browned around the edges, approximately 3 minutes. Add the tomatoes and blend well into the garlic mixture. Bring to a low simmer and slowly add chicken stock to retain moisture and create the fresh sauce. Cook 5-7 minutes and add basil and cayenne pepper. The sauce is now ready to serve as a pasta topping or a base for fish and veal. Add additional stock as necessary to retain sauce-like consistency. When serving this sauce over pasta, drain the pasta when done and toss with a small amount of olive oil. Blend 1-2 serving spoons of the fresh marinara into the pasta along with a generous sprinkle of Parmesan cheese. Once all is well coated, place the pasta in the center of a serving platter and top with the simmering marinara.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Black and White Eggplant Pasta

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

One of the best experiences in a Farmer's Market is viewing the multitudes of unique vegetables not often seen in a grocery store. In eggplant there are varieties such as Ichiban, Machiaw, Thai, Snowy, Black Beauty, Neon and more. This recipe incorporates the Snowy and Black Beauty varieties, which are certain to enhance this pasta dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup diced Black Beauty Eggplant
- 1 cup diced Snowy Eggplant
- 1 tsp Kosher salt
- 1/4 cup Extra Virgin Olive oil
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 10 garlic cloves, sliced
- 12 Creole tomatoes, peeled and seeded
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 12 large basil leaves
- Cayenne pepper to taste
- Hot sauce to taste
- 1 small Snowy Eggplant, thinly sliced
- 1 small Black Beauty Eggplant, thinly sliced
- 1 cup Extra Virgin Olive oil
- 1 pound whole wheat pasta
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

METHOD:

Place diced eggplant into a colander and sprinkle with Kosher salt. Set aside for 15 minutes. In a large sauté pan, heat 1/4 cup olive oil and 1/4 cup vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Add sliced garlic and sauté 2 to 3 minutes taking care not to scorch as garlic will become bitter. Remove garlic and set aside. Drain diced eggplant of any liquid and sauté 2 to 3 minutes in flavored oil. Add diced tomatoes and return garlic to the pan. Bring to a low simmer adding chicken stock to retain moisture while tomatoes cook. Add basil and season to taste using cayenne pepper and hot sauce. A small amount of sugar may be needed if sauce is too acidic in taste. Cook 10 to 15 minutes, set aside and keep warm. Cook pasta according to package directions and while pasta is cooking, which should take approximately 10 to 12 minutes, heat the remaining 1 cup of olive oil to 350 degrees. Saute the black and white eggplant slices a few at a time until golden brown. Drain well. Shingle the eggplant chips around the edge of a large platter, alternating the black and white colors. When the pasta is cooked, drain well, coat with a small amount of the eggplant marinara sauce and place in the center of the serving platter lined with the eggplant. Top with remaining sauce and coat generously with

Parmesan cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Poke Salad Lasagna

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound ground beef
 1 cup chopped onions
 1/2 cup chopped celery
 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 3 cups tomato sauce
 1 tsp fresh oregano, chopped
 1 tsp fresh basil, chopped
 1 tsp fresh thyme, chopped
 12 lasagna noodles
 2 cups poke salad, cooked and drained (or canned)
 1 cup cottage cheese
 1 cup ricotta cheese
 1 egg, beaten
 1 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
 1/4 tsp nutmeg
 salt and black pepper

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a 12-inch cast iron skillet, sauté ground beef until meat is separated grain for grain. Remove beef with a slotted spoon and discard all but 1 teaspoon of the drippings. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Return beef to the skillet and blend into the vegetable mixture. Add tomato puree, oregano, basil and thyme. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce heat to simmer and cook for 30 minutes. In a two gallon stock pot, cook noodles according to package directions. Drain and set aside. In a medium-size mixing bowl, combine poke salad, cottage cheese, ricotta cheese, egg, Parmesan cheese and nutmeg. Using a wooden spoon, mix ingredients thoroughly until well incorporated. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Assemble lasagna by placing 1/3 of the poke salad mixture in the bottom of a lightly greased 9" x 13" pan. Top with 4 noodles and beef mixture. Repeat this process until 3 layers are complete, ending with the beef mixture. Repeat this process until 3 layers are complete, ending with the beef mixture. Cover pan with aluminum foil and bake 45 minutes until hot and bubbly.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Spaghetti a' la Puttanesca a' la Napoletana - Spaghetti a' la Campania Style

PREP TIME:30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This dish combines almost all the tasty staples of the southern Italian kitchen. Although many recipes have been printed for this popular dish, this is one of my favorites. Adjust the anchovies, olives and capers depending on your taste. This dish was supposedly named because ladies of the night were able to fix it quickly between "tricks."

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 pounds ripe, fresh tomatoes; or 1 1/2 pounds canned tomatoes, preferably imported Italian, drained
- Coarse-grained salt
- 2 medium-sized cloves garlic, peeled
- 1/2 cup olive oil
- 1/2 pound large black Greek olives in brine
- 3 anchovies in salt, or 6 anchovy fillets packed in oil, drained
- 4 heaping tbsp capers in wine vinegar, drained
- 2 tbsp tomato paste
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp hot red pepper flakes
- 1 pound dried spaghetti, preferably imported Italian

METHOD:

If using fresh tomatoes, blanch them in boiling salted water, remove the skins, and cut them into pieces. Pass fresh or canned tomatoes through a food mill, using the disc with smallest holes, into a crockery or glass bowl.

Coarsely chop the garlic on a board. Heat the oil in a medium-sized saucepan over medium heat; when the oil is warm, add the garlic and sauté until lightly golden, about 10 minutes. Meanwhile, pit the olives and cut them into quarters. If using anchovies preserved in salt, fillet them under cold running water, discarding bones and washing away excess salt. Cut anchovy fillets into 1-inch pieces. Add the tomatoes to the pan, then the olives, anchovies, capers and tomato paste. Mix well and season to taste with salt, pepper, and the red pepper flakes. Cook for 15 minutes over medium heat, stirring every so often with a wooden spoon.

Meanwhile, bring a large pot of cold water to a boil, add coarse salt to taste, then add the pasta and cook until al dente, for 9 to 12 minutes depending on the brand. Drain the pasta, place it in a large bowl, pour the sauce over, and mix well. Transfer to a warmed serving dish and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Homemade Semolina Pasta

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 1/2 pounds of fresh pasta

COMMENT:

This recipe is from Chef Andrea Apuzzo of Andrea's Restaurant in New Orleans. Andrea believes in preparing dishes with only the freshest ingredients to serve to his patrons. Before you can even think of making the Tomato Basil Sauce recipe that follows, you have to make your pasta from scratch. Pasta is one of the world's greatest foods. It is delicious, healthy, and low in fat. You can make pasta in any imaginable shape and serve it with almost any food. Invest in a small pasta machine for your kitchen and make your own fresh pasta. It is no more difficult than making any other kind of dough and it gives superior results.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups semolina flour
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 eggs, well beaten
- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 1/2 tsp salt

METHOD:

Mix the two flours together and make a mound on top of a clean surface. Make a well in the center of the mound. In a large bowl, beat the eggs and mix in the olive oil, salt and one cup cold water. Pour this into the flour well. With your hands, mix the flours and liquids together and knead until you have a ball of dough. Add up to another 1/2 cup of water to help things along, as necessary. Work the dough by rolling it away from you on the counter while simultaneously tearing it in half. Then pull it back together while rolling it back towards you, always keeping some pressure on the dough with the balls of your hands. Keep rolling and tearing for five minutes, until the mixture is uniform and smooth. Dust with flour now and then to keep the dough from sticking. Make the dough into the shape of a bread loaf and dust with white flour. Cover with a dry cloth and allow the pasta dough ball to rest for five minutes. Cut off a piece of dough about the size of your fist and flatten it into a disk. Dust it lightly with flour. The dough is now ready to be shaped using your pasta machine.

Salsa Pomodoro Basilico - (Tomato Basil Sauce)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: About 8 (2-ounce) Pasta Entrees

COMMENT:

That's Italian! Salsa Pomodoro Basilico is one of Chef Andrea Apuzzo's favorite pasta sauces. He serves it in his restaurant, he makes it at home, and it's included in his cookbook. It's become one of my

favorite tomato sauce recipes, too.

INGREDIENTS:

1 tbsp olive oil
1/4 cup chopped onion
1 tsp chopped garlic
1/4 cup red wine
2 cups canned Italian plum tomatoes
2 cups juice from tomatoes
1/2 tsp salt
1/4 tsp white pepper
2 springs chopped fresh oregano
8 chopped fresh basil leaves
4 chopped sprigs of Italian parsley
1 bay leaf

METHOD:

In a saucepan over medium heat, heat the olive oil until very hot. In it sauté the onions and garlic until they turn blond. Add wine and bring to a boil. Immediately add the tomatoes, squeezing them between your fingers to break them up as you add them. Add tomato juice. Lower the heat and simmer the sauce. After about 30 minutes, add water (1 cup or less) if necessary to give the sauce the right consistency. You want the sauce thin enough to be able to easily coat pasta, yet not so thin that it runs off the pasta. Add salt, pepper, oregano, basil, parsley and bay leaf. Simmer sauce another 15-20 minutes. Adjust seasonings as needed.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

John's "Tender & Juicy" Spaghetti and Meatballs

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

Nothing is worse than sitting at the table ready to enjoy a plate of Spaghetti and Meatballs, and the meatballs are tough and dry. I actually had to travel to Italy to learn the secret of juicy, tender meatballs.

INGREDIENTS: MEATBALLS

- 1 pound ground chuck
- 1 pound ground pork
- 6 eggs
- 1 cup minced onion
- 1 cup minced celery
- 1/4 cup chopped garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped basil
- 1 3/4 cup Italian breadcrumbs
- 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tbsps salt
- 2 tbsps pepper

METHOD: MEATBALLS

In a large mixing bowl, combine ground beef and ground pork. Using your hands (washed well), blend beef and pork thoroughly. Add eggs, onion, celery, garlic, basil, breadcrumbs and cheese. Again, using your hands, blend thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper. I recommend frying a small patty of the meat mixture in a sprinkle of extra virgin olive oil to test for seasoning. Correct if necessary. Roll the meatballs into the desired size. I recommend meatballs slightly larger than a golf ball. Place the rolled meatballs on a cookie sheet, cover and refrigerate. This will make approximately 20 meatballs.

INGREDIENTS: SAUCE

- 4 35-ounce cans Italian plum tomatoes with juice
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1/4 cup minced garlic
- 1/4 cup chopped basil
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD: SAUCE

Drain the Italian plum tomatoes through a sieve, retaining the juice. Chop the tomatoes into 1/4-inch pieces. Return tomatoes to the juice and set aside. In a 3-gallon saucepot or large Magnalite pot, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery and garlic and

sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes in juice and chopped basil. Bring to a low boil, reduce to a simmer and cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add raw meatballs, dropping gently into the sauce. Return sauce to a simmer. Do not stir for the first 10 minutes of simmering, or you will break the meatballs. When stirring, use a wooden spoon and move the meatballs gently through the sauce. Simmer for one hour, adding a little water or chicken stock, if the sauce becomes too thick. Season the sauce to taste using salt and pepper.

When ready to serve, cook spaghetti according to package directions. Place cooked spaghetti in a large serving bowl and top with six to eight ounces of the finished sauce. Toss well to coat spaghetti. Pour spaghetti in the center of a large serving platter. Arrange meatballs on top of pasta, top with additional sauce and Parmesan cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Fettucine Alfredo

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

Serves: 4

COMMENT:

Italian cooking is very simple and usually very fast. It uses fewer ingredients for each dish than any other cuisine. This recipe is a prime example of that fact.

INGREDIENTS:

12 ounces fettucine, cooked
 ¼ cup unsalted butter
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 cups heavy cream
 1 cup chicken broth
 2 egg yolks
 ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
 ¼ cup chopped chives or parsley
 salt and coarsely ground pepper to taste

METHOD:

Melt butter in a large sauté pan. Add garlic sauté 1-2 minutes, Add cream and chicken broth bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until cream is slightly thickened. Remove from heat and quickly whip eggs into the center of the cream whisking constantly to keep eggs from scrambling. Add cooked pasta blending well into the mixture. Follow with cheese, chives or parsley continuing to blend well. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Serve immediately otherwise pasta will become pasty.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Crawfish Michaela

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

1/4 pound butter
 1 tbsp garlic, chopped
 1/4 cup green onions, chopped
 1/4 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1/2 cup tomatoes, diced
 1/2 cup andouille, diced
 1 pound cooked crawfish tails
 1 tbsp flour
 1 ounce dry white wine
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1/4 cup tomato sauce
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1 tbsp parsley, chopped
 1 tsp basil, chopped
 1 tsp tarragon, chopped
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 4 cups cooked rotini pasta

METHOD:

In a 2-quart heavy sauce pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add garlic, green onions, mushrooms, tomatoes and andouille. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add 1/2 of the crawfish and cook for 2 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend well into the mixture. Deglaze pan with white wine and lemon juice. Add tomato sauce, stirring well to incorporate. Add heavy whipping cream, stirring constantly. Cook until cream is thick and of a sauce-like consistency, approximately 5 minutes. Add bell pepper, parsley, basil, tarragon and remaining crawfish. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Gently fold in cooked rotini pasta and serve. May be chilled and served as a cold pasta salad.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Crawfish Stuffed Pasta Shells

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Here is yet another example of the innovative Creoles stuffing crawfish into an ingredient to create an entrée. Normally this was done in either chicken or in turbans of trout. In this recipe we see the crawfish stuffed into pasta shells and baked.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds crawfish tails, chopped
- 1 box jumbo pasta shells
- 8 tbsps butter
- 1 cup onion, minced
- 1/2 cup green bell pepper, minced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, minced
- 6 tsps garlic, minced
- 4 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsps hot sauce
- salt to taste
- Creole seasoning to taste
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
- 1 cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Boil shells according to package directions until al dente and set aside. In a medium sauce pan, heat butter over medium-high heat. Add onions and bell peppers and sauté until wilted, approximately 1-2 minutes. Add garlic and crawfish tails and heat through. Add Worcestershire sauce, hot sauce, salt and Creole seasoning. Remove from heat and let cool. Beat eggs in a large mixing bowl and add to crawfish mixture. Fold in Parmesan cheese and breadcrumbs. Combine well and stuff each pasta shell with an equal amount of crawfish stuffing. Place shells in a 9 x 12-inch baking pan and cover with your favorite pasta sauce or Alfredo. For ease of preparation, combine 2 cans of cream of shrimp soup with 1/2 cup white wine. Place in oven and bake for 15-20 minutes or until stuffing is heated completely through.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Crawfish Pasta Salad

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

SERVES: 4-5

COMMENT:

This dish is right at home everywhere from your holiday table to the parking lot tailgating party on LSU campus.

INGREDIENTS FOR SALAD:

- 1 lb peeled crawfish tails
- 1 lb pasta, cooked (small shells)
- 1/2 cup green onions, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, minced
- 1/2 cup yellow pepper, minced
- dill weed (to taste)

INGREDIENTS FOR DRESSING:

- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 5 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 4 tbsp sour cream
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 2 tbsp sugar
- Coarsely ground black pepper
- 2 tsp chopped parsley

METHOD:

Mix dressing first by combining all dressing ingredients. Use a whisk to blend in the sour cream. The salad dressing can be made up ahead of time. In a separate bowl, combine crawfish tails, cooked pasta, green onions, red bell pepper, yellow pepper and celery. Season with dill weed. Pour dressing over crawfish mixture and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Tuscan Shrimp Pasta

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Tuscany is without a doubt one of the regions of Italy best known for its cuisine. This wonderful shrimp dish is of Tuscan origin and may be served over a multitude of pastas. Enjoy!

INGREDIENTS:

3 dozen shrimp (21-25 count) peeled and deveined
 2 lbs. pasta, cooked al dente
 1/4 lb. butter
 1 tbs. garlic, sliced
 1/4 cup green onions, diced
 1/4 cup mushrooms, sliced
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, julienne
 1/4 cup yellow bell pepper, julienne
 1/4 cup green bell pepper, julienne
 1/2 cup Creole tomatoes, diced
 1/4 cup black olives, sliced
 2 tbs. flour
 1 oz. dry white wine
 2 1/2 cups hot shellfish or chicken stock
 1 tsp. lemon juice
 1 tsp. parsley
 salt and pepper, to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté garlic, green onions and mushrooms approximately 2 minutes or until mushrooms are slightly wilted. Add bell peppers, tomatoes and olives, stir into mixture and cook one additional minute. Add shrimp and stir fry into vegetables until shrimp begin to turn pink and curl, approximately 2 minutes. Sprinkle in flour and blend into dish until white roux is achieved. The flour will absorb most of the liquids in the pan and act as a thickening agent for the sauce. Deglaze with white wine and add hot stock, whisking well into seasoning mixture. Add lemon juice and parsley and season to taste using salt and pepper. Cook until sauce is thickened and shrimp are perfectly cooked, but not overdone. Additional chicken stock may be added should sauce become too thick. Serve over your favorite pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Spicy Fried Chicken Pasta Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

One of the greatest challenges faced when planning an outdoor patio party is determining the accompaniments to the main dish and whether they should be served hot or cold. Here in Bayou Country one characteristic of our Cajun and Creole dishes is that most may be served either way and still taste great! This treatment of leftover fried chicken is sure to win praises when added as a main ingredient to an otherwise simple pasta salad.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 pieces cold, spicy fried chicken
- 6 cups cooked rotini pasta
- 6 boiled eggs, yolks separated
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp Creole mustard
- 1/4 cup minced onions
- 1/4 cup minced celery
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 1/4 cup minced red bell peppers
- 1/4 cup minced green bell peppers
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup sweet pickle relish
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

If you don't have leftover fried chicken, simply take a trip to your favorite fried chicken fast food outlet and pick up 6 pieces of their spicy version. Personally, I love Popeyes. Bone chicken and cut into cubes, making sure that the skin is left intact. Set aside until later. In a large mixing bowl, mash egg yolks well with a fork, then add mayonnaise and Creole mustard, blending well into the yolks. Finely dice egg whites and add to the mixture. Combine all remaining ingredients except the chicken and pasta and mix well until all seasonings are thoroughly coated with the mayonnaise sauce. Add rotini pasta, blending well into the mixture, then gently toss in the cold fried chicken cubes. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Place on a large serving platter and garnish with boiled eggs, or you may wish to surround the pasta with additional whole pieces of hot fried chicken. NOTE: Since the mayonnaise sauce is a typical blend for potato salad, you may wish to add your own special seasoning blend to personalize the dish. The most important flavor aspect here is the seasoning applied to the chicken prior to frying.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Mama Fresina's Lasagna - (Something New)

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

With a name like Mama Fresina's Lasagna, there's no debate what culture this recipe represents! Italians are known for their great cooking and so many famous Louisiana dishes can be traced back to humble Italian beginnings in bayou country. This reduced fat recipe is perfect for anyone watching their waistline. You won't even have to sacrifice flavor!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound extra lean ground beef
- 1 pound extra lean ground turkey
- 1 (8-ounce) package lasagna noodles
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 tsp oregano
- 2 tsps parsley
- 2 tsps sweet basil
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp salt substitute
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 3 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce, no salt added
- 2 (6-ounce) cans tomato paste, no salt added
- 1 cup fresh mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup fat-free cottage cheese
- 1 cup fat-free Ricotta cheese
- 2 cups frozen spinach, drained
- 2 cups low-fat Mozzarella cheese, shredded

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. In lightly salted water, boil lasagna noodles according to package directions. Drain, rinse well to keep from sticking and set aside. In a 5-quart cast iron Dutch oven, brown ground meat and turkey over medium-high heat. Continue to chop and cook meats until they separate, grain for grain. After meats are well browned, approximately 20-30 minutes, add onions and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Drain the excess fat. Season with oregano, parsley, basil, garlic powder, salt substitute and pepper. Add tomato sauce and tomato paste. Blend well into the meat mixture and bring to a low simmer. Add mushrooms and cook, stirring occasionally, 15-20 minutes. Remove from heat and adjust seasonings if necessary. Add cottage cheese, Ricotta and spinach to the mixture. Once all is well blended, place a layer of sauce in the bottom of 9" x 13" baking dish. Add one layer of noodles and top with sauce and shredded Mozzarella. Repeat 3 times, leaving approximately 1/2-inch at the top of the dish for overflow. Sprinkle the top layer evenly with Mozzarella cheese. Bake, uncovered, for 30

minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Penne with Pumpkin Cream Sauce

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment: Pumpkins are plentiful during the fall months. This recipe uses pumpkin purée to create an interesting pasta dish. You can purchase canned pumpkin or make your own fresh purée using the method below.



Ingredients:

1 pound penne pasta, cooked
 ½ cup pumpkin purée*
 4 tbsps butter
 1 cup diced onions
 ¼ cup diced red bell peppers
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 1 cup sliced mushrooms
 3 cups heavy cream
 ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
 pinch of nutmeg
 salt and black pepper to taste
 parsley for garnish

Method:

In a large skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, bell peppers and garlic 3–5 minutes or until wilted. Add mushrooms and sauté 2 more minutes or until softened. Add cream and bring to a slow simmer. Stir in pumpkin purée and Parmesan cheese. Simmer until reduced and slightly thickened. Season with nutmeg, salt and pepper. Serve over hot, cooked penne pasta and garnish with chopped parsley.

*Pumpkin Purée

To make fresh pumpkin purée, cut a large pumpkin in half and remove the stem and seeds. Cut into 2-inch squares. In a large stockpot, place pumpkin squares and cover with water by 2 inches. Bring to a rolling boil and cook 20–30 minutes until pumpkin is completely tender. Drain and cool under cold running water. When completely cooled, scoop pumpkin off of the skin and discard skin. Place cooked pumpkin into a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Any remaining purée can be frozen for up to a year.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

PASTA

Low Fat Chicken Pasta "Creamavera"

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Pasta primavera is usually a red pasta sauce filled with tender vegetables. Here, we have put a little twist on the traditional dish by changing the sauce to a rich and cheesy cream sauce. We have also cut the fat found in regular cream sauces to almost nothing by using fat-free half-and-half and sour cream and reduced fat Parmesan cheese.

Ingredients:

- 1 pound linguine, cooked
- 2 cups grilled chicken breast, sliced
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 (6-ounce) can marinated artichoke hearts
- ½ cup diced onion
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- ¾ cup julienned red bell pepper
- ¾ cup julienned yellow bell pepper
- 1 cup sliced mushroom
- 1 tbsp chopped oregano
- 2 tsps chopped thyme
- 2 cups fat-free half and half
- ¼ cup fat-free sour cream
- ½ cup reduced fat, grated Parmesan cheese
- salt and black pepper to taste



Method:

In a large skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. When oil is hot, add liquid from artichoke hearts. Chop artichokes into bite-sized pieces and reserve for later. Bring liquid to a simmer and add onions, garlic and bell peppers. Sauté for 3-5 minutes or until softened. Add artichoke hearts, mushrooms, oregano and thyme and sauté for 2-3 additional minutes. Add half and half, bring to a simmer then reduce slightly. Remove from heat and add sour cream and cheese. Stir until cheese is melted. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Toss mixture with hot cooked pasta and garnish with more Parmesan cheese and a sprig of oregano.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Leftover Turkey Tetrazzini

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

If you are trying to figure out what to do with the leftover turkey, but you do not want to eat it immediately, this recipe is the solution. Make this the day after Thanksgiving, and freeze it until ready to eat, up to 2 months.

Ingredients:

3 cups coarsely chopped leftover turkey
 12 ounces spaghetti, cooked
 4 cups thinly sliced mushrooms
 5 tbsps butter
 ½ cup diced onions
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 3 tbsps minced garlic
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 2 tbsps canned pimientos, chopped and drained
 ¼ cup flour
 2 cups turkey stock or chicken stock
 1¾ cups milk
 ½ cup shredded Cheddar cheese
 1 cup cooked peas, canned or frozen
 ½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
 1/3 cup bread crumbs
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a large, heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium-high heat, melt 4 tablespoons butter. Add mushrooms, onions, celery, bell peppers, green onions, garlic, parsley and pimientos. Cook until vegetables are wilted. Stir in flour and cook 5 minutes. Slowly pour in milk and stock. Bring mixture to a boil, stir and simmer 5 minutes. Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large bowl, combine cooked spaghetti, stock mixture, leftover turkey, peas, Cheddar and ¼ Parmesan. Season with salt and pepper. Transfer mixture into a lightly greased, 3-quart casserole dish. In a small bowl, combine remaining Parmesan and bread crumbs. Sprinkle bread crumbs evenly over spaghetti mixture. Dot top with remaining tablespoon of butter. Bake 40 minutes or until golden and bubbly.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

Best Ever Lenten Lasagna
Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

During the Lenten season in Louisiana, Catholics refrain from eating meat on Fridays and also use this 40-day period to cut back on rich foods in their diets. Even though this recipe fits into that category, after tasting it you'll wonder if it's really a penance.

Ingredients:

¼ cup olive oil
 1 cup (¼-inch) sliced button mushrooms
 1 red bell pepper, sliced
 1 green bell pepper, sliced
 2 cups whole kernel corn
 2 medium zucchini, cubed
 1 medium yellow squash, cubed
 ½ cup butter
 1 cup diced onions ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 tsp dried oregano
 1 tsp dried basil
 ½ tsp dried thyme
 ½ cup flour
 2½ cups milk
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 pinch of nutmeg
 ¼ cup olive oil
 ½ cup low-fat Ricotta
 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
 1 (24-ounce) can crushed tomatoes with juice
 1 pack lasagna noodles, cooked
 2 (10-ounce) packages frozen spinach, thawed and squeezed
 1 cup reduced-fat shredded Mozzarella
 1 cup grated Parmesan

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a 10-inch skillet, heat ¼ cup olive oil over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, sliced bell peppers, corn, zucchini, yellow squash, oregano, basil and thyme. Season with salt and pepper. Stir-fry 5–6 minutes, and set aside to cool. In a 2-quart saucepot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add half of the following ingredients: onions, celery, red bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add flour to make a white roux, whisking constantly. Whisk in milk, stirring until a thickened white sauce is achieved. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and season with salt, pepper and nutmeg. Remove from heat, whisk in Ricotta and set aside. In a 2-quart saucepot, heat ¼ cup olive oil over medium-high heat. Add remaining onions, celery, red bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato sauce and crushed tomatoes with juice. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper. Simmer 5–7 minutes and remove from heat.

To Assemble:

Place 2 spoonfuls of tomato sauce in bottom of a casserole dish then cover with 3 lasagna noodles. Add half of spinach, sautéed vegetables and white sauce. Top with 3 lasagna noodles, tomato sauce, half of Parmesan and Mozzarella. Repeat process with remaining spinach, vegetables and white sauce. Top with noodles, tomato sauce and remaining cheese. Bake 30–45 minutes or until bubbly. Remove from oven and allow to rest 20 minutes before serving.

PASTA

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Rustic Chicken and Fleur-de-Lis Tart

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 8 Servings

Ingredients for pastry crust:

- 1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
- 7 tbsps unsalted butter, chilled and cut into pieces
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 4 tbsps ice water

Method for crust:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a food processor, combine flour, butter, salt and pepper. Pulse for 10 seconds, then add ice water. Continue to pulse 5 or 6 times until the dough comes together. Place dough on a floured surface and work into a ball. Enclose dough in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.



Ingredients for filling:

- 1 ½ cups pulled or chopped chicken
- 1 (8-ounce) wheel Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Fleur-de Lis Fromage Triple Cream
- 1 (4-ounce) wheel Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Fleur-de Lis Fromage Triple Cream
- ¼ pound butter
- 8 pearl onions, peeled and halved
- 1 cup celery, sliced ½-inch
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- ½ cup julienned bell peppers
- ¾ cup baby carrots, bias cut
- 4 tbsps all-purpose flour
- 3 cups turkey or chicken stock
- 1 ½ cups red potatoes, skin-on, cubed
- ½ cup milk
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp black pepper
- 1 tsp chopped oregano
- 1 tbsp chopped parsley
- 1 whole egg, whipped

Method for filling:

In a large skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, garlic, bell peppers, and carrots. Sauté 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Blend in flour but do not brown. Stir in stock until roux dissolves. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer, and cook 5 minutes. Add potatoes and cook 4 minutes. Add milk, salt, pepper, oregano and parsley. Cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture thickens to a

heavy white sauce consistency. Remove and discard the rind from the 8-ounce wheel of cheese. Remove skillet from heat and blend in 1 cup of chicken and the 8-ounce cheese. Allow to cool 30 minutes. Allow dough to sit 15 minutes at room temperature. Roll dough into a 15" circle (1-inch thick). Carefully place dough on a ceramic pizza stone or a large cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Spoon filling onto center of dough leaving a 1½-inch space around the edge. Fold the 1½-inch edge over the top of the filling. Place remaining chicken on top of filling. Brush crust with egg and bake 20-30 minutes or until golden. Cut the 4-ounce wheel of Fleur-de-Lis fromage triple cream into eight equal slices. Place one piece of cheese on the crust of each slice of tart and serve warm.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

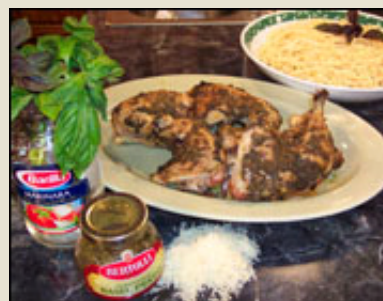
Quick and Easy Pesto-Rubbed Roasted Chicken

PREP TIME: 1 Hour, 15 Minutes

SERVES: 4–6

COMMENT:

Who wants to come home from a hard day of work and have to decide what to cook and then spend 2 hours cooking? No one does. I have the perfect solution to this problem. I have used prepared ingredients to make a great dish that even the kids will love.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 whole fryer chicken
- 1 (8-ounce) bottle pesto
- 1 jar of your favorite spaghetti sauce
- 1 pound linguini
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Shake bottle of pesto well or mix with a spoon. Season chicken with salt and pepper. Rub pesto over the entire chicken and under the skin. Put any remaining pesto into the cavity of the chicken. Bake covered for 30–40 minutes or until wing pulls freely from the breast. Raise the oven temperature to 450°F and cook for 15 minutes more or until the skin is golden brown. Cut chicken into serving pieces and serve over linguini with your favorite spaghetti sauce.

NOTE: This recipe can be prepared with chicken pieces; however, a whole chicken will remain moister than pieces during the cooking process.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Lemonade Glazed Chicken

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

During the summertime, the best way to cool off after a hot day is with a tall, refreshing glass of ice-cold lemonade. We have combined the sweet and tart tastes of the official drink of summer to create a wonderful, savory glaze for roasted or grilled chicken.

INGREDIENTS:

2 whole fryer chickens
 ¾ cup lemon juice
 1¼ cups light brown sugar
 3 tbsps butter
 ½ cup finely diced onions
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 ½ tsp minced fresh thyme
 ¾ cup water
 6 tbsps yellow mustard
 4 tsps cornstarch
 salt, pepper and granulated garlic to taste



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Cut each chicken in half through the breast bone and then into quarters. Season chicken generously with salt, pepper and granulated garlic to taste and place on a baking sheet or in a roasting pan. Bake for about 45 minutes or until wing pulls freely from the breast and skin is crispy and golden brown. In a small bowl mix cornstarch with ¼ cup cold water, blending until dissolved. Set aside. While the chicken is roasting, melt butter in a saucepot over medium- high heat. Add onions and garlic and sauté 3–5 minutes. In the saucepot, add lemon juice, brown sugar, thyme, remaining water and mustard, blending well. Bring to a low simmer and cook for about 10–15 minutes. Add the cornstarch mixture stirring constantly until sauce is thickened. Remove from heat and allow sauce to cool slightly. When chicken is done, brush the lemon glaze over the chicken and bake for 5 additional minutes. Serve the chicken with your favorite side dish.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chick on a Stick with Sweet n' Spicy Orange Marinade

PREP TIME: 1 Hour, 15 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Bone-in chicken is one of the hardest meats to grill. You have to be careful to cook it all the way through without burning the skin. We have made it easier to enjoy grilled chicken by using boneless, skinless chicken breasts and marinating them in a sauce brimming with the flavors of orange, cane syrup, fresh herbs and crushed red chili peppers.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pounds chicken breasts, sliced lengthwise, or chicken tenders
- 1 cup orange juice
- ¼ cup Louisiana cane syrup
- ½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes, or to taste
- ¼ cup dry white wine
- 2 tsps chopped thyme
- 2 tsps chopped basil
- 1½ tsps chopped sage
- 1 tsp chopped tarragon
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- salt, pepper and granulated garlic

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, mix orange juice, cane syrup, pepper flakes, wine, herbs, and garlic and blend well. Season chicken with salt pepper and granulated garlic and add to marinade. Let sit at room temperature for a minimum of 2 hours. Thread chicken onto metal skewers and grill until done, about 5-7 minutes on each side. While grilling, baste remaining sauce over chicken.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Jollof Rice of Nigeria

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT: This dish is common throughout West Africa and can be made with chicken, beef, goat or pork. It is almost a cross between a Red Jambalaya and a Chicken Creole, which are both found here in Cajun country and may be the origin of dishes of this type.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (2-3 pound) fryer chicken, cut into 8 pieces
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- 2 onions, sliced
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 1 (28 ounce) can Cento Italian plum tomatoes, diced
- 1 tbsp Cento tomato paste
- ½ tsp cayenne or to taste
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp pepper
- ¼ tsp dried thyme
- 1 cup uncooked rice
- 8 ounces green beans, fresh, cut in 1 inch pieces
- 2 cups frozen black eyed peas
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a large cast iron Dutch oven, heat vegetable oil over medium high heat. Season chicken with salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper to taste. Cook chicken until well browned, about 10-15 minutes. Add onions and sauté for 10-15 minutes, or until slightly browned. Add stock, tomatoes, tomato paste and measured seasonings. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, cover and cook for 30 minutes or until the chicken is nearly done. Stir as needed. Add rice, green beans and black eyed peas. Continue cooking for 20 minutes or until rice is completely cooked and chicken is done. Can be served alone or over additional steamed rice.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chicken Biryani

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

This delicious Indian rice dish is often reserved for very special occasions, such as weddings or holidays. Although the preparation time seems lengthy, it is definitely worth the work. Basmati rice, with its thin, fine grains, is perfect for this dish. However, you may substitute long grain rice. In India, ghee, clarified butter or butter that has been slowly melted so that the milk solids and butter fat separate, is often used in place of the vegetable oil in this recipe. This recipe was given to me by Mangala Deshmukh.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (2½ pound) chicken
- 1½ tps crushed saffron
- ¾ cup vegetable oil
- 2 1-inch pieces cinnamon stick
- 6 cloves
- 3 pieces cardamom
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 large onions, thinly sliced
- 2 tbsps granulated garlic
- ½ tsp red chili powder
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint
- ¼ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 2 jalapeño peppers, diced
- 1 cup plain yogurt
- 1 cup water
- 3 cups basmati rice
- 1 cup finely chopped carrots
- ¼ cup lemon juice
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- ½ cup milk
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Begin by cutting chicken into 8 serving pieces. Wash and set aside. Place the saffron in the microwave for 30 seconds to crisp and concentrate the flavor, then drop in 3 tbsps of hot water. Set aside to bloom. In a large dutch oven, heat vegetable oil over medium high heat. Add cinnamon, cloves, cardamom and bay leaves. Sauté 2-3 minutes, then add onions and sauté until golden brown. Add the garlic and red chili powder, then sauté one minute. Add ginger and cook one minute longer. Add chicken, a few pieces at a time, and sauté, turning occasionally, to brown slightly on each side. Once all the chicken has been browned, remove and set aside. Add the fresh mint, cilantro and jalapeño, blending well into the mixture. Sauté 2-3

additional minutes. Add yogurt and 1 cup of water. Bring to a lower simmer. Soon, the oil will float to the top of the mixture. Carefully remove the oil (approximately ½ cup). Reserve for later use. Return the chicken to the pot. Bring to a simmer. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, for 30 minutes. In a separate pot, place 10 cups of water, lightly salted, and bring to a boil. Wash the basmati rice 2-3 times under cold water to remove the excess starch. Add the rice to the boiling water along with the carrots. After 5 minutes, check to see if the rice is approximately ½ cooked. If the rice is half cooked, drain quickly in a colander and return to the pot. Add the saffron and blend well. Set aside. Add the lemon juice and melted butter to the reserved oil that was removed from the dutch oven. Arrange the rice on top of the cooked chicken mixture, drizzling in the oil over the rice at even intervals. Add ½ cup of milk to the mixture, cover tightly and cook over medium to low heat 30-40 minutes or until rice is steamed to a perfect cook and fluffy. Serve an equal portion of chicken and rice to each guest.

Note: You may wish to take the assembled casserole at 375°F covered for 45-50 minutes rather than cooking it on the stovetop.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Cajun-Style Chicken and Eggplant Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

In Louisiana, we are constantly combining protein and garden vegetables to create simple, yet tasty and nutritious dishes. Eggplant is one of our favorite vegetables, often used by every culture in Bayou Country. This is an Italian favorite.

INGREDIENTS:

6 chicken breasts, skinned
 3 eggplants, diced
 1/2 cup flour
 vegetable spray
 2 tbsps lite margarine
 1 cup onions, diced
 1 cup celery, diced
 1/2 cup green bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, minced
 2 (8-ounce) cans tomato sauce, no salt
 1 tbsp dried basil
 1 tsp dried thyme
 1/2 cup pimento olives, sliced
 1 (8-ounce package) low fat cheddar cheese, shredded
 salt substitute
 cayenne pepper

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly season the flour to taste using salt substitute and pepper. Dust chicken lightly in the seasoned flour. Place breasts on a cookie sheet, coated with vegetable spray and bake 10-15 minutes. Remove and keep warm. Poach eggplant in water until tender. Using a fork, mash eggplant and set aside. In a 10-inch cast iron skillet, heat margarine over medium heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetable mixture is wilted and simmer 10-15 minutes longer. Add tomato sauce, basil and thyme. Blend well and season to taste using salt substitute and pepper. Place chicken breasts in a 2-quart casserole dish. Cover with the eggplant mixture, olives and 1/2 of the shredded cheese. Using a fork, blend the ingredients well over the chicken. Top with the remaining cheese. Bake, uncovered, 15-20 minutes.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Christmas Capon

PREP TIME: 3 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

Most folks know that capon is the name given to a castrated rooster. The capon dates back to the time of the Greeks and Romans. This bird is known for its oversized, meaty breast and tender, super-moist texture. I first experienced capon at the suggestion of Olga Hirsch, a fabulous French cook living in Donaldsonville. She always served capon as the centerpiece for Christmas lunch. I remember her saying, "Christmas is not Christmas without capon."

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (4 to 6-pound) capon
- 1/2 cup softened butter
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 4 tbsps basil, chopped
- 4 tbsps thyme, chopped
- 4 tbsps tarragon, chopped
- 2 tbsps rosemary, chopped
- 3 tbsps garlic, minced
- 2 medium onions, quartered
- 2 sticks of celery, chopped
- 2 red apples, diced
- 2 green apples, diced
- 1/2 cup white wine
- 3 cups chicken stock

METHOD:

If you should purchase a frozen bird, thaw in the refrigerator for 2 days. Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees F. Rinse the bird well under cold running water and place in the center of a roasting pan or Dutch oven. Season the bird generously, inside and out, using salt and pepper. In a small bowl, blend softened butter with all of the chopped herbs and garlic. Rub the herb paste under the breast skin of the bird and over the outer skin, distributing evenly. Any remaining herb paste should be placed in the pan around the base of the bird. Place the giblets in the pan and surround the bird with the diced vegetables and apples. Cover tightly with aluminum foil or the lid of the Dutch oven and roast, covered, for 2 1/2 hours. Check for tenderness at 2 hours. The bird will be ready when the legs wiggle freely at the joints. Uncover and allow to brown for approximately 30 minutes. When bird is done, remove from the roasting pan and keep warm. Make a sauce from the pan drippings by removing as much of the fat as possible from the pan without disturbing the natural drippings. Place the pan over high heat to caramelize the remaining juices, but be careful not to burn. Deglaze the drippings with wine, scraping the pan with a spatula. Add chicken stock, bring to a low boil and reduce to approximately 1 cup. Strain through a fine sieve and season to taste

with salt and pepper. Serve with sliced capon. This sauce is also excellent served over pasta as a side dish to the capon.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Smothered Chicken and Maque Choux Casserole

PREP TIME: 1 ½ Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This recipe incorporates two of Bayou Country's greatest dishes, Baked Chicken and Corn Maque Choux. This recipe was often cooked for Sunday lunch in many homes along the River Road.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-pound) fryer chicken, cut into serving pieces
- ½ cup bacon drippings
- 4 ears fresh corn
- 1 cup shoepeg corn
- 1 cup whole kernel corn
- 2 cups (150-200 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 1 cup onion, chopped
- ½ cup celery, chopped
- ½ cup green bell pepper, chopped
- ½ cup red bell pepper, chopped
- ¼ cup garlic, diced
- ¼ cup andouille, finely diced
- 2 cups tomatoes, coarsely chopped
- 2 tbsps tomato sauce
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- salt and black pepper
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Select tender, well-developed ears of corn and remove shucks and silk. Using a sharp knife, cut lengthwise through the kernels to remove them from the cob. Scrape each cob using the blade of the knife to remove all milk and additional pulp from the corn. This is important since the richness of the dish will depend on how much milk and pulp can be scraped from the cobs. In a 7-quart cast iron dutch oven, melt bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Sauté chicken in oil until golden brown on each side. Add corn, onion, celery, bell peppers, garlic and andouille. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes, tomato sauce, stock and shrimp. Continue cooking until juices from the tomatoes and shrimp are rendered into the dish, approximately 15-20 minutes. Add green onions and season to taste using salt and pepper. Cover dutch oven and bake 1 hour until chicken is tender and the full flavors of corn and shrimp have developed.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

"Backfield in Motion" Buffalo Wings

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

SERVES: 3-4

COMMENT:

Former LSU football star, Lyman White owned his own restaurant and was known for his wings. Lyman has now passed his delicious wing recipe on to me.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 dozen chicken wings
- oil for deep frying
- 1/2 tsp season salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp Zatarain's Creole Seasoning
- 1/2 stick of margarine, melted
- 2 cups of Louisiana Hot Sauce

METHOD:

Heat oil in Fry Daddy to 350 degrees. Season chicken with salt, black pepper, garlic powder and Zatarain's Creole Seasoning. Put chicken in oil and let fry for 12-15 minutes. In a separate bowl, mix margarine and Louisiana Hot Sauce. Take chicken out of oil and put into the hot sauce bowl and mix thoroughly.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

1st & 10 Black-Eyed Pea, Chicken & Sausage Jambalaya

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Jambalaya has become the best known rice dish in America. The origin of this dish cannot be disputed. When the early Spanish settlers came to New Orleans, in the early 1700's, they brought with them the recipe for their famous paella. Since the ingredients for paella were not to be found in South Louisiana, their recipe was quickly adapted to the products at hand. Oysters and crawfish replaced clams and mussels in the recipe. Andouille took the place of ham and the new dish emerged from the paella pans of the Spanish. Since the main ingredient in the dish was rice, the dish was named "Jambon a la yaya." Yaya is the African word for rice and there is no argument that the "black hand in the pot" had a tremendous influence on our jambalaya. Today, the dish is made with many variations and with whatever is available. The most popular combination, however, is pork, chicken and andouille.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (12-ounce) can black-eyed peas
- 3 cups chicken, diced
- 2 pounds heavy-smoked sausage, sliced
- 1/2 cup bacon drippings
- 2 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 1 cup bell peppers, diced
- 1/2 cup garlic, minced
- 8 cups chicken stock
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and cayenne pepper
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- 5 cups Uncle Ben's Long Grain Rice, uncooked

METHOD:

In a 7-quart cast iron dutch oven, heat bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Add smoked sausage and cook until fat is rendered and sausage is browned, approximately 15 minutes. Do not burn bacon fat. Sauté diced chicken until dark brown on all sides and some pieces are sticking to the bottom of the pot, approximately 15 minutes. This is very important as the brown color of jambalaya is derived from the color of the meat. Tilt the pot to one side and ladle out all oil, except for one large cooking spoon. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Continue cooking until all vegetables are well caramelized, however, be very careful as vegetables will tend to scorch since the pot is so hot. Add chicken stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cook all ingredients in stock approximately 15

minutes for flavors to develop. Add mushrooms, green onions, parsley and black eyed peas, including the liquid from the can. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. I suggest that you slightly over-season since the rice tends to require a little extra seasoning. Add rice, blending well into the seasoning mixture. Reduce heat to low, cover and cook 30-45 minutes, stirring at 15 minute intervals. Do not uncover except to stir.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Bricks and Mortar Chicken

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-pound) fryer
- 2 sprigs rosemary, finely minced
- ½ tsp dried thyme
- ½ tsp dried basil
- 3 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 1 tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- ½ tsp paprika
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- juice from one lemon
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 bricks, wrapped in heavy foil

METHOD:

Using a sharp, boning knife, split the chicken lengthwise into 2 halves. Remove the backbone, breastbone and the first 2 joints from each wing. Rinse chicken well and pat dry. Place the 2 halves on a large cookie sheet, skin side down. In a small mixing bowl combine rosemary, thyme, basil, garlic, salt, pepper, paprika, olive oil and lemon juice. Mix well to incorporate all ingredients. Spoon half of the mixture evenly over the 2 chicken halves, rubbing well into the meat. Turn chicken over, skin side up, and repeat the process making sure to rub the seasoning above and under the skin. Cover chicken with clear wrap and refrigerate for a minimum of 4 hours, but preferably overnight. Remove chicken from refrigerator and allow to sit at room temperature for 1 hour before cooking. Heat vegetable oil in a cast iron skillet over medium-high heat. Place chicken in skillet, skin side down, and immediately place 2 foil-covered bricks on top, pressing down to flatten the chicken. Let cook, undisturbed, until skin side is crispy, approximately 15 minutes. Remove bricks, turn chicken over and replace bricks. Continue cooking for an additional 12-15 minutes or until thigh meat is cooked thoroughly. Depending on portion size, this recipe serves 4 quarters or 2 halves.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Creole Chicken and Biscuits

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Often in Cajun Country, left-over biscuits or French Bread was used as a starch in place of rice or potatoes. The desire to seek variety gave rise to a dish that, in many cases, was better than the original. This is one such recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-pound) fryer, halved
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 1 onion, quartered
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 6 cloves garlic, mashed
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 1/2 cups onions, diced
- 1 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell peppers, diced
- 1/2 cup yellow bell peppers, diced
- 1/4 cup garlic, minced
- 1 can Rotel tomatoes, drained
- 1 tsp basil, chopped
- 1 tsp thyme, chopped
- 2 quarts chicken stock
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 6 homemade biscuits

METHOD:

Place halved chicken in a stockpot along with carrots, onion, celery and garlic. Add 2 1/2 quarts cold water. Bring to a low boil, reduce to simmer and cook until chicken is tender, but not falling apart, approximately 30-40 minutes. Once chicken is tender, strain and reserve 2 quarts of de-fatted stock and cool chicken, skin and debone. Place stock and deboned meat on the side for later use. In a dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add flour and, using a wire whisk, stir until dark brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add Rotel tomatoes, basil, thyme and hot chicken stock, 1 cup at a time, until a slightly thickened stew is achieved. Add bay leaf, mushrooms and half of the green onions. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. While sauce is cooking, preheat oven to 350 degrees F. After sauce has cooked 30 minutes, add chicken and season to taste using salt and pepper. Additional

stock or water may be necessary to retain stew-like consistency. Add remaining green onions, parsley and adjust seasonings if necessary. When ready to serve, heat biscuits thoroughly in oven and, when hot, split in half. Place the bottom half in the center of a 10-inch plate and top with a generous portion of the chicken fricassee. Top with the remaining biscuit half. Garnish with parsley.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Tailgater's Smoked Chicken

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

Smoking chicken is one of the easiest techniques for cooking the bird on an outdoor grill. This recipe requires a little bit of grilling and a little bit of smoking. It is perfect for any outdoor event, but especially tailgating.

INGREDIENTS:

3 chickens, halved
 ½ pound margarine
 ½ cup apple cider vinegar
 ¼ cup Steen's Cane Syrup
 2 tbsps basil, chopped
 2 tbsps thyme, chopped
 2 tbsps tarragon, chopped
 1 tbsp Creole seasoning
 salt to taste
 black pepper

METHOD:

On one side of your barbecue grill, start up coals according to manufacturer's directions. Leave the opposite side of the grill free of coals. Place 2 to 3 generous handfuls of your favorite smoke wood in a pail of water. This will be added to the coals later. In a small saucepan, melt margarine over medium-high heat. Add vinegar, Steen's Cane Syrup, basil, thyme, tarragon, Creole seasoning and salt. Add black pepper until the mixture seems to turn black. This takes a lot of pepper for the recipe, but you may wish to cut back depending on your personal taste. Simmer ingredients 3 to 5 minutes and remove. Place in a bowl to later use as a basting sauce. Season the chicken to taste using salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. Place chicken halves over the hot coals and cook for 15 – 20 minutes turning once or twice. Baste the chickens generously with the basting sauce and move the halves to the side of the pit without the coals. Place your favorite smoke wood over the hot coals, close the lid of the pit and allow the chicken to cook and smoke until the skin is crispy and dark and juices run clear, approximately 1 to 1 ½ hours.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Ratatouille Stuffed Chicken - Melrose Plantation

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The use of multiple vegetables in casseroles and stuffings was prevalent throughout the English, Spanish and German sections of North Louisiana. Large gardens guaranteed an ample supply of the needed ingredients for casseroles, soups and stuffings. This vegetable stuffing was often used in the kitchens of Creole Louisiana.

INGREDIENTS:

6 large deboned chicken breasts, skin-on
 1/4 cup butter
 1/4 cup onions, chopped
 1/4 cup celery, chopped
 2 tbsps red bell peppers, chopped
 2 tbsps yellow bell peppers, chopped
 1 tsp garlic, diced
 1/4 cup tomatoes, diced
 1/4 cup black olives, chopped
 1/2 cup yellow squash, diced
 1/2 cup zucchini, diced
 1 cup eggplant, diced
 1/4 cup tomato sauce
 pinch of thyme
 pinch of basil
 salt and pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 1/2 cup seasoned Italian breadcrumbs
 1 cup flour for dusting
 1/4 cup olive oil for sautéing

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a sharp paring knife cut a pocket lengthwise through the center of the breast. This pocket will be filled with the stuffing later. In a large sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes, black olives, squash, zucchini and eggplant. Continue to sauté until vegetables are cooked but not mushy, add tomato sauce and blend well. Season to taste using thyme, basil, salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Sprinkle in breadcrumbs and stir well into the vegetable mixture. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Once the mixture is cool, divide into 6 equal portions. Season chicken thoroughly using salt and pepper. Stuff ratatouille into the pockets of each chicken breast. Secure the opening with a toothpick then dust breast lightly in seasoned flour. In a heavy-bottomed sauté pan, heat olive oil over medium high heat. Sauté chicken breast 3 at a time until golden brown on each side, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Remove the

breasts to a baking dish and bake until cooked thoroughly, approximately 15 minutes. Serve over your favorite Creole Marinara sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Coq Au Vin

Prep Time: 2½ Hours

Yields: 6-8 Serving

Comment:

This classic French braised chicken dish is normally made with an older rooster or a large baking hen, which allows for longer cooking time. Long braising ensures that the flavors of the meat, vegetables, spices and wine will fully infuse. This dish can be made with white or red wine; however, red is preferred. For best results, I always braise Coq Au Vin in the oven rather than on the stovetop.

Ingredients:

6 large leg quarters OR whole baking hen
 salt and black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 ¾ cup flour
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 ½ pound bacon, chopped
 ¼ cup cognac
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced carrots
 12 garlic cloves, halved
 12 pearl onions, peeled
 3 cups Burgundy wine
 3 cups beef stock or beef bouillon
 1 tbsp tomato paste
 18 button mushrooms
 1 bay leaf
 1 cup demi-glace (optional)
 2 tbsps chopped bittersweet chocolate
 1 cup fresh or frozen early peas

Method:

Preheat oven to 400°F. If using a whole baking hen, cut into 6–8 serving pieces. Season with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Season flour lightly with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Dust chicken in flour, shaking off excess. In a large Dutch oven or roasting pan, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Sauté bacon, stirring constantly until bacon fat is rendered, taking care not to burn oil. Using a slotted spoon, remove bacon. In same pan, cook 3–4 pieces of chicken at a time 3–5 minutes on each side or until golden brown, turning occasionally. Remove chicken from pan and set aside. Once chicken is browned, deglaze with cognac taking care because it may ignite when it hits the pan. Add onions, celery, carrots and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add pearl onions and cook an additional 2–3 minutes. Blend wine and beef stock into vegetable mixture. Whisk tomato paste into simmering liquid. Return chicken pieces to pan. Add stock if necessary to cover chicken by ¼

inch. Add mushrooms and bay leaf. Bring to a rolling boil, cover and place in oven for 1½ hours. Check for tenderness, because age and size of bird will determine cooking time. Chicken should be fork tender, but not falling apart. When done, gently remove chicken from braising liquid and place on a sheet pan. Return braising liquid and vegetables to stovetop. Bring to a low boil over medium-high heat. If necessary, thicken sauce with 1–2 tablespoons dark brown roux. When sauce is thickened, adjust seasonings using salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Add demi-glace. Blend in chocolate and peas. Simmer 10–12 minutes or until peas are tender. Return chicken to braising liquid and reheat. When ready to serve, place a portion of chicken in center of a soup bowl and top with sauce and braised vegetables.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Spicy Fried Chicken Pasta Salad

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

One of the greatest challenges faced when planning an outdoor patio party is determining the accompaniments to the main dish and whether they should be served hot or cold. Here in Bayou Country one characteristic of our Cajun and Creole dishes is that most may be served either way and still taste great! This treatment of leftover fried chicken is sure to win praises when added as a main ingredient to an otherwise simple pasta salad.

INGREDIENTS:

6 pieces cold, spicy fried chicken
 6 cups cooked rotini pasta
 6 boiled eggs, yolks separated
 1 cup mayonnaise
 1 tbsp Creole mustard
 1/4 cup onions, minced
 1/4 cup celery, minced
 1 tsp garlic, chopped
 1/4 cup red bell peppers, minced
 1/4 cup green bell peppers, minced
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 1/2 cup sweet pickle relish
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

If you don't have leftover fried chicken, simply take a trip to your favorite fried chicken fast food outlet and pick up 6 pieces of their spicy version. Personally, I love Popeyes. Debone chicken and cut into cubes, making sure that the skin is left intact. Set aside until later. In a large mixing bowl, mash egg yolks well with a fork, then add mayonnaise and Creole mustard, blending well into the yolks. Finely dice egg whites and add to the mixture. Combine all remaining ingredients except the chicken and pasta and mix well until all seasonings are thoroughly coated with the mayonnaise sauce. Add rotini pasta blending well into the mixture, then gently toss in the cold fried chicken cubes. Season to taste using salt and pepper. Place on a large serving platter and garnish with boiled eggs, or you may wish to surround the pasta with additional whole pieces of hot fried chicken.

NOTE: Since the mayonnaise sauce is a typical blend for potato salad, you may wish to add your own special seasoning blend to personalize the dish. The most important flavor aspect here is the seasoning applied to the chicken prior to frying.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Cassoulet

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 6 to 8

COMMENT:

Cassoulet is a rich combination of white beans baked with a variety of meats and seasonings. The variety of cassoulets is as infinite as the stars in the heavens. Each region of France has its typical variety in much the same fashion as gumbo is to Louisiana.

INGREDIENTS:

5 cups great northern beans
 5 quarts light beef or chicken stock
 1/2 pound pork salt meat, cubed
 1/2 pound pork butt, cubed
 2 pounds duck, beef or chicken
 1 pound smoked sausage
 1 pound bacon, cubed
 2 cups onions, diced
 1/2 cup celery, diced
 1/4 cup garlic, chopped
 1/2 cup puréed tomatoes
 3 cups dry white wine
 1/2 tsp thyme
 2 bay leaves
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In a large saucepot, place the beans with the stock and salt meat. Bring to rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cook until beans are al dente, approximately 45 minutes. Do not overcook. While beans are boiling, place cubed pork butt and other meat along with sausage into a stockpot. Cover meat by 2 inches with water. Bring to a rolling boil and cook until meat is tender, approximately 45 minutes. When beans and meats are tender, drain and combine stocks. In a heavy-bottom saucepot, place cubed bacon and render fat over medium-high heat. When bacon is lightly brown, add onions, celery and garlic. Sauté 3 to 5 minutes, or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes and white wine. Reduce to 1/2 volume. In a large corning ware baking dish, place beans and poached meats, cover with vegetable mixture and stir to blend well. Ladle in enough of the combined stocks to cover the beans by 1/2 inch. Add thyme and bay leaves and season to taste using salt and pepper. Cover and bake approximately 30 to 45 minutes or until the majority of the water has been absorbed into the cassoulet. Serve as vegetable or entrée.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Our Best...Forget the Rest...Southern Fried Chicken

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

For best results, keep the oil temperature between 350 degrees F and 360 degrees F. Also, 2 cups buttermilk may be substituted for the saltwater solution used to soak the chicken pieces. Proceed as directed.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 quarts water
- 2 tbsp salt
- 1 (3-4 pound) broiler-fryer chicken, cut into 8 pieces
- 1 tbsp salt
- 1 tbsp pepper
- 1 tbsp granulated garlic
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- salt, pepper and granulated garlic to taste
- 2 cups vegetable oil
- ¼ cup bacon drippings

METHOD:

Combine 3 quarts water and 2tablespoons salt in a large bowl. Blend until dissolved. Add chicken pieces then cover and refrigerate 8 hours. Drain chicken; rinse with cold water and pat dry. Combine salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Sprinkle seasoning mixture on chicken. In a gallon-size, heavy-duty, zipper bag, season flour with additional salt, pepper and garlic. Place 3 pieces of chicken in bag. Seal then shake to coat completely. Place floured chicken on a cookie sheet to dry slightly. Repeat procedure with remaining pieces. In a 12-inch cast iron skillet or chicken fryer heat vegetable oil and bacon drippings to 360 degrees F. Place chicken into oil, skin side down. Do not overcrowd pan. Cover and cook 6 minutes; uncover and cook 9 minutes. Turn chicken pieces; cover and cook 6 minutes. Uncover and cook 5 to 9 minutes, turning pieces during the last 3 minutes for even browning, if necessary. Drain chicken on a wire rack or on a paper towel-lined plate placed over a large bowl of hot water.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chicken Maque Choux

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This is just one more attempt by the Cajuns to create a dish using 2 ingredients available most of the year. Maque Choux has been seen as a soup, vegetable and now as an entree. This proves that when we like a flavor, we create a dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3 lb) fryer
- 8 ears young tender corn
- 1 cup flour
- 3/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 2 cups canned tomatoes
- 2 tbsps tomato sauce
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 2 cups chicken stock
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- dash of hot sauce

METHOD:

Cut chicken into serving size pieces. Season well with salt and cracked black pepper. Dust pieces in flour on all sides until well coated. In a heavy-bottom dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Saute chicken and brown well on all sides. When browned, remove from pot and keep warm. In the same oil add corn, onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic, green onions and tomatoes. Saute 3 to 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato sauce and mushrooms, return chicken to the pot and stir well into the vegetables. Add chicken stock, cover and reduce to simmer and cook until chicken is tender, approximately 45 minutes. Season to taste using salt, cracked black pepper and a dash of hot sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chicken Stew Cabanocey

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The fricassee or stewed chicken has been the most popular poultry dish among the Cajuns and Creoles. The traditional chicken stew was always prepared on Sunday in our home and is still today a family favorite.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (3-4 lb) stewing hen
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 cup onions, chopped
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- 1 cup bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup garlic, diced
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 6 cups chicken stock
- 6 fresh chicken livers
- 1 cup green onions, sliced
- 1 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Cut stewing hen into serving pieces. In a 2-gallon heavy-bottom sauce pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Depending on the size, some of the larger cuts, such as the breasts, may be cut into 2 pieces. Add flour, and using a wire whisk, stir constantly until light brown roux is achieved. Do not scorch. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. When browned, add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and mushrooms. Sauté approximately 10 to 15 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add hen pieces and sauté in roux mixture for 5 to 10 minutes. Slowly add chicken stock, 1 ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook for 1 hour or until hen is tender. Add chicken stock if necessary to retain volume of liquid. Add chicken livers, green onions and parsley and season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Cook an additional 20 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Spicy Honey Drummettes

TIME: 40 Minutes

MAKES: 28 pieces

COMMENT:

The obvious marriage between natural spice and oriental.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 lbs chicken drummettes
- 1 cup honey
- 2 tbsp Worcestershire Sauce
- 2 tbsp Soy Sauce
- 1 tsp red pepper, flakes
- Salt to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Rinse drummettes and pat dry. Arrange in single layer on a baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine remaining ingredients until well blended. Spoon half of honey mixture over drummettes; bake 10 minutes. Using tongs, turn drummettes over. Spoon remaining honey mixture over drummettes; bake 10 minutes longer. Let cool slightly before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

MAMA'S CHICKEN FRICASSÉE

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

The best fricassée is made like Mama's, in an old cast iron pot. Mama would always fry her chicken first, and many times she had to fry extra because the kids would eat it before it got to the stew. In Louisiana it is traditional to finish a fricassée with sour cream.

Ingredients:

1 (3-pound) fryer chicken
 1½ cups flour
 1 cup vegetable oil
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced bell peppers
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 1½ quarts chicken stock
 1 cup sliced mushrooms
 1 cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 1 cup sour cream
 salt and black pepper to taste
 Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

Rinse chicken under cold running water then cut it into 8 serving pieces. Drain chicken in colander. Season meat with salt, pepper and hot sauce. In a large Dutch oven, heat ½ cup vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Dust chicken in 1 cup of flour, shaking off excess. Once oil is hot, fry pieces, a few at a time, until golden brown on all sides. Caution: Heat may need to be adjusted to avoid scorching flour and oil. Remove chicken and set aside. Retain pan drippings for roux. If necessary, add oil to pan to reach ½ cup of drippings. Whisk in remaining flour, stirring until a golden brown roux is achieved. Sauté onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic in roux 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chicken stock, a little at a time, until stew-like consistency is achieved. Return fried chicken to pot and add mushrooms. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce heat to simmer and cook 45 minutes or until chicken is tender. Blend in green onions, parsley and sour cream. Season with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Additional stock may be needed to retain consistency. Serve over steamed white rice or noodles.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chicken & Sausage Jambalaya

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Jambalaya has become the best known rice dish in America. The origin of this dish cannot be disputed. When the early Spanish settlers came to New Orleans, in the early 1700's, they brought with them the recipe for their famous paella. Since the ingredients for paella were not to be found in South Louisiana, their recipe was quickly adapted to the products at hand. Oysters and crawfish replaced clams and mussels in the recipe. Andouille took the place of ham and the new dish emerged from the paella pans of the Spanish. Since the main ingredient in the dish was rice, the dish was named "Jambon a la yaya." Yaya is the African word for rice and there is no argument that the "black hand in the pot" had a tremendous influence on our jambalaya. Today, the dish is made with many variations and with whatever is available. The most popular combination, however, is pork, chicken and andouille.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pounds cubed chicken
- 2 pounds sliced smoked sausage
- 1/4 cup Crisco or bacon drippings
- 2 cups chopped onions
- 2 cups chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped bell pepper
- 1/2 cup diced garlic
- 8 cups beef or chicken stock
- 2 cups sliced mushrooms
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- 1/2 cup chopped parsley
- salt and cayenne pepper
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- 5 cups Uncle Ben's Long Grain Rice, uncooked

METHOD:

In a seven quart cast iron dutch oven, heat Crisco or bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Sauté cubed chicken until dark brown on all sides and some pieces are sticking to the bottom of the pot, approximately thirty minutes. This is very important as the brown color of jambalaya is derived from the color of the meat. Add smoked sausage and stir fry an additional ten to fifteen minutes. Tilt the pot to one side and ladle out all oil, except for one large cooking spoon. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Continue cooking until all vegetables are well caramelized, however, be very careful as vegetables will tend to scorch since the pot is so hot. Add stock, bring to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Cook all ingredients in stock approximately fifteen minutes for flavors to develop. Add mushrooms, green onions and parsley. Season to taste using salt,

pepper and Louisiana Gold. I suggest that you slightly over-season since the rice tends to require a little extra seasoning. Add rice, reduce heat to very low, cover and cook thirty to forty-five minutes, stirring at fifteen minute intervals. Do not uncover except to stir.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Oven-fried Chicken

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

Take pride, it's oven-fried. If you want to eat crispy chicken on a more frequent basis, we recommend this oven-fried version. Southern Living Test Kitchens staffers Julia Dowling and Vanessa Ward developed this recipe. The results speak for themselves. The secret is baking the chicken at a high temperature, ensuring that almost-fried crispness.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 quart water
- 1 tsp salt
- 6 chicken drumsticks
- 4 bone-in chicken breast halves, skinned
- ½ cup nonfat buttermilk
- 3 cups cornflake crumbs
- 2 to 3 tsp Creole seasoning
- 2 tsp dried Italian seasoning
- ½ tsp garlic powder
- 1/2 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1/2 tsp ground red pepper (optional)
- Vegetable cooking spray

METHOD:

Combine water and salt in a large bowl; add chicken pieces. Cover and refrigerate 8 hours or overnight. Drain chicken; rinse with cold water, and pat dry. Place chicken in a shallow dish; pour buttermilk over chicken, turning pieces to coat. Combine cornflake crumbs, Creole seasoning, Italian seasoning, garlic powder and ground black pepper in a gallon-size, heavy-duty, zip-top plastic bag. Add red pepper, if desired. Place 2 pieces of chicken in bag; seal. Shake to coat completely. Remove chicken, and repeat procedure with remaining pieces. Place coated chicken, bone side down, in a 15-x 10-x 1-inch jellyroll pan coated with cooking spray, and spray chicken with cooking spray. Place pan on the lowest rack in oven. Bake at 400 degrees F for 45 minutes (do not turn).

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Ellie Mathews' Salsa Couscous Chicken - (Winner of the 1998 Pillsbury Bake-Off)

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups hot cooked couscous or rice (cook as directed on package)
- 1 tbsp olive or vegetable oil
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped almonds
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 8 chicken thighs, skin removed
- 1 cup Old El Paso® Garden Pepper or Thick 'n Chunky Salsa
- ¼ cup water
- 2 tbsps dried currants
- 1 tbsp honey
- ¾ tsp cumin
- ½ tsp cinnamon

METHOD:

While couscous is cooking, heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until hot. Add almonds; cook 1 to 2 minutes or until golden brown. Remove almonds from skillet with slotted spoon; set aside. Add garlic to skillet; cook and stir 30 seconds. Add chicken, cook 4 to 5 minutes or until browned, turning once. In medium bowl, combine salsa and all remaining ingredients; mix well. Add to chicken; mix well. Reduce heat to medium; cover and cook 20 minutes or until chicken is fork-tender and juices run clear, stirring occasionally. Stir in almonds. Serve chicken mixture with couscous.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chicken Bayou Lafourche with Andouille Tarragon Cream

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings



Comment :

Bayou Lafourche flows from the Mississippi River in Donaldsonville, La., to the Gulf of Mexico. Over the past 200 years, many of the Creole cultures have settled this area. These families have developed many interesting cooking methods not only for seafood, but also for poultry and beef. This recipe combines crawfish, a staple of the bayou, with chicken and traditional Cajun andouille.

Ingredients for Chicken:

- 6 boneless chicken breasts
- ¼ pound chopped crawfish tails
- ¼ pound jumbo lump crabmeat
- 2 tbsps diced tasso
- ¼ cup minced onions
- ¼ cup minced celery
- ¼ cup minced red bell peppers
- 1 tsp minced garlic
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- ½ tsp Herbsaint
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ½ cup Italian bread crumbs
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- 1 cup Petit Marché Stone Ground Cornmeal
- ½ cup Whirl butter oil
- 1 tbsps chopped fresh herb mix (basil, tarragon, rosemary, etc.)

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Pound chicken breasts lightly to flatten. Season with salt and pepper. In a 1-quart mixing bowl, combine all remaining ingredients except cornmeal and oil. Blend well and adjust seasonings if necessary. Place an equal amount of stuffing in center of each breast, roll into a turban shape and secure with toothpicks. Dust lightly in cornmeal and set aside. In a 10-inch sauté pan, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken and sauté until brown on all sides. Remove chicken from pan, place in a baking dish and bake 20–30 minutes. Keep warm.

Ingredients for Andouille Tarragon Cream:

¼ cup andouille, diced
1 tbsp chopped tarragon
¼ cup Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Butter
1 tbsp sliced shallots
1 tbsp minced garlic
1 tsp flour
1 ounce white wine
1 cup heavy whipping cream
½ cup crawfish stock
salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add shallots, garlic and andouille. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Blend in flour, add tarragon and deglaze with white wine. Stir in cream and stock then reduce to half volume. Season with salt and pepper. Serve under Chicken Bayou Lafourche with wilted red kale.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Sauteed Chicken Livers Orleans

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Chicken was so predominant on the farms in early Louisiana that many a unique chicken dish emerged from the Cajun kitchen. This recipe dates back to the early 1900's and today is still a favorite in the city of New Orleans.

INGREDIENTS:

2 dozen chicken livers
 1/4 pound butter
 1/4 cup diced onions
 1/4 cup diced celery
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 1 tbsp diced garlic
 1 bay leaf
 1 pinch file powder
 1 pinch dry thyme
 1 pinch of basil
 2 ounces brandy
 1 cup veal demi-glace
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 2 tbsps finely chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom saute pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Saute chicken livers until brown on all sides, approximately five minutes. Add onions, celery, green onions, garlic, bay leaf, file powder, thyme and basil. Continue to saute until vegetables are wilted, about three to five minutes. Deglaze pan with brandy and add veal demi-glace. Bring to a slight boil, reduce heat to simmer and cook an additional five minutes. Season to taste using salt and cracked black pepper. Remove from heat and add finely chopped parsley for color. Serve four pieces of liver covered with sauce in au gratin dish, or over toast points or pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Prairie Chicken & Dumpling Stew

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Prairie chicken was abundant in America's Heartland and made a great soup or stew, especially when mixed with fresh spring or winter vegetables. This recipe is particularly good in the fall or winter and can be prepared with game birds as well.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups chicken meat, diced
- 1/2 cup butter
- 2 cups diced onions
- 2 cups sliced celery
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 2 cups sliced carrots
- 2 cups diced potatoes
- 2 cups biscuit mix
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp black pepper

METHOD:

NOTE: Prepare 2 cups of biscuit mix such as Bisquick, according to package directions. Once biscuit dough is formed, place in a bowl, cover with clear wrap and set aside.

In a 7-quart cast iron Dutch oven, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add chicken and sauté 5-10 minutes until cooked and lightly browned. Add onions and celery. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Sprinkle in flour, and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Add chicken stock, one ladle at a time, until all is incorporated. Bring mixture to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. Add carrots and potatoes. Continue to cook 10-15 minutes. Season mixture to taste using salt and pepper. Spoon the biscuit mix into the pot in the shape of dumplings. Cover and cook approximately 1 hour. Serve in a soup bowl with a generous amount of the vegetables and a couple of the dumplings.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Six-Spice Encrusted Breast of Chicken

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

There are hundreds of interesting combinations of spices, herbs, and seasonings used to coat meats and seafood to create unique or regional flavors. This six-spice rub combines many of the ethnic flavors found in the cultures surrounding New Orleans and is one of my favorites.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 boneless chicken breasts
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup
- 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
- For the spice rub
- 3 tablespoons curry powder
- 3 tablespoons ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons allspice
- 3 tablespoons paprika
- 2 tablespoons powdered ginger
- 2 tablespoons Zatarain's Creole Seasoning

METHOD:

Mix all the spices together well. Add oil, cane syrup and balsamic vinegar. Prior to sautéing or grilling, rub the chicken breast well with the spice rub. Sauté (using a non-stick frying pan for best results) or grill for 7 to 10 minutes on each side. I especially like to serve this spice encrusted chicken over a generous serving of Zatarain's Jambalaya or Zatarain's Dirty Rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Rum Jerk Chicken

PREP TIME: 2 hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This jerk blend can be rubbed into just about any meat, fish or seafood, or used in salads and soups to add pizzazz. If you find that you especially like Rum Jerk, make a batch and store it in a tightly sealed jar in the refrigerator for quick, convenient use.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 fryer
- 2 tbsp garlic powder
- 2 tsp ground ginger
- 2 tsp ground allspice
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 tsp salt
- 3 bay leaves, crumbled
- 2 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/2 cup lime juice
- 1/2 cup minced onions
- 1 cup dark rum
- 1/2 cup Steen's Cane Syrup

METHOD:

Cut fryer into 8 serving pieces. Combine the garlic powder, ginger, allspice, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt, bay leaves, and cayenne pepper, and store in a tightly covered jar in the refrigerator. When ready to jerk, combine this mixture with the lime juice, onion, rum and syrup. Give the chicken at least 2 hours in the marinade in the refrigerator, and use it frequently during grilling or broiling as a baste. I recommend grilling the chicken on your home-style bar-b-que pit using your favorite smoke wood for extra flavor.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

French-Roasted Chicken Sandwich

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

A great sandwich only has two elements, bread and filling. The key to making the ultimate sandwich is to discover which two elements, when combined creates a masterpiece. This is one example.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 4 pound roasted chicken (reserve pan drippings) Or
- 1 deli-style rotisserie chicken.
- 8 slices (1/2 inch thick) Italian or French Bread
- 2 cups shredded lettuce
- 1 tomato, sliced
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced

INGREDIENTS FOR DRESSING:

- 3/4 cup heavy duty mayonnaise
- 1/4 cup Creole mustard
- 1/4 cup Heinz Hot & Spicy Ketchup
- 1 tsp capers (drained)
- 1/2 tsp Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp minced red bell pepper
- 2 tbsp minced yellow bell pepper
- 1/4 cup minced celery
- 1 tbsp finely minced garlic
- 2 tbsp minced parsley
- Salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Remove dark meat from chicken legs and thighs and finely chop. Slice breast meat against the grain, cover with clear wrap and set aside. In a mixing bowl combine all dressing ingredients, blend well and season to taste using salt and pepper. In a separate bowl combine the chopped leg and thigh meat of chicken with enough of the dressing mixture to coat well and to your liking. Cover and set aside. Any remaining dressing can be refrigerated and used as a sandwich spread or seafood cocktail mix. Brush one side of the bread slices with the reserved pan drippings and grill or broil for 1 minute. Divide the dark meat chicken salad evenly on 4 slices of grilled bread and top with the sliced breast meat and an equal portion of the shredded lettuce, sliced tomato and onion. Top with the second slice of bread slice in half and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

The Ballistic Chick

PREP TIME: 2½ hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Many backyard cooks pride themselves in the art of "beer can" or drunken chicken. The process of grilling a chicken standing over a can filled with liquid and spice seasonings is quite popular today, and many companies are now producing cast iron or aluminum cookers made especially for this style of barbecue or smoking.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 whole chickens
- 1 jar Cajun Injector Creole Butter flavor
- 1 can of beer
- 1 cup of root beer
- 2 tbsps of Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp of Louisiana Gold hot sauce
- salt, pepper and granulated garlic to taste

METHOD:

Using a barbecue grill with a lid large enough to place two whole chickens standing, start the charcoal as usual until briquettes are ashen. Wash chickens well and inject thoroughly with Cajun Injector sauce. Season chicken well inside and out with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Mix remaining ingredients including any left over Cajun Injector sauce in a bowl. Blend well and pour into the open end of a beer can. You may wish to use one of the many cast iron or aluminum chicken cookers now available on the market to stand your chicken in the pit. Grill at 350-375°F or bake in the oven 2 to 2½ hours or until chickens are done. When chicken legs pull away easily, the bird will be done.

NOTE: It is perfectly acceptable to cook the birds at a lower temperature for a longer period of time by building the coal bed on one side of the pit and placing the chickens on the opposite side of the grill away from direct heat.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chicken Piccata

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This is a simple, Italian dish that can be found in most of your favorite Italian restaurants. Why not take this recipe and make it at home?

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 chicken breasts, deboned
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1 cup chicken broth or chicken stock
- 3 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsps capers, drained
- 4 lemon slices, thinly cut
- 4 tbsps unsalted butter
- ¼ cup chopped parsley
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Slice each chicken breast in half. Place chicken halves between sheets of plastic wrap and pound to an even thickness. Season chicken to taste with salt and pepper, then dust in flour lightly, shaking off the excess. In a large sauté pan, heat vegetable oil over medium-high heat. Sauté cutlets a few at a time, 2-3 minutes on each side. Remove cutlets from pan and pour off all but 2 tablespoons of oil. Add garlic and sauté one minute. Deglaze with white wine. Bring to a rolling boil and reduce to half volume. Add chicken stock, lemon juice, capers and lemon slices. Return chicken to the pan and simmer in stock for 1-2 minutes or until heated thoroughly. Add the butter and parsley, swirling the pan constantly until butter sauce is achieved. Remove from heat and serve with rice or pasta.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Oodles of Noodles Casserole

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Here is a great way to use up that leftover fried chicken from Sunday night's game. It combines fried chicken with that old favorite, macaroni and cheese. What could be more flavorful?

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (8-ounce) package elbow macaroni, cooked
- ¼ cup butter
- 1 cup diced onion
- 1 cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- 1 cup smoked sausage, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp flour
- ½ tsp paprika
- ½ tsp mustard
- 1½ cups milk
- 1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese [BUY NOW](#)
- 1½ cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- ½ cup diced spicy fried chicken, de-boned
- ¾ cup bread crumbs
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- salt and black pepper to taste



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a saucepan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add sausage and brown slightly. Do not burn the butter. Add onions, celery and red bell peppers and sauté 3–5 minutes until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and blend to create white roux, do not brown flour. Add paprika, mustard and milk. Bring to a low boil stirring occasionally. Add Creole cream cheese and cheddar cheese blending well into the mixture. Stir until cheese is melted, about 5 minutes. Fold in fried chicken pieces then season to taste using salt and pepper. Remove from heat and set aside. In a bowl, combine bread crumbs and Parmesan cheese. Set aside. Spray a 9" x 13" casserole dish with a non-stick spray. Place cooked macaroni in the dish and blend in the cheese mixture. Top with breadcrumbs and bake uncovered for 20 minutes or until lightly browned.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Warm Duck Breast Salad with Asian Spices and Hazelnut Vinaigrette

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

We particularly enjoy this dish as a first course, as it seems to wake up the taste buds. Try to include some spicy greens - mizuna, red mustard, nasturtium leaves - in the mix. The challenging part of this dish is to serve it quickly so that the greens stay chilled and the duck is still warm.

Marinade INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tsp minced garlic
- 2 tbsp minced green onions
- 2 tsp oyster sauce (see Note)
- 1 tsp light soy sauce
- 1 tsp rice wine or dry sherry
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp 5-spice powder (see Note)

Vinigrette INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1/3 cup hazelnut oil
- 1/3 cup walnut oil or light olive oil
- 1 tbsp minced chives
- 1 tsp light soy sauce
- 1/4 tsp sugar
- 1/3 cup toasted, coarsely chopped hazelnuts
- 2 whole duck breasts (1 to 1 1/4 pounds each)
- 4 to 6 ounces mixed baby salad greens
- Edible flowers (nasturtium, borage) for garnish (optional)

METHOD:

Bone duck breasts and trim off excess fat. Cut each breast in half and place in a shallow dish. Combine ingredients for marinade and coat breasts thoroughly. Allow to marinate for 2 hours at room temperature. In a small bowl, combine all ingredients for vinaigrette at least 2 hours before serving, to allow the flavors to develop.

To assemble salad, preheat broiler or prepare a fire in a charcoal grill. Artfully arrange baby greens on individual serving plates. Wipe excess marinade off duck breasts and grill or broil until medium-rare, about 2 1/2 minutes per side. Do not overcook. Quickly slice breast on the bias and arrange on plates with greens. Drizzle vinaigrette over greens. Garnish with flower petals, if available. Serve immediately.

NOTE: These ingredients can be found in Asian markets.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chicken in Hoisin Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

One thing about Chinese cooking, the ingredients and flavor are so similar to my beloved Cajun. Oh, don't for a minute think that this is a strange statement! The Chinese and the Cajuns both love seafood, shellfish, chicken, pork, fresh vegetables, spice, and hot sauce. Our kitchens really do have much similarity. This is one such recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 chicken breasts, sliced lengthwise into strips
- 2 tbsps soy sauce
- 2 tbsps dry Sherry
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- 4 scallions, green and white parts, sliced diagonally
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, peeled and minced
- 2 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 medium green bell pepper, seeded and julienned
- 1 medium red bell pepper, seeded and julienned
- 1 medium yellow bell pepper, seeded and julienned
- 1/4 cup hoisin sauce
- 1/4 cup dry sherry
- Pinch salt
- 2 tsps freshly ground black pepper
- 1/8 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 2 tbsps water
- 1 tbsp sesame oil

METHOD:

In a mixing bowl, combine soy sauce, sherry and cornstarch. Add the chicken and toss until coated. Let stand for at least 10 minutes. In a wok or sauté pan, heat the vegetable oil over high heat until just smoking. Add the scallions and ginger, and stir-fry for about 30 seconds. Add the chicken, reserving any remaining marinade, and stir-fry for about 5 minutes, until the chicken is just done. Add the green, red and yellow peppers and stir-fry for another minute. Add the hoisin sauce, sherry, salt and black pepper, and combine. Add water to the marinade remaining in the bowl and add to the wok. Toss to blend well and simmer until slightly thickened. Remove from the heat, drizzle with the sesame oil and serve immediately over fried rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Chicken Sauce Piquante - (Something Old)

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

STORY:

Although I created this recipe myself, I have vivid memories of my grandmother and mother cooking sauce piquante. I came from a big family of 12 and whenever lunch or dinner came around, we always seemed to have lots of company. In those days, we raised our own chickens, grew our own fresh vegetables, rice, corn and sugar cane, and our milk came right from the cow! Although it was hard work to cook back then, we sure had a great time. A few years ago when Hurricane Andrew came through, everybody was without electricity and most of the young people had no idea what to do under those circumstances. Our 6 children, with all of their children, came to our house and I cleaned out the freezer of chickens and vegetables and cooked up a sauce piquante large enough to feed our family and anyone else in the neighborhood. This recipe is also good with seafood or game. Thelma Lemoine - Lafayette

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 chicken breasts
- 1 1/2 cups oil
- 1 cup flour
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
- 2 tbsps diced garlic
- 1 (10-ounce) can Rotel tomatoes
- 1 (16-ounce) can whole tomatoes
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 2 tbsps sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- black pepper
- cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp oregano
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire Sauce
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season chicken breasts using salt and peppers and sauté until golden brown. Remove from oil and keep warm. Add flour to pot and, using a wire whisk, stir until dark brown roux is achieved. Add tomato paste and continue to stir 5-6 minutes or until the sauce is a nice brown color. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes and chicken stock. Blend well into the roux mixture, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to

simmer. Add chicken, sugar, salt and peppers. Blend well. Add oregano and Worcestershire. Allow to simmer 45 minutes or until chicken is tender. Finish with green onions and parsley. Serve over a plate of steamed white rice.

CHICKEN SAUCE PIQUANTE - (Something New)

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 skinless chicken breasts
- 1 cup oil-less roux
- 1 quart defatted chicken stock, unsalted
- 1/4 cup oil
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper
- 2 tbsps diced garlic
- 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste, no salt added
- 1 (10-ounce) can Rotel tomatoes
- 1 (16-ounce) can whole tomatoes no salt added
- 2 tbsps sugar
- salt substitute
- black pepper
- cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp oregano
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire Sauce
- 1/2 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

Dissolve oil-less roux in stock and set aside. In a cast iron dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season chicken breasts using salt substitute and pepper and sauté until golden brown. Remove from oil and keep warm. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomato paste, tomatoes and chicken stock/roux mixture. Blend well into the vegetable mixture, bring to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add chicken, sugar, salt substitute and peppers. Blend well. Add oregano and Worcestershire. Allow to simmer 45 minutes or until chicken is tender. Finish with green onions and parsley. Serve over a plate of steamed white rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Creole Chicken & Grits

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Since this Creole style chicken is served over grits, I have to assume that it was originally a breakfast dish. This isn't surprising because the Planter's Breakfast was served around 10:00 am. In many cases this was the main meal of day. In fact, it was the origin of our present day brunch.

INGREDIENTS:

6 boneless chicken breasts
 1/2 cup oil
 1/2 cup flour
 3/4 cup chopped onions
 1/2 cup chopped celery
 1/4 cup chopped bell pepper
 1/4 cup diced garlic
 2 bay leaves
 1-8 ounce can tomato sauce
 1 quart chicken stock
 1 tbsp chopped oregano
 1 tbsp chopped basil
 1 tsp chopped thyme
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 1/4 cup chopped parsley
 6 cups cheese garlic grits

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Season chicken breasts with salt and pepper. Saute in oil until lightly browned on both sides, remove and set aside. Sprinkle in flour and using a wire whisk, stir constantly until dark roux is achieved. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Saute three to five minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add bay leaves and tomato sauce, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Pour in chicken stock, one cup at a time, until sauce consistency is achieved. Add oregano, basil and thyme. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Bring mixture to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Add chicken breasts to the sauce and allow to cook thirty minutes. Add more stock should sauce become too thick. Add green onions and parsley and adjust seasonings if necessary. Place one cup serving of hot cheese garlic grits in the center of a ten inch plate, add one chicken breast and top with generous serving of Creole sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Low Carb Lemon-Rosemary Chicken with Marsala Sauce

Prep Time: 1 ½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment: Not only does this dish have a low carbohydrate count, only 2 grams per serving, but it is also very easy to put together. This quick, delicious meal allows you to give your family something healthy for dinner and gives you time to spend time with them, too.



Ingredients:

- 2 whole fryer chickens
- 7 (2-inch) sprigs rosemary
- 4 tbsps butter
- salt, pepper and granulated garlic to taste
- paprika for color
- 1½ tsps olive oil
- 2 lemons
- ½ cup chicken broth
- ½ cup dry Marsala wine

Method:

Preheat oven to 450°F. Remove giblets from chicken, rinse and pat dry. Insert a rosemary sprig and 1 tablespoon butter between the meat and skin of each breast half. Season chickens with salt, pepper, granulated garlic and a small amount of paprika for color. Rub oil on skin. Put a rosemary sprig and half of a lemon in each bird's cavity. Roast chickens for 1 hour. Chicken is done when skin is crisp, juices run clear and an instant-read thermometer reads 170°F when inserted in the thickest part of the thigh. Transfer chickens to a cutting board to rest. Remove leaves from remaining rosemary sprig and coarsely chop. Grate rind from remaining lemon. Pour liquid from roasting pan into a measuring cup or gravy separator. Degrease liquid and reserve. Place roasting pan on two burners over high heat. Add broth to pan and scrape up browned bits from bottom. Cook about 1 minute, until broth is reduced by half. Add wine, chopped rosemary and grated lemon rind. Cook 1-2 minutes to allow flavors to blend. Add reserved pan juices and any accumulated juices from resting chickens to rosemary-lemon mixture in roasting pan. Transfer to a gravy boat. Carve chickens and serve with sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Stuffed Tomato with French-Roasted Chicken Salad

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 12 Servings



Comment: Use a roasted chicken from the local supermarket for this recipe, or bake your own flavored with a multitude of fresh herbs. For an elegant presentation, stuff the chicken salad into hollowed out tomatoes.

Ingredients:

- 6 cups cold roasted chicken
- 6 boiled eggs, separated
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 tbsp Creole mustard
- ¼ cup minced onions
- ¼ cup minced celery
- 1 tsp chopped garlic
- 2 tbsps minced red bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced green bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced yellow bell peppers
- 2 tbsps minced orange bell peppers
- 2 tbsps chopped parsley
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- ½ cup sweet pickle relish
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

Bone and cube chicken. If desired, remove skin and set chicken aside until later. In a large mixing bowl, use a fork to mash egg yolks well. Add mayonnaise and Creole mustard, blending well into yolks. Dice egg whites and add to mixture. Combine all remaining ingredients except chicken. Mix until all seasonings are thoroughly combined with mayonnaise sauce. Add cold roasted chicken cubes and gently toss. Season with salt, pepper and hot sauce. This salad can be served in a hollowed out tomato or on bread as a chicken salad sandwich.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

HONEY GLAZED CHICKEN BREAST SANDWICH

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Now you can make a delicious chicken sandwich at home! The honey mustard marinade gives this chicken sandwich a boost of flavor.

Ingredients:

- 4 boneless chicken breasts
- 4 tablespoons honey
- 1/3 cup orange juice
- 1 teaspoon orange zest
- ¼ teaspoon grated ginger
- ½ teaspoon minced garlic
- 3 teaspoons Creole mustard
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper

Method:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except chicken and blend well. Pour mixture in a plastic zipper bag. Add chicken breasts, turning to coat all sides. Refrigerate at least 30 minutes, but flavor is enhanced with longer marinating time. Lightly grease grill rack. Remove chicken from marinade and discard remaining marinade. Grill chicken on medium heat until done, turning occasionally. Serve on bread with lettuce and tomatoes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Pati a la Rapure (Rappe Pie)

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 12 Servings

Ingredients:

- 1 (5-pound) chicken
- 3 medium onions, quartered
- 1 medium carrot, sliced
- 1 celery stalk
- 2 tsps salt
- 8 strips bacon
- 15 medium potatoes (about 8 pounds)
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2 medium onions, diced
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 4 ounces butter

Method:

In a large stockpot, place chicken, quartered onions, 1 carrot, celery and salt. Add water until ingredients are just covered. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to simmer and skim off any impurities that rise to the surface. Simmer 2½ hours or until meat is tender. When done, remove skin and bones from chicken and cut meat into pieces. Strain stock, discard vegetables and reserve liquid. Preheat oven to 400°F. Fry bacon until crisp. Peel potatoes then grate very fine, or purée in a blender. Squeeze 1 cup of potatoes at a time through a clean dish towel to remove liquid. Reserve all liquid. Place drained potatoes in a large bowl. Measure liquid. Measure out an equal amount of chicken stock then discard potato liquid. In a stockpot bring chicken stock to a rolling boil. Gradually stir hot stock into potatoes and mix thoroughly until all lumps are removed. As boiling stock cooks potatoes, they will take on a jelly-like appearance. Season with salt and pepper and stir vigorously. Cover bottom of a well-greased pan with half of the potato mixture. Arrange pieces of chicken, diced onions, carrots and pats of butter on top, distributing evenly. Cover with the other half of potato mixture and another layer of onions, carrots and butter. Top with strips of bacon to form the crust. Bake 2 hours or until a browned crust forms. Serve piping hot.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Hot Pot Garlic and Rosemary Chicken

Prep Time: 4–8 Hours

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Crockpots seem to be replacing Dutch ovens in today's kitchens due to the hectic schedules of many working families. The crockpot is ideal for many traditional Cajun and Creole dishes especially when the trinity of seasonings are added to mimic the Dutch oven dishes. This is a fine example.

Ingredients:

2 pounds chicken pieces
 6 garlic cloves, slivered
 1 sprig rosemary
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup green bell peppers
 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes
 1 (6-ounce) can tomato paste
 2 tbsps white wine vinegar
 2 bay leaves
 1 tsp sugar
 ¼ tsp salt
 ¼ tsp cracked black pepper
 4 ounces sliced fresh mushrooms
 grated Parmesan cheese for topping
 1 pound penne pasta, cooked

Method:

In a 3½–5 quart slow cooker, combine onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Add chicken to cooker. In a medium mixing bowl, combine undrained diced tomatoes, tomato paste, white wine vinegar, bay leaves, sugar, salt and pepper: Mix well. Pour over chicken. Add rosemary and mushrooms. Cover and cook on low 7 hours or on high 3½ hours. When ready to serve, remove bay leaves and rosemary. Cook pasta according to package directions. Serve chicken and sauce over pasta. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Irish Eyes Chicken Pot Pie

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment:

There's a great population of Irish living in the Irish Channel of New Orleans. Their recipes are often a combination of their heritage with a touch of the Crescent City. This recipe incorporates their love of meat pies with the cathead biscuits of the South.

Ingredients for Chicken Stew:

8 boneless/skinless chicken thighs, cubed 1-inch
 1½ pounds bacon, diced
 ¼ cup olive oil
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 2 cups coarsely diced onions
 ¼ cup sliced garlic
 ½ cup flour
 2 quarts chicken stock or bouillon
 3 cups sliced carrots, 1-inch
 3 cups sliced celery, 1-inch
 1 bay leaf
 1 tbsp fresh thyme leaves
 2 cups diced red potatoes, skin-on
 8 Cathead Biscuits (see recipe)

Method:

In a 1-gallon stockpot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add bacon to render fat, but do not brown. Add chicken and season lightly with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Stir-fry until lightly browned. Add onions and garlic. Sauté 2–3 minutes. Add flour, stirring constantly to form a white roux. Do not brown. Add stock and blend well into roux mixture. Add bay leaf, thyme, carrots, celery. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30 minutes. Add potatoes and cook approximately 20 minutes or until tender. NOTE: Stock should become slightly thickened after 30 minutes of cooking, and the addition of potatoes will further thicken sauce. While cooking proceed with the Cathead Biscuit recipe. When ready to serve, place 1 (6–8 ounce) ladle of Chicken Stew into a soup bowl. Place 1 hot Cathead Biscuit in center.

Ingredients for Cathead Biscuits:

2 cups flour
 1 tbsp baking powder
 ½ tsp baking soda
 ½ tsp salt
 1/3 cup shortening
 4 tsps butter
 2/3 cup buttermilk

Method:

Preheat oven to 450°F. In a mixing bowl, sift flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Blend well. Using a pastry cutter, cut in shortening and butter until it resembles coarse cornmeal. Using a large cooking spoon, blend buttermilk into flour mixture until moistened. On a lightly-floured surface, knead dough until it comes together. Do not overwork dough as the less it is handled, the flakier the biscuits. Break dough into 8 equal portions and pat approximately ½-inch thick onto a baking sheet. Biscuits should be irregular in shape, but no more than ½-inch high and 1-inch apart. Bake 10–15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and brush with melted butter.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

POULTRY

Chicken and Sausage Grits Casserole

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment:

These grits are not the soupy, creamy breakfast variety. Here, the grits form a hearty casserole flavored by chicken and smoked sausage.

Ingredients:

1 fryer, cleaned and quartered
 1 pound smoked sausage, sliced
 1 cup yellow stone-ground grits
 2 large Creole tomatoes, chopped
 ½ cup bacon, chopped
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 ¼ cup butter
 ¼ cup sliced garlic
 1 large yellow onion, diced
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 3 cups water
 ½ cup heavy whipping cream
 1 tsp salt
 2 tbsps canned chopped green chiles

Method:

In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, cook bacon until crisp. Remove bacon, but reserve drippings in pan. Season chicken with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Brown chicken 2–4 minutes on each side, remove. Add sausage, tomatoes, butter, garlic, onions and bell peppers. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Preheat oven to 350°F. Mix in water, cream, salt and chiles then bring to a boil. Gradually stir in grits, blending well. Bring to a boil then turn off heat. At this point, line the bottom of a casserole dish with chicken pieces. Pour grits mixture over chicken. Cover tightly with foil and bake 45–55 minutes, or until chicken is cooked.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

LEMONADE-GLAZED CHICKEN

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

A twist on a summer favorite—use lemonade ingredients to marinade this baked chicken for a fresh family treat.

Ingredients:

4 chicken quarters
 1/3 cup lemon juice
 1 tbsp grated lemon zest
 ¼ cup minced onions
 ¼ cup olive oil
 1 tbsp brown sugar
 1 tbsp cracked black pepper
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tsp salt

Method:

Combine all ingredients except chicken in a small mixing bowl. Reserve 2 tablespoons of mixture for later use. In a gallon-sized plastic zipper bag, combine remaining marinade and chicken. Seal bag and knead to coat chicken well. Refrigerate at least 4 hours, preferably overnight. Preheat oven to 375°F. Remove chicken from marinade. Discard marinade. Arrange chicken on a microwave-safe plate and cover with waxed paper. Microwave on high 5 minutes. Turn chicken, cover and microwave an additional 5 minutes. Transfer chicken and reserved marinade to baking pan. Cover with foil and bake 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 10–15 minutes or until browned.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

TANDOORI BAKED CHICKEN

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

In this recipe the tart yogurt highlighted by Eastern spices gives the chicken an incredible flavor. Enjoy this "Tandoori" chicken even if you don't have a traditional clay or brick Tandoor oven.

Ingredients:

6 chicken leg quarters
 1 pint Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Bulgarian-Style Plain Yogurt
 ½ cup Louisiana hot sauce
 1 tbsp fresh grated peeled ginger
 3 cloves garlic, minced
 1 tbsp paprika
 1½ tsps ground cumin
 1 tsp ground coriander
 salt to taste
 Creole seasoning to taste
 granulated garlic to taste

Method:

Remove skin and visible fat from leg quarters. Rinse under cold running water and pat dry. Using a paring knife, make slits randomly across chicken. Place chicken in a large mixing bowl. In a small mixing bowl, combine all remaining ingredients and mix well. Pour mixture over chicken pieces, turning to coat evenly. Cover bowl with foil and refrigerate at least 1 hour. Preheat oven to 375°F. Place chicken and marinade in a greased baking pan. Cover with foil and bake 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 10–15 minutes or until browned.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

BRINED SOUTHERN DEEP-FRIED CHICKEN

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Brining is a pretreatment in which the chicken is placed in a salt water solution known as brine. This produces a moist and well-seasoned bird. Normally, meat loses about 30 percent of its weight during cooking, but if you brine it first, you can reduce the moisture loss by as little as 15 percent. Additionally, brining enhances juiciness. The muscle fibers absorb the flavored liquid during the brining period. Some of this liquid will get lost during cooking, but since the meat is in a sense more juicy at the start of cooking, it ends up much juicier and flavorful. I recommend brining in two plastic trash bags, one inside the other, to hold the chicken and brine. I then place the bags in a large metal or ceramic bowl. Once the brine is added, I seal the bag with a wire tie and place in the bottom of a refrigerator, shaking the bag every couple hours. You may also place the bird in a small ice chest, breast down, covering with the brine. If using the ice chest method, chill the brine to approximately 40°F, and then add 5–6 ice packs to maintain temperature overnight. A smaller bird works best when brining.

Ingredients for Brine:

- 1 chicken fryer
- 1 gallon cold water
- ½ cup kosher salt
- OR 1 cup table salt
- ¼ cup brown sugar
- 2 bay leaves, crushed
- ½ tbsp dried thyme
- ½ tbsp dried basil
- ½ tbsp dried sage
- 1 tbsp granulated garlic
- 1 tbsp black pepper

Method:

Begin brining 1 day prior to cooking. Use a fresh chicken or other bird, completely thawed. NOTE: Check label to ensure that bird has not been pre-injected with salt or other flavorings, otherwise it will be overseasoned. Wash bird completely. In a large stockpot, dissolve salt in 1 gallon cold water. Add brown sugar, and stir until completely dissolved. Add bay leaves, thyme, basil, sage, granulated garlic and pepper. Place 2 trash bags inside of a large metal bowl, and place chicken breast down in bags. Add brine mixture, tie bags with wire ties, and place in bottom of refrigerator. Chill 12–14 hours. NOTE: If desired, cut chill time in half by doubling all ingredients except water. Remove chicken from brine, rinse well inside and out under cold running water. Completely dry using paper towels.

Ingredients for Chicken:

vegetable oil for frying
salt and black pepper to taste
1 cup flour

Method:

Cut chicken into 8 serving pieces. Heat vegetable oil in a homestyle deep fryer such as a FryDaddy®. Season chicken and flour separately with salt and pepper. In a gallon-size plastic zipper bag, place seasoned flour and 2 pieces of chicken. Seal bag and shake to coat each piece of chicken completely. Remove chicken, and repeat process with remaining pieces. Fry chicken, a few pieces at a time, until golden brown. Drain chicken on a paper towel-lined plate over a large bowl of hot water.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

PAMPY'S FRIED CHICKEN

Prep Time: 45 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Any restaurant with a claim to this recipe is eager to put their name on it, but when a steaming hot plate of crispy fried chicken comes to the table garnished with minced fresh garlic and parsley, the true fried chicken connoisseur knows Austin Leslie is behind it. Order a Famous # 9 at Leslie's latest haunt, Pampy's in New Orleans, and the best fried chicken you ever tasted will be accompanied by stuffed peppers and potato salad. Famous # 9 is a reference to a menu item at Chez Helene where he first made his mark. And while the parsley and garlic topping is his signature, Chef Austin credits the original recipe and technique to Bill Turner who taught him how to make it when he was in high school and worked at Turner's restaurant, Portia's, on Rampart Street.

Ingredients:

1 chicken fryer cut into 8 pieces
 ½ cup peanut oil
 salt and black pepper to taste
 1 egg
 1 cup evaporated milk
 1 cup water
 ½ cup flour
 4 tbsps fresh minced garlic
 4 tbsps fresh minced parsley

Method:

Wash chicken pieces in cool water, pat dry with paper towels and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Set aside. In a medium mixing bowl, whisk egg, evaporated milk and water. Season with salt and pepper. Place flour in a separate bowl. Combine garlic and parsley in small mixing bowl and set aside. Heat oil in a cast iron skillet to 350°F. NOTE: Oil should come about halfway up sides of skillet. Adjust amount in accordance with skillet size. One piece at a time, starting with heaviest pieces, dip chicken into egg wash, squeeze, dip into flour and place gently in skillet. Do not overcrowd skillet. Maintain temperature of 350°F. Use tongs and long fork to turn chicken often for 7–8 minutes. Remove chicken from oil with tongs, pierce with fork and squeeze. Place chicken back in oil approximately 7–8 minutes. Chicken is done when no longer hissing and juices run clear. Remove from oil and place on paper towels to drain. Immediately top with a sprinkle of garlic and parsley mixture. Continue until all the chicken is cooked.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

OVEN-BARBECUED CHICKEN

Prep Time: 1–1½ Hours

Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment:

If prepared properly, no one will know this "barbecue" was prepared in the oven. This technique was created by an old chef who loved barbecue, but whose health did not permit him to cook outdoors. This recipe allowed him to enjoy barbecued chicken anytime.

Ingredients:

2 (2½-pound) fryer chickens
 ½ cup melted butter
 ½ cup Worcestershire sauce
 ¼ cup Louisiana hot sauce
 2 tbsps liquid smoke
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 1½ tbsps chili powder
 1½ tbsps cumin
 ¾ cup brown sugar
 1 cup water
 1–1½ cups barbecue sauce

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Cut chicken into serving pieces, rinse under cold water and set aside. Mix together all liquid ingredients. Coat chicken well with liquid mixture. Season chicken with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Place it in a large baking pan with a 1-inch lip. Sprinkle chili powder and cumin on all sides of chicken. Turn chicken skin-side up and space evenly in pan. Rub an equal amount of brown sugar on each piece. Pour water into bottom of pan. Cover pan with foil then place on center rack of oven. Bake 45 minutes. Uncover and bake 10–15 minutes, basting with barbecue sauce until golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Hail Caesar Turkey Salad

PREP TIME: 20 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

After a big Thanksgiving dinner, we all look forward to a lighter meal on the days following. The leftover turkey makes a perfect salad for lunch or dinner.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 loaf French or Italian bread
- 3 tbsp extra-virgin olive oil, plus ½ cup
- 1 garlic clove, minced, plus 3 cloves peeled
- ½ tsp dried oregano
- salt and pepper
- 3 anchovy fillets
- 2 tps Dijon mustard
- ½ lemon, juiced
- 2 tbsps red wine vinegar
- 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 romaine lettuce hearts, cut in 2-inch pieces
- 2 bunches watercress, trimmed
- 1 hard boiled egg
- 1 cup shredded Pecorino Romano
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- 1 pound cooked turkey, diced

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Remove the crust from the bread, then cut the loaf into cubes. Place the bread cubes in a mixing bowl. In a small pan over medium heat, add the oil, minced garlic and oregano. Cook for 2 minutes to infuse the flavors. Pour the oil over the bread cubes and toss. Season with salt and pepper. Spread the bread cubes in a single layer on a baking pan and bake for 10 minutes. The croutons should be crisp but not too hard to pierce with a fork.

In a food processor, combine remaining garlic, anchovy, mustard, lemon, vinegar, Worcestershire, salt and pepper. Process for 30 seconds to make a paste. Add the olive oil and process again until combined. Combine the romaine and watercress in a large salad bowl. Grate the hard boiled egg into the bowl. Drizzle the dressing over the salad and toss to coat the leaves. Add the cheese, croutons, parsley and turkey, toss well. Season with salt and pepper, and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Day After Thanksgiving Turkey Gumbo

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Everyone has turkey leftovers from Thanksgiving. Why not make a warm, soothing gumbo instead of the traditional sandwich? After a long day of after-Thanksgiving sale shopping, wouldn't it be nice to come home to a steaming bowl of turkey gumbo?

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups cooked turkey, cubed
 1 pound Jacob's andouille, sliced*
 1 cup vegetable oil
 1½ cups flour
 2 cups onions, diced
 2 cups celery, diced
 1 cup bell pepper, diced
 ¼ cup garlic, minced
 3 quarts chicken or turkey stock
 2 cups green onions, sliced
 1 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stockpot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Once oil is hot, add flour and using a wire whisk, stir constantly until roux is golden brown. Do not scorch. Should black specks appear, discard and begin again. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and cook approximately 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add andouille, blend into vegetable mixture and sauté 15 minutes. Add chicken or turkey stock, one ladle at a time, stirring constantly until all is incorporated. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook approximately one hour. Add turkey, green onions and parsley and cook an additional 10 minutes. Season to taste using salt and pepper and serve over cooked rice.

*You can find Jacob's Andouille at 505 W. Airline Hwy., LaPlace, LA 70068. Phone: (985) 652-9080

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Roasted Turkey Sandwich

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

Here is a twist on the traditional day-after-Thanksgiving sandwich. With a great spicy dressing and grilled bread, you couldn't dream of a better sandwich.

INGREDIENTS:

Any remaining sliced turkey breast and chopped dark turkey meat
 8 slices (1/2 inch thick) Italian or French Bread
 2 cups shredded lettuce
 1 tomato, sliced
 1 red onion, thinly sliced

INGREDIENTS FOR DRESSING:

¾ cup heavy duty mayonnaise
 ¼ cup Creole mustard
 ¼ cup Heinz Hot & Spicy Ketchup
 1 tsp capers (drained)
 ½ tsp Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
 1 tsp lemon juice
 2 tbsp minced red bell pepper
 2 tbsp minced yellow bell pepper
 ¼ cup minced celery
 1 tbsp finely minced garlic
 2 tbsp minced parsley
 Salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Remove dark meat from turkey legs and thighs and finely chop. Slice breast meat against the grain, cover with clear wrap and set aside. In a mixing bowl combine all dressing ingredients, blend well and season to taste using salt and pepper. In a separate bowl combine the chopped leg and thigh meat of turkey with enough of the dressing mixture to coat well and to your liking. Cover and set aside. Any remaining dressing can be refrigerated and used as a sandwich spread or seafood cocktail mix. Brush one side of the bread slices with the reserved pan drippings and grill or broil for 1 minute. Divide the dark meat turkey salad evenly on 4 slices of grilled bread and top with the sliced breast meat and an equal portion of the shredded lettuce, sliced tomato and onion. Top with the second slice of bread slice in half and serve. Remove dark meat from turkey legs and thighs and finely chop. Slice breast meat against the grain, cover with clear wrap and set aside. In a mixing bowl combine all dressing ingredients, blend well and season to taste using salt and pepper. In

a separate bowl combine the chopped leg and thigh meat of turkey with enough of the dressing mixture to coat well and to your liking. Cover and set aside. Any remaining dressing can be refrigerated and used as a sandwich spread or seafood cocktail mix. Brush one side of the bread slices with the reserved pan drippings and grill or broil for 1 minute. Divide the dark meat turkey salad evenly on 4 slices of grilled bread and top with the sliced breast meat and an equal portion of the shredded lettuce, sliced tomato and onion. Top with the second slice of bread slice in half and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Turkey Turnovers

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

One of the greatest challenges experienced by a home cook after the holidays is how to make use of leftovers. One can do it simply or simply elegant. This is one of those elegant presentations of a simple recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups boneless turkey, chopped
 ½ cup butter
 ½ cup onions, diced
 ¼ cup celery, chopped
 ¼ cup red bell pepper, chopped
 2 tbsps garlic, minced
 ½ cup all purpose flour
 2 ½ cups hot chicken stock
 1 ½ cups heavy whipping cream
 ¼ cup pimentos
 ¾ cup mushrooms, sliced
 ¼ cup carrots, diced
 ½ cup early June peas, frozen
 ¼ cup green onions, sliced
 1 tbsp basil, chopped
 1 tsp thyme, chopped
 salt and pepper to taste
 4 (9-inch) frozen pie shells

METHOD:

In a sauce pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic and sauté 3 – 5 minutes. Add flour, blending well into the vegetables to create a white roux. Using a wire whisk, blend in hot chicken stock and heavy whipping cream. Stir constantly until smooth sauce is achieved. Additional stock may be necessary to retain a sauce like consistency. Add pimentos, mushrooms and carrots and blending well into the mixture. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook, stirring occasionally, for 15 minutes. Add turkey, peas, green onions, basil and thyme and stir well. Return to a simmer and season to taste using salt and pepper. Cook 5 additional minutes. Remove from heat and allow to cool. This may be done overnight. When ready to cook, pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Using a paring knife, cut each pie shell in half, placing a generous portion of the turkey supreme on the bottom edge of each half. Dampen the edges with a small amount of milk or egg yolk. Fold the top over to create a triangle and press closed with the ends of a fork. Pierce the top of the pie to create steam vents. Place the eight turnovers on a large cookie sheet and bake until golden brown and sauce is thoroughly heated in the pie, approximately 20 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Turkey Hash in Puff Pastry

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

SERVES: 5 - 6

COMMENT:

The turkey and ham can be taken from leftovers remaining from the Thanksgiving Day lunch. If you do not have all of the meats on your table, substitute and equal amount of which ever you have.

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups turkey, diced
 3 cups ham, diced
 3/4 cup vegetable oil
 3/4 cup flour
 2 cups onions, diced
 1 cup celery, diced
 1/2 cup red bell pepper, diced
 1/2 cup green bell pepper, diced
 1 tbsp garlic, minced
 2 quarts chicken stock
 2 tbsps basil, chopped
 1 tbsp thyme, chopped
 2 cups potatoes, diced
 1 cup carrots, diced
 1 cup green onions, sliced
 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

The turkey and ham should be cubed from the leftovers remaining from the Thanksgiving Day meal. In a heavy bottom black iron pot, heat oil over medium - high heat. Add flour and using a wire whisk, stir until golden brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Saute 3 - 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add meats and blend into the roux mixture. Add hot stock, one ladle at a time until stew - like consistency is achieved. Add basil and thyme. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook approximately 15 minutes. Add potatoes, carrots, green onions and parsley. Return to a simmer and season to taste using salt and pepper. Cook until potatoes are tender, adding additional stock if necessary to retain consistency.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Deep-Fried Turkey

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 8 - 10

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (16-pound) turkey
- 3 gallons peanut oil
- 8 ounces Wishbone Italian Dressing
- Hot sauce to taste
- Worcestershire sauce to taste
- Salt to taste
- Black pepper to taste
- Cayenne pepper to taste
- Onion powder to taste
- Garlic powder to taste
- Celery salt to taste

METHOD:

Most hardware stores in Louisiana will carry a special pot for deep-frying turkeys. This pot not only enables you to use less oil, approximately three gallons, but includes an apparatus specially designed for standing the turkey on end and lifting it out of the pot. There is a company here in Louisiana that produces a fried turkey seasoning blend and markets it under the trade name "Cajun Injector." This product, designed by Reece Williams, includes all the necessary flavoring ingredients and the injector as well. I have found it to be an excellent choice when deep-frying turkeys. They have made the work of injecting spices into the breasts and thighs of the turkey quite easy. Ask your grocer for this device by name. Should you wish to make your own, just follow this recipe. In a turkey frying pot, heat oil over a propane burner outdoors. Using a candy thermometer, preheat oil to 350 F. In a blender or food processor, combine all seasoning ingredients with Italian dressing and one half cup water. Blend 2-3 minutes to break the dried seasonings into the liquid mixture. Using a poultry injector, season the breast by injecting 2 -3 times on each side and repeat the process on the upper thighs. Slowly submerge the turkey by using the handles included in the frying set two to three inches at a time, to keep the oil from boiling over. Once the turkey is completely submerged, maintain a frying temperature of 335-350 F and cook three minutes per pound or until internal temperature of breast reaches 150-155 F, approximately 50 minutes. Remove the turkey from the oil and allow to sit overnight. Less than two tablespoons of oil will be used in this frying process and may be reused three to four times. A 16-pound turkey will yield approximately 5 1/2 pounds of meat. At 3 ounces per person, you can serve 25 friends a great fried turkey sandwich!

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

John's Roasted Turkey

PREP TIME: 4 Hours

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT:

When buying a turkey you should plan on roughly one pound per person uncooked. Remember to buy the turkey early enough to allow it to defrost in the refrigerator for approximately 2 days prior to roasting. If this is your first roasted turkey, relax. You could not have a better recipe to work from!

Always plan on placing the turkey in the oven, calculating the time necessary for the turkey to rest 30-45 minutes prior to carving.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (15-pound) turkey
- salt to taste
- ground black pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste
- 1/4 pound butter softened
- 2 tbsps garlic, minced
- 6 basil leaves
- 4 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 2 cups carrots, diced
- 3 oranges, quartered
- 8 whole cloves garlic
- paprika for color

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Remove the packet of giblets, which are normally packed in the neck cavity at the front of the turkey and covered with the neck skin. If a wire retainer is holding the legs in place, take care and remove it prior to seasoning the bird. Rinse turkey well, inside and out, with cold water. Place the bird in a baking pan and season generously, inside and out, using salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Extra seasoning should be placed on the inside cavity since the bone structure will prevent the majority of this seasoning from reaching the meat. Blend butter and garlic and rub under the breast skin of the turkey until all is used up. Place 3 basil leaves, in a decorative fashion, under the skin on each side of the breast. The leaves will show up nicely when the turkey is cooked. Place approximately 1/2 of the onions, celery, carrots, oranges and garlic on the inside of the bird, and place the remaining 1/2 around the bird in the pan. Squeeze juice of 2 orange quarters over the turkey breast. Sprinkle paprika lightly across the breast and leg portions and rub evenly for color. This will assist in even browning. Tie the legs in place using butcher's twine, then cover the roasting

pan tightly with aluminum foil. Bake for approximately 3 1/2 hours, then remove foil and check for doneness. The bird is done when the legs pull away easily from the body and the internal temperature reaches 170 degrees F. The aluminum foil covering will allow the bird to cook evenly and retain moisture without over-browning. Once done, remove cover and allow turkey to brown evenly, approximately 1/2 hour. When done, allow bird to rest 1 hour prior to slicing. The bird may be served with its natural drippings, or the juices may be strained and thickened with a light roux. Normally, a turkey will require a cooking time of 12-15 minutes per pound. However, ovens differ and you should check 30 minutes prior to your calculations.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Smothered Turkey Necks in Onion Gravy

PREP TIME: 2 ½ Hours

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

Turkey neck stew or gumbo is often served at large gatherings such as Mardi Gras parties in Louisiana. The reason is simple. First, the meat is inexpensive and quite flavorful, but more important, there's a lot of meat on those turkey necks so they're good for a large crowd and the flavor mimics beef, veal, pork and chicken.

INGREDIENTS:

8 turkey necks
 ½ cup bacon drippings
 2 cups onions, sliced
 1 cup celery, diced
 1 cup red bell pepper, diced
 ¼ cup garlic, minced
 ¼ cup flour
 1 ½ quarts beef or chicken stock
 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
 1 cup green onions, sliced
 ¼ cup parsley, chopped
 salt and black pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

Turkey necks are normally available in packs of 6 in the poultry section of your supermarket. The necks are usually cut into 2 (6-inch) sections but if they are packaged whole, cut them in half for easier handling. Season turkey necks well using salt, pepper and pepper sauce. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. In a large dutch oven, heat bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Add the larger ends of the turkey necks and cook until golden brown on all sides. Regulate the heat to keep the bacon fat from burning. Continue until all the neck pieces are well browned. Remove and keep warm. In the same dutch oven add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3 – 5 minutes stirring occasionally, or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and blend well into the vegetables. This will help to thicken the finished sauce. Add 1 quart of the stock and Worcestershire sauce, blend well into the vegetables and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat to simmer and add turkey necks, making sure that the stock covers the necks by a minimum of half way. Add additional stock if necessary. Return the mixture to a rolling boil, top with green onions and parsley. Cover, place in oven and bake for 2 hours, checking for tenderness at 1 ½ hours. It is imperative that the meat is tender enough to fall from the bones. If not, allow the necks to continue baking. Serve over steamed white rice or alongside whipped potatoes.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Turkey and Ham Glacé

Prep Time: 2½ Hours

Yields: 15-25 Servings

Comment: Daube Glacé is the most classical of the Creole hors d'oeuvres. Usually made with leftover daube (braised beef), this classical dish has been altered in this recipe to use two of the most popular holiday main dishes, turkey and ham.



Ingredients:

- 1½ pound cooked turkey, 1-inch diced
- 1½ pound cooked ham, ¼-inch diced
- 2 quarts turkey or chicken stock
- ½ cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- ½ cup diced carrots
- ½ cup minced parsley
- salt and cayenne pepper to taste
- 3 envelopes gelatin, dissolved in warm water

Method:

NOTE: To make turkey stock, simmer bones of roasted turkey in 1 gallon of water until reduced to 2½ quarts.

In a cast iron Dutch oven, bring turkey stock to a light boil. Add cooked meat, onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Reduce heat to simmer and allow to cook until turkey begins to string apart. Strain all ingredients from liquid through a fine sieve and set aside. Return liquid to heat and reduce to 1½ quarts. Add carrots and parsley then season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. Using a wire whisk, blend dissolved gelatin into sauce. Remove from heat and allow to cool slightly. Place the strained meat and vegetables into a bundt pan. Ladle stock over the meat, cover with clear wrap and allow to gel in the refrigerator. This glacé is best when allowed to sit for 24 hours so that flavors can develop. Serve with garlic croutons or crackers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Smoked Turkey, Spinach and Roasted Red Pepper Panini

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: 1 Sandwich

Comment: "Panini" is Italian for "sandwich." These hot, grilled, pressed sandwiches have become a lunchtime favorite across America. A Panini is best when made with thin slices of meat and cheese or sliced vegetables. In this panini, we have used smoked turkey slices and Fontina cheese.

Ingredients:

- 2 slices wheat berry bread
- 2 tbsps aioli (garlic sandwich spread)
- ¼ cup baby spinach, stems removed
- 4 ounces sliced turkey
- 2 fillets roasted red peppers, canned
- 2 ounces Fontina cheese, sliced
- olive oil as needed

Method:

Spread aioli on both slices of bread. Place baby spinach on 1 slice. Top with turkey, roasted peppers and cheese. Top with remaining slice of bread. Brush outsides of both slices with olive oil and place on sandwich press. Apply light pressure while closing sandwich press. Allow bread to toast, spinach to wilt and cheese to melt.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Brine Method for Turkey, Duck, Goose or Chicken

Prep Time: 12–14 Hours

Yields: 1 Turkey

Comment:

Brining is a pretreatment in which the turkey is placed in a salt water solution known as brine. This produces a moist and well-seasoned bird. Normally, meat loses about 30 percent of its weight during cooking, but if you brine the meat first, you can reduce the moisture loss by as little as 15 percent. Additionally, brining enhances juiciness. The muscle fibers absorb the flavored liquid during the brining period. Some of this liquid will get lost during cooking, but since the meat is in a sense more juicy at the start of cooking, it ends up much juicier and flavorful. I recommend brining in two plastic trash bags, one inside the other, to hold the turkey and brine. I then place the bags in a large metal or ceramic bowl. Once the brine is added, I seal the bag with a wire tie and place in the bottom of a refrigerator, shaking the bag every couple hours. You may also place the bird in a small ice chest, breast down, covering with the brine. If using the ice chest method, chill the brine to approximately 40°F, and then add 5–6 ice packs to maintain temperature overnight. A smaller bird works best when brining.

Ingredients:

- 1 (12–14 pound) turkey or other fowl
- 2 gallons cold water
- 1 cup kosher salt or 2 cups table salt
- ½ cup brown sugar
- 4 bay leaves, crushed
- 1 tbsp dried thyme
- 1 tbsp dried basil
- 1 tbsp dried sage
- 2 tbsps granulated garlic
- 2 tbsps black pepper

Method:

Begin brining 1 day prior to cooking turkey. Use a fresh turkey or other bird, completely thawed. NOTE: Check label to ensure that bird has not been pre-injected with salt or other flavorings, such as the Butterball brand, otherwise it will be overseasoned. Wash bird completely, removing giblets and neck. In a large stockpot, dissolve 1 cup kosher salt or 2 cups table salt in 2 gallons cold water. Add brown sugar, and stir until completely dissolved. Add bay leaves, thyme, basil, sage, granulated garlic and pepper. Place 2 trash bags inside of a large metal bowl, and place turkey breast down in bags. Add brine mixture, tie bags with wire ties, and place in bottom of refrigerator. Chill 12–14 hours. NOTE: If desired, cut chill time in half by doubling all ingredients except water. Remove turkey from brine, rinse well

inside and out under cold running water. Completely dry bird using kitchen or paper towels. This step allows skin to become crisp during roasting. When ready to cook, see John's Roasted Turkey recipe.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Turkey Hash on Creole Tomato Grits

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

This recipe is especially great the morning after major holidays when there is leftover turkey. You may wish to add leftover diced ham and roast to the turkey for added flavor. What a wonderful way to use leftovers!

Ingredients for Turkey Hash:

6 cups turkey, diced
 ¾ cup vegetable oil
 ¾ cup flour
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 ½ cup diced green bell peppers
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 quarts turkey stock
 2 tbsps chopped basil
 1 tbsp chopped thyme
 2 cups diced potatoes
 1 cup diced carrots
 1 cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

NOTE: I always use the carcass of the turkey to make a flavorful stock for the recipe. (See Stock techniques.) Turkey should be cubed from Thanksgiving day leftovers. In a cast iron pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Whisk in flour until golden brown roux is achieved. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add turkey meat and blend into roux mixture. Add hot stock, 1 ladle at a time until stew-like consistency is achieved. Add basil and thyme. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook approximately 15 minutes. Add potatoes, carrots, green onions and parsley. Return to a simmer and season with salt and pepper. Cook until potatoes are tender, adding additional stock if necessary to retain consistency.

Ingredients for Creole Tomato Grits:

1 cup yellow stone-ground grits
 2 large Creole tomatoes, chopped
 ½ cup bacon, chopped
 ¼ cup butter

¼ cup sliced garlic
3 cups water
½ cup heavy whipping cream
1 tsp salt
2 tbsps canned chopped green chiles
¼ cup shredded mild Cheddar cheese

Method:

In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, cook bacon until crisp. Reserve drippings in pan. Add tomatoes, butter and garlic. Sauté until garlic is tender. Mix in water, cream, salt and chiles then bring to a boil. Gradually stir in grits, blending well. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and cook 15–20 minutes, stirring occasionally until thickened. Remove from heat then blend in cheese until melted. Top with Turkey Hash.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Smoked Duck Ham

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 mallard duck breasts
- 2 tsps salt
- 1 tsp black pepper
- 1 tbsp diced garlic
- 1 tbsps fresh thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsps fresh basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp fresh tarragon, chopped
- 1/2 cup dry red wine
- 1/4 cup Steen's cane syrup or maple syrup
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil
- 2 bottles root beer

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine duck breasts with all remaining ingredients, except root beer. Massage the seasonings well into the breasts. Pour all ingredients from the bowl into a Ziploc bag. Place in the refrigerator for 2 days prior to smoking. Turn the bag often over the 2 days. Heat a home-style smoker according to manufacture's directions. Into the water pan, place one quart of water and the root beer. Soak your favorite wood chips in water and, when ready to cook, place the duck breasts on the top of the smoker. Pour remaining marinating liquid into the water pan of the smoker. Throw two generous handfuls of wet smoke wood onto the hot coals and allow the breast to smoke for approximately 1 hour or until done to your liking. Once done, slice each breasts into 6-8 slices and serve with your favorite dipping sauce or as an entree.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Breast of Duck with Gingered Orange Marinade

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4 - 6

COMMENT:

When sautéing breast of duck I prefer teal, pintail or wood duck. Not only are they smaller in size, but are more tender as well. The Orientals often use the marriage of duck with ginger and sesame, so I thought that this would be the perfect marriage for Louisiana birds as well.

INGREDIENTS:

8 teal or pintail breasts only
 1/4 cup fresh squeezed orange juice
 1/4 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
 1 teaspoon Soy Sauce
 2 teaspoons cracked black pepper
 1/8 pound butter
 2 tablespoons sesame oil 1 cup chicken stock
 1 two-inch piece of ginger root peeled and julienned
 1/2 cup sliced green onions
 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
 1 tablespoon julienned orange peel
 salt to taste

METHOD:

Rinse duck breast well under cold running water. Drain well and place the breasts in a ceramic bowl along with the orange juice, cane syrup, soy sauce and cracked pepper. Blend well and allow to marinate at room temperature for two hours stirring occasionally. In a large sauté pan melt half of the butter with the sesame oil over medium high heat. Remove duck breasts and sauté two to three minutes on each side or until duck breasts are medium rare in the center. Remove and keep warm. Into the sauté pan add chicken stock, remaining marinade from the bowl, ginger, green onions, garlic, and orange peel. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook three to five minutes. Cook until volume is reduced to approximately one half cup then add the remaining butter stirring constantly. Return the duck breast to the sauté pan and heat two to three minutes, then serve. Salt to taste. The duck breast should be sliced and served as an appetizer.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Cajun Fried Duck Breast

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 4

INGREDIENTS:

2 duck breasts, each sliced in 3 pieces
 1 1/2 cup milk
 1 tsp salt
 1/2 tsp black pepper
 1/8 tsp cayenne red pepper
 2 eggs, beaten
 1 cup saltine cracker crumbs
 shortening, lard preferred
 6 quart iron pot

METHOD:

Tenderize breasts slightly with meat hammer. Cut each breast into 3 equal pieces. Soak in milk for 2 hours. Remove duck from milk, dip in beaten eggs, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and dredge in finely crumbled cracker crumbs. Deep fry in large skillet with 1 inch of shortening at medium heat for 20 minutes on each side.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Wild Duck in Orange Cane Syrup Marinade - Rene Beauregard House

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The Spanish brought oranges to Louisiana from South America in the late 1600's. Once sugar cane was introduced into bayou country, these two ingredients were combined to produce a perfect marinade. There is nothing better to my knowledge for tenderizing game than orange juice and cane syrup which are both produced in Louisiana.

INGREDIENTS:

6 small wood or teal ducks
 juice of four oranges
 1/4 cup Louisiana cane syrup
 1/4 cup dry white wine
 1 tbsp chopped thyme
 1 tbsp chopped basil
 1 tbsp chopped sage
 1 teaspoon tarragon
 1 tbsp diced garlic
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 2 cups orange slices
 2 cups game or chicken stock
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine duck, orange juice, cane syrup, wine, thyme, basil, sage and garlic. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Toss ducks well in the marinade and allow to sit at room temperature a minimum of four hours. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. In a large dutch oven, heat oil over medium high heat. Remove ducks from marinade and brown well on all sides. Surround with orange slices and add stock. Cover and bake until tender, approximately one and a half hours. Uncover and allow ducks to brown evenly. Remove ducks and keep warm. Reduce drippings to a sauce consistency and degrease. You may wish to serve the ducks over Creole dirty rice (see recipe) and top with orange sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Roasted Cane River Mallards

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The Cane River runs through the heart of Natchitoches. The early settlers of this Creole town often harvested mallard ducks from this river. There are numerous recipes for the preparation of this delicacy, but I think pot roasting is one of the best. Try substituting a variety of fresh fruit in the place of the apples.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 mallard ducks, cleaned
- 1 tbsp thyme, chopped
- 1 tbsp basil, chopped
- 1 tbsp sage, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste
- 3 medium onions, quartered
- 2 stalks celery, cubed
- 2 tbsps garlic, diced
- 2 red apples, cubed
- 2 green apples, cubed
- 1 cup andouille sausage, cubed
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 red apples, quartered
- 2 green apples, quartered
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 4 tbsps Mayhaw or fruit jelly

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 450 degrees F. Season ducks well inside and out using herbs, salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Stuff the cavities of the ducks with quartered onions, cubed celery, garlic, cubed apples and andouille sausage. In a large dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Brown ducks well on all sides, remove from heat and surround with remaining red and green apples and chicken stock. Drizzle butter over ducks and using a pastry brush, paint the breasts well with jelly. Cover with aluminum foil and roast the birds for 1 1/2 hours. Check for tenderness, remove foil and allow breasts to brown evenly. When done, remove ducks and keep warm. Reduce the stock over medium high heat until thickened to a sauce consistency. Strain the sauce and degrease. To serve, place one half mallard duck on a 10-inch dinner plate and top with a generous serving of sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Smoked Breast of Mallard

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Today, chicken is used more and more on grills and smokers to produce variety in salads and appetizers. We are replacing the traditional breast of chicken with its bayou counterpart, breast of mallard.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 boneless duck breasts
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup Louisiana sugar cane syrup
- 1/4 cup dry red wine
- 2 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- 1/2 cup diced onions
- 1/2 cup diced carrots
- 1 tbsp finely diced garlic
- 2 tbsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp dry thyme
- 1 tsp dry tarragon

METHOD:

Preheat a home style smoker according to manufacturer's directions. You may wish to flavor pecan or hickory chips by soaking them in root beer for a unique flavor. In a one quart mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except duck breasts. Using a wire whip, whisk well to blend all seasonings. Add duck breasts to mixing bowl, cover with marinade and allow to set at room temperature for one hour. Smoke for approximately one to two and a half hours, testing for doneness after one hour. Remove from smoker, slice into quarter inch strips and serve with Creole mustard sweetened with a small amount of Louisiana cane syrup. The sliced breast may also be used on a salad or in a gumbo.

HINT: Domestic duck or Long Island duckling may be substituted in this recipe.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Fresh Spinach Pasta with Smoked Duck, Olives and Porcini Mushrooms

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

This recipe is extremely simple, just as most good pasta dishes are. Any smoked game breasts or legs could be used, not just duck. With a food processor and a pasta machine, pasta dough is a snap to make on your own. If you don't have the equipment, the time, or the inspiration, there's plenty of good fresh pasta available in local markets.

Spinach Pasta INGREDIENTS:

- 1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 large eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 pound spinach, cooked, well-drained, and pureed
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- About 1 tbsp warm water, or as needed

METHOD:

To make pasta, combine flour, eggs, salt, spinach, and oil in a good processor and blend with a steel blade just until dough begins to come together, about 15 seconds. Add drops of water if dough is too dry. It should be firm but not sticky. Turn machine on for 15 to 20 seconds longer to knead dough. Remove, wrap in plastic wrap, and let rest at room temperature for 1 hour. After dough has rested, roll it out and cut it into fettuccine noodles on a pasta machine according to manufacturer's instructions. Drape noodles over a rack or place in a single layer on a flour-dusted towel until ready to cook.

Duck Sauce INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ounce dried porcini mushrooms
- 1 cup warm water
- 1/3 cup slivered shallots
- 6 tbsp olive oil
- 2 cups chopped, seeded ripe tomatoes
- 1/2 cup loosely packed fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 1/2 pound boneless smoked duck meat, julienned
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- Toasted pine nuts and fresh basil sprigs for garnish
- 1/2 cup slivered, pitted oil-cured olives

METHOD:

Combine porcini and warm water and soak for at least 30 minutes. Remove mushrooms and carefully strain soaking liquid to remove any grit or sand. Coarsely chop mushrooms. In a sauté pan over

moderate heat, sauté mushrooms and shallots in oil until shallots just begin to color. Add tomatoes, mushroom soaking liquid, and lives and simmer, uncovered, until liquid is a light sauce consistency, about 10 minutes. Stir in basil and duck and warm through. Season with salt and pepper. Keep warm.

Fill a large pot with water and bring to a rapid boil. Add salt to taste and then add fettuccine. Cook until just tender, drain and toss with duck sauce. Garnish with pine nuts and basil sprigs.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Stuffed Duck Breast

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

My preference in general is to pluck and roast a duck. This is not always desirable, however, if he is quite shot up or the skin has torn for some other reason. This recipe is for just such a dilapidated duck.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 ducks, breasted out
- 1 lb spinach
- 1/4 cup currants, soaked in a little armagnac
- 1/4 cup stock
- 1 egg
- 3/4 cup bread crumbs
- 1 tsp tarragon
- 1 tbsp fresh, chopped basil
- 5 tbsp unsalted butter
- Salt and pepper

METHOD:

Wash the spinach and put it in a pan with a tight lid over a medium heat for a few minutes until the spinach is just barely limp. Let cool and then chop. Combine the spinach with the currants and their juices, the stock, the egg, the bread crumbs, the tarragon and salt and pepper to taste. Cut a pocket in each duck breast and stuff the spinach mixture into the breast. Oven poach the breasts by sautéing them in the butter for just a few minutes. Place in a buttered baking dish and cut a round of wax paper to fit over the top of the dish and butter it. Press the wax paper over the breasts. Cooking for 5 minutes at 400 degrees F or until the meat is springy to the touch.

Make a noisette butter by heating the remaining amounts of butter until it turns a hazelnut brown. Pour over the breasts. Season with salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Cajun Duck Fajitas

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

INGREDIENTS:

3 duck breasts
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 1/2 cup sliced onions
 1/2 cup julienned green bell pepper
 1/2 cup julienned red bell pepper
 1 tbsp chopped garlic
 1 cup shredded lettuce
 1 cup diced tomatoes
 1 cup prepared guacamole
 1 bag tortilla shells
 salt and black pepper
 cumin
 chili powder
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce

METHOD:

In a 3-quart cast iron dutch oven, place ducks in lightly salted water. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until tender. Drain and de-bone meat, cutting into 1/2-inch strips. In a 10-inch cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Season duck with salt, pepper, cumin, chili powder and Louisiana Gold. Stir-fry the duck breasts in the hot oil until golden brown. Add onions, bell peppers and garlic. Reduce heat to medium, cover, and allow vegetables to wilt over the sizzling duck. In a separate cast iron skillet, heat tortilla shells until thoroughly warm. Assemble fajitas by spreading guacamole over the hot tortillas, adding small amounts of the lettuce and tomatoes, and topping each with an equal amount of the duck, onions and peppers. Roll, jelly-roll fashion, and heat until warm.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Roasted Christmas Goose

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

South Louisiana is a haven for game birds. I suppose this is why our state motto is "Sportsman's Paradise." Canadian geese and speckled bellies are found by the thousands here in the marshlands of South Louisiana. This dish uses the domestic goose, but feel free to use the wild species.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (8-10 pound) goose
- 4 cups onions, diced
- 2 cups celery, diced
- 2 cups carrots, diced
- 10 garlic cloves
- 2 cups mushrooms, sliced
- 2 cups red seedless grapes
- 2 red apples, diced
- 2 green apples, diced
- 1/4 cup basil, chopped
- 1/4 cup thyme, chopped
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste
- paprika for color

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Make sure goose is cleaned well inside and out. Remove giblets to the roasting pan. Season the inside cavity of the bird well with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Place a generous amount of onions, celery, carrots and garlic into the cavity. Season the outside of the goose with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Sprinkle with a small amount of paprika for even color. Place the goose into a heavy roasting pan or Dutch oven and surround with remaining seasonings, mushrooms, grapes, apples and herbs. Cover tightly with lid or aluminum foil. Bake for 2 1/2 hours and check for doneness. Goose will be cooked when legs pull away easily from the body. Once done, remove cover and allow goose to brown. The bird may be served with the natural drippings or the juices may be strained and thickened with a light roux.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Blueberry Cornbread Stuffed Game Hens

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Cornish game hens make an elegant dish for a dinner party or special celebration. Their leaner quality lends well to sauces and their natural drippings are very flavorful. I would recommend serving this dish with a dark green vegetable such as asparagus or broccoli and a loaf of crusty French bread.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 Rock Cornish game hens
- 2 cups fresh blueberries
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1/2 pound bulk sausage
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1/4 cup diced celery
- 1/4 cup diced red bell pepper
- 1/4 cup diced garlic
- 1/2 cup diced apples
- 4 cups cooked corn bread
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1 tsp fresh sage, chopped
- 1/2 tsp fresh thyme, chopped
- 1/2 tsp fresh rosemary, chopped
- salt and black pepper
- granulated garlic
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- 3 cups chicken stock
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup dry sherry
- 1/2 cup melted butter

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Rinse Cornish hens under cold running water. Drain well. Place the Cornish hens in a large cast iron dutch oven and sprinkle with the orange juice. Season generously, inside and out, using salt, pepper, granulated garlic and Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce. In a cast iron skillet, melt 1/4 pound of butter over medium-high heat. Add bulk sausage and cook until brown. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add apples, blending well into the sausage mixture. When apples are slightly cooked, pour the mixture into a large mixing bowl. Add blueberries, corn bread, parsley, green onions, sage, thyme and rosemary. Using a wooden spoon, fold the corn bread into the sausage mixture. Add two cups of chicken stock or enough to moisten the corn bread and hold the stuffing together. Add

pecans and season to taste using the salt and pepper. Stuff the Cornish hens with equal amounts of the stuffing, placing any excess stuffing the the corners of the roasting pan. Top the hens with sherry and melted butter. Bake, uncovered, for approximately one hour, basting the hens frequently during the process. When hens are golden brown, remove them from the oven and serve with natural pan drippings.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Fig & Mustard Glazed Cornish Hen on Spinach Salad

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

Serves: 4

COMMENT:

Cornish hen is available in the poultry section of most grocery stores. I love cooking this bird, not only because of its rich flavor, but also because of its perfect size. In this recipe one-half Cornish hen makes for the perfect luncheon entrée.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 Cornish game hens, halved
- 1/2 cup extra virgin olive oil, divided
- 1 tbsp chopped basil
- 1 tbsp chopped thyme
- 1 tsp chopped tarragon
- 1/4 cup Sara Lee Garden Pepper Trio Mustard
- 1/4 cup mashed fig preserve with syrup
- 4 servings fresh spinach
- 1 avocado, peeled & chopped
- 1/2 cup sliced hearts of palm, optional
- 1/2 cup sliced tomatoes, optional
- 1 tbsp Sara Lee Pepper Trio Mustard for dressing
- salt & pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Rinse Cornish hens well under cold water and place skin side up on a cookie sheet. Coat halves with 1/4 cup olive oil and season well using basil, thyme, tarragon, salt, pepper and granulated garlic, bake for 30 minutes. In a small bowl, blend pepper mustard with fig preserves and syrup. Using a pastry brush, glaze the hens with the sweet mustard mixture. Continue to bake until golden brown, 10 to 15 minutes or until leg portion pulls away easily from the breast.

While hens are roasting, rinse spinach under cold water to remove any sand or grit. Place in a large mixing bowl and season to taste using salt, pepper and granulated garlic. In a measuring cup, combine the remaining 1/4 cup olive oil and Garden Pepper Trio Mustard to create the dressing. Additional olive oil, mustard or honey may be added to your taste. Immediately before removing Cornish hen from oven, drizzle the greens with the salad dressing and toss well. Place an equal portion of the greens in the center of four 10-inch serving plates and garnish with the avocado, hearts of palm and sliced tomatoes. Top the salad with a Cornish hen half and serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Baked Game Hens Vacherie

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Most people don't realize that the Germans were among the first to settle South Louisiana. The original settlement was in present day St. Charles Parish, west of New Orleans. The following was a favorite dish of the Germans in Louisiana.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 Cornish game hens
- 3 tsps Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- salt to taste
- 2 tsps dry thyme
- cracked black pepper to taste
- 2 tsps dry basil
- 3 tbsps chopped garlic
- paprika for color
- 4 tsps green peppercorns
- 1 ounce dry white wine
- 6 tsps Worcestershire sauce
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- 1/2 pound melted butter

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Split cornish hens in two and remove back bone and wing tips. Season hens well on all sides using salt, pepper, and garlic. Using a sharp paring knife, cut small pockets in breasts and thighs of each hen. Insert green peppercorns in each pocket and place on baking sheet skin side up. Coat each bird well with Worcestershire, Louisiana Gold, melted butter, thyme, basil and paprika. Add additional salt and pepper if necessary. Pour excess butter and white wine in bottom of baking pan and place in oven. Bake for thirty minutes, basting occasionally with drippings. Hens will be cooked when legs separate easily from thighs. Remove from oven, place hens on serving platter and keep warm. Add chopped parsley to pan drippings, blend well into sauce and pour over Cornish hens.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

POULTRY

Grilled Cornish Hens with Spicy Tangipahoa Strawberry BBQ Glaze

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yield: 3 Cups

Comment:

The great thing about this type of dish is the many variations and flavors that you can achieve with a little creativity. You may substitute any fresh fruit such as peaches, plums or blackberries. You may wish to use this recipe on boneless chicken breast or on a large roasting capon for your next holiday dish!



Ingredients:

- 6 Cornish hens, split in half*
- 3 cups fresh strawberries, chopped
- 2/3 cup strawberry preserves
- 1/2 cup hot & spicy ketchup
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 2 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp strawberry wine
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp fresh ginger, chopped
- 1 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
- 1/2 tsp fresh lemon zest, grated
- 2 tbsps sliced green onions
- 1 tbsp seeded and chopped jalapenos
- ? cup light brown sugar
- 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
- salt and black pepper to taste
- granulated garlic to taste

Method:

In a food processor, blend strawberries, preserves, ketchup, soy sauce, lemon juice, wine, garlic, ginger, red pepper flakes, lemon zest, green onions, jalapenos, brown sugar and balsamic vinegar. Blend until smooth. Set glaze aside. Wash the Cornish hens well inside and out. Split each hen in half and remove the backbone. Pat hens dry and sprinkle both sides with salt, black pepper and granulated garlic. Heat grill over medium-high heat. Brush grill with olive oil or cooking spray. Place hens skin-side-up on the grill. Cook 15 minutes then turn hens and brush with strawberry glaze. Continue to cook 15 minutes. Turn hens once more and brush again with strawberry glaze. Cover grill and cook for an additional 10 minutes or until juices run clear. Brush hens again with the glaze. Serve any remaining glaze on the side as a dipping sauce. *NOTE: You may wish

to leave hens whole and roast in a 375°F oven for 1 hour. Remove hens from oven and glaze. Return hens to oven and bake 15-20 minutes or until golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Bavarian Apple Walnut Bread

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

YIELDS: 2 (8" x 4" inch) loaves

COMMENT:

Apples are widely used in German cooking. You can find them in desserts, salads and even main dishes. In this recipe we have combined apples and walnuts to create a moist, sweet bread that can be served as a dessert or as a breakfast or brunch item.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups grated apples or applesauce
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 2/3 cup shortening
- 2 2/3 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2/3 cup water
- 3 1/3 cup flour
- 2 tsps baking soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground cloves
- 1 tsp salt



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325°F. Spray 2 (8" x 4" inch) loaf pans with vegetable spray. In the bowl of your home-style mixer, cream shortening and sugar on medium-high speed. Beat in eggs, apples (or applesauce) and water. In a separate bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and salt and blend into the creamed shortening mixture. When well blended, add walnuts. Divide the batter evenly between the loaf pans. Bake on the middle rack of the oven for 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean. Remove from oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes before removing from the pans. Serve thick slices with a dollop of applesauce, sour cream or Creole cream cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Hardtack

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4-6

COMMENT:

Hardtack is a thin, extremely hard bread that was issued to soldiers during the Civil War. It was widely used because it was a source of energy for the men and was rather resistant to spoilage. These biscuits were sometimes called "teeth-dullers" and usually had to be broken with the butt of a rifle or smashed with the fist. Soldiers usually soaked the hard pieces in coffee, fried them in bacon grease or broke them up into soup.

INGREDIENTS:

5 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
1 tbsp salt
1 to 1½ cups water

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray a large cookie sheet lightly with vegetable spray. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour and salt and blend well with a whisk. Using your hands, add water until you can form a firm ball. If the dough gets sticky, add more flour. If it gets too dry, add more water. Roll out on a well-floured surface, using liberal amounts of flour to keep dough from sticking to roller. Roll to approx. ½" thickness. Cut dough into 3" x 3" squares. Poke squares with toothpick all over top surface. Place on cookie tin and put into preheated oven. Bake for 20 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Basic Quick Bread Batter

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 2 Loaves

COMMENT:

This is just a base for your favorite fruit, vegetable or nut bread. Create any number of great tasting breads for breakfast, parties or gifts. The sky's the limit. I have suggested a few of my favorites for great Christmas gifts or to eat with your loved ones on Christmas morning.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup whole wheat flour
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 2 tsps cinnamon
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups of your favorite fruit, nut or vegetable*

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour two 8½ x 4½ x 2 inch loaf pans. In a medium mixing bowl, combine wheat and white flour, salt, baking soda, baking powder and cinnamon. In a separate large mixing bowl, whisk eggs and add sugar, oil and vanilla and whisk until blended. Add dry ingredients and stir with a spoon until flour is just moistened. Do not over mix. Add 2 cups of any type of fruit, vegetable, nut or combination of any of these ingredients and mix until evenly distributed. Divide batter evenly between loaf pans. Bake for 50-60 minutes or until tops are golden brown and a toothpick inserted into center of loaves comes out clean. Cool in pans for 10 minutes before turning loaves out on a wire rack to cool completely .

*Purée any soft fruits or vegetables like bananas, pumpkins or tomatoes. Shred any hard fruits or vegetables like apples, pears, zucchini or sweet potatoes. If using dried fruits or nuts, add ½ cup of vegetable oil to liquid ingredients to keep the bread moist.

Here are some of my favorite things to add to this wonderful bread base:

Cranberry Pecan Bread: Add ½ cup oil and ½ cup water to liquid ingredients. Add 1 cup dried cranberries, and ½ cup golden raisins and 2/3 cup chopped pecans to batter.

Fruit Cake Bread: Soak 1½ cups fruitcake mix or other candied fruits in ½ cup Port wine for 30 minutes and add to batter.

Ole St. Nick Bread: Add ¾ cup of maraschino cherries and ¾ cup of green cherries and ½ cup of maraschino cherry juice to batter.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Blueberry-Zucchini Bread

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

MAKES: 2 loaves

COMMENT:

Freshly grated zucchini in bread recipes enhances the moisture content and gives you the perfect accompaniment for a leisurely cup of coffee. Try this next weekend instead of pancakes - you'll be glad you did!

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups fresh blueberries
- 2 cups grated zucchini
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 3 1/2 cups self-rising flour
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease two 9" x 5" x 3" loaf pans and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine eggs, sugar, oil and vanilla. Using a wire whisk, blend well. Stir in zucchini until it is well blended into the egg mixture. Slowly add flour, stirring into the liquids until all is incorporated. Add cinnamon, pecans and blueberries. Gently fold into the batter and, when thoroughly mixed, spoon into the loaf pans and bake for approximately 45 minutes or until thoroughly cooked. Cool in pans for 5 minutes then remove to a wire rack. For best flavor, serve warm.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Chef John Folse's Sweet and Airy Cornbread

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 9

COMMENT:

I can't begin to imagine how many recipes there are for cornbread. Some are savory, some sweet, some spicy and some are a little bit of each. However, the best cornbread recipes in the South create a light and fluffy cornbread that is sometimes used as a dessert. It is so wonderful! This is one such recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 cup flour
- 1 1/2 tbsps baking powder
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1/4 cup butter, melted

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 450 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, sift together cornmeal, flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Whisk milk, eggs and butter into the dry ingredients. Continue to blend until all lumps are removed, taking care not to over-whip. Spray an 8-inch-square baking pan with vegetable spray or lightly grease with butter. Pour batter into the greased pan and bake 20-25 minutes. NOTE: 1/2 cup fresh kernel corn and 1 tbsp chopped jalapenos may be added to this recipe for an interesting twist.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Banana Walnut Bread in a Jar

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 8 (1-pint) Jars

COMMENT:

Cooks are always looking for those perfect, homemade gifts to give during the holidays or when visiting friends and family. This jar cake is perfect for such occasions because you can make a variety of these and place in the pantry for future use.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups mashed bananas
 2/3 cup walnuts, chopped
 2/3 cup shortening
 2 2/3 cups sugar
 4 eggs
 2/3 cup water
 3 1/3 cups flour
 1/2 tsp baking powder
 2 tsps baking soda
 1 1/2 tsps salt
 1 tsp ground cinnamon
 1 tsp ground cloves

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325 F. In a large mixing bowl, cream shortening and sugar. Beat in eggs and bananas. In a separate bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and cloves. Add to banana mixture and stir in nuts and water, blend well. Pour mixture into greased wide - mouth pint jars, filling 1/2 full with batter (I suggest using a large - mouth funnel for filling the jars). Divide the batter evenly between the pint jars. Do not put lids on jars for baking. Be careful to keep the rims clean, wiping off any batter that gets on them. Place jars on a large baking sheet, place in oven and bake for approximately 45 minutes. Meanwhile, sterilize the lids and rings in boiling water. As soon as bread is done, quickly remove one jar at a time from oven and clean its sealing edge with a dry towel to remove any residue or oil. Immediately apply and firmly tighten a 2 - piece wide - mouth canning lid. The lid will form a vacuum seal as the jar cools. Jars of cooled bread may be stored on the pantry shelf with other canned foods or may be placed in the freezer. The bread is safe to eat as long as jars remain vacuum sealed and free of mold growth.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Chef John Folse's Shoepeg Cornbread Stuffing

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Most often in South Louisiana meat and oyster dressings are found as accompaniments to the holiday table. The bread or cornbread dressings are definitely southern in tradition, but seldom seen in Bayou Country. Since I am a fan of both the meat and the cornbread dressing, I've decided to share one of those versions with you here.

Note: As an added flavor enhancer you may wish to add one pint of shucked oysters with liquid to the pot during the final cooking phase.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 (11-ounce) can shoepeg corn
- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 tsps baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsps sugar
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- 3/4 cup milk
- 4 chicken leg quarters
- 1/2 cup onions, diced
- 1/2 cup celery, diced
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1/4 tsp rubbed sage
- 1/8 tsp dried basil leaves
- 1/8 tsp dried thyme
- 3 tbsps melted butter
- 1/4 cup pimentos, chopped
- 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl combine cornmeal, flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. Blend well to incorporate all dry ingredients. Whisk egg with 2 tablespoons melted butter and milk, then add to cornmeal mixture, blending thoroughly. Pour the cornbread batter into a well oiled 9-inch cake pan and bake 15-20 minutes. When done, remove and cool. Separate chicken legs from thighs. In a 2-quart stock pot place chicken, onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Cover with 6 cups of cold water, bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 30-40 minutes or until chicken is tender and falling from the bones. Remove the chicken and allow to cool. Retain stock and seasoning. When chicken is cool, de-bone and

finely chop. Return the meat to the pot along with the stock and seasonings then add sage, basil, thyme, butter, pimento, green onions, shoepeg corn and parsley. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer, and cook 15 minutes. If oysters are to be added, put oysters and liquid into the pot at this point and cook 2 minutes longer. Pour the contents of the pot through a strainer, capturing the chicken and vegetable seasonings, while reserving 3 cups of the stock. While chicken is draining, crumble cornbread into a large mixing bowl and season the reserved stock using salt and pepper. Place drained chicken mixture into the crumbled cornbread bowl along with 2 ½ cups of the seasoned stock. Stir until well-blended. Dressing should be very moist, but not watery. Use as is to stuff into a crown roast of pork, or pour the dressing back into the 9-inch cake pan, and drizzle with 3 to 4 tablespoons of the remaining stock. Bake uncovered for approximately 20-30 minutes or until dressing begins to brown lightly around the edges. Dressing may be made the evening before cooking, but should be baked immediately prior to serving. Do not overcook as dressing will tend to dry out.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Persimmon Nut Bread

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

MAKES: 1 Loaf

COMMENT:

Persimmons are no different from any other fruit. Before their peak of ripeness, they can be bitter and astringent. However, once ripe and soft to the touch, they explode with a sweet, sugary flavor. They are perfect for jams, jellies and breads.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups mashed persimmons
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 2 cups flour
- 1 1/2 tsps baking powder
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 2 eggs
- 5 tbsps butter
- 1/4 cup buttermilk
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour a 9 1/2 by 5 1/2-inch loaf pan. In a large mixing bowl, sift flour, baking powder and baking soda. Reserve for later use. In the bowl of an electric mixer, food processor or blender add eggs, butter, buttermilk, lemon juice, persimmons, sugar and salt. Mix or blend until smooth. Slowly add flour mixture and mix until well incorporated. Fold in nuts. Pour batter into pan and bake 1 hour and 25 minutes, or until inserted toothpick comes out clean.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Creole Cornbread

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup cornmeal
- 1 can cream-style corn
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 cup milk
- 1 egg
- 1 lb ground meat
- 1 onion, finely chopped
- 1 1/2 cup grated cheese
- 1 can jalapeño peppers, chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Brown meat in a medium-sized sauce pan over medium-high heat. In a separate bowl combine cornmeal, cream-style corn, salt, soda, milk, green chiles and egg. Blend well. Pour one half of the cornmeal mixture into a cast iron skillet. Layer ground meat, onions, cheese and peppers on top. Pour remaining cornmeal over layers. Place in oven and bake until golden brown, approximately 45 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Traditional Sally Lunn

PREP TIME: 3 1/2 hours

MAKES: 1 loaf

COMMENT:

Fortunately, to get them through the dreadful first days of soldiering, most mothers and girlfriends sent their boys off to war with hampers and boxes packed with home-baked goodies that, alas, lasted not nearly long enough as the recruits shared them with their messmates. This light, sweet bread was named for the 18th-century English woman who first made it. Many recipes, or "receipts" as they were known, were reminiscent of cooking styles brought from the Old World.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup milk
- 2 tbsps shortening
- 1/2 oz active dry yeast
- 3 cups flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 egg
- 1 tbsp sugar

METHOD:

Heat the milk and shortening to scalding point and then allow to cool. Pour the milk into a bowl, add the remaining ingredients and mix until smooth. Cover the bowl and leave in a warm place to rise for about 1-1 1/2 hours. Knock down the dough and put in a greased pan and allow to rise for a further hour. Bake in a moderately hot oven (375° F) for about 45 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Beer, Sun-dried Tomato and Olive Quick Bread

PREP TIME: 50 Minutes

MAKES: 1 Loaf

COMMENTS:

Not all breads take the whole day to make. With these quick recipes, bread can be served piping hot in less than an hour. Beer gives a yeasty flavor to this quick bread made without yeast. Slices of the bread are good toasted or sandwiched around a filling of choice.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp double-acting baking powder
- 1 large egg, beaten lightly
- 1 12-ounce bottle of beer (not dark)
- 1/2 cup chopped drained sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, reserving 1 tsp of the oil
- 1/3 cup pimiento-stuffed olives, chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350° F and grease and flour a loaf pan, 9 by 5 by 3 inches. In a large bowl whisk together the flour, salt, baking soda, and baking powder. Then add the egg, beer, tomatoes with reserved oil, and olives. Stir the batter until it is just combined. Turn the batter into the pan and bake the bread in the middle of the oven for 40 minutes, or until a tester comes out clean. Turn the bread out onto a rack and let it cool.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Herbal Beer Bread

PREP TIME: 55 Minutes

MAKES: 1 Loaf

COMMENTS:

Not all breads take the whole day to make. With these quick recipes, bread can be served piping hot in less than an hour. This mix produces a dense loaf with a textured, crunchy crust, excellent for snacks and perfect as an accompaniment for hearty dishes like gumbo, stew, or pasta. Cut thick slices and serve hot from the oven. ...This recipe contributed by Sarah Liberta of HERBS by Sarah, Baton Rouge, LA.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups self-rising flour
- 3 tbsp sugar
- 1 tbsp dried herbs or 2 tbsp fresh herb blend
- 12 ounces warm beer (room temperature)
- 3 tbsp butter or margarine

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Generously butter a 9" by 5" loaf pan (about 1 tbsp butter) and set aside. Combine flour, sugar, and herbs in a 2-quart bowl. Stir briefly to mix thoroughly. Add beer and gently fold it into dry ingredients just until the mixture is evenly moistened, do not over-mix. Pour the mixture into the pan and dot with the remaining butter. Bake for 45-50 minutes, or until the crust is lightly browned. Remove from oven and serve immediately with an herbed butter or cheese spread.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Blueberry-Orange-Pecan Quick Bread

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 15 Minutes

MAKES: 1 Loaf

COMMENTS:

Not all breads take the whole day to make. With these quick recipes, bread can be served piping hot in less than an hour.

Unlike most quick breads, fruit-and-nut loaves taste better if they're wrapped in foil and allowed to mellow for a day or two before slicing. Also, the berries won't sink to the bottom of the batter if you first sprinkle them with flour, then shake off the excess in a colander before folding them in.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/2 cup squeezed orange juice
- 2 tsp freshly grated orange zest
- 1/3 cup butter, melted and cooled
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Lightly grease and flour 4 1/2 by 8 1/2-inch loaf pan. In large bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, salt, baking soda, nutmeg and sugar. Add pecans to dry ingredients. In a separate bowl, beat eggs with milk, orange juice and zest. Blend in butter. Pour liquids into dry ingredients, stirring until barely moistened. Gently fold in blueberries. Spread batter in prepared pan. Bake until crust is golden brown and wood pick inserted in center of loaf comes out clean, 55 to 65 minutes. Let cool in pan 10 minutes, then turn out onto wire rack to cool.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Basic Quick Bread

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 15 Minutes

MAKES: 1 Loaf

COMMENTS:

Not all breads take the whole day to make. With these quick recipes, bread can be served piping hot in about an hour.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups all-purpose flour
 1/2 tsp baking powder
 1/2 tsp baking soda
 1/2 tsp salt
 1/2 cup butter, softened
 3/4 cup sugar
 2 eggs
 1 cup buttermilk

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Grease and flour one 8 1/2" by 4 1/2" loaf pan (or spray nonstick pan with butter spray). In large bowl, combine all-purpose flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt. In a mixing bowl with electric mixer on high, beat butter and sugar 3 minutes until light and fluffy. Add eggs and beat well. Beat in buttermilk. Add flour mixture, with mixer on low, stir just until blended. Spoon into prepared pan. Bake 55-65 minutes, until wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool on rack 5 minutes. Un-mold, cool for 1 hour before slicing.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Hot Cross Buns

PREP TIME: 3 hours

MAKES: 18 buns

INGREDIENTS:

3/4 cup warm water
 1 tbsp active dry yeast
 1/3 cup sugar
 1 cup warm milk
 8 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
 1 tsp salt
 3 large eggs
 4-5 cups unbleached, all-purpose flour, plus a few extra tbsp for flouring work surface
 1 cup dried currants
 1/2 cup dried apricots, finely chopped
 1/2 tsp ground mace
 1/2 tsp pure vanilla extract Oil or solid vegetable shortening for greasing bowls and baking pans

FOR SUGAR GLAZE:

1/4 cup sugar
 1/2 cup water

FOR LEMON ICING:

1 cup sifted powdered sugar
 1 tsp fresh lemon juice
 1 tsp lemon zest, grated
 1 1/2 tbsp milk

METHOD:

Twenty minutes before baking, center a rack in the oven and preheat oven to 375 °. In a small mixing bowl, pour in warm water and sprinkle the yeast and a pinch of sugar on top. Stir to dissolve and let stand until foamy, about 10 minutes. In a large bowl using a whisk at first (and then switching to a wooden spoon when dough gets hard to stir) combine the remaining sugar, milk, butter, salt, eggs and 1 cup of the flour. Beat hard for 1 minute. Add the yeast mixture, dried fruits, mace, vanilla and 1 cup more flour. Beat until well-mixed, about 1 minute. Add the remaining flour, 1/2 cup at a time, until a soft dough forms. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured work surface and knead until soft, smooth and springy, about 3 minutes, dusting with flour - only 1 tablespoon at a time - when needed to prevent sticking. Push back in any fruit that falls out during kneading. Place the dough in a deep, greased bowl, turn once to coat the top and cover with plastic wrap. Let rise at room temperature until doubled in bulk, 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Gently deflate the dough. Turn the

dough out onto a floured work surface. Grease two baking sheets or line them with baking parchment. Divide the dough into 2 equal portions. Roll each portion into a 10-inch log and cut into 9 equal portions. Form each portion into a round bun, and place each bun about 1 1/2 inches apart on the baking sheets. Let rise, uncovered, until doubled in bulk, about 30 minutes. With a sharp knife, cut a cross no more than 1/2-inch deep in the surface of each bun. Bake each sheet separately, 15-20 minutes, or until buns are browned and sound hollow when tapped. While first pan is baking make the glaze: Combine the sugar and water in a heavy saucepan. Boil, uncovered, for 5 minutes. When done, remove buns to a cooling rack and brush immediately with glaze. Let cool. Making the icing: Combine all ingredients in a bowl and whisk until smooth. When glaze is dry, place the icing in a pastry bag fitted with a small, plain tip, and pipe a cross over the top of each bun, following the imprint of the incision. Let stand 20 minutes until set.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Southern Style Corn Bread

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

MAKES: 1 8-inch skillet of bread

COMMENT:

Unlike its sweet, cakey Northern counterpart, Southern corn bread is thin, crusty, and decidedly savory. Though some styles of Southern corn bread are dry and crumbly, I favor this dense, moist, tender version. Cornmeal mush of just the right texture is essential to this bread. Though I prefer to make cornbread in a preheated cast-iron skillet, a 9-inch round cake pan or 9-inch square baking pan, greased lightly with butter and not preheated, will also produce acceptable results if you double the recipe and bake the bread for 25 minutes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 tsp bacon drippings or 1 tbsp melted butter and 1 tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup yellow corn meal, preferably stone ground
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tbsp baking soda
- 1/2 cup rapidly boiling water
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 large egg, beaten lightly

METHOD:

Adjust oven rack to lower middle position and heat oven to 450 degrees F. Set 8-inch cast iron skillet with bacon fat (or vegetable oil) in heating oven. Measure 1/3 cup cornmeal into medium bowl. Mix remaining cornmeal, sugar, salt, baking powder, and baking soda in small bowl; set aside. Pour boiling water all at once into the 1/3 cup cornmeal; stir to make a stiff mush. Whisk in buttermilk gradually, breaking up lumps until smooth, then whisk in egg. When oven is preheated and skillet very hot, stir dry ingredients into mush mixture until just moistened. Carefully remove skillet from oven. Pour hot bacon fat (or melted butter) into batter and stir to incorporate, then quickly pour batter into heated skillet. Bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes. Remove from oven and instantly turn corn bread onto wire rack; cool for 5 minutes, then serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Chef John Folse's Holiday Corn Bread Dressing

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

COMMENT:

Most often in South Louisiana meat and oyster dressings are found as accompaniments to the holiday table. The bread or corn bread dressings are definitely southern in tradition, but seldom seen in Bayou Country. Since I am a fan of both the meat and the corn bread dressing, I've decided to share one of those versions with you here.

Note: As an added flavor enhancer you may wish to add one pint of shucked oysters with liquid to the pot during the final cooking phase.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1/2 cup flour
- 2 tsps baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tbsps sugar
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- 1 egg
- 3/4 cup milk
- 4 chicken leg quarters
- 1/2 cup diced onions
- 1/2 cup diced celery
- 1/2 cup chopped red bell pepper
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1/4 tsp rubbed sage
- 1/8 tsp dried basil leaves
- 1/8 tsp dried thyme
- 3 tbsps melted butter
- 1/4 cup chopped pimientos
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions
- 1/4 cup chopped parsley
- salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a mixing bowl combine cornmeal, flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. Blend well to incorporate all dry ingredients. Whisk egg with 2 tablespoons melted butter and milk then add to cornmeal mixture, blending thoroughly. Pour corn bread batter into a well-greased 9-inch cake pan and bake 15-20 minutes. When done, remove and cool. Separate chicken legs from thighs. In a 2-quart stock pot place chicken, onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Cover with 6 cups cold water, bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer

and cook 30-40 minutes or until chicken is tender and falling from bones. Remove chicken and cool. Retain stock and seasoning. Lower oven temperature to 375°F. When chicken is cool, bone and dice. Return meat to pot along with stock and seasonings then add sage, basil, thyme, butter, pimientos, green onions and parsley. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 15 minutes. If oysters are to be added, put oysters and liquid into pot and cook 2 minutes longer. Pour contents of pot through a strainer, capturing chicken and vegetable seasonings, while reserving 3 cups of stock. While chicken is draining, crumble corn bread into a large mixing bowl and season reserved stock with salt and pepper. Place drained chicken mixture into crumbled corn bread bowl along with 2½ cups seasoned stock. Stir until well-blended. Dressing should be very moist, but not watery. Pour dressing back into 9-inch cake pan, and drizzle with 3-4 tablespoons of remaining stock. Bake uncovered 20-30 minutes or until dressing begins to brown lightly around edges. Dressing may be made the evening before cooking, but should be baked immediately prior to serving. Do not overcook as dressing will tend to dry out.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Cornbread Muffins - Caspiana Plantation

PREP TIME: 1 hour

MAKES: 16 muffins

COMMENT:

Cornbread can be made into every shape and size imaginable. I've seen it served in skillets, stick pans and muffin tins. It has been referred to as skillet bread, hushpuppies, spoon bread and corn sticks. Whatever you call it and however you cook it, it is still good ole' Southern cornbread.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/4 cups yellow corn meal
- 3/4 cup all purpose flour
- 2 1/2 tps double acting baking powder
- 2 tbsps sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 egg
- 3 tbsps melted butter
- 1 cup milk
- 1/4 cup whole kernel corn

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Grease two eight-hole muffin tins and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Mix well, add corn meal and blend until the ingredients are well incorporated. Add egg, butter and milk and continue to blend ingredients well. Fold whole kernel corn into the cornbread batter. Pour the batter into muffin tins and bake twenty to twenty-five minutes or until golden brown.

LAGNIAPPE

If you grow up in South Louisiana, you certainly know what good cornbread is all about. It always has that slightly browned crust but is light, sweet and gritty to the bite. It is hard to make a good cornbread without a heavy black iron skillet or muffin pan. The old folks say that the pan should always be heated to about 400 degrees F in the oven before the batter is placed in the pan. They also say that a little bit of crackling or bacon, and always whole kernels of corn, should be added for better flavor. Yes, if you grow up in South Louisiana, you know exactly what they're talking about.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Hushpuppies

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

MAKES: 15 - 20 hushpuppies

COMMENT:

Nobody really knows where the name "hushpuppies" came from, but as is true with most foods, there is a legend associated with it. An old Creole cook was frying a batch of catfish down in New Orleans and whipping up a batch of corn fritters that she called "Croquettes de Maise." His hungry hunting dogs began to howl in the pen next door from the smell of that frying fish. The innovative Creole tossed a few pieces of croquettes to the dogs and yelled, "Hush puppies!" The name has been associated with this corn meal ever since.

INGREDIENTS:

oil for deep frying
 1-1/4 cup yellow corn meal
 2 cup flour
 3 tsps baking powder
 1 tsp sugar
 1 pinch of salt
 1 small onion, finely diced
 1 egg, beaten
 2 cup milk
 2 cup whole kernel corn
 1/4 cup sliced green onions
 1 tsp cracked black pepper

METHOD:

In a home style deep fryer, such as a Fry Daddy, heat oil according to manufacturer's directions. In a large mixing bowl, combine corn meal, flour, baking powder, sugar, salt and pepper. Mix until all ingredients are well blended. Add diced onions, egg, milk, corn and sliced green onions. Continue to mix until all ingredients are well blended. The batter should be smooth and free of any lumps. Using a soup spoon or a small ice cream scoop, dip one hushpuppy and deep fry as a sampler. The hushpuppy will be done when it floats and is golden brown. Correct seasonings and cooking time if necessary. Continue to fry until all are done.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Banana Zucchini Bread

PREP TIME: 1 ½ hours

SERVES: 2 loaves

COMMENT:

There are many recipes in regional cookbooks that combine fruit and vegetables into a dish. None are more recognized than those combinations found in bread and muffin recipes. Try this interesting combination.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups mashed bananas
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 cups grated zucchini
- 3 1/2 cups self-rising flour
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease two 9" x 5" x 3" loaf pans and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine eggs, sugar, oil and vanilla. Using a wire whisk, blend well. Stir in zucchini until it is well blended into the egg mixture. Slowly add flour, stirring into the liquids until all is incorporated. Add cinnamon, pecans and mashed bananas. Gently fold into the batter and, when thoroughly mixed, spoon into the loaf pan and bake for approximately 45 minutes or until thoroughly cooked. Cool in pans for 5 minutes then remove to a wire rack. For best flavor, serve warm. This bread is excellent as a breakfast dish or may be cooked in a muffin tin.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Southern Style Pumpkin and Pecan Bread

PREP TIME: 1 hour and 15 minutes

MAKES: 2 loaves

COMMENT:

Pumpkin is one of those unique vegetables that because of its flavor and texture can fit into any recipe ranging from soups to desserts. This is yet another example of the marriage of pumpkins and pecans in a bread recipe making the dish perfect for those Southern style dinners.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups canned pumpkin
- 1 cup corn oil
- 4 beaten eggs
- 2/3 cup water
- 3 1/3 cups sifted flour
- 1 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 tsp baking soda
- 3 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup golden raisins
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour two loaf pans. In a large mixing bowl, combine oil, eggs, water, and pumpkin. Using a wire whisk, whip to blend thoroughly. Sprinkle in flour and when well blended, add salt, nutmeg, cinnamon, baking soda and sugar. Fold in to incorporate the ingredients, then add the raisins and pecans. Pour the mixture into the loaf pans and bake for 1 hour.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Sweet Potato Pumpkin Bread

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Both sweet potatoes and pumpkins are indigenous to South Louisiana and are most often cooked in desserts or sweetened casseroles. Here, the two are combined with a simple bread mix to create a quick and easy bread recipe that is sure to please.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3/4 cup cooked sweet potatoes, cubed
- 3/4 cup cooked pumpkin, cubed
- 3 cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1/2 cup oil
- 2 tbsps cinnamon
- 2 tbsps nutmeg
- 3 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsps baking soda
- 1/2 cup water
- 3/4 cup raisins
- 1 cup pecans
- pecan halves for garnish

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a sauce pot, par boil sweet potatoes and pumpkin cubes until tender. Drain, mash and set aside. You may wish to use eight ounce cans of cooked sweet potatoes and pumpkin rather than fresh. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and eggs until creamy. Add oil, sweet potatoes and pumpkin. Mix on high speed until creamy. Reduce speed to low and add dry ingredients alternately with water. Beat until well blended. Stir in raisins and pecans. Pour batter into a large greased cake pan. Bake for one hour or until golden brown. Garnish with pecan halves or for an added touch, glaze with Louisiana cane syrup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

A French Cake - (From The Magnolia Mound Plantation Kitchen Book)

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Anyone with a pot crane and a good cast iron Dutch oven can cook this dish in the fireplace. However, we've adapted this recipe to cook on the stove.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 tsp. cinnamon or nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp. salt
- 5 tbsp butter
- 1 cup milk or cream
- 3 medium eggs
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. warm water

METHOD:

Mix flour, sugar, cinnamon or nutmeg and salt together in a bowl. Cream the butter. Add milk or cream to the butter, alternating with the flour mixture. Beat the eggs until very light in a separate bowl and add to the cake batter and beat for 10 minutes. Dissolve the baking powder in warm water and add to batter; stir only long enough to mix well. Butter a deep pan (bundt or angel food pan). Bake at 350 degrees for 40-45 minutes. Good served with hot tea.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Cracklin' Biscuits

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 8-10 Biscuits

COMMENT:

The Cajuns, always looking for variation in recipes, certainly created a winner here. Adding the hog cracklin' to the biscuit mixture created a unique breakfast item. If you don't have cracklin's, you may wish to substitute salted pork skins.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups all purpose flour
- 2 tbsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 1/2 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 1 1/2 cups buttermilk
- 3/4 cup chopped hog cracklin's
- 1/4 cup melted butter

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, sugar and salt. Mix well to ensure proper blending. Using a pastry blender, cut butter into flour mixture. Once butter has been well blended into flour, add buttermilk and chopped cracklin's. Continue to mix until biscuit dough is well formed. Place dough on a floured board and knead lightly. Roll dough out until approximately 3/4-inch thick. Cut biscuits with a 3-inch biscuit cutter until all are formed. Place biscuits in a greased 12-inch cast iron skillet and drizzle with remaining melted butter. Bake until golden brown, approximately 25 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Fry Bread

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 3 Dozen

COMMENT:

Many people think that Indian Fry Bread gave origin to Louisiana's beignets. However, those little French doughnuts covered with powdered sugar were being served in Europe long before the discovery of America. In Cajun country, we often fried dough but very seldom did we cover it with confectioner's sugar. Our "beignets" were a lot more like fry bread.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups unbleached flour
- 1½ cups warm water or milk
- 2 tsps baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup oil or shortening

METHOD:

In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except oil and knead until smooth. Rub oil or shortening over dough. Cover and let sit for about 30 minutes. Pat or roll out enough dough to fit in the palm of your hand. The dough should be large enough to form a circle about 4 inches in diameter and 1/8-inch thick. In a 12-inch heavy-bottom skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Fry the bread, 1-2 pieces at a time, until golden brown on each side approximately 2-3 minutes. Depending on the size or your portions, this volume of dough should make approximately 12 flat breads.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Maw Maw Coniglio's Fry Breads

PREP TIME: 1/2 Hour

MAKES: 2 Dozen

COMMENT:

Fry breads were originally developed by the Native Americans who made this dish using corn flour. They probably began deep frying of such breads with the arrival of the Europeans who brought ironware and wheat flour to this country. Fry breads have been made throughout South Louisiana as a hearty breakfast bread that tastes great, but is inexpensive to make.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups Gold Medal Self-Rising Flour
- 1/4 cup flour
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup vegetable oil

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl combine the flour and milk. Dust the counter top with 1/4 cup of flour, then kneed the dough, so that it's easy to handle. Pat the dough into a flat pie shape, approximately 1/4-inch thick. Heat the oil in a frying pan. Cut the dough in half, then, cut it into 3-inch by 1-inch strips. Be sure to make one or two slices in each strip, so that the bread will cook thoroughly. Fry the strips in the hot oil. The breads fry quickly, so be careful to remove them when they turn brown. Fry breads taste best when dipped into a hot cup of Community Coffee.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREADS

Gloria Maxie's Corn Bread Dressing

Prep Time: 1 ½ Hours

Yields: 10-12 Servings

Comment: When I tried this recipe for the first time, the smell of the sausage, ground beef and chicken made me deem this dish a success. Gloria's corn bread dressing is one of the winners of our Stirrin' It Up for the Holidays recipe contest. No wonder her family loves this dish!

Ingredients:

2 (9" x 13" inch) pans cooked corn bread*
 3 chicken breasts
 1 pound ground beef
 1 pound Italian sausage
 1 cup diced onions
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced green, red or mixed bell peppers
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ½ cup chopped parsley
 1 tsp rubbed sage
 1 tsp Italian seasoning
 1 tsp garlic powder
 2 tsp poultry seasoning
 Creole seasoning to taste
 9 cups canned chicken broth

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small saucepot, place chicken breasts in just enough water to cover them. Bring to a rolling boil and cook until chicken is completely done. Remove from water and allow to cool. Chop chicken into bite size pieces. In a large skillet or saucepot, brown ground beef, sausage, onions, celery, bell peppers and green onions over medium-high heat. After meat is well browned and vegetables are softened, drain all grease. In a large roasting pan, crumble corn bread leaving some larger pieces intact. Add the meat and vegetable mixture. Blend in chicken, parsley and seasonings. Add chicken broth until moist. Bake for 45 minutes or until golden brown.

*Note: Use your favorite corn bread recipe or use a commercial boxed corn bread cooked according to manufacturer's directions.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- **Stuffings & Dressings**
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STUFFINGS & DRESSINGS

Mississippi Corn Bread Dressing

Prep Time: 2½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Recipe Courtesy of Bill Stevens

Ingredients:

4 (9-inch) pans corn bread, cooked, cooled and crumbled
 8 slices white bread toasted, cooled and crumbled
 ½ cup cracker crumbs
 2 tbsps poultry seasoning
 1 tsp thyme
 1 tsp oregano
 1 tsp salt
 ½ tsp white pepper
 1 tsp cracked black pepper
 2 tbsps butter plus ¼ pound butter, cut into pats
 2 cups diced onions
 2 cups diced celery
 1 cup sliced green onions
 ½ cup diced green bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 4 slices white bread soaked in water and mashed
 5 cups chicken stock
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 3 (5-ounce) cans evaporated milk
 2 eggs
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 sugar to taste
 4 boiled egg whites, chopped

Method:

In a large plastic zipper bag, combine corn bread crumbs, toasted bread crumbs and cracker crumbs. Add poultry seasoning, thyme, oregano, salt, white and black pepper. Shake and let stand. In a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat, melt 2 tablespoons butter. Sauté onions, celery, green onions, bell peppers 3–5 minutes or until tender. Stir in garlic and parsley. Continue to cook 2–3 minutes. Remove from heat and set aside. Preheat oven to 375°F. In a large bowl, combine seasoned stuffing mix with sautéed vegetables. Blend in 2 cups chicken stock, vegetable oil and moistened bread. Pour additional 2 cups chicken stock, evaporated milk, eggs, salt, pepper and sugar. Add remaining cup of chicken stock if dressing appears dry during baking. Fold in egg whites, and pour into a large greased casserole dish. Place butter pats evenly across top and place in top section of oven. After 30 minutes, stir dressing and scrape edges of pan to center. Bake an additional 30 minutes or until top begins to brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STUFFINGS & DRESSINGS

Thanksgiving Fruit and Nut Stuffing

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 9 Cups

COMMENT:

Everyone has a traditional stuffing that they make for their Thanksgiving turkey. If this is your first Thanksgiving as a cook, make this your new family favorite. Everyone is sure to love this savory stuffing studded with fresh and dried fruits and toasted pecans.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 10 oz. day old French bread, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1/4 pound unsalted butter
- 1 cup onions, finely chopped
- 1 cup celery, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup red bell pepper
- 1 cup dried apricots, finely diced
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 2 1/2 cups green apples, peeled and finely chopped
- 1/2 cup Calvados, applejack or apple cider
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 1/4 tsp dried thyme
- 1/4 tsp dried sage
- 2 cups chicken or turkey stock
- Salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Toast pecans on a baking sheet until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Remove and set aside to cool. On another large baking pan, brown French bread cubes, stirring occasionally until crisp and dried. Do not overbrown. Cool and place along with pecans in a large mixing bowl. In a 1-quart sauce pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery and red bell pepper for 3-5 minutes until wilted. Add apricots, cranberries and apples. Sauté 5-10 minutes, then add Calvados. Add cloves, thyme and sage. Add chicken stock, bring to a low boil and reduce to simmer. Season the stock to taste using salt and pepper. Pour the seasoned stock over the bread mixture, tossing to incorporate. Spoon the fruit dressing into a 3-quart casserole dish and bake, covered, for about 45 minutes. Additional stock may be added to retain moisture. Uncover for 5-10 minutes to brown lightly, if a crispier top is desired.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STUFFINGS & DRESSINGS

Sweet Farre Dressing

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 8-10 Servings

Comment:

Farre is a meat dressing brought to Louisiana, many think by the Germans, that further evolved here in the French kitchens. In many Cajun and German communities of the River Road west of New Orleans, farre was often seen as a sandwich spread at weddings, parties and funerals. This is one of our many variations, which includes sweet potatoes and is undoubtedly from the German Coast of Louisiana.

Ingredients:

- 1½ pounds ground beef
- 1½ pounds ground pork
- ½ pound chicken livers
- 1 quart chicken stock
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1 cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced green bell pepper
- ¼ cup diced red bell pepper
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 2 cups shredded sweet potatoes
- 1 cup sliced green onions
- ½ cup chopped parsley
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste

Method:

In a cast iron skillet, sauté ground beef and pork over medium-high heat. Cook meat 30 minutes, chopping occasionally, until it is golden brown and grains of meat are totally separated. While meat is browning, poach chicken livers in chicken stock or water for approximately 20 minutes. Drain livers and reserve stock for later use. Once meat is browned, add poached chicken livers, onions, celery, bell peppers, garlic and sweet potatoes. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Using the side of a cooking spoon, chop livers into meat mixture. Reduce heat to simmer and add stock as necessary to retain moisture. Simmer 2 hours or until meat is extremely tender and sweet potatoes have totally disappeared, stirring occasionally. Add green onions, parsley, salt, pepper and hot sauce. NOTE: If using as a rice dressing, combine 1 cup cooked meat dressing with 1½ cups cooked rice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STUFFINGS & DRESSINGS

Ruth Fertel's Plaquemines Parish Oyster Dressing

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 15-20 Servings

Comment:

This recipe is from the famous founder of Ruth's Chris Steak House, Ruth Fertel. Her son Randy shared it with us on the occasion of a tribute dinner held in her honor.

Ingredients:

- 1 gallon oysters with liquid
- ¼ pound butter
- 1 pound smoked sausage, minced
- 1 pound hot sausage, minced
- 3 cups diced onions
- 2 cups diced celery
- 1 cup diced green bell peppers
- 1 cup diced red bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 12 chicken bouillon cubes
- 3 (2½ foot long) loaves stale French bread
- salt, black pepper, red pepper flakes to taste
- 1 dozen eggs, whipped
- 1 pound melted butter

Method:

Pour oysters into a large pan, reserving liquid, and go through them 1 at a time, removing any partial shells that remain. Heat oysters in liquid until edges curl. Drain oysters, save liquid and set aside. When oysters are cool to touch, chop coarsely and set aside. In a large Dutch oven, heat ¼ pound butter over medium-high heat. Sauté sausages until oil is rendered. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add chopped oysters, oyster liquid and bouillon cubes. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 5 minutes. Season with salt and peppers. Preheat oven to 350°F. Chop stale French bread into 1-inch cubes, and add bread into oyster mixture, 2 cups at a time, until enough bread has been added to absorb liquid but mixture is still moist. Remove from heat and add eggs and remaining melted butter, blending well into mixture. Pour into a large baking pan. Cover with aluminum foil and bake 1 hour. Remove foil and brown for about 15 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Persimmon Creole Cream Cheese Cheesecake

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

MAKES: 1 (10-inch) Cake

COMMENT:

Fall is fast approaching, and persimmons are coming into season. We have combined this vibrant, sweet fruit with our Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole cream cheese to create this luscious dessert.



INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

- 1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
- ¼ cups sugar
- 4 tbsps melted butter

METHOD FOR CRUST:

Combine graham cracker crumbs and sugar. Drizzle melted butter into the mixture to moisten. Using your fingertips, press the graham cracker mixture into the bottom of a 10-inch round spring form pan. Place the pan in the refrigerator for 30 minutes or until crust is firm to the touch.

INGREDIENTS FOR CHEESECAKE:

- 1 cup persimmons, skinned and puréed
- 2 (11.5-ounce) packages Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- 3 (8-ounce) packages Philadelphia cream cheese
- 3 whole eggs
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 pinch nutmeg
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 1 tbsps lemon juice
- 2 tbsps lemon zest

INGREDIENTS FOR TOPPING:

- 1 pound sour cream
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- ½ cup sugar
- 3 tbsps persimmons, skinned and puréed

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F and test with an oven thermometer for accuracy. Soften Philadelphia cream cheese to room temperature and place in the bowl of an electric mixer along with Creole cream cheese, sugar, nutmeg, vanilla, lemon juice and zest. Blend on medium-high

speed until all lumps are removed. Turn mixer speed down to lowest setting and add 1 egg at a time, whipping completely between each addition. Continue until eggs are incorporated. Do not over- whip. Remove crust from the refrigerator and fill with batter. Add spoonfuls of persimmon purée around the top of the batter in a polka dot pattern. With a toothpick or metal skewer, make a swirling pattern through the persimmon pulp to create the desired effect in the finished product. Place on middle shelf of oven and bake for 1 hour. NOTE: The cake should be slightly browned around the edges and may appear to be a little under cooked in the center. Remove from oven and allow cake to rest 15–20 minutes. Turn oven temperature up to 400°F. While cooling, if the cake develops a crack or two in the center do not panic it will be filled with the sour cream topping. While cake is cooling blend sour cream, sugar, vanilla and persimmon pulp into a mixing bowl and whip thoroughly until the sour cream is ready to pour. Pour the sour cream evenly over the top of the cake and place in oven for 5–7 minutes. Remove and when cool, cover with clear wrap and refrigerate 5–6 hours or preferably overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Spiced Pear Cake

PREP TIME: 1 Hour, 45 Minutes

YIELDS: 12 Servings

COMMENT:

This recipe uses the jarred pears from the Spiced Pear recipe done on WAFB on August 21, 2003. This soft, moist cake uses the wonderfully spiced fruit and syrup you have already created. When you need a great treat for a party or to bring to the game, pull down a couple of jars of spiced pears and whip up this simple, tasty cake.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups **Spiced Pears for Canning**
- 1-1/2 cups white sugar
- 4 egg whites
- 2/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 3 cups sifted flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1-1/2 tsps baking soda
- 1/2 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp ground cloves
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1/4 cup reserved spiced pears syrup



METHOD:

Drain jars of pears, reserve syrup and dice the fruit. Preheat oven to 325°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine pears and sugar and let stand for 20-30 minutes. Coat a 10-inch Bundt pan with non-stick cooking spray. In a large mixing bowl, beat egg whites with a hand mixer until white and frothy, but do not allow peaks to form. Fold oil, pecans and pear mixture into egg whites. In a separate large mixing bowl, stir together the flour, salt, baking soda, nutmeg, cinnamon and cloves. Stir in the pear mixture slowly until flour is completely moistened. Do not over-work batter. Pour batter into the prepared Bundt pan and bake for 1 hour and 10 minutes. Remove from oven and let cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes before removing from pan. In a small mixing bowl, whisk together powdered sugar and pear syrup until smooth. Pour glaze over cooled cake before cutting.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creole Cream Cheese Pecan Pound Cake

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

COMMENT:

Many different dessert recipes call for sour cream. There are sour cream coffee cakes, muffins and pound cakes. We have taken one of our favorite sour cream dessert recipes and substituted our Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese in the place of the sour cream to make this delicious Creole Pecan Pound cake.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 3 cups cake flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 1 cup unsalted butter
- 3 cups white sugar
- 6 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 300°F. Grease and flour a 10-inch bundt or tube pan. Sprinkle pecans on the bottom of the pan and set aside. Sift together flour, salt, and baking soda in a medium bowl and set aside. In a large bowl, cream butter and white sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs 1 at a time, and then stir in the vanilla. Add flour mixture alternately with Creole cream cheese. Pour half of the batter over pecans in prepared pan. In a small mixing bowl, add 1/3 cup flour, brown sugar and cinnamon and mix well. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle mixture over batter in the bundt pan and add remaining batter over cinnamon sugar mixture. Bake for 75–90 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean. Let cool in pan for 20 minutes, then turn onto a wire rack and cool completely.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Fourth of July Margarita Cheesecake

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT:

Everyone loves cold margaritas out by the grill on a hot Fourth of July afternoon. In this recipe we have combined the great citrus flavor of margaritas with the creamy richness of everyone's favorite dessert—cheesecake!



INGREDIENTS:

- 1¼ cups vanilla wafer cookie crumbs
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- 3 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 tbsps Triple Sec
- 3 tbsps tequila
- 3 tbsps fresh lime juice
- 2 tsps grated lime zest
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup sour cream
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 tbsp fresh lime juice

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Mix cookie crumbs and butter in a medium mixing bowl until well blended. Press mixture onto bottom of a 9-inch springform pan. Refrigerate while making filling. Using an electric mixer, beat cream cheese in large bowl until fluffy. Add 1 cup sour cream, 1 cup sugar, Triple Sec, Tequila, lime juice and lime peel and beat until well blended. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating just until blended after each addition. Pour filling into crust. Bake for 50 minutes or until center is just set. In a mixing bowl, mix 1 cup sour cream, ¼ cup sugar and 1 tbsp lime juice in small bowl. Pour over cheesecake. Using spatula, smooth top and bake for 5 minutes longer. Transfer pan to a rack and cool at room temperature completely. Refrigerate until well chilled, at least 4 hours or overnight. Run knife around pan sides to loosen cake. Remove pan sides. Garnish cake with lime twists, grated lime peel and whipped topping.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chocolate Lava Cakes with Spiced Ruston Peaches

PREP TIME: 1 Hour, 20 Minutes

SERVES: 16

COMMENT:

Chocolate lava cakes or molten chocolate cakes are found on many dessert menus around the country. However, only Louisiana chefs can top them with the sweet Ruston peach. We have flavored the peaches with four different spices to top these ooey gooey little chocolate cakes.

INGREDIENTS FOR CAKES:

3/4 cup butter, cut into pieces
 3 (4-ounce) bars premium semisweet chocolate, broken into chunks
 1/2 cup whipping cream
 1-1/4 cup egg substitute
 3/4 cup sugar
 2/3 cup flour
 powdered sugar



METHOD FOR CAKES:

Spray 16 muffin cups with vegetable oil spray. Place butter and chocolate in a heavy-bottomed saucepan. Cook over low heat, stirring often, until butter and chocolate melt. Slowly whisk in cream; set aside. Combine egg substitute and sugar in a large mixing bowl. Beat at medium speed with an electric mixer for 5-7 minutes or until slightly thickened. Add chocolate cream and flour, beating until just blended. Pour batter into muffin cups, filling to within 1/4-inch from the tops. Cover and chill at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours. Bake at 450 degrees F for 10-11 minutes or just until edges of cakes spring back when lightly touched but centers are still soft. Let stand 3 minutes before loosening the edges with a knife. Quickly invert cakes onto a baking sheet or clean surface. Transfer to dessert plates using a spatula. Sprinkle with powdered sugar. Serve immediately.

INGREDIENTS FOR SPICED RUSTON PEACHES:

8 fresh Ruston peaches
 1/2 cup butter
 1 cup brown sugar
 1/2 tsp cinnamon
 1/2 tsp ground cloves
 1/4 tsp nutmeg
 1/4 tsp allspice
 4 ounces peach liqueur or white wine

METHOD FOR SPICED RUSTON PEACHES:

Cut peaches in half and remove pit. Slice each half into thick slices, about 4 slices per half. In a 10-inch sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add peaches and sauté until tender, about 2-4 minutes. Add brown sugar and spices. Stir until brown sugar is melted and creates a smooth sauce with the butter. Remove skillet from heat, pour in liqueur, and return to heat. **NOTE:** Be extremely careful, as liqueur with flame up when placed back onto the fire; however, it will extinguish itself quickly. Heat for 2 additional minutes. Serve over Chocolate Lava Cakes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Biskvitnyi Abrikosovyi Tort (Apricot Sponge Cake with Lemon Butter Cream Icing and Rum Syrup)

PREP TIME: 24 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT: This traditional Russian dessert is a great summertime cake. Filled with apricot jam and iced with a rich lemon butter cream, this cake is a wonderful teatime treat or afternoon snack. The chocolate-dipped, rum-soaked apricot flowers make it a beautiful piece of edible art.

INGREDIENTS FOR RUM SYRUP:

- 4 tbsp sugar
- 6 tbsp water
- ½ cup rum
- ¼ tsp rum extract
- 16 dried apricots



METHOD FOR RUM SYRUP:

Bring the sugar and water to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cover for 1½ minutes. Let cool and stir in the rum and rum extract. Add the dried apricots and soak for 24 hours. Drain, reserving the syrup, and set the apricots to dry on a plate for about 2 hours or until the surface is dry, turning once or twice during the drying process. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR SPONGE CAKE:

- 7 eggs, separated
- 8 ounces sugar
- 1 cup flour
- 1 ounce melted butter

METHOD FOR SPONGE CAKE:

In two bowls, separate egg yolks and whites. Add ½ of the sugar to each bowl. Beat both until peaked. When stiff, fold the whites into the yolk mixture. Gradually add flour, mixing with a wooden spoon or spatula. Mix in the butter. Pour this mixture into a 10-inch greased cake pan. Bake for about 20 minutes or until spongy and golden. Remove from oven and allow to cool completely. Once cooled, slice the cake in half horizontally into 2 even slices. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR LEMON BUTTER CREAM:

- 3½ cups sugar

1 cup water
12 egg yolks
2 pounds (8 sticks) unsalted butter, softened
3-5 tbsps lemon juice, to your taste

METHOD FOR LEMON BUTTER CREAM:

Combine sugar and water and bring to a boil in a medium saucepan. Boil until a candy thermometer registers 240 degrees F. In the bowl of an electric mixer, whip egg yolks until light and fluffy. Carefully pour the hot sugar mixture into the yolks while the mixer is running at half speed. Continue whipping until mixture is cool. Add softened butter in small batches, stopping after each addition. When butter is fully incorporated, add lemon juice to taste.

INGREDIENTS FOR CAKE:

2 ounces unsweetened chocolate
¾ cup rum syrup
sponge cake
¾ cup jarred apricot jam
lemon butter cream
24 toasted whole almonds

METHOD FOR CAKE:

Melt the chocolate according to manufacturer's directions and dip one end of each apricot into it. Let the dipped apricots cool on the edge of a plate until the chocolate hardens. To assemble the cake, place one half on a cake stand or serving platter. Brush the cake with an ample serving of the rum syrup. Brush the second half of the cake evenly with the rum syrup and set aside. Spread the apricot jam evenly over top of the half sitting on the platter. Position the second half of the cake evenly on top of the first layer. Whip the butter cream gently to ensure that it is soft and fluffy. Reserve about ½ cup for decoration, then ice the top and sides of the cake evenly with the butter cream using a spatula. Place the reserved butter cream into a pastry bag fitted with a ¼ inch star tip. In a decorative fashion, pipe a border around the top and bottom of the cake. Arrange chocolate-dipped apricots evenly around the top of the cake and add toasted almonds in a decorative pattern around the bottom edge. Refrigerate the cake for 1½ hours or until the butter cream has hardened. The cake will keep in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours, but it tastes best when it is fresh.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chef John Folse's Easter Carrot Cake

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT: With spring gardens blooming around Easter time every year, you always find carrot cake on restaurant menus. Here we have a super moist version of this traditional Easter time recipe.

INGREDIENTS FOR CAKE:

- 3 cups grated carrots
- 2 cups sugar
- 1½ cups vegetable oil
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 3 tsps baking flour
- 3 tsps baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsps cinnamon
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple
- 1 cup sugar
- 2½ tbsps corn starch



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Oil and flour four 9-inch cake pans. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream sugar and oil until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time, whipping after each addition. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, soda, salt and cinnamon. Add a little at a time into the egg mixture, blending well until all is incorporated. Fold in the vanilla, pecans and grated carrots. Once all is well blended, pour evenly into the 4 cake pans. Bake 30-40 minutes or until cake tester comes out clean. Remove and allow to cool. While cake is baking, make filling by combining pineapple, sugar and corn starch. Bring to a low boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly for 5 minutes. Once mixture thickens, remove from heat and allow filling to cool. Remove cakes from baking pans and spread pineapple filling between layers. Ice with cream cheese frosting below and serve.

INGREDIENTS FOR FROSTING:

- 3½ cups confectioners' sugar
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese
- ½ cup butter, softened

1¼ tsps vanilla extract

METHOD:

In a medium bowl, combine confectioner's sugar, cream cheese, butter and vanilla. Beat until smooth.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Low Fat Turtle Custard Cake

PREP TIME: 4 Hours

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

The rich and creamy texture of this cake is sinful without all of the fat that usually accompanies a dessert of this kind. Topped with nonfat caramel, pecans and fat free whipped topping, it is to die for.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (14 ounce) cans fat free sweetened condensed milk
- egg substitute equivalent to 5 eggs
- ½ cup skim milk
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- ¼ cup nonfat chocolate syrup



METHOD:

In a small saucepan, place 1 can of condensed milk, label removed, and cover with water. Boil for 4 hours in the can, replacing any water that evaporates out. This must be done often so as not to create a dangerous situation. When the 4 hours are up, let cool to room temperature before opening the can to reveal a rich caramel sauce. While the caramel is boiling, preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray an 8-inch nonstick round cake pan with vegetable oil spray. Cut a circle of parchment paper to fit the bottom of the pan. In a large bowl, whisk together 1 can condensed milk, egg substitute, milk, sugar, cocoa and chocolate syrup. Pour into prepared pan. Place the pan in the middle of a larger baking pan and fill baking pan with 1 inch of water. Bake for 40-45 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center of cake comes out clean. Remove cake pan from water and let cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully invert onto a plate and remove paper. Let cool for 15 minutes. Top the cake with drizzles of the fat-free caramel sauce, nonfat whipped topping and pecan halves or pieces to create this wonderful Turtle Custard Cake.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Praline Bread Pudding Cake

PREP TIME: 2 hours

Serves: 14

COMMENT:

This recipe was given to me by the master bread pudding chef, Sharon Jesowshek. I first tasted it in French Settlement, Louisiana, and could not rest until I had secured the recipe. It takes patience, but it is a true masterpiece.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ounce praline liquor
- 5 (10-inch) loaves French bread
- 1 quart milk
- 6 whole eggs
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup vanilla
- 1 tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp nutmeg
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 cup raisins

METHOD:

Slice French into bread into 1/2-inch round croutons. In a large mixing bowl, combine milk, eggs and sugar. Using a wire whisk, blend ingredients well. Add praline liquor, vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg. Continue to blend until all ingredients are well mixed. Oil a 10-inch cheesecake pan. Press 1 layer of French bread croutons into the bottom of the pan, making sure there are no void spaces. Sprinkle a small amount of pecans and raisins over this layer. Ladle in 1/3 of the custard mixture. Carefully press the custard into the croutons using the tips of your fingers. Continue this process until all croutons and custard are used up. You may find that 1-2 cups of the custard mixture will remain once the pan has been filled. This is normal and you must continue to add the custard, a little at a time, firmly pressing into the croutons until all has been used. This may take an hour or so. The bread pudding is always allowed to set in the refrigerator overnight before cooking. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Place the bread pudding pan into a larger pan filled with water. Cook in this water bath approximately 1 - 1 1/2 hours. Serve warm or cold. Slice into 14 wedges.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Blueberry-Lemon Pound Cake

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This cake is extremely fine-textured and is covered with a lemon glaze that is almost as thick as a frosting. Big, proud and dripping with golden glaze, it looks like the epitome of a Southern summer dessert and is a legacy here in Bayou Country.

INGREDIENTS FOR CAKE:

- 1 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 lemon rind, grated
- 6 tbsps butter
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 2 tps flour
- pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup milk
- 3 tps fresh lemon juice

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease an 8" x 4" loaf pan and set aside. In a mixing bowl, cream butter and 1 cup of sugar. Beat on medium speed until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time, blending thoroughly into the mixture. In a separate bowl, combine 1 1/2 cups flour, baking powder and salt. Slowly add flour to the sugar mixture, alternately with milk, while constantly stirring. Dredge blueberries in remaining 2 teaspoons of flour. Fold into batter, along with the lemon rind. Pour batter into loaf pan and bake for approximately 1 hour or until thoroughly cooked. Combine remaining 1/2 cup sugar and lemon juice into a small sauce pan over medium-high heat until the sugar is totally dissolved. When cake is done, remove from oven and pierce the top at even intervals with a toothpick. Pour the lemon mixture over the top of the cake and allow to cool.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Raspberry-Chocolate Truffle Cake

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

This Raspberry Chocolate Truffle Cake is not for the faint of heart! I must caution you...do not attempt this recipe if you don't consider yourself a chocolate addict! Undecorated layer cakes such as this one were often served in early Creole homes with a topping of fresh fruit and unsweetened whipped cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 ounces Baker's® bittersweet chocolate
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup Chambord or raspberry liqueur
- 1 cup butter chips, softened
- 6 eggs, room temperature
- 1 1/2 tbsps flour
- 1 cup whipped cream, optional
- 2 cups fresh raspberries, optional

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Butter a 9-inch springform pan then place a buttered parchment sheet in the bottom of the pan. Cover the outside of the springform pan with aluminum foil to keep water from entering the pan during the cooking process. Place the cake pan into a large roasting pan with 1-inch sides. Set aside. Chop chocolate into 1/4-inch pieces and place into a large stainless steel mixing bowl. Place 1-inch of water in the bottom of a sauce pan and bring to a simmer. Place the bowl of chocolate on top of the sauce pan, stirring occasionally as chocolate melts. In a separate sauce pan, combine 1 cup sugar and Chambord or raspberry liqueur. Bring mixture to a low boil, stirring occasionally. When sugar is fully dissolved, pour the hot mixture over the chocolate, stirring constantly, until chocolate is melted thoroughly. Remove the bowl from the sauce pan to a table or work surface and add the butter chips, a few at a time, melting completely before the next addition. In a separate stainless steel mixing bowl, whip eggs on high speed with the remaining 1/2 cup sugar and flour until pale yellow and thickened, approximately 5 minutes. Using a rubber spatula, fold the egg mixture into the melted chocolate and blend until well incorporated. Pour the batter into the springform pan and smooth the top with the spatula. Fill roasting pan with hot tap water until it reaches half way up the side of the springform pan. Place cake in oven and bake for 1 hour. The top of the cake should have a thin, dried crust when cooked. Do not overbake. Remove cake from oven and allow the cake to cool 1 hour at room temperature. Cover the pan with clear wrap and place cake in the refrigerator a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to serve, carefully remove the sides of the springform pan. Place a cake plate or cardboard cake circle on top of the cake and invert to remove the

bottom of the pan and parchment paper. This cake is extremely rich and truffle-like in consistency. Cut portions into 1 1/2-inch slices and top with fresh raspberries and unsweetened whipped cream. Garnish with julienned mint leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Easter Lemon Pound Cake with Lemon Curd

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

MAKES: 1 (9 x 5-inch) Cake

COMMENT:

When I think of lemon, I think of freshness and crispness. I also think of spring and Easter. This simple lemon pound cake is the perfect dessert for any spring menu, but is special for Easter Sunday lunch. It may be topped with spoonful of lemon curd and fresh blueberries.

INGREDIENTS FOR LEMON CURD:

- 1/2 cup lemon juice, fresh squeezed
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 6 tbsps unsalted butter, cut into 1/2-inch pieces
- 1 tbsp lemon zest, grated
- 3 large eggs, beaten

METHOD:

In the top of a double boiler over simmering water, cook all of the above ingredients whisking frequently until a custard forms and bubbles appear on the surface, approximately 12-15 minutes. Remove from heat and strain through a fine, mesh sieve into a ceramic bowl. Cover with clear wrap and chill.

INGREDIENTS FOR POUND CAKE:

- 1/2 pound unsalted butter, melted
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 2 tbsps lemon zest, grated
- juice from 2 medium lemons
- 4 large eggs
- 1 1/2 tsps pure vanilla extract
- 1 1/2 cups cake flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a 9 x 5-inch loaf pan with 1 tbsp of the melted butter, then dust with 1 tbsp of cake flour tapping out the excess. In the bowl of a food processor, place sugar and lemon zest. Pulse 4-5 times in one second intervals. With machine off, add lemon juice, eggs and vanilla. Process approximately 5 seconds. With machine running add melted butter through the feed tube in a steady stream. This should take no more than 20-25 seconds. Do not over mix. Transfer the mixture to a large bowl. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and salt. Sift the mixed flour into the egg mixture, gently whisking until just combined. Again, do not over mix. Pour batter into prepared loaf pan and bake 15 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees F and continue

to bake until deep golden brown or a skewer inserted into the center of the cake comes out clean, approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour. Rotate pan halfway through baking time. While cake is baking, combine 1/2 cup additional sugar with 1/4 cup additional lemon juice. In a sauce pan, bring to a low simmer, whisking until sugar is totally dissolved. Set aside for later glazing of the cake. Remove cake from oven and cool for 10 minutes. Turn cake onto a wire rack. Using a toothpick, stick 15-20 holes in the top of the cake, then brush with the lemon glaze using a pastry brush. When ready to serve, slice cake and serve with a generous tbsp of lemon curd and blueberries. Any remaining pound cake may be wrapped tightly in plastic wrap and stored at room temperature for up to 5 days.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Spiced Apple and Pecan Cake In A Jar

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

MAKES: 8 (1-pint) Cakes

COMMENT:

Cooks are always looking for those perfect, homemade gifts to give during the holidays or when visiting friends and family. This jar cake is perfect for such occasions because you can make a variety of these and place in the pantry for future use.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups grated apples or apple sauce
- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped
- 2/3 cup shortening
- 2 2/3 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2/3 cup water
- 3 1/3 cup flour
- 2 tsps baking soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground cloves
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 cup raisins

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. Grease 8 wide-mouth pint canning jars with melted shortening. Use a brush and avoid getting grease on the jar rims. In the bowl of your home-style mixer, cream shortening and sugar on medium-high speed. Beat in eggs and apples or apple sauce and water. In a separate bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and salt and blend into the creamed shortening mixture. When well blended, add raisins and pecans. I suggest using a large-mouth funnel for filling the jars. This will keep any batter from dripping along the outside of the jars. Divide the batter evenly between the pint jars. The jars will be more than half full. Place the open jars on a large, heavy-duty cookie sheet and bake about 1 hour. While cake is baking, boil the lids in water for 10-15 minutes. When cake jars are done, quickly remove one hot jar at a time and clean its sealing edge with a dry towel to remove any residue or oil.

Immediately apply and firmly tighten a 2-piece wide-mouth canning lid. The lid will form a vacuum seal as the jar cools. Jars of cooled cake may be stored on the pantry shelf with other canned foods or may be placed in the freezer. The cake is safe to eat as long as jars remain vacuum sealed and free of mold growth.

NOTE: If this jar is kept in a dark, cool pantry it can last 6 months to a year, minimum. Just make sure the seal remains unbroken.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Summer Lemon Pound Cake

PREP TIME: 2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 20

COMMENT:

This cake is extremely fine-textured and is covered with a lemon glaze that is almost as thick as a frosting. Big, proud and dripping with golden glaze, it looks like the epitome of a Southern summer dessert and is a legacy here in Bayou Country.

INGREDIENTS FOR CAKE:

- 3 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 pound soft, unsalted butter
- 1/2 cup vegetable shortening, room temperature
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 6 large eggs
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tpsps lemon zest, grated
- 1 cup whole milk

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Butter the bottom, sides and center tube of a 9 1/2- or 10-inch fixed-bottom tube pan with at least 3 3/4-inch-high sides. Line the bottom of the pan with parchment or wax paper and butter the paper. In a medium sized mixing bowl sift together flour, baking powder and salt. In a separate bowl combine butter, vegetable shortening and granulated sugar. Beat with an electric mixer on medium speed until creamy, approximately 3 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating for 1/2 minute after each addition. Add lemon juice and lemon zest. Decrease speed to low, and alternately add the flour mixture and milk. Mix until the batter is smooth and thick. Using a rubber spatula, scrape all of the batter into the prepared pan and smooth the top. Place in oven and bake for about 1 hour and 50 minutes. Begin checking the cake after 1 hour and 35 minutes. The cake is done when an inserted toothpick comes out free of batter. The top of the cake should be firm and golden brown. Using a small, sharp knife, loosen the cake from the sides and center tube of the pan and place onto a wire rack or serving plate. Keep warm.

INGREDIENTS FOR GLAZE:

- 6 tbsps unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 2 cups powdered sugar

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl and mix together until well incorporated. Spoon about 2/3 of the glaze over the top of the warm cake, using a small metal spatula to spread it evenly. Spread the remaining glaze over the sides and in the center hole of the cake. Cool the cake thoroughly. The glaze will firm as the cake cools. When ready to serve, cut into slices. Fresh berries or strawberry or black raspberry ice cream make good accompaniments. The cake can be covered and stored at room temperature up to five days.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chocolate Decadence Cake with Raspberry Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

This cake was prepared by David Harris, Executive Pastry Chef for Exceptional Endings for the 5th Anniversary of Stirrin' It Up.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 sticks (½ lb) unsalted butter
- 6 ounces semisweet chocolate, cut into pieces
- 2 ounces unsweetened chocolate
- 5 large eggs, separated, plus 3 large egg yolks
- 1 cup plus 2 ½ tsps granulated sugar
- 1 ½ pints raspberries
- 2 tbsps fruit liqueur (optional)
- about 1 tbsp confectioners' sugar
- mint sprigs, for garnish

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 325° F. Butter an 8-inch spring-form pan and set it on a baking sheet. In a bowl set over a saucepan with 1 inch of simmering water, combine the butter with the semisweet and unsweetened chocolate. Stir until the chocolate is melted, about 6 minutes. Let cool. In a medium bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form. In another bowl, beat 1 cup of the granulated sugar with the egg yolks until thickened and pale, about 3 minutes. Stir the chocolate mixture into the egg yolks, then stir in half of the egg whites. Using a spatula, fold in the remaining egg whites. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for 60 minutes, or until the cake is well-risen and cracked in a few places. Transfer to a rack and let stand for 10 minutes. Run a knife between the side of the pan and the cake, then remove the side and let the cake cool completely. In a food processor, puree 1 pint of the raspberries with the remaining 2 ½ teaspoons of granulated sugar and the liqueur. Strain to remove the seeds. Sift the confectioner's sugar over the top of the cake. Run a knife under the cake and transfer it to a cake plate. Cut the cake into wedges and serve on individual plates. Garnish with mint, the remaining ½ pint of raspberries and the raspberry sauce. Pass the additional raspberry sauce on the side.

NOTE: The cake and sauce can be refrigerated for up to 1 day. Serve cold or at room temperature.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Cassata Alla Siciliana - (Sicilian Cannoli Cake)

PREP TIME: 6 Hours

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

I first experienced true cassata at a dinner party in Palermo, Sicily at Ristorante Cutino. It was served as a birthday cake. However, it is often called the national cake of Sicily.

INGREDIENTS:

- ¼ cup milk
- 3 tbsps butter
- 8 eggs
- 2 cups plus 2 tbsps sugar
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 ½ cups whole milk Ricotta cheese
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
- 3 tbsps rum
- ¼ heavy cream, whipped stiff
- ¼ cup candied lemon peel, chopped
- ¼ cup candied orange peel, chopped
- ¼ cup candied green and red cherries, chopped
- ¼ cup pistachio nuts, chopped
- ¼ cup Grand Marnier
- 1 ½ cups sweetened whipped cream
- 3 cups semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
- ½ cup cold coffee
- ½ pound cold butter, cubed

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a small saucepan, heat the milk and 3 tbsps of butter together. When hot, set aside. Using an electric mixer fitted with a wire whip, combine eggs and sugar. Whip on medium-high speed until mixture is pale yellow and tripled in volume, approximately 8 to 10 minutes. With the machine running, slowly add the heated milk. In a large mixing bowl, sift the flour, baking powder and salt. Sprinkle the flour mixture into the eggs and continue to whip thoroughly to remove any lumps. Add vanilla extract. Spray a ½-sized sheet pan with vegetable spray or line with parchment paper. Sprinkle 1 tbsp of sugar over the surface. Pour the cake batter into the pan and bake approximately 25 minutes, or until the cake springs back when touched. Cool for 5 minutes. Using a long thin knife, loosen the edges of the cake and flip it onto a wire rack or work surface. In a separate bowl combine the Ricotta cheese, confectioners' sugar, vanilla extract and rum. Using a wooden spoon, cream the ingredients together until smooth and well blended. Fold in the whipped cream.

Fold in all but 1 tbsp each of the candied fruit and nuts and set aside. Divide the sheet cake into 4 equal pieces and trim the pieces to fit snugly into a 10-inch loaf pan. Brush the top of each piece with an equal amount of the Grand Marnier. Line the bottom of the loaf pan with parchment paper, place one piece of cake in the bottom of the pan and spread with 1/3 of the cheese and fruit filling. Repeat this process with the remaining cake and filling. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate a minimum of 3 hours. Remove the cake from the refrigerator and unmold. Place the cake on a wire rack with a sheet pan underneath. Ice the top and sides of the cake with sweetened whipped cream and return to the refrigerator for at least an hour. While the cake is chilling, place the chocolate and coffee in a heavy-bottom saucepan over medium-high heat. Using a wire whisk, stir until chocolate is melted. Remove from heat and stir in ½ pound of butter. Continue to whisk until well blended. Cool the mixture until it is almost spreadable, but still slightly pourable. Carefully pour the chocolate frosting over the entire cake. Return to the refrigerator and chill 2 additional hours, until the icing is set. Remove the cake from the refrigerator, and using a long, thin spatula, carefully lift the cake off of the rack and onto a serving platter. Sprinkle the top of the cake with the remaining fruit and nuts. Slice and serve.

NOTE: At certain times of the year, white chocolate may be used to ice the cake. Additionally, almond extract should be used in place of the vanilla and Frangelico liqueur in place of the Grand Marnier. In this case, almonds replace the pistachios.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Fruit Cake in a Jar

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 8 to 10 (10-ounce jars)

COMMENT:

You will notice that this fruitcake is light in color due to the lack of brown sugar or molasses in the recipe. This enables the fruit and nuts to stand out in the cake. Additionally, this recipe makes a great addition to any holiday gift basket.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups pecans, coarsely chopped
- 2 cups walnuts, coarsely chopped
- 1 pound candied cherries (1/2 red & 1/2 green)
- 1 pound candied pineapple
- 1 box chopped dates
- 1 cup golden raisins
- 1 cup butter, room temperature
- 1 cup sugar
- 5 large eggs
- 1 3/4 cups flour
- 1 1/4 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp vanilla extract
- 1 tbsp lemon extract

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 275 degrees F. Mix chopped nuts, chopped cherries and pineapple (cut into medium-sized pieces), dates and raisins. Dredge with enough flour to coat fruit. Set aside. Cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time. Mix well. Sift together flour, baking powder and salt. Fold into egg and butter mixture. Add vanilla and lemon. Mix well. Add fruit and nut mixture and blend well. Fill 8 to 10 wide-mouth pint jars 2/3 full of the mix. Bake approximately 40 minutes. When done, remove one jar at a time from oven, clean sealing edge, place scalded lid and screw cap on tight. The cooling of the cake will seal the jar and make it shelf-stable as with any canned or jarred item. This recipe may also be baked in:

One greased 10-inch tube pan lined with heavy brown paper and greased again. Bake at 250 degrees F for 2 1/2 hours or until done.
Two 9- x 5-inch loaf pans, paper lined. Bake at 250 degrees F, approximately 2 hours or 275 degrees F for 1 1/2 hours or until done.
Or, bake in small 1 or 2 pound tins lined at 275 degrees F, approximately 45 minutes.

To decorate, dip candied cherries and nuts in corn syrup and place on top of cake as soon as removing from the oven. If baked ahead of time, wrap cakes in brandy-soaked cheesecloth. You may substitute apple juice for brandy. Store in an airtight container in a cool place

for 3 weeks.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Lebkuchen

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 12 small cakes

COMMENT:

Each year German Christmas trees are decorated with lights, tinsel and ornaments, but the specialty is the Lebkuchen, a spicy, tasty cake made in shapes and hung on the tree.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 medium-sized eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- rind of one lemon
- 1 pound almonds, ground
- 3 ounces lemon peel, ground
- 2 tsps nutmeg
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp cloves

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a stainless steel mixing bowl, add eggs, sugar and fresh lemon rind. Using a hand mixer, beat on high speed for 15 minutes until smooth and creamy. Add remaining ingredients and mix well until all is incorporated and dough is stiff. Using a spoon, drop onto a greased baking sheet 2 - 3 inches apart. Place baking sheet in the oven and bake until golden brown.

INGREDIENTS FOR ICING:

- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 3 tbsps lemon juice
- colored sugar

METHOD:

In a stainless steel mixing bowl, add powdered sugar and lemon juice. Mix together until all is incorporated and icing consistency is reached. Cover each cake with a little icing and sprinkle the top with colored sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Red Velvet Cake

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

INGREDIENTS FOR CAKE:

1/2 cup shortening
 1 1/2 cups sugar
 2 eggs
 2 cups flour
 1 tbsp cocoa
 1/2 tsp salt
 1 cup buttermilk
 2 ounces red food coloring
 1 tsp baking soda
 1 tbsp vinegar

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine shortening and sugar. Using a wire whisk, blend together until mixture is smooth and creamy. Add eggs and beat until nice and fluffy. Sift together flour, cocoa and salt, then add to mixture. Fold in buttermilk, food coloring, baking soda and vinegar and mix until all ingredients are incorporated. Place mixture into two, 9-inch or three, 8-inch pans and bake in oven for 30 - 35 minutes.

INGREDIENTS FOR ICING:

1 cup milk
 1/4 cup flour
 1 cup sugar
 2 sticks butter
 1 tsp vanilla

METHOD:

In a large saucepan, heat milk, flour and sugar over low heat until pudding stage is reached. Set aside. When mixture is cool add butter and vanilla and beat until fluffy. Spread icing evenly over one layer of cake and place second layer on top. Coat second layer thoroughly and repeat until all layers have been used.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mardi Gras King Cake

Prep Time: 2½ Hours

Yields: 10 Servings

Comment:

The king cake has a long tradition associated with the Carnival season. Originally served as a dessert on the Feast of the Epiphany, this cake was baked with unique ingredients. A bean was pressed into the dough prior to cooking and whoever got the slice containing the bean had to host a party for all guests in attendance. Today, the bean has been replaced with a plastic baby signifying the New Year.

Ingredients for cake:

- ½ ounce instant yeast
- ½ cup warm water
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 5 cups all purpose flour
- ½ cup powdered milk
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 1 cup melted butter
- 1 cup warm water

Method:

In a measuring cup, combine yeast and ½ cup of water. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, sift together all dry ingredients. Using a dough hook on an electric mixer, blend ingredients on low speed for 2-3 minutes. In a separate mixing bowl, combine eggs, butter and remaining warm water. Slowly pour liquids and blossomed yeast into the mixing bowl, gradually increasing the mixing speed. Mix until dough separates from the bowl, approximately 8-10 minutes. An additional ½ cup of flour may be sprinkled into the bowl if dough is too wet. Brush a large stainless bowl with melted butter then place dough inside. Brush dough with remaining butter and cover tightly with plastic wrap. Allow dough to proof in a warm place approximately 1 hour until double in size.

Ingredients for glaze:

- 2 pounds powdered sugar
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 tbsp almond extract
- ¾ cup water
- 3 tbsps cinnamon

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and salt. Place in an electric mixer. Slowly pour in almond extract and water while mixing on low

speed. Add cinnamon and continue to blend until glaze is smooth. Set aside.

Ingredients for assembly:

¼ cup melted butter
½ cup sugar
1 tbsp cinnamon
eggwash (½ cup milk, 2 eggs, beaten)
Purple, green, and gold sugars

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. After dough has proofed, roll out on a well-floured surface into an 18" x 12" rectangle. Brush top of dough with melted butter then sprinkle with mixture of sugar and cinnamon. Cut dough vertically into three even strips that will measure approximately 4" x 18". Fold each strip in half to make it 2" wide. Form into a basic three-strand braid then shape into a circle and pinch ends. Brush the entire cake with eggwash and proof in a warm place until the cake doubles in size. Bake 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Drizzle glaze over the entire cake and sprinkle with purple, green, and gold sugars. These sugars are available at pastry and cake decorating outlets.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Bread Pudding Cake

PREP TIME: 2 hours

SERVES: 14

COMMENT:

This recipe was given to me by the master bread pudding chef, Sharon Jesowshek. I first tasted it in French Settlement, Louisiana, and could not rest until I had secured the recipes. It takes patience, but is a true masterpiece.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 (10-inch) loaves French bread
- 1 quart milk
- 6 whole eggs
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/4 cup vanilla
- 1 tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp nutmeg
- 1 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup raisins
- 1 cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F and oil a 10-inch cheesecake pan. Slice French bread into half inch round croutons. In a large mixing bowl, combine milk, eggs and sugar. Using a wire whisk, blend these three ingredients well. Add vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg. Continue to blend until all ingredients are well mixed. Press one layer of French bread croutons into the bottom of the pan, making sure there are no void spaces. Sprinkle a small amount of pecans and raisins over this layer. Ladle in one third of the custard mixture. Carefully press the custard into the croutons using the tips of your fingers. Continue this process until all croutons and custard are used up. You may find that one to two cups of the custard mixture will remain once the pan has been filled. This is normal and you must continue to add the custard, a little at a time, firmly pressing into the croutons until all has been used. This may take an hour or so. The bread pudding is always best if allowed to set in the refrigerator overnight before cooking. Place the bread pudding pan into a larger pan filled with water. Cook in this water bath approximately one and a half hours. Serve warm or cold. Slice into 14 one third wedges.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Gateau de Figue - (Fig Cake)

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

YIELDS: 2 Quarts

COMMENT:

This recipe goes back five generations in the Guidry family of Church Point, Louisiana. Make it a tradition in your family.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup fig preserves
- 3/4 cup butter
- 1 1/4 cup sugar
- 3 eggs
- 2 1/2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour a bundt-style pan and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add the eggs, one at a time, blending after each addition. In a separate bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, soda and spices. Add these dry ingredients, alternating with the buttermilk, into the sugar mixture. Stir constantly until all ingredients are well incorporated into the batter. Add vanilla, pecans and fig preserves. Stir well and pour into the greased pan. Bake for approximately 1 hour or until cake tester comes out clean. Allow to cool. Remove from pan. You may wish to serve with ice cream or a dollop of fresh whipped cream.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mandarin Orange Cheesecake

PREP TIME: 1-1/2 hours

SERVES: 1 - 10 inch cake

COMMENT:

Ron Abidin arrived in Baton Rouge in the 1970's. He formed his very successful cheesecake company, "Dah Big Cheese", in the early 80's. His marriage of cheesecake with local ingredients inspired this creation.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

1-1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
4 tbsp. melted butter
1/4 cup sugar

METHOD:

Combine cracker crumbs and sugar. Drizzle melted butter into the mixture to moisten. Using your fingertips, press the graham cracker mixture into the bottom of a ten inch round spring form pan. Place the pan in the refrigerator for fifteen minutes or until crust is firm to the touch.

INGREDIENTS FOR CHEESECAKE:

1-1/2 lbs. cream cheese
1 cup chopped mandarins with juice
1/4 cup heavy whipping cream
4 medium eggs
1 cup sugar
1/4 tsp. orange "hard-candy" flavoring
1/4 tsp. orange #6 food coloring
1 tsp. vanilla
1/2 cup chopped pecans

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine softened cream cheese and heavy whipping cream. Blend well to remove all lumps from the cream cheese. This can be done in a blender or with a hand held mixer. Add one egg at a time, whipping completely before the next one is added. Continue until all is incorporated. Add sugar, a little at a time, while continuing to whip. Add the four flavorings and color, blending well after each is added. Fold in chopped pecans. Remove crust from the refrigerator and pour batter into the baking pan. Rotate pan until batter mixture flattens out. Place in preheated oven and bake approximately one hour or until firm to the touch. The cake may be topped with a sour cream topping made by combining one pound of sour cream, four tablespoons of sugar and one half teaspoon of vanilla. Blend all together well until creamy. Add to the top of the slightly cooled

cheesecake and place in 400 degree oven for five minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Pumpkin Streusel Coffeecake

PREP TIME: 2 hours

SERVES: 16

COMMENT:

Perfect for a crisp fall morning with coffee or for an afternoon break with hot cider.

INGREDIENTS Streusel:

½ cup brown sugar
 1 tsp. ground cinnamon
 ½ cup chopped pecans
 1/4 tsp. allspice
 2 tsp. butter
 In a small bowl combine all ingredients with a fork until crumbly. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS Cake:

3 cups flour
 2 tsp. baking soda
 1 tbsp. ground cinnamon
 1 tsp. salt
 1 cup butter, softened
 2 cups sugar
 4 eggs
 1 cup canned pumpkin
 1 cup sour cream
 2 tsp. vanilla extract

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour a 12 cup bundt pan. In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking soda, cinnamon and salt. In a large bowl, using an electric hand mixer, beat butter and sugar together. Add eggs and beat well. Add pumpkin, sour cream and vanilla. Beat well. Gradually add flour mixture and beat on low speed until blended. Spread half the batter in pan. Sprinkle streusel (prepared from recipe above) evenly over batter. Top with remaining batter. Bake 55 to 60 minutes or until toothpick inserted in cake comes out clean. Remove from oven and cool in pan on wire rack for 30 minutes. Invert on wire rack, remove cake, allow to cool completely. Sprinkle with powdered sugar.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Super Moist Carrot Cake - (Something Old)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

My mother, like every other mother in Cajun country, was a fabulous cook. Her dishes were always delicious, but unfortunately for us, she never used a written recipe. I learned to cook as everyone else did - just by watching and asking the right questions. My parents ran a grocery store and I was brought up working side by side with them. I had countless opportunities to observe Mama. Although she made many delicious candies and cakes, her favorite was always the gold brick fudge. I do remember her moist carrot cake, one of my favorites. Renella Lavergne, Opelousas, Louisiana

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 1/2 cups vegetable oil
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 3 tsps baking powder
- 3 tsps baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsps cinnamon
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 3 cups grated carrots
- 1 (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 1/2 tbsps corn starch
- 8-ounces cream cheese
- 1/2 stick butter
- 1 lb powdered sugar
- 1 tbsp vanilla

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Oil and flour four 9-inch cake pans. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream sugar and oil until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time, whipping after each addition. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, soda, salt and cinnamon. Add, a little at a time, into the egg mixture, blending well until all is incorporated. Fold in the vanilla, pecans and grated carrots. Once all is well blended, pour evenly into the 4 cake pans. Bake 30-40 minutes or until cake tester comes out clean. Remove and allow to cool. While cake is baking, make filling by combining pineapple, sugar and corn starch. Bring to a low boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly for 5 minutes. Once mixture thickens, remove from heat and allow filling to cool. In the bowl of an electric mixer, combine cream cheese, butter, powdered sugar and vanilla. Blend on low speed until well mixed. Whip until icing is fluffy and smooth. Remove

and set aside. Remove cakes from baking pans and spread pineapple filling between layers. Ice with the cream cheese frosting and serve.

Super Moist Carrot Cake - (Something New)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/2 cups sugar
3/4 cup vegetable oil
3/4 cup apple sauce, unsweetened
1 cup egg substitute
2 cups all purpose flour
3 tsps baking powder
3 tsps baking soda
1/2 tsp salt
2 tsps cinnamon
1 tbsp vanilla
3/4 cup chopped pecans
3 cups grated carrots
1 (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple
1/2 cup sugar
2 1/2 tsps corn starch
1 box confectioner's sugar
1/2 tsp cream of tartar
3 egg whites
1 tbsp vanilla

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Oil and three four 9-inch cake pans. Set aside. Oil and flour four 9-inch cake pans. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream sugar, oil and apple sauce until well blended. Add egg substitutes, a little at a time, whipping after each addition. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, soda, salt and cinnamon. Add, a little at a time, into the egg mixture, blending well until all is incorporated. Fold in the vanilla, pecans and grated carrots. Once all is well-blended, pour evenly into the 4 cake pans. Bake 30-40 minutes or until cake tester comes out clean. Remove and allow to cool. While cake is baking, make filling by combining pineapple, sugar and corn starch. Bring to a low boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly for 5-10 minutes. Once mixture thickens, remove from heat and allow filling to cool. In the bowl of an electric mixer, place sugar. Add cream of tartar and, while whipping on medium speed, add egg whites, one at a time. Add vanilla and blend well until stiff icing forms. Remove cakes from pans and spread pineapple filling between layers. Ice with the royal icing and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Super-Moist Fruitcake

Prep Time: 3½ Hours

Yields: 6 (4-pound) Cakes

Comment:

The fruitcake may have originated in ancient Egypt or the Roman Empire. The confection was, and still is, widely loved in England, where it was originally called plum cake, and was served at weddings and other celebrations. How the fruitcake made it to Louisiana is hard to determine. Nevertheless, fruitcake is commonplace on the Christmas table in Bayou Country.

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds candied dried fruit mix
- ¾ cup raisins
- ¾ cup golden raisins
- 1 pound dates
- 1 cup whiskey
- 1½ cups port wine
- ½ pound butter
- ½ pound sugar
- 5 large eggs
- 2 tsps baking soda
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 2 ounces pure vanilla extract
- 4 (11.5-ounce) jars fig preserves
- 1½ cups brewed coffee
- 5 cups flour
- 1 pound chopped pecans
- 1 (20-ounce) can crushed pineapple in juice
- 1 cup red cherries in juice
- 1 cup green cherries in juice
- 30 red cherry halves for decorating
- 30 green cherry halves for decorating
- 30 pecan halves for decorating

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine candied dried fruit mix, raisins, dates, whiskey and wine. Blend well and allow to marinate at room temperature approximately 30 minutes. Grease and flour 6 (4" x 9") loaf pans. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper to prevent sticking. Set aside. In an electric mixer, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, continuing to blend. Fold in baking soda, nutmeg, cinnamon, vanilla and fig preserves. Continue to blend on medium speed until well mixed. Pour in coffee then add flour, one cup at a time, blending until mixture is smooth. Pour contents into mixing bowl with marinating fruit. Fold in pecans, pineapple and

whole cherries. Using a rubber spatula, blend until ingredients are evenly distributed. Pour mixture into greased pans and bake 35 minutes. Open oven, carefully slide shelf out and decorate the top of each cake with five red and green cherry halves and five pecan halves.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Krumkake

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 24

COMMENT:

Krumkake is a Norwegian-American Christmas treat. This cookie is usually made with a special iron that has been engraved with Christmas and Nativity scenes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp. Vanilla
- 1/2 cup butter or margarine, melted and cooled
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour

METHOD:

Beat together eggs, sugar, and vanilla. Mix in butter. Beat in flour till smooth. Drop small amount batter onto krumkake iron, ungreased krumkake iron (for 6-inch iron use 1/2 tablespoon batter); close gently (do not squeeze). Bake till golden on one side, 15 to 20 seconds; turn iron over and bake 15 to 20 seconds more. Remove cookie with narrow spatula; immediately roll into a cylinder on wooden or metal form. Cool, seam side down, for 30 seconds; remove form. Repeat with remaining batter. Makes 24 cookies.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Moist & Yummy Yam Cake

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT:

Everybody loves a super moist layer cake. The only problem is, they very seldom get one. This recipe is the world's best yam layer cake but it is also the perfect batter for a muffins or bread. You may wish to add raisins or fruit for an interesting twist.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups sugar
- 1 1/2 cups vegetable oil
- 4 eggs
- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 3 tsps baking powder
- 3 tsps baking soda
- 1 tsp salt
- 2 tsps cinnamon
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 1/2 cups Bruce's mashed yams
- 1 20 ounce can crushed pineapple
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 1/2 tbsps corn starch
- 8-ounces Philadelphia cream cheese
- 1/2 stick butter
- 1 lb powdered sugar
- 1 tbsp vanilla

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Oil and flour three 9-inch cake pans. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream sugar and oil until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time, whipping after each addition. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder, soda, salt and cinnamon. Add, a little at a time, into the egg mixture, blending well until all is incorporated. Fold in the vanilla, pecans and mashed yams. Once all is well blended, pour evenly into the cake pans. Bake 40 minutes or until cake tester comes out clean. While cake is baking, make filling by combining pineapple, sugar and corn starch. Bring to a low boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly for 5 minutes. Once mixture thickens, remove from heat and allow filling to cool. In the bowl of an electric mixer, combine cream cheese, butter, powdered sugar and vanilla. Blend on low speed until well mixed. Whip until icing is fluffy and smooth. Remove and set aside. When cakes are done, remove from oven and allow to cool. Remove from baking pans and spread pineapple filling between layers. Ice with the cream cheese frosting and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Gateau de Sirop - Syrup Cake or Masse Pain (as it is often called)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8 to 10

COMMENT:

This smooth-textured cake made with Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup is an old-fashioned Acadian favorite. I love to make this cake for special occasions, especially my Daddy's birthday.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/3 cup solid vegetable shortening
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1/3 cup Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup
- 1/3 cup boiling water
- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 1/2 cups flour

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 340 degrees F. Lightly butter a 9-inch cake pan or a 9x5x3 inch loaf pan. In a mixing bowl, cream together the shortening and sugar. Add the cane syrup and boiling water and mix well. Add the beaten egg and stir to combine. Add the baking powder, baking soda, salt, nutmeg and flour. Mix until smooth. Pour the batter into the prepared pan and bake for about 35 minutes, until the top springs back when touched. Serve warm with sweetened whipped cream.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creole Cream Cheese Cheesecake

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

MAKES: 1 (10-inch) Cake

COMMENT:

In August 2002, we at Bittersweet Plantation Dairy resurrected the art of Creole cream cheese making. This unique regional product ceased production in Louisiana in the 1980s. The slight tart taste of this Creole specialty lends just the right flavor to this traditional recipe.



INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

- 1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
- ¼ cups sugar
- 4 tbsps melted butter

METHOD FOR CRUST:

Combine graham cracker crumbs and sugar. Drizzle melted butter into the mixture to moisten. Using your fingertips, press the graham cracker mixture into the bottom of a 10-inch round spring form pan. Place the pan in the refrigerator for 30 minutes or until crust is firm to the touch.

INGREDIENTS FOR CHEESECAKE:

- 2 (11.5-ounce) packages Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese [BUY NOW](#)
- 3 (8-ounce) packages Philadelphia cream cheese
- 3 whole eggs
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 pinch nutmeg
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsps lemon zest

INGREDIENTS FOR TOPPING:

- 1 pound sour cream
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- ½ cup sugar

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees and test with an oven thermometer for accuracy. Soften Philadelphia cream cheese to room temperature and place in the bowl of an electric mixer along with Creole cream cheese, sugar, nutmeg, vanilla, lemon juice and zest. Blend on medium-high

speed until all lumps are removed. Turn mixer speed down to lowest setting and add 1 egg at a time, whipping completely between each addition. Continue until eggs are incorporated. Do not over whip. Remove crust from the refrigerator and fill with batter. Rotate pan until batter mixture flattens out. Place on middle shelf of oven and bake for 1 hour. NOTE: The cake should be slightly browned around the edges and may appear to be a little under cooked in the center. Remove from oven and allow cake to rest 15-20 minutes. Turn oven temperature up to 400 degrees F. While cooling, if the cake develops a crack or two in the center do not panic it will be filled with the sour cream topping. While cake is cooling blend sour cream, sugar and vanilla into a mixing bowl and whip thoroughly until the sour cream is ready to pour. Pour the sour cream evenly over the top of the cake and place in oven for 5-7 minutes. Remove and when cool, cover with clear wrap and refrigerate 5-6 hours or preferably overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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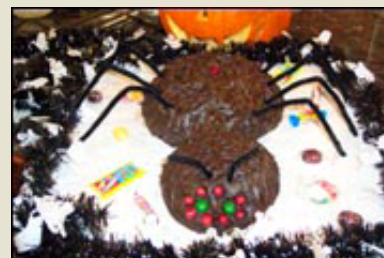
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Scary Spider Cake

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 20 Servings



Comment:

This creepy spider won't bite you, but you'll love biting it! This fun and tasty cake is a great project for the kids at Halloween.

Ingredients:

- 1 1/3 cups flour
- 1/4 tsp baking soda
- 2 tsps baking powder
- 3/4 cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 3 tbsps butter, softened
- 1 1/2 cups white sugar
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 tsp vanilla
- 1 cup milk
- 1 can vanilla frosting
- 2 cans dark fudge icing
- Red food coloring
- 8 black licorice twists or black pipe cleaners
- 2 large red jellybeans or gum drops
- 8 small green jellybeans or gum drops

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°. Sift together flour, baking soda, baking powder, cocoa and salt. Set aside. In mixer, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs one at a time, beating well with each addition. Stir in vanilla. Add the flour mixture alternately with the milk and beat well. Grease and flour a 1-quart and a 2.5-quart Pyrex mixing bowl. Pour 1/4 cup of the batter to the small bowl and the remaining batter to the larger bowl. Bake both cakes for 30 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the small cake comes out clean. Remove the small cake and continue to bake the larger cake for 20 minutes, or until done. Allow both cakes to cool completely then place onto a serving platter or cake board. Cut the larger cake in half horizontally. Tint the vanilla frosting with red food coloring to create a blood red color. Scoop out a small section of the inside of the cake on the bottom half. Fill the section with red icing and top with the other half. Ice the outside of both cakes with the fudge icing and place the small cake touching the larger cake to create the head of the spider. Place large jellybeans on the small cake and surround them with small jellybeans to create the spider's eyes. Add the 8 licorice twists

or pipe cleaners, 4 on each side of the body, for the legs.

Note: You can also use 1 box of dark fudge chocolate cake mix instead of making the cake from scratch. Follow the same directions above for preparing the pans and baking and decorating the cake.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Pam Lemoine's Brownie Chocolate Chip Cheesecake

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 10-12 Servings

Comment:

This recipe combines two of the most addictive substances in the known universe: brownies and cheesecake. Therefore, we had to give it top marks in our 2003 Stirrin' It Up for the Holidays recipe contest. As an added benefit, the white and dark layers of this rich confection make a striking presentation on your special holiday dessert plates.

Ingredients:

1 (19.8-21.5-ounce) package fudge brownie mix
 3 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, softened
 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
 3 eggs
 2 tsp vanilla extract
 ½ cup mini chocolate chips

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease the bottom only of a 10-inch springform pan. Mix the brownie batter according to package directions for chewy brownies. Spread the batter evenly in the pan. Bake 35 minutes or until set. In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. Gradually beat in condensed milk. Add the eggs and vanilla. Mix well then stir in chocolate chips. Once brownies are done, allow to cool for 10-15 minutes at room temperature. Reduce oven temperature to 300°F. Pour cream cheese mixture over the slightly cooled brownies. Return pan to the oven and bake 50 minutes or until center is set. Turn oven completely off, leave a small opening in the door and allow cake to cool in the oven for about an hour. Chill cake in refrigerator thoroughly, preferably overnight. Remove the side and bottom of the pan and place cake on a platter. Garnish with your favorite whipped topping. Decorate with chocolate shavings or as desired.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Heart-Healthy Apple Coffee Cake

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 10 Servings

Comment:

For the best results when baking with margarine, be sure you select a brand that contains at least 60% vegetable oil.

Ingredients for cake:

1½ cups finely chopped, peeled apples (2 small)
 nonstick spray coating
 2/3 cup all purpose flour
 ½ cup whole wheat flour
 1 tsp baking soda
 1 tsp ground cinnamon
 ¼ tsp salt
 ¼ cup frozen egg product, thawed
 ¾ cup granulated sugar
 ¼ cup chopped pecans
 ¼ cup applesauce



Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 9-inch round baking pan with nonstick coating and set aside. In a small bowl stir together all-purpose flour, wheat flour, baking soda, cinnamon, and salt. In a separate bowl, combine apples and egg product. Stir in sugar, pecans, and applesauce. Add dry ingredients to apple mixture. Pour batter into prepared pan.

Ingredients for topping:

¼ cup packed brown sugar
 1 tbsp all-purpose flour
 1 tbsp whole wheat flour
 ½ tsp ground cinnamon
 1 tbsp margarine
 ¼ cup chopped pecans

Method:

For topping, stir together brown sugar, all-purpose flour, wheat flour, and cinnamon. Cut in the margarine. Stir in pecans. Sprinkle topping over batter in pan. Bake 30-35 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted near center comes out clean. Cool in pan for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and serve warm.

Nutritional Information:

202 calories, 5 g fat (1 g saturated fat), 0 mg cholesterol, 207 mg sodium, 37 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 3 g protein

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chocolate Creole Cream Cheese Cheesecake

Prep Time: 1½ Hours
Yields: 1 (10-inch) Cake

Comment:

In August 2002, Bittersweet Plantation Dairy resurrected the art of making Creole cream cheese. This unique, regional product ceased production in Louisiana in the 1980s. The slight tart taste of this Creole specialty lends just the right flavor to this traditional cheesecake recipe.

Ingredients for Crust:

1½ cups graham cracker crumbs
 ¼ cups sugar
 4 tbsps melted butter

Method:

Combine graham cracker crumbs and sugar. Drizzle melted butter into the mixture to moisten. Using your fingertips, press the graham cracker mixture into the bottom of a 10-inch round springform pan. Place the pan in the refrigerator 30 minutes or until crust is firm to the touch.

Ingredients for Cheesecake:

1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
 3 (8-ounce) packages Philadelphia cream cheese
 2/3 cup whipping cream
 6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
 1½ cups sugar
 1 pinch nutmeg
 2 tbsps vanilla
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 3 eggs

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Test with an oven thermometer for accuracy. Soften Philadelphia cream cheese to room temperature. In a medium saucepan bring whipping cream to a boil. Add chocolate and heat, stirring constantly, until melted. Allow to cool. Place Philadelphia cream cheese, Creole cream cheese, sugar, nutmeg, vanilla and lemon juice into an electric mixer. Blend on medium-high speed until all lumps are removed. Blend in chocolate mixture. Turn mixer speed down to lowest setting and add 1 egg at a time, whipping completely between each addition. Do not over whip. Remove crust from the refrigerator and fill with batter. Rotate pan until batter mixture flattens out. Place on middle shelf of oven and bake 1 hour. NOTE: The cake should be slightly browned around the edges and may appear to be a little under cooked in the center. Remove from oven

and allow to rest 15–20 minutes. Turn oven temperature up to 400°F. While cooling, if the cake develops a crack or two in the center do not panic it will be filled with the sour cream topping.

Ingredients for Topping:

16 ounces sour cream
1/2 cup sugar
2 tbsps pure vanilla extract

Method:

In a mixing bowl, blend sour cream, sugar and vanilla. Whisk thoroughly until sour cream is ready to pour. Pour evenly over top of cake and place in oven 5-7 minutes. Remove and allow to cool. Cover cooked cake with plastic wrap. Refrigerate 5-6 hours, preferably overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

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- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

DESSERTS

SUNKEN PEACH CAKE

Prep Time: 1 Hour 15 Minutes

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment: Ruston, Louisiana grows some of the best tasting peaches in the world! In late may, truck farmers begin lining the highways to sell these fresh-picked delicacies. If you can find them, use Ruston peaches to make this cake extra special.

Ingredients:

- 4 medium peaches, peeled and cut into 8 slices each
- 2 tbsps plain bread crumbs
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsps baking powder
- 3 large eggs, separated
- 4 tbsps butter
- 5 tbsps vegetable oil
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2/3 cup milk
- pinch of salt

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a 10" x 3" springform pan. Sprinkle bottom of pan with breadcrumbs and set aside. Sift together flour and baking powder then set aside. In a mixing bowl, beat egg whites with a pinch of salt until stiff then place in refrigerator. In a separate mixing bowl, beat butter and oil until smooth. Add sugar, vanilla and egg yolks, 1 at a time. Beat until creamy. Alternately add four and milk, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating continuously. Fold in stiff egg whites. Pour batter into springform pan and smooth top. Carefully lay peach slices outside up on top of the batter. DO NOT PUSH DOWN. Bake 45 minutes. Do not open oven door for the first 30 minutes because cake will fall. Serve with Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Peachy Keen Creole Cream Cheese Ice Cream and whipped topping.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mama Brown's Orange Date Nut Cake

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 12 Servings

Recipe Courtesy of Jackie Alford

Ingredients for Cake:

zest of 1 orange, grated
 1 (8-ounce) package chopped dates
 1 cup chopped pecans
 3 cups flour
 1 tsp salt
 ½ tsp baking soda
 ¾ cup butter
 2 cups sugar
 3 eggs
 1 cup buttermilk

Method:

In a medium mixing bowl, sift 2 cups flour with salt and baking soda. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar 5 minutes or until smooth and sugar has dissolved. Add eggs, 1 at time. Blend in dry ingredients alternately with buttermilk. Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small mixing bowl, combine remaining flour, dates, pecans and zest. Blend well and add to cake mixture. Pour into a greased Bundt pan and bake 1 hour. Remove and invert cake onto platter.

Ingredients for Glaze:

zest of 1 orange, grated
 1 cup sugar
 ½ cup orange juice

Method:

In a small mixing bowl, combine all ingredients. Stir until dissolved. Carefully pour half of glaze over cake while it is still hot. Cake will absorb glaze. Allow to cool. Gently turn cake over and top with remaining glaze.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Devil's Own Zulu Cake

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

If the devil came down to Zulu, he'd pass a good time at the parade, then spear him one of these cakes. This is a rich, dark Devil's Food cake with an oh-so-sinful secret!

Ingredients for Cake:

- ½ cup amarettini cookies
- 1 cup sugar
- ¾ cup light brown sugar, firmly packed
- ¼ pound butter, softened
- 3 ounces unsweetened chocolate, melted
- 3 eggs, beaten
- ¼ cup Amaretto liqueur
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1½ cups cake flour, sifted
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ tsp baking soda
- 1 cup milk
- Chocolate Sauce (see recipe below)
- ½ cup chopped pecans for garnish
- ½ cup shredded coconut for garnish

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray a 9-inch springform pan with nonstick spray. Refrigerate 5 minutes or until chilled. In a food processor, pulse cookies until finely ground. Set aside. In a large bowl, cream sugars and butter. Add melted chocolate. In a small mixing bowl, combine eggs, Amaretto and vanilla until well blended. Gradually add egg mixture to chocolate mixture. Once combined, whisk until light and fluffy. Sift together cake flour, salt and baking soda. Alternately add flour mixture and milk, blending well after each addition. Fold in cookies. Pour mixture into prepared pan. Bake 30–35 minutes or until cake springs back when touched. Cool in pan 15 minutes. Transfer cake to platter. Top with Chocolate Sauce, pecans and coconut.

NOTE: If desired, sprinkle decorating sugars in Mardi Gras colors (purple, green and gold) over cake.

Ingredients for Chocolate Sauce:

- 1 pound dark chocolate
- 1 cup Amaretto liqueur (optional)
- 6 ounces butter

Method:

Chop chocolate into small pieces. Place chocolate and Amaretto in a double boiler over low heat. Melt 2–5 minutes or until chocolate is smooth, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and add butter. Stir until butter is melted and well combined. Set bowl of double boiler in a bowl of ice water and stir sauce until cool.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

OLD-FASHIONED ROOT BEER FLOAT CAKE

PREP TIME: 2 hours

Serves: 10-12 Servings

COMMENT:

When Emile Zatarain began his company in 1889, his first product was root beer. Today, Zatarain's still packages root beer extract. As any good Louisianian would, I have paired it with the local Abita root beer.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3½ tsps Abita® root beer
- 1 tbsp Zatarain's® root beer extract
- 3 cups cake flour
- 1 cup butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 1½ tsps baking powder
- ½ tsp salt
- 4 eggs
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 cup milk

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour 2 (9-inch) cake pans. Line bottoms with parchment paper for easy removal of cake. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter then add sugar and continue mixing until light and fluffy. In a separate mixing bowl, sift together cake flour, baking powder and salt. With a mixer on low speed, slowly add root beer and eggs to butter mixture until well blended. Mix in root beer extract and vanilla extract. Alternately add flour mixture and milk to create a smooth batter. Pour into prepared pans and bake 30–40 minutes or until just set. Let cool in pans 5 minutes before inverting onto cooling racks. Let cool completely before icing.

INGREDIENTS FOR ICING:

- 7½ cups powdered sugar
- 2½ cups butter
- 4 tsps heavy whipping cream
- 3 tsps pure vanilla extract

METHOD:

In a mixer fitted with a whisk attachment, combine powdered sugar and butter. Mix on low speed until blended then increase to medium. Mix 3 additional minutes. Add cream and vanilla, continuing to mix on medium 1 minute. Additional cream may be added if necessary to achieve spreading consistency. Place 1 cooled cake layer on cake stand, spread icing on top surface and chill 10 minutes. Add top layer, inverting it to create a flat top, and push down on it slightly. Spread sides and top with a thin layer of icing to hold in crumbs. Chill 25 minutes. Apply a second layer of icing to cake, making swirls on top

for decoration. If desired, add bendable straws to each slice of cake to make it resemble a root beer float.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chocolate Mocha Pots de Crème

PREP TIME: 30

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

If you are a chocoholic, then this is the perfect recipe for you. The bittersweet chocolate and brewed coffee lend a slightly bitter richness to this traditional French dessert.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups heavy cream
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 6 egg yolks
- 1 vanilla bean, split
- 12 ounces bittersweet chocolate, cut into 1/4-inch pieces
- 1/2 cup very strong, prepared espresso coffee
- 8 pots de crème cups (4-5 ounces each)



METHOD:

In a medium saucepan, bring the cream and sugar to a rolling boil with the vanilla bean. In a large mixing bowl, whisk yolks. Add about a third of the boiling cream into the yolks and whisk again. Return remaining cream to a boil and whisk in yolk mixture. Continue to cook, whisking constantly, another 15-20 seconds until slightly thickened. Strain cream into a bowl and add chocolate. Whisk cream smooth, then whisk in coffee, and pour into cups. Refrigerate until cooled. For advance preparation, cover the pots de crème with plastic wrap and refrigerate. Uncover and leave at room temperature for 1 hour before serving. You can use small ramekins if pots de crème cups are not available.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Bouche Noire

Prep Time: 1 1/2 Hours

Yields: 8-10 Servings

Comment:

The French name of this dish, bouche noire, translates to black mouth. The name becomes immediately apparent when you see 12 ounces of dark chocolate as the main ingredient in this recipe. I must caution you however, do not attempt this recipe if you don't consider yourself a chocolate addict! Undecorated layer cakes such as this one were often served in early Creole homes with a topping of fresh fruit and unsweetened whipped cream.

Ingredients:

- 12 ounces Baker's bittersweet chocolate
- 1½ cups sugar
- ½ cup bourbon
- 1 cup butter chips, softened
- 6 eggs, room temperature
- 1½ tbsps flour
- 1 cup whipped cream, optional
- 2 cups sliced Louisiana strawberries, optional
- mint leaves, optional

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Butter a 9-inch springform pan. Place a buttered parchment sheet in the bottom of the pan. Cover the outside of the springform pan with aluminum foil to keep water from entering during the cooking process. Place the cake pan into a large roasting pan with 1-inch sides. Set aside. Chop chocolate into 1/4-inch pieces and place into a large stainless steel mixing bowl. Place 1-inch of water in the bottom of a saucepan and bring to a simmer. Place the bowl of chocolate on top of the saucepan, stirring occasionally as chocolate melts. In a separate saucepan, combine 1 cup sugar and bourbon. Bring mixture to a low boil, stirring occasionally. When sugar is fully dissolved, pour the syrup over the chocolate, stirring constantly, until all is thoroughly melted. Remove the bowl from the saucepan and add butter chips, a few at a time, melting completely before the next addition. In a separate stainless steel mixing bowl, whip the eggs on high speed with flour and remaining ½ cup sugar 5 minutes or until pale yellow and thickened. Using a rubber spatula, fold the egg mixture into the melted chocolate and blend until well incorporated. Pour the batter into the springform pan and smooth the top with the spatula. Fill roasting pan with hot tap water until it reaches half way up the side of the springform pan. Place cake in oven and bake for 1 hour. The top of the cake should have a thin dried crust when cooked. Do not over bake. Remove cake from oven and allow to cool 1 hour at room temperature. Cover the pan with clear wrap and place in the refrigerator a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to serve, carefully remove the sides of the springform pan.

Place a cake plate or cardboard cake circle on top of the cake and invert to remove the bottom of the pan and parchment paper. This cake is extremely rich and truffle-like in consistency. Cut portions into 1 1/2-inch slices and top with fresh fruit and unsweetened whipped cream. Garnish with julienned mint leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chocolate Soup

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Yes, that's what I said. Chocolate soup! This dish was originally created at Le Cirque 2000 in New York City by the talented pastry chef, Jacques Torres. Feel free to enhance this soup with any fresh fruit in season, pound cake or angel food cake. The addition of individual heart-shaped poundcakes in each bowl, make this dish a Valentine's day treat!

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 ounces semi-sweet chocolate or bittersweet chocolate
- 4 cups half and half
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 4 egg yolks, room temperature
- 1/3 cup creme de cacao
- 3 tbsps Frangelico
- 6 individual pound cakes, heart-shaped
- fresh strawberry slices for garnish
- 1/2 cup whipping cream, lightly whipped

METHOD:

In a medium saucepan, combine half and half, chocolate and sugar. Place over medium-low heat, stirring frequently, until the chocolate melts and sugar dissolves. While mixture is heating, whip egg yolks in a stainless steel mixing bowl. Whisk in 1 cup of the chocolate mixture. Slowly pour the egg mixture into the chocolate/milk mixture, stirring frequently. Remove from heat and stir in the liqueurs. You may pour the mixture into a container, tightly cover and refrigerate until chilled, at least 2 hours or as long as 5 days. If serving warm, place individual pound cakes in the center of 6 soup bowls. (Note: Heart-shaped cookie cutters are available at your local kitchen supply store.) Ladle an equal amount of chocolate soup into each bowl and garnish with fresh strawberry slices. Top with a dollop of whipped cream. (Note: If you wish to warm the mixture after refrigeration, simply place the chocolate soup in a bowl over a pot of simmering water while whisking constantly to desired temperature.) This soup is also excellent with caramelized bananas.

INGREDIENTS FOR CARAMELIZED BANANAS:

- 4 large bananas, peeled and diced
- 1/4 cup dark rum
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp unsalted butter

METHOD:

In a medium-sized mixing bowl place bananas and rum. Toss to coat well. Set aside at room temperature for about 20 minutes. Place sugar in a heavy-bottom cast iron skillet over medium-high heat. Allow to melt until sugar is golden brown. Do not burn. Remove from heat and immediately add butter, stirring until smooth. Add bananas and rum and return to medium-high heat. Take caution as rum may ignite when added to the skillet. Continue to cook until almost all of the liquid has evaporated and the bananas are soft, but not mushy. Remove from heat and pour onto a plate. Cover with plastic wrap and let cool about 20 minutes. Garnish each soup bowl with an equal portion of bananas and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

White Chocolate, Mint and Pecan Fudge

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 2 Pounds

COMMENT:

When most of us think of fudge, we think of dark or milk chocolate. In this recipe, we substitute white chocolate in the place of dark and add a hint of mint for that refreshing finish to the flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups (18-ounces) white chocolate morsels
- 1 1/2 cups miniature marshmallows
- 1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
- 2 tsps orange rind, grated
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/8 tsp salt
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 1 tsp mint, chopped

METHOD:

Line a 9-inch square Pyrex dish with aluminum foil and set aside. In a heavy saucepan, combine white chocolate morsels, marshmallows and sweetened condensed milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, 10 to 12 minutes or until smooth. Remove from heat and blend in all remaining ingredients. Pour fudge into lined Pyrex dish. Cover and chill 2 to 3 hours or until fudge is firm. Cut into 1-inch squares and store in refrigerator.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chocolate Java Mousse

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

We love coffee in South Louisiana! Not only do we drink it with our desserts, we add the flavor to many of our sweets. This simple mousse recipe is quite elegant and incorporates the finest from the sweet cart, while borrowing a pinch of instant coffee from the cupboard. What a marriage!

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 ounces Baker's semi-sweet chocolate
- 1 tbsp instant coffee granules
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 tsp Cointreau or brandy
- 8 ounces heavy whipping cream
- 2 tbsps orange zest
- 6 coffee beans, optional
- 1/4 cup finely grated white or dark chocolate
- 6 mint leaves, optional

METHOD:

Chop chocolate into 1/4-inch pieces. In a stainless steel bowl, combine chocolate pieces and coffee granules. Place 1 inch of water into a sauce pot and bring to a low simmer. Do not boil. Place stainless steel bowl containing chocolate over the simmering pot. Do not allow the bottom of the bowl to touch the hot water. Stir chocolate gently using a wooden spoon until completely melted and smooth. Remove chocolate from heat and stir in the egg yolks and Cointreau. The mixture will quickly thicken to a heavy mousse-consistency. Set aside. Place the whipping cream in a large ceramic bowl and whip with a hand mixer until stiff peaks form. Blend 3 tablespoons of the whipped cream into the chocolate mixture to help "loosen" the heavy mousse. Using a rubber spatula, gently fold the chocolate into the bowl of whipped cream. Continue blending chocolate to create a marbling effect. It is important not to over- whip. Cover the bowl with clear wrap and chill for a minimum of 1 hour or preferably overnight. When ready to serve, place an equal amount of the Chocolate Java Mousse into 6 chilled wine glasses or decorative coffee cups. Top with orange zest, a coffee bean and grated chocolate. Garnish with fresh mint leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Triple Chocolate Valentine Brownies

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

MAKES: 12 (3-inch) hearts

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ¼ cups flour, unsifted divided
- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ cup margarine or butter, cold
- 1 (14-oz can) sweetened condensed milk, (not evaporated milk)
- ¼ cup unsweetened cocoa
- 1 egg
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 (8-oz) milk chocolate bar, broken into chunks
- ¾ cup nuts, chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 13 x 9-inch baking pan with heavy foil. Set aside. In a medium bowl, combine 1-cup flour and the sugar; cut in butter until it resembles crumbs. Press on the bottom of a baking pan. Bake 15 minutes. In a large bowl, beat condensed milk, cocoa, egg, remaining ¼ cup flour, vanilla and baking powder. Mix in chocolate chunks and nuts. Spread over prepared crust. Bake 20 minutes or until set. Cool. Use foil to lift out of pan. For hearts, cut with heart-shaped cookie cutter, or with knife, cut around waxed paper heart shape. Or you can cut into bars. Store tightly covered. Decorate bars with white icing or gels if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Fabulous Chocolate Fondue or Fudge Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 3 Cups

INGREDIENTS:

6 ounces semisweet baking chocolate
 ¼ cup butter or margarine
 1½ cups sugar
 dash of salt
 1 (13-oz. can) evaporated milk
 1 tsp vanilla

METHOD:

Melt chocolate and butter or margarine over low heat. Stir in sugar and salt. Slowly add evaporated milk. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture is slightly thickened and bubbly. Remove from heat and stir in vanilla.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Good Loving' Brownies

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 9 x 13" Pan

COMMENT:

This is a simple and easy recipe, but get ready as the name says, they're durn good and you're going to love these brownies!

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 ounces semisweet chocolate, broken up
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 12 tbsp unsalted butter, cut up into tablespoons
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup cocoa, sifted
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 tbsp instant espresso powder
- 1 tbsp vanilla

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray bottom and sides of 9 x 13" baking pan with non-stick cooking spray. Cut and place parchment paper into the bottom of the pan and spray again. In a double-boiler, stir chocolate, sugar and butter over simmering water. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. Whisk together flour, sifted cocoa, baking powder and salt. In a separate bowl, beat eggs, espresso powder and vanilla until foamy. Beat into cooled chocolate mixture. Sprinkle small amount of flour in chocolate mixture and fold. Repeat in small increments until all flour is added and well blended. Spread batter evenly in pan. Bake for 22 - 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center is barely moist. Remove from oven and cool completely in the pan. Run a knife around the edge of the pan to loosen. Place a rack on top of pan and invert. Peel off paper. Invert again onto cutting surface. Trim the edges and cut brownies into 2-inch squares.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Summer Afternoon Brownies

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 9 x 13" Pan

COMMENT:

This is a simple and easy recipe. The addition of Louisiana's state coffee, Community gives this brownie a unique twist. This is the brownie that is best served with a scoop of homemade white chocolate or vanilla ice cream balanced perfectly on the top.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 ounces semisweet chocolate, broken up
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 12 tbsp unsalted butter, cut up into tablespoons
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup cocoa, sifted
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 4 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 tbsp instant Community Coffee
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans (optional)

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Spray bottom and sides of 9 x 13" baking pan with non-stick cooking spray. Cut and place parchment paper into the bottom of the pan and spray again. In a double-boiler, stir chocolate, sugar and butter over simmering water. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. Whisk together flour, sifted cocoa, baking powder and salt. In a separate bowl, beat eggs, coffee and vanilla until foamy. Beat into cooled chocolate mixture. Sprinkle small amount of flour in chocolate mixture and fold. Repeat in small increments until all flour is added and well blended. Add pecans, blend well then spread batter evenly in pan. Bake for 22 - 25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center is barely moist. Remove from oven and cool completely in the pan. Run a knife around the edge of the pan to loosen. Place a rack on top of pan and invert. Peel off paper. Invert again onto cutting surface. Trim the edges and cut brownies into 2-inch squares.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

THE ULTIMATE CHEESECAKE BROWNIE

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 45 Minutes

YIELDS: 1 (8-inch) Pan

COMMENT:

There are many recipes for brownies, but this is the ultimate! The flavors of the cheesecake and brown are remarkable when combined together. This is sure to be one for your family's favorite summertime treats.

INGREDIENTS FOR BROWNIE:

- 4 ounces unsweetened chocolate, chopped
- ½ cup unsalted butter, cubed
- 2 tbsps cocoa powder
- 1 tsp instant coffee granules
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- ¼ tsp salt
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup walnuts, toasted and chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray an 8-inch square baking pan with nonstick spray.

Place chocolate, butter, cocoa powder and coffee in a microwave-safe bowl. Heat on full power in the microwave, stirring every 30 seconds. Remove when chocolate is nearly melted. Stir until totally smooth. Add sugar, vanilla and salt. Blend in eggs, 1 at a time. Fold in flour and walnuts. Spread batter in baking pan and set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR CHEESECAKE:

- 2 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 2 ounces Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- ¼ cup sugar
- zest from 1 lemon, minced
- ½ lemon, juiced
- ½ tsp vanilla
- pinch of salt
- 1 egg

METHOD:

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, Creole cream cheese, sugar, lemon zest, lemon juice, vanilla and salt with an electric mixer until smooth. Add egg and blend well. Spread mixture evenly over the top

of the unbaked brownie batter. Bake 1 hour or until cheesecake is set and golden around edges. Cool, cover and chill overnight. Cut into squares and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Cupid's Super Chocolate Brownies with Dipped Strawberries

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 12 Servings

Comment:

They'll say "I Do" to just about anything after just one taste of these super-rich and sinful brownies topped with oh-so-luscious Louisiana strawberries.

Ingredients for Brownies:

12 ounces semisweet chocolate
 12 tbsps unsalted butter
 1½ cups sugar
 1 cup flour
 ¼ cup cocoa, sifted
 2 tsps baking powder
 ¼ tsp salt
 4 large eggs, room temperature
 2 tbsps instant Community® Coffee
 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
 ½ cup chopped pecans (optional)

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray bottom and sides of 9" x 13" baking pan with nonstick cooking spray. Line pan with parchment paper and spray again. Break chocolate into small pieces and slice butter into tablespoons. In a double boiler, melt chocolate, butter and sugar over simmering water. Remove from heat and cool to room temperature. In a separate bowl, whisk flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt. In a separate mixing bowl, beat eggs, coffee and vanilla until foamy. Whisk egg mixture into cooled chocolate then fold in dry ingredients in small increments. Blend well then add pecans. Spread batter evenly in pan. Bake 22–25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center is barely moist. Remove from oven and cool completely in pan. Run a knife around edge of pan to loosen brownies. Place a rack on top of pan and flip over. Peel off paper. Invert again onto cutting surface. If desired, use a heart-shaped cookie cutter to create hearts. Store tightly covered.

Ingredients for Strawberries:

8 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
 2 pints Louisiana strawberries

Method:

Place chocolate in bowl of a double boiler over 1-inch hot water. NOTE: Do not allow the bottom of bowl to touch water. Bring to a low simmer and as chocolate begins to melt, stir constantly until smooth. Grasp stem end of 12 strawberries and dip into chocolate allowing a small portion of stem end to remain uncoated. Remove and place berries on foil-lined plate. Refrigerate until chocolate sets. Top each

brownie with 1 chocolate dipped strawberry.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

TRIPLE CHOCOLATE TRUFFLE CAKE

Prep Time: 1 Hour 45 Minutes

Yields: 12 Servings

Comment:

This cake is as sinful as it sounds and more delicious than you could ever imagine. The chocolate pecan butter that we make here at Bittersweet Plantation Dairy is a great addition. Consider yourself lucky if you ever get to try this one!

Ingredients for Cake:

1 (18.25-ounce) box Duncan Hines® devil's food cake
 1 cup milk
 1 cup Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Bulgarian-Style Drained Yogurt with Sugar and Vanilla
 1 (3.9-ounce) box Jell-O® instant chocolate pudding mix
 ½ cup Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Chocolate Pecan Butter
 4 eggs
 1 cup water
 1½ cups Hershey's® semi-sweet chocolate chips

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 10-inch Bundt pan. In a large mixing bowl, combine cake mix, milk, yogurt, pudding, chocolate butter, eggs and water. Whisk 2 minutes or until smooth. Fold in chocolate chips. Pour into Bundt pan and bake 1 hour and 10 minutes. Remove and cool on rack.

Ingredients for Glaze:

1½ cups of Hershey's® semi-sweet chocolate chips
 1/3 cup heavy whipping cream
 4 tbsps butter

Method:

In a small saucepan over medium-high heat, bring heavy whipping cream to a boil. Add butter, stirring well. Reduce heat to low, add chocolate chips and stir constantly until just melted. Turn off heat, and continue stirring until completely smooth. Let cool 5 minutes. Spoon glaze over cooled cake while it is still on the rack. This will allow the excess chocolate to drip off bottom. Cool and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

CHOCOLATE PECAN ICING

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Yields: 3 Cups

Comment:

This recipe comes from Ebbie Addison of Chapepeela Jersey Farm in Robert, La. The icing recipe originated with her mother using cocoa powder years ago, but Ebbie has substituted Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Chocolate Pecan Butter for a delicious treat. This recipe makes enough icing to cover one large cake.

Ingredients:

4 ounces Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Chocolate Pecan Butter
 8 ounces cream cheese
 1 (16-ounces) box powdered sugar

Method:

Allow butter and cream cheese to soften at room temperature. In a mixer, combine all ingredients on low speed. Once combined, cream until smooth and well blended.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

➤ Appetizers
➤ Soups
➤ Salads
➤ Game
➤ Meats
➤ Seafood
➤ Vegetables
➤ Pasta
➤ Poultry
➤ Breads
➤ Stuffings & Dressings
➤ Desserts
➤ Beverages
➤ Breakfast & Brunch
➤ Rouxs
➤ Stocks & Sauces
➤ Seasoning Cast Iron
➤ Misc

DESSERTS

Chef Guy's Homemade Biscotti

PREP TIME: 50-60 Minutes

MAKES: 60-72 slices

COMMENT:

This recipe is from a compadre in Pennsylvania, Chef Guy DiSalvo. Guy owns two little Italian restaurants named "DiSalvo's Station" in Latrobe and "DiSalvo's" in Jeanette. The next time you're in Pennsylvania drop by to see Guy, and tell him John sent you. Don't forget to try his homemade Biscotti.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 whole eggs
- 1 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 orange rind
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 2 cups flour
- 2 tbsp baking powder
- 2 lb toasted pecans

METHOD:

Break the eggs into a small mixing bowl. Add the sugar, orange rind and vanilla. Beat on medium heat for 10 to 12 minutes. SLOWLY add the vegetable oil. In a separate bowl, combine the flour and baking powder together. SLOWLY add the flour mixture to the egg mixture. Beat on low speed for 2 minutes. Fold mixture by hand until smooth (NO lumps). With a rubber spatula, slowly fold in pecans. Grease (spray with a cooking spray) 6 (six) bread loaf pans. Divide the dough evenly into the 6 pans: approximately 1 inch of batter. Bake at 350 degrees F for approximately 15 minutes. Let set in pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans and place on a cooling rack for 5 minutes. Slice each loaf into approximately 1 inch slices (10-12 slices per loaf). Arrange slices on a cookie sheet tray and place in oven for 5 to 6 minutes or until lightly toasted.

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Biscotti di Mandorle con Cioccolato - (Almond Cookies with Chocolate)

PREP TIME:

SERVES:

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 ounces blanched almonds
- 2 1/2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 2 extra large eggs
- pinch of salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 3 ounces semisweet chocolate chips or "morsels"
- 1 extra large egg white

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Put the almonds on a baking sheet and bake in the oven until the nuts are golden (about 20 minutes). Finely grind one third of the toasted almonds and coarsely grind the remaining almonds. Put the flour on a pastry board in a mound and make a well in the flour. Put the finely and coarsely ground almonds, sugar, egg salt, and baking soda in the well and mix all of these ingredients together with a wooden spoon. Then start incorporating the flour, little by little, until all but 2 tablespoons of the flour has been incorporated. Knead the dough for 2 minutes; then add the chocolate pieces, gently incorporating them into the dough while kneading it on the leftover flour. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Lightly butter and flour a baking sheet. Divide the dough into 4 pieces. With your hands, shape each piece into a long thin roll about 1/2 inch in diameter. Place the rolls on the prepared baking sheet. Beat the egg white slightly in a small bowl and brush the tops of the 4 rolls with it. Bake for 20 minutes. Remove the rolls from the oven and, with a long knife, cut at a 45 degree angle (diagonally) every 1/2 inch to get the shape required for this type of biscotti. Return the biscotti to the oven, lower the oven temperature to 225 degrees, and bake for 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and let cool completely before serving.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Neapolitan Confetti Cookies

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups sifted all-purpose flour
- 3 eggs, well beaten
- 6 tbsp. Sugar
- 2 tbsp. Butter
- 1/2 tsp. Each grated lemon and orange rind
- 2 tbsp. Minced candied orange peel
- 1/2 cup minced candied citron
- 1 tbsp. Brandy
- salt to taste
- 1-2 tbsp. Milk
- deep fat or oil, heated to 360 degrees
- 3/4 cup honey
- 3 tbsp. Colored sprinkles for decoration

METHOD:

Mix flour, eggs, 1 tablespoon of the sugar, butter, grated lemon and orange rind, candied orange peel, half of the citron, brandy and a pinch of salt. Add milk if necessary to make a stiff dough. Knead dough on a floured surface, shape it into a ball, wrap in a towel and let stand for about an hour. Pinch off pieces the size of a large olive an roll with the fingers into slender sticks the shape of little finger. Join ends to form a ring. Drop into preheated hot oil. When they are golden brown, remove from pan with a slotted spoon and drain on paper toweling.

In a large saucepan mix honey, remaining sugar and 2 tablespoons water. Bring to a boil over moderate heat and simmer until syrup takes on a yellowish color. Lower heat and add "struffoli", stirring to cover them completely with honey. Drain and put them on a plate in a mound. Sprinkle with colored sprinkles. Garnish with remaining citron.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Italian Fig Cookies

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 24

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups dried figs
- 3/4 cup light raisins
- 1/4 cup slivered almonds
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup hot water
- 1/4 tsp. ground cinnamon
- 2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 2 tsps. butter or margarine
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 beaten egg
- ** confectioner's icing
- 1/3 cup sugar

METHOD:

Put figs, raisins, and almonds through food grinder. In mixing bowl combine 1/4 cup sugar, water, cinnamon, and dash pepper; stir into fruit mixture. Set aside. Combine flour, 1/3 cup sugar, and baking powder. Cut in shortening and butter until mixture resembles small peas. Stir in milk and egg till dry mixture is moistened. On lightly floured surface roll dough to 18 x 16-inch rectangle. Cut into four 18 x 4-inch strips. Spread about 1/3 cup fig mixture over each strip. Roll each strip up jelly-roll fashion, starting at long side. Cut each filled strip into six 3-inch lengths. Place cookies, seam side down, on ungreased cookie sheet. Curve each slightly. Snip outer edge of curve 3 times. Bake at 350 degrees till lightly browned, 20 to 25 minutes. Remove from cookie sheets, cool on rack. Frost with Confectioners' Icing. Sprinkle with small multicolored decorative candies, if desired. Makes 24.

**Confectioners Icing: Mix 1 cup sifted powdered sugar, 1/4 teaspoon vanilla, and enough milk to make of spreading consistency (about 1 1/2 tablespoons).

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Sandra Scalise Juneau's Cuccidata
Sicilian Fig Cookies

FIG FILLING

Ingredients for 2 pounds fig filling:

2 pounds dried Greek figs
1 tbsp cinnamon
4 tbsps honey
2 tbsps orange zest
pinch black pepper (1/8 tsp)

Ingredients for 10 pounds fig filling:

10 pounds dried Greek figs
5 tbsps cinnamon
1 cup honey
½ cup orange zest
¾ teaspoon black pepper

Method:

Remove stems from figs. Rinse thoroughly in warm water to soften. Drain off any excess water. Set aside.

Season figs with cinnamon, mixing thoroughly. Coat with honey then blend in orange zest and black pepper. Grind fig mixture to a fine ground texture using an electric meat grinder (not a food processor).

After mixture is ground, mix thoroughly to blend all ingredients. Separate into 1 or 2-pound packages wrapped in plastic food wrap and sealed in plastic bags. This mixture will keep in refrigerator for several weeks, or it may be frozen for up to 6 months.

CUCCIDATA DOUGH

Ingredients for large fig cake designs:

5 pounds plain flour
1 cup white vegetable shortening
1 cup granulated sugar
2-3 cups warm water (gradually add as needed to form a moist dough)

Ingredients for small fig cakes:

5 cups plain flour
¾ cup white vegetable shortening

¾ cup sugar
1-2 cups warm water (gradually add as needed to form a moist dough)

Method:

In a food processor (or by hand), blend flour and shortening to a cornmeal texture. Set aside.

Dissolve sugar in warm (tepid, not boiling) water. Gradually add sugar/water to flour mixture and blend until dough forms a ball. If dough is too dry, gradually add more water as needed. Cover, set aside and allow the dough to rest for 10 minutes.

Separate dough into workable sized balls (for large cakes, about 6 inches across, for individual cookies, about 3 inches across). Knead each ball to a smooth texture and return to bowl. Cover again, then allow dough to rest for several more minutes.

ASSEMBLY

Ingredients:

Prepared fig filling
Prepared dough balls

Method:

Preheat oven to 250°F. Roll a small piece of dough (about a 2-inch ball) into the thickness of pie pastry. Cut into 4" x 12" strips. Shape fig filling into ½-inch wide rolls. Fill center of dough with fig mixture.

Fold sides of pastry over figs, overlapping dough slightly. Turn over, seam side down, and pat lightly to flatten.

Cut on an angle into 1-inch long bars. Cut slits in sides and on top to allow filling to cook through. Bake at 250°F 20-30 minutes. Cookies should be slightly browned on the bottom only. Allow to cool before icing cookies.

CUCCIDATA ICING

Ingredients for icing:

1 tbsp milk
2 drops almond extract
2 cups powdered sugar
colored nonpareils (sugar sprinkles)

Method:

Combine milk and almond then gradually blend in sugar, mixing to a smooth paste. Icing should be the texture of heavy cream.

Thoroughly cool cuccidatae (cookies) before icing. Working over a small bowl, spoon icing onto each cookie, allowing excess to drip into the bowl.

Allow each cookie to dry slightly before sprinkling with colored nonpareils. Before packaging cookies, allow them to dry completely (if they last that long !).

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Sandra Scalise Juneau's Cuccidata Sicilian Fig Cookies

FIG FILLING

Ingredients for 2 pounds fig filling:

2 pounds dried Greek figs
 1 tbsp cinnamon
 4 tbsps honey
 2 tbsps orange zest
 pinch black pepper (1/8 tsp)

Ingredients for 10 pounds fig filling:

10 pounds dried Greek figs
 5 tbsps cinnamon
 1 cup honey
 ½ cup orange zest
 ¾ teaspoon black pepper

Method:

Remove stems from figs. Rinse thoroughly in warm water to soften. Drain off any excess water. Set aside.

Season figs with cinnamon, mixing thoroughly. Coat with honey then blend in orange zest and black pepper. Grind fig mixture to a fine ground texture using an electric meat grinder (not a food processor).

After mixture is ground, mix thoroughly to blend all ingredients. Separate into 1 or 2-pound packages wrapped in plastic food wrap and sealed in plastic bags. This mixture will keep in refrigerator for several weeks, or it may be frozen for up to 6 months.

CUCCIDATA DOUGH

Ingredients for large fig cake designs:

5 pounds plain flour
 1 cup white vegetable shortening
 1 cup granulated sugar
 2-3 cups warm water (gradually add as needed to form a moist dough)

Ingredients for small fig cakes:

5 cups plain flour
 ¾ cup white vegetable shortening

¾ cup sugar
1-2 cups warm water (gradually add as needed to form a moist dough)

Method:

In a food processor (or by hand), blend flour and shortening to a cornmeal texture. Set aside.

Dissolve sugar in warm (tepid, not boiling) water. Gradually add sugar/water to flour mixture and blend until dough forms a ball. If dough is too dry, gradually add more water as needed. Cover, set aside and allow the dough to rest for 10 minutes.

Separate dough into workable sized balls (for large cakes, about 6 inches across, for individual cookies, about 3 inches across). Knead each ball to a smooth texture and return to bowl. Cover again, then allow dough to rest for several more minutes.

ASSEMBLY

Ingredients:

Prepared fig filling
Prepared dough balls

Method:

Preheat oven to 250°F. Roll a small piece of dough (about a 2-inch ball) into the thickness of pie pastry. Cut into 4" x 12" strips. Shape fig filling into ½-inch wide rolls. Fill center of dough with fig mixture.

Fold sides of pastry over figs, overlapping dough slightly. Turn over, seam side down, and pat lightly to flatten.

Cut on an angle into 1-inch long bars. Cut slits in sides and on top to allow filling to cook through. Bake at 250°F 20-30 minutes. Cookies should be slightly browned on the bottom only. Allow to cool before icing cookies.

CUCCIDATA ICING

Ingredients for icing:

1 tbsp milk
2 drops almond extract
2 cups powdered sugar
colored nonpareils (sugar sprinkles)

Method:

Combine milk and almond then gradually blend in sugar, mixing to a smooth paste. Icing should be the texture of heavy cream.

Thoroughly cool cuccidatae (cookies) before icing. Working over a small bowl, spoon icing onto each cookie, allowing excess to drip into the bowl.

Allow each cookie to dry slightly before sprinkling with colored nonpareils. Before packaging cookies, allow them to dry completely (if they last that long !).

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chocolate Chunk, Orange and Pecan Cookies

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 24 Cookies

COMMENT:

These cookies are a crowd pleaser. Whether preparing them for family or bringing them to a birthday party, they are sure to be a hit. You will be delighted that homemade cookies can be baked in half an hour.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1¼ cups flour
- ½ tsp baking soda
- 1/8 tsp salt
- ¾ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ cup unsalted butter, room temperature
- 4 tsps grated orange peel
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 1 egg
- 9 ounces semi-sweet chocolate chunks
- 1½ cups chopped pecans, toasted

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a mixing bowl, combine flour, baking soda and salt. Blend well. In a separate mixing bowl, using an electric mixer, beat brown sugar, butter, orange peel and vanilla until light and fluffy. Add egg and beat well. Blend in flour mixture until combined. Add chocolate chunks and toasted pecans. Mix well. Drop batter by heaping tablespoonfuls onto 2 ungreased baking sheets, spacing batter 2 inches apart. Bake cookies until firm to touch and beginning to brown, approximately 13 minutes. Allow to cool on racks. NOTE: These cookies can be made 2 days in advance and stored in an airtight container at room temperature.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Citrus Honey Bars

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 24 Bars

Comment:

These Citrus Honey Bars are perfect for back-to-school time. Give your children a special treat in their lunchboxes or reward them with an after-school snack. If you do not have honey, feel free to substitute 1 cup sugar.

Ingredients for Crust:

- 1¾ cups flour
- 2/3 cup powdered sugar
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- ¾ tsp salt
- 12 tbsps softened unsalted butter (1½ sticks) cut into 1-inch pieces

Method:

Lightly grease a 13" x 9" baking dish and line with parchment or wax paper allowing edges to come over sides. In a food processor combine dry ingredients. Mix on low speed 15 seconds. Add butter and blend 10 seconds, and then pulse until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle mixture into lined pan and press firmly into an even layer with slightly-raised sides to hold filing. Refrigerate 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake 20 minutes or until light brown. Remove crust from oven and reduce temperature to 325°F.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Petit Gateaux Christmas Tea Cookies

Prep Time: 2 Hours
Yields: 24 Bars

Comment:

These Citrus Honey Bars are perfect for back-to-school time. Give your children a special treat in their lunchboxes or reward them with an after-school snack. If you do not have honey, feel free to substitute 1 cup sugar.

Ingredients for Crust:

1¾ cups flour
2/3 cup powdered sugar
¼ cup cornstarch
¾ tsp salt
12 tbsps softened unsalted butter (1½ sticks) cut into 1-inch pieces

Method:

Lightly grease a 13" x 9" baking dish and line with parchment or wax paper allowing edges to come over sides. In a food processor combine dry ingredients. Mix on low speed 15 seconds. Add butter and blend 10 seconds, and then pulse until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle mixture into lined pan and press firmly into an even layer with slightly-raised sides to hold filing. Refrigerate 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake 20 minutes or until light brown. Remove crust from oven and reduce temperature to 325°F.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Louisiana Quince and Pear Chutney

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

With Louisiana quinces and pears in abundance at this time of year, we have added these native fruits to a traditional chutney recipe to create a great accompaniment to ice cream, cakes or cheese.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 fresh quinces
- 4 fresh pears
- 1 tbsp golden raisins
- 1/4 cup butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp allspice
- 2 ounces red wine

METHOD:

Peel and dice quinces and pears ½-inch thick. In a 10-inch sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add quinces, pears and raisins and sauté until tender. Add brown sugar, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and allspice. Stir until brown sugar is melted and creates a smooth sauce with the butter. Remove skillet from heat and pour in red wine. Return skillet to heat and simmer 2–3 additional minutes.

NOTE: Be extremely careful, as wine may flame up when placed back onto the stove; however, it will extinguish itself quickly.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Spiced Pears for Canning

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

YIELDS: 10-12 (1-pint) Jars

COMMENT:

During the summer, when fresh fruits are abundant, you should preserve some to enjoy during the winter, when they are scarce. This great recipe for preserving hard Louisiana cooking pears contains an aromatic mixture of ground spices that will make the whole house smell wonderful.



INGREDIENTS:

- 7 pounds cooking pears, peeled, cored and quartered
- 2 cups vinegar
- 4 cups sugar
- 1 cup water
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- 1 tbsp whole cloves

METHOD:

Immediately place peeled, quartered pears in cold water with lemon juice or Fruit Fresh preservative to prevent them from turning brown. In a 3-gallon stockpot, blend vinegar, sugar, water and spices. Drain pears, add to pot and bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook until pears are tender and can be pierced with a fork. Using a slotted spoon, remove all pears from the syrup. Pour ¼ cup syrup into each jar then add pears and 2-3 whole cloves in a decorative fashion. Fill the jar with syrup up to ¼-inch from the rim. Cover jars and place in boiling water for 20-25 minutes. After boiling, tighten lids completely and place upside down until cooled. These wonderful spiced pears can be poured over ice cream or cakes, chopped and spread on toast, or eaten right out of the jar.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

French Market Fruit Pizza

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 16

COMMENT:

No matter how old the kids are, eight or eighty, they're sure to love this unique and interesting rendition of pizza. The thing that I like most about it is the simplicity of the dish and the fact that any seasonal fruit will work perfectly.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 kiwi, peeled and sliced
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin oranges, drained
- ½ cup red grapes, halved
- 1 (18-ounce) package cookie dough
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup confectioner's sugar
- 1 (8-ounce) carton whipped topping
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 2 tbsps water
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1½ tsps corn starch
- pinch of salt



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Pat cookie dough into an ungreased 14-inch pizza pan. Make sure dough is smooth and evenly distributed. Bake 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from oven, cool dough and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, whip cream cheese and confectioner's sugar until smooth. Fold in whipped topping and stir to blend thoroughly. Once the cookie crust has cooled, spread the cheese mixture evenly over the crust. Arrange fruit on top of the crust in a decorative fashion, starting from the outer edge and working toward the center. Place pizza in the refrigerator to chill. In a sauce pan, combine sugar, orange juice, water, lemon juice, corn starch and salt. Using a wire whisk, whip to dissolve the sugar and corn starch into the liquid. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes or until mixture thickens. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Remove pizza from refrigerator and brush the glaze over the fruit. This glaze will protect the fruit from drying out, flavor the pizza and give a shiny, glistening look. Cover pizza and chill until ready to serve. This pizza may be served as a breakfast item or light dessert.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Deep Dish Mixed Berry Pie

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

A slice of pie is an American tradition, and we have gathered all of Louisiana's favorite berries into one great shell. Serve with vanilla ice cream for a great summer treat.

INGREDIENTS FOR PIE CRUST:

2 cups flour
pinch of salt
2/3 cup lard
3-4 tbsps ice water

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. In a mixing bowl, combine flour and salt. Add the lard, and work it in with your hands until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add water, 1 tbsp at a time. Form dough into 2 smooth balls. Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Remove dough from refrigerator and place on a lightly floured surface. Roll out each dough ball into a circle about 12 inches in diameter and 1/8 inch thick. Fold one of the dough circles into fourths and carefully remove the dough from the surface. Unfold the dough into a 9-inch by 2-inch deep-dish pie pan.

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

1 pint raspberries
1 pint blueberries
1 pint blackberries
1 pint strawberries
1½ cups water
1½ cups sugar
¼ cup cornstarch

METHOD FOR FILLING:

In a saucepan combine the berries and 1 cup water with sugar, over medium-high heat. Bring the mixture to a boil, reduce to simmer and cook for 10 minutes. In a small bowl, combine cornstarch with remaining water. Stir until the cornstarch dissolves and the mixture is smooth. Stir the cornstarch mixture into the berry mixture. Bring the mixture back to a boil and continue to cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and cool. Pour the berry filling, once cooled, into the pastry shell. Place the remaining circle of dough over the filling. Lightly press the pastry into the berry mixture. Using a small knife, trim off any excess and crimp the edges. Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Place in the oven and bake for 45 minutes or until the crust is golden. Remove and cool for 20 minutes before slicing. Serve each slice with a scoop of your favorite ice cream.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Four Berry Fruit Cobbler

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT: What could be more Southern then cobbler? We see it every way from peach to blackberry. We have taken four great Louisiana berries and combined them to make a great twist on a great traditional Southern dessert.

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

1 pint strawberries, halved
 1 pint blueberries
 1 pint blackberries
 1 pint raspberries
 juice of 1 orange
 zest of 1 orange
 juice of 1 lemon
 zest of ¼ lemon
 2 tbsps Grand Marnier, optional
 ¼ cup sugar
 5 tbsps cornstarch
 2 tsps ground cinnamon

METHOD FOR FILLING:

In a large bowl, place berries, orange juice and zest, lemon juice and zest, Grand Marnier, sugar, cornstarch and cinnamon. Mix lightly. Let set for 5 minutes. Place berry mixture into an 8 inch soufflé dish.

INGREDIENTS FOR TOPPING:

¼ cup butter, softened
 ¼ cup sugar
 1 tsp cinnamon
 1 cup flour

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a medium bowl combine butter, sugar and cinnamon. Mix well with a fork. Add flour until crumbly. Sprinkle topping mixture over berries. Place in center of oven rack and bake for 40 minutes or until brown and bubbly. Serve with vanilla ice cream.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Berries and Creole Cream Cheese Crêpes

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT: Start your day off with a great mix of berries and Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese. We have wrapped fresh mixed berries and cool Creole cream cheese in warm, delicate crêpes for a breakfast beyond comparison.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRÊPES:

- 2 eggs
- ½ cup flour
- 1½ tsps sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla
- 1 tbsp triple sec
- 1 tbsp melted butter
- ¾ cup milk
- salt to taste
- ¼ cup vegetable oil

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, place eggs, flour, sugar, vanilla and triple sec. Using a wire whisk, whip until ingredients are silky smooth. Add butter and milk and continue to blend until batter reaches the consistency of heavy whipping cream. Make sure that all lumps are removed. Season to taste using salt. It is best to make crêpe batter a minimum of 6 hours prior to use and refrigerate. I recommend refrigerating the batter overnight. Place 2 (6-inch) crêpe pans over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil into the first pan and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Once hot, pour excess oil into the second crêpe pan. Place approximately 2 ounces of the crêpe batter into the first pan, tilting in a circular motion, until the batter spreads evenly. Cook crêpe until outer edge browns and loosens from the pan. Flip crêpe and cook 1 additional minute. Using a thin spatula, remove crêpe from the pan and sprinkle with sugar. Continue process until all crêpes are done. If you wish to store crêpes overnight or freeze, place plastic wrap between each crêpe to prevent sticking and place in a large Ziploc bag prior to refrigerating or freezing.

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

- 2 cups fresh mixed berries such as strawberries, blackberries, blueberries and raspberries
- 2 tbsps sugar
- ½ lemon
- ½ cup Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese

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METHOD:

In a bowl, combine berries, sugar and a squirt of lemon. Toss to

combine. Spread 2 tablespoons of Creole cream cheese over crêpe. Top with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the berry mixture. Fold into quarters and serve with syrup or puréed mixed berries and sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mixed Berries Bathed in Bay Leaf Custard

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

From April throughout the summer months, it is very easy to find fresh berries from strawberries to wild mulberries. We have enrobed these sweet, bountiful berries in a luxurious custard flavored with the delicate essence of bay leaves.

INGREDIENTS:

5 large egg yolks
 ½ cup granulated sugar
 2 cups heavy cream
 1 tsp vanilla
 pinch of nutmeg
 2-3 fresh bay leaves, not dried
 6 cups mixed fresh berries such as strawberries, raspberries, blueberries, blackberries or wild mulberries



METHOD:

Beat egg yolks and sugar in a bowl with an electric mixer until thick and pale, about 3 minutes. Transfer yolk mixture to a 2-3 quart heavy saucepan and stir in cream, vanilla, nutmeg and bay leaves. Cook over moderately low heat, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until mixture is thick enough to coat back of spoon and registers 175 degrees F on an instant read thermometer, about 8-10 minutes. Do not boil! Remove from heat and cool custard to room temperature in pan, stirring frequently to prevent skin from forming, about 1 hour. Discard bay leaves and serve custard over berries in a martini glass with bay leaf for garnish.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Sweet Fruit Chutney

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

In this recipe, we have sautéed apples with four different spices and red wine to create a rich, sweet topping that is perfect for ice cream. Feel free to experiment with pears, peaches or your favorite fruit.

INGREDIENTS:

4 fresh apples, pears or peaches
 1 tbsp golden raisins
 ¼ cup butter
 ½ cup brown sugar
 ½ tsp cinnamon
 1/8 tsp ground cloves
 1/8 tsp nutmeg
 1/8 tsp allspice
 2 ounces red wine

METHOD:

Dice apples ½ inch thick with skin on. In a 10-inch sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add apples and raisins and sauté until tender. Add brown sugar, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and allspice. Stir until brown sugar is melted and creates a smooth sauce with the butter. Remove skillet from heat and pour in red wine. NOTE: Be extremely careful, as wine will flame up when placed back onto the fire. However, it will extinguish itself quickly. Serve over ice cream.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

CREOLE CREAM CHEESE STRAWBERRY SHORTCAKE

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 10 Servings

Comment:

During strawberry season in Louisiana, trucks selling the sweet berries line the roads. Here, the fresh produce is combined with our Creole cream cheese to create the most famous and most loved strawberry dish.

Ingredients for Strawberries:

1 quart strawberries, sliced lengthwise
 ½ cup sugar, or to taste
 1 ounce strawberry wine

Method:

Preheat oven to 425°F. In a medium mixing bowl, combine strawberries, sugar and wine. Mash with a potato masher or fork just until strawberries release their juices. Be careful not to mash to a pulp.

Ingredients for Whipped Cream:

1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 ½ tsp nutmeg
 ½ tsp cinnamon
 ¾ cup sugar

Method:

In an electric mixer, combine Creole cream cheese, cream, nutmeg and cinnamon. Whisk on medium-high speed until mixture starts to slightly thicken. Slowly add sugar and beat until very soft peaks form. Be careful to avoid creating a stiff whipped cream. Set aside.

Ingredients for Cream Biscuits:

2 cups flour
 1 tbsp double-acting baking powder
 3 tbsps sugar, or to taste
 ½ tsp salt
 1½ cups heavy whipping cream
 whole milk (for brushing tops of biscuits)

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Slowly add cream and stir mixture until it just forms a dough.



Gather dough into a ball and turn onto a lightly-floured surface. Roll or pat dough ½-inch thick. Using a 2½-inch cutter, cut out as many rounds as possible and transfer them to an ungreased baking sheet. NOTE: A 4-inch or 1-inch cutter may be substituted. Gather scraps, roll dough and cut out more rounds until all dough has been used. Brush tops of biscuits lightly with milk. Bake 15 minutes or until golden brown. Transfer biscuits to a rack and let cool 5 minutes. Split biscuits horizontally with a fork, arrange bottom halves on plates, and spoon strawberry mixture over them. Top strawberry mixture with whipped cream and arrange biscuit tops on cream. Serve remaining cream separately.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Rustic Apple and Pear Tart

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Rustic fruit tarts took the place of the more classic pies and tarts of the French kitchen here in South Louisiana. During the holiday season, canned or jarred fruits were mixed with fresh seasonal varieties to create these seasonal delicacies. This pear tart is a magnificent example of these homespun desserts.

INGREDIENTS:

4 pears, halved, cored and peeled
 1 quart water
 2 cups sugar
 2 cups Cabernet Sauvignon
 ¼ pound butter (one stick)
 2 red apples, skin-on, ¼" diced
 2 green apples, skin-on, ¼" diced
 ½ cup sugar
 1/8 tsp cinnamon
 1/8 tsp nutmeg
 4 tbsps flour
 1 tbsp vanilla
 ½ cup golden raisins
 1 cup Calvados, or apple brandy
 1-1/3 cups flour
 ¼ pound chipped cold butter
 1 tbsp sugar
 ¼ cup ice water

METHOD:

In a large pot, place water, sugar, wine and pears. Slightly simmer pears until fork tender, but not falling apart, about 30 minutes. The pears must remain in poaching liquid overnight to soak up the color and flavor of the wine. The next step is to make the apple filling. In a large sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. In a mixing bowl, toss diced apples in sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg and flour. Add to sauté pan and stir constantly. Cook until apples are cooked al dente. Add vanilla, raisins, and Calvados. Place mixture in a mixing bowl and set aside to cool. The next day, make the crust by placing the flour, butter and sugar into the bowl of a food processor equipped with a metal blade. Using pulse button, blend mixture until a coarse meal texture is achieved, approximately one minute. Slowly add ice water, a little at a time, until dough forms into a ball. Remove and place on floured surface. Roll dough to a one eighth inch thickness, about 12 inches in diameter. Carefully place rolled dough onto a ceramic pizza stone. Leaving about 1 ½ -2 inches around the edge place the cold apple filling onto the dough. Arrange the 8 pear halves on top of the filling about 1 inch in from the edge. Fold the dough over the edges of the filling to create the rustic pie crust, being careful not to cover the

pears. Bake on the pizza stone in a 400-degree oven until crust is golden, about 20-30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Strawberry Crêpes Romanoff

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 20 Crêpes

COMMENT:

As versatile foods go, crêpes are at the top of the list. They not only fall into categories ranging from appetizers to desserts, but they can be filled with everything from seafood and wild game to fruits and berries. This is one of my favorite versions.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRÊPES:

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tbsps triple sec
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- 1 ½ cups milk
- pinch of salt
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup sugar

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, place eggs, flour, sugar, vanilla and triple sec. Using a wire whisk, whip until ingredients are silky smooth. Add butter and milk and continue to blend until batter reaches the consistency of heavy whipping cream. Make sure that all lumps are removed. Season to taste using salt. It is best to make batter a minimum of 6 hours prior to use and refrigerate. I recommend refrigerating the batter overnight. Place 2 (6-inch) crêpe pans over medium-high heat. Add 2 tbsps of vegetable oil into one pan and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Once hot, pour excess oil into the second pan and heat. Place approximately 2 ounces of the batter into the first pan, tilting in a circular motion, until the batter spreads evenly. Cook crêpe until outer edge browns and loosens from the pan. Flip crêpe and cook 1 additional minute. Using a thin spatula, remove crêpe from the pan and sprinkle with sugar. Continue process, using both pans, until all crêpes are done. If you wish to store overnight or freeze, place plastic wrap between each crêpe to prevent sticking. Place in a large Ziploc® bag prior to refrigerating or freezing.

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

- 4 pints Louisiana strawberries, sliced
- ½ cup sugar
- ¼ cup Grand Marnier
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- ½ cup sour cream
- ¼ cup confectioners' sugar

METHOD:

Combine strawberries, sugar and Grand Marnier in a large mixing bowl. Stir once, cover with clear wrap and refrigerate overnight. when ready to serve, place whipping cream and confectioners' sugar in a bowl and whip into firm peaks. Fold in sour cream and blend well. Drain 2 cups of the strawberries then fold into the whipped cream mixture. Spoon a generous serving into the center of each crêpe and roll cigar-style. Place two crêpes in the center of a plate and top with a 2-ounce ladle of the strawberries and juice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Sautéed Apples Calvados

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Calvados, or apple brandy, is the perfect flavor ingredient for these sautéed apples. When finished, serve in an au gratin dish topped with puff pastry or alongside French vanilla or white chocolate ice cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 Fuji apples
- 1/4 cup Calvados
- 1/4 cup melted butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1/4 cup apple cider
- 1 ounce Kirsch
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon
- pinch of cloves
- pinch of ginger
- pinch of nutmeg

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Peel apples, core and slice into 1/8-inch slices. Submerge in water with 1 tbsp lemon juice to keep apples from turning brown. When ready to cook, place butter in a 10-inch skillet over medium-high heat. Add apples and sauté 3-5 minutes, then add all remaining ingredients. Continue to simmer until sugar is dissolved and apples are fork-tender but not falling apart. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Place an equal amount of apples into an au-gratin dish or other appropriate heat-resistant serving dish. Prior to serving, place in oven approximately 5-10 minutes or until sauce is bubbly. Serve as a topping for ice cream or lay a circle of sugared, baked puff pastry on top of the sautéed apples.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Honeyed Apple Rings

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

These apple rings have been created as the perfect accompaniment to our Duo of Sausages Smothered in Apples. However, you may wish to serve them warm over a green salad or over vanilla ice cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 red apples, cored and sliced
- 2 green apples, cored and sliced
- 2 cups honey
- 1/2 cup red wine vinegar
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of nutmeg
- pinch of salt

METHOD:

When slicing the apples, leave the peelings on for a better presentation. Remember that apples oxidize and turn brown quickly when exposed to air, so always submerge the sliced apples in a bowl of water with 2 tbsps lemon juice to prevent oxidation. In a heavy-bottomed iron skillet, combine all of the above ingredients, except apples, over medium-high heat. Using a wire whisk, stir well to incorporate. Bring to a low simmer, then cook apple rings a few at a time in the simmering liquid until tender, but not overcooked. Remove and keep warm. Continue until all apples have been "poached" in the sweet and sour mixture. Arrange the apples, alternating colors, around the edge of the platter containing the smothered sausages.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

MAMERE'S FIG PRESERVES

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 2 Quarts

Comment:

No fruit, wild or store bought, has been preserved in Louisiana more often than figs. My grandmother was an expert at preserving figs, and I can't remember a day that a jar of her specialty wasn't sitting in the center of our kitchen table.

Ingredients:

1 gallon figs
12 cups sugar
1 quart water
4 lemon slices

Method:

Sort figs and remove any that are overripe or blemished. Wash figs well in cold, running water. Bring a pot of water to a boil, drop in figs, remove from heat and allow to stand 3 minutes. Quickly remove and drain. The hot water will help set color in fruit. In a 2-gallon, heavy-bottomed saucepot, combine sugar and water and bring to a rolling boil. Stir constantly until sugar is melted and syrup is formed. Add lemon slices then gently place figs into boiling liquid. Reduce heat to medium and cook figs 2½ hours or until transparent. During cooking process, shake pot gently. Stirring will mash fruit. Using a slotted spoon, scoop figs into hot, sterilized jar then top with syrup. Leave ¼-inch headspace in jar. Wipe syrup from rim then tightly cover and seal. Place jars in a hot water bath and simmer approximately 10 minutes. Remove, cool, label and store for later use. NOTE: Figs may be left overnight in syrup to plump prior to packing in jars. Should you decide to do this, fill jars with fruit and syrup, seal and place in a boiling water bath approximately 20 minutes.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Spiced Ruston Peach Topping for Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Ruston peaches, although smaller than those big Georgia or California peaches, sure have a fantastic flavor. Most people don't associate peaches with Louisiana. However, the town of Ruston in the northern part of the state is the peach capital of Louisiana. There's even a peach festival held in its honor. Try this simple topping with vanilla or praline ice cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 fresh peaches
- ¼ cup butter
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp allspice
- 2 ounces brandy

METHOD:

Peel peaches and slice 1/2-inch thick. In a 10-inch sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add peaches and sauté until tender. Add brown sugar, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and allspice. Stir until brown sugar is melted and creates a smooth sauce with the butter. Remove skillet from heat and pour in brandy. NOTE: Be extremely careful as brandy will flame up when placed back onto the fire. However, it will extinguish itself quickly. Serve sauce over ice cream.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Individual Meringues with Sliced Strawberries and Chocolate Sauce

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

INGREDIENTS:

5 large egg whites
 Pinch of coarse salt
 1¼ cups plus 3 tbsps sugar
 12 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
 3 (1-pound) baskets strawberries
 6 tbsps water

METHOD:

Position 1 rack in bottom third and 1 rack in top third of oven and preheat to 250 degrees F. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper. Draw six, 3 ½-inch circles on each piece of parchment paper. The bottom of a 6-ounce tuna can makes a convenient template for these circles. You will use these circles when making the meringue shells. Using an electric mixer, beat egg whites and salt in large bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add 1¼ cups sugar, beating until whites are stiff and glossy. Spoon approximately 1/3 cup of the whipped egg whites into the center of each circle. Using the back of a cooking spoon, spread the meringue evenly within the circle and depress the center to form a shell. Bake meringues until crisp and almost dry, about 1 hour 15 minutes. Turn off oven; leave door closed. Let meringues dry in oven for 1 hour. Remove from oven and lift meringues from parchment. (These can be made 1 week ahead. Wrap airtight and freeze.) Place chocolate in a stainless steel bowl and set over a saucepot containing 1-inch of hot water. Do not allow the bottom of the bowl to touch the water. Bring to a low simmer and as the chocolate begins to melt, stir constantly until smooth. Grasp the stem end of 12 strawberries and dip into chocolate allowing a small portion of the stem end to remain uncoated. Remove and place the berries on foil-lined plate; refrigerate until chocolate sets. Whisk 6 tablespoons of cold water into remaining chocolate to create a sauce. Keep warm. Hull and slice remaining strawberries, then sprinkle with remaining 3 tablespoons of sugar. When ready to serve, place meringues in center of 10-inch serving plate. Top with sliced berries, drizzle with chocolate and garnish with whole dipped strawberry.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Strawberry Shortcake

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Ponchatoula, Louisiana, is the strawberry capital of the world. It certainly makes sense that this very English dessert was first created in this area of our state. There is dispute over the exact shortcake recipe, but most agree with this version.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups strawberries, sliced
- ½ cup sugar
- ½ cup water
- 2¾ cups flour
- 2½ tbsps sugar
- 1½ tbsps baking powder
- 1 tsp salt
- 7 tbsps butter
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine strawberries, sugar and water. Blend thoroughly, cover and chill a minimum of 3 hours. In the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade, combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Pulse to blend thoroughly. Add butter and continue to pulse until consistency of fine meal and pale yellow in color. The tenderness of the shortcake depends on the flour and butter being thoroughly mixed. Slowly pour in cream until mixture comes together in one mass. Turn dough out onto a floured surface and knead gently 3 to 4 times. Do not over-work. Roll the dough to 3/4-inch thickness and cut into 3-inch circles. Before baking, brush with a little cream and sprinkle with sugar. Bake 20 to 30 minutes or until golden brown. To serve, split the biscuits horizontally and top with strawberry mixture. You may wish to garnish with a spoon of heavy whipping cream and drizzle with strawberry liqueur. Dust with powdered sugar prior to serving. I prefer to serve the shortcake while the biscuits are still warm.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Apple Crêpe Tatin

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 8 to 10 Crêpes

COMMENT:

This unique dish was first discovered at Chef Cyril Renaud's New York Restaurant, Fleur de Sel. The simple crêpe batter is enhanced with the addition of apple slices and cooked tatin-style. This baked upside down apple dessert was devised by the Tatin sisters at their restaurant near Orleans, France.

INGREDIENTS:

- 30 (1/8-inch thick) Fuji apple slices
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tbsps triple sec
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- 1-1/2 cups milk
- pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup sugar

METHOD:

The Fuji apple may be found in most grocery stores and is best used in this dessert. Slice the apples 1/8-inch thick and place in a bowl of cold water along with 1/4 cup lemon juice to keep the apples from turning brown. Set aside. In a large mixing bowl, place eggs, flour, sugar, vanilla and triple sec. Using a wire whisk, whip until ingredients are silky smooth. Add butter and milk and continue to blend until batter reaches the consistency of heavy whipping cream. Make sure that all lumps are removed. Season to taste using salt. It is best to make crêpe batter a minimum of 6 hours prior to use and refrigerate. I recommend refrigerating the batter overnight. Place 2 (6- to 8-inch) crêpe pans over medium-high heat. Add 2 tbsps of vegetable oil into the pan and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Once hot, pour excess oil into the second crêpe pan. Place 3 apple slices into the pan and cook 1 minute on each side. Using a fork, centrally place the apple slices around the pan to create a configuration resembling 2 eyes and a mouth. Carefully ladle 2-1/2 ounces of the batter over the apples. Slowly tilt the pan in a circular motion until the batter spreads evenly to the edge of the pan. Cook until outer edge browns and loosens from the pan. Flip and cook 1 additional minute. Place 1/8 tsp of butter on top of the crêpe along with 2 tsps sugar. Flip over and allow the sugar and butter to caramelize on the bottom of the pan, creating the caramelized look of an apple tarte tatin. Flip onto a plate and serve with your favorite ice cream or a scoop of Devonshire cream.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

French Market Fruit Pizza

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 16

COMMENT:

No matter how old the kids are, they're sure to love this unique and interesting rendition of pizza. The thing that I like most about it is the simplicity of the dish and the fact that any seasonal fruit will work perfectly.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 kiwi, peeled and sliced
- 1 banana, sliced
- 1 (11-ounce) can mandarin oranges, drained
- 1/2 cup red grapes, halved
- 1 (18-ounce) package cookie dough
- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 1/4 cup confectioner=s sugar
- 1 (8-ounce) carton whipped topping
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 2 tbsps water
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 2 tps corn starch
- Pinch of salt

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Pat cookie dough into an ungreased 14-inch pizza pan. Make sure dough is smooth and evenly distributed. Bake 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove from oven, cool and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, whip cream cheese and confectioner=s sugar until smooth. Fold in whipped topping and stir to blend thoroughly. Once the cookie crust has cooled, spread the cheese mixture evenly over the crust. Arrange fruit on top of the crust in a decorative fashion, starting from the outer edge and working toward the center. Place pizza in the refrigerator to chill. In a sauce pan, combine sugar, orange juice, water, lemon juice, corn starch and salt. Using a wire whisk, whip to dissolve the sugar and corn starch into the liquid. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, stirring constantly, for 1-2 minutes or until mixture thickens. Remove from heat and cool slightly. Remove pizza from refrigerator and brush the glaze over the fruit. This glaze will protect the fruit from drying out, flavor the pizza and give a shiny glistening look. Cover pizza and chill until ready to serve. This pizza may be served as a breakfast item or light dessert.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

DESSERTS

Louisiana Fig Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

MAKES: 1 Quarts

COMMENT:

During the late summer, when figs are plentiful, it is not uncommon to find fig preserves topping a bowl of vanilla ice cream. This combination inspired the following ice cream recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup mashed fig preserves
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1 1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine milk, cream and vanilla. Using a thermometer, bring the mixture to 190 degrees F, whisking occasionally; do not boil. In a separate bowl, combine eggs and sugar, whisk to blend thoroughly. NOTE: If you like your ice cream less sweet, you may cut the sugar to 1/4 cup since the fig preserves are already sweetened. Once the milk is heated, slowly pour the hot milk into the egg mixture whisking constantly. Pour the mixture back into the saucepan and return to 190 degrees F. Do not boil, otherwise eggs will scramble. Remove from heat and pour the mixture through a fine sieve and refrigerate, preferably over night. Prior to pouring the mixture into an ice cream freezer, whisk in the chopped fig preserves. Pour the contents into a home-style freezer and follow manufacturer's directions. NOTE: If you wish to add more lightness to the texture of this ice cream, separate the egg yolks and whites. Whip the egg whites separately and fold into the mixture prior to freezing.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Wild Blackberry Crepes

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 20 Crepes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The thing I like most about crêpes is their versatility. Not only are they the perfect dessert, but crêpes cross the boundaries of all meal periods. Some of my favorite luncheon items are seafood and chicken dishes wrapped in crêpes, and who among us hasn't longed for yet another Crêpe Suzette for dessert. But when it comes to breakfast, nothing makes a more elegant plate presentation than a crêpe.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRÊPES:

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tbsps Grand Marnier liqueur
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- 1 ½ cups milk
- Pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup sugar

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, whip eggs, flour, 1 tablespoon of sugar, vanilla and Grand Marnier. Using a wire whisk, whip until ingredients are silky smooth. Add butter and milk and continue to blend until batter reaches the consistency of heavy whipping cream. Make sure that all lumps are removed. Season to taste using salt. It is best to make the crêpe batter a minimum of 6 hours prior to use and refrigerate. I recommend refrigerating the batter overnight. Place two 6-inch crêpe pans over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil into one pan and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Once hot, pour excess oil into the second crêpe pan. Place approximately 2 ounces of the crêpe batter into the first pan, tilting in a circular motion, until the batter spreads evenly. Cook crêpe until outer edge browns and loosens from the pan. Flip crêpe and cook 1 additional minute. Using a thin spatula, remove crêpe from the pan and sprinkle with remaining sugar. Continue this cooking process in both pans until all crêpes are done. If you wish to store crêpes overnight or freeze, place plastic wrap between each crêpe to prevent sticking and place in a large Ziploc® bag.

INGREDIENTS FOR BLACKBERRY FILLING:

- 3 cups wild Louisiana blackberries
- 2 tbsps butter
- 2 tbsps corn starch

1 cup water
1/2 cup white wine
1/2 cup sugar
1/8 tsp cinnamon
1/8 tsp nutmeg
1 cup whipped cream

METHOD:

In a saute pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Dissolve corn starch in water until thoroughly blended. Pour corn starch mixture, wine and sugar into the saute pan. Bring mixture to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer then add 2 cups of the blackberries. Add cinnamon and nutmeg and continue to cook until sauce thickens, approximately 3 minutes. When ready to serve, divide an equal number of the remaining fresh blackberries into the center of 12 crepes. Place approximately 1 tablespoon of the cooked sauce over the berries and roll each crepe into a cigar-shape. Place 2 crepes in the center of 6 serving plates. Top each crepe with a generous serving of hot blackberry syrup and 1 tablespoon of whipped cream. Garnish with fresh mint leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Marinated Ponchatoula Strawberries

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I love Strawberries Romanoff and it's nothing more than strawberries marinated in Grand Marnier and blended with fresh whipped cream. I knew that we could do a lot better than that here in Louisiana. So here's our jazzed up version of that classical dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 8 cups strawberries, sliced
- 1 cup strawberry liqueur
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. nutmeg
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup strawberries, chopped
- 1/4 cup strawberry wine
- 6 sugar cookies, optional

METHOD:

Place sliced strawberries in a large mixing bowl along with strawberry liqueur, 1 cup of sugar, cinnamon and nutmeg. Blend well, cover with clear wrap and refrigerate, preferably overnight. When ready to serve, place heavy whipping cream in a large mixing bowl. Add 1/4 cup of sugar, chopped strawberries and strawberry wine. Using a hand mixer, whip cream until heavy peaks form. Remove the marinated strawberries from the refrigerator and fold into the whipped cream. Serve the mixture in a champagne or wine glass. A sugar cookie may be added as a garnish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Crepes Estelle

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

MAKES: 20 Crepes

COMMENT:

Degas' uncle, Michel Munson, was head of his New Orleans household at the time the artist was in residence there in the late 1800s. Munson's daughter, Estelle, was the subject of at least one Degas painting and obviously the inspiration for this tasty crepe dish.

INGREDIENTS FOR CREPES:

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tbsps triple sec
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- Pinch of salt
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 cup sugar

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, place eggs, flour, sugar, vanilla and triple sec. Using a wire whisk, whip until ingredients are silky smooth. Add butter and milk and continue to blend until batter reaches the consistency of heavy whipping cream. Make sure that all lumps are removed. Season to taste using salt. It is best to make crepe batter a minimum of 6 hours prior to use and refrigerate. I recommend refrigerating the batter overnight. Place two 6-inch crepe pans over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil into one pan and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Once hot, pour excess oil into the second crepe pan. Place approximately 2 ounces of the crepe batter into the first pan, tilting in a circular motion, until the batter spreads evenly. Cook crepe until outer edge browns and loosens from the pan. Flip crepe and cook 1 additional minute. Using a thin spatula, remove crepe from the pan and sprinkle with sugar. Continue process until all crepes are done. If you wish to store crepes overnight or freeze, place plastic wrap between each crepe to prevent sticking and place in a large Ziploc bag prior to refrigerating or freezing.

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 tbsp sugar
- Zest of 1 satsuma
- Juice of 2 satsumas
- 1 tsp Grenadine or cherry juice
- 3 tbsps Cointreau or triple sec

3 tbsps Kirsch liquor

METHOD:

Juice satsumas by peeling and pressing the segments through a fine sieve or chop in the food processor and then push through a sieve, discarding the pulp. In a cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add sugar and satsuma zest, stirring until sugar is melted. Add satsuma juice, Grenadine and Cointreau. Continue to stir until ingredients are well incorporated. Remove skillet from heat and add Kirsch. Take caution when returning skillet to the heat as alcohol may ignite for a second or two. Fold each crepe in ½ then in ½ again to create a triangle. Gently simmer the crepes, 1 or 2 at a time, in the hot sauce and serve immediately. Place 2 crepes on a 10-inch serving plate and garnish with a few sections of fresh satsumas.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mama's Apple Dumplings

PREP TIME: 1 ½ Hours

SERVES: 4-8

COMMENT:

This recipe is taken from Jackie Alford's cookbook, Peppermints in the Armoire. Jackie is quick to say, "Mama never used a recipe, but I often watched her cook and recreated the dish from what I remembered." This is one success story from Jackie's memory.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 large Granny Smith apples
- 4 teaspoons lemon juice
- 4 9-inch pie crusts, unbaked
- 8 tablespoons butter
- cinnamon to taste
- nutmeg to taste
- 8 tablespoons brown sugar
- 4 tablespoons raisins
- 4 tablespoons Jack Daniels
- 4 teaspoons Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Core and peel the apples, then rub approximately 1 teaspoon of lemon juice over the surface of the fruit. This will keep the apples from turning brown. Place one apple in the center of each pie crust. Into the cored out section, place 1 tablespoon of softened butter. Press the butter to the bottom of the core to seal the hole. Sprinkle the cavity generously with cinnamon and nutmeg. Place one tablespoon of brown sugar into the core followed by the raisins. Pour 1 tablespoon of Jack Daniels over the raisins followed by the Steen's Cane Syrup. Add the remaining tablespoon of brown sugar and top with the second tablespoon of butter. You may wish to paint the edges of the pie crust with a mixture of one beaten egg and 1/4 cup milk to act as a sealant. Bring the edges of the crust over the top of the apple and continue until the apple is totally sealed. You may choose to cut away any excess dough. Make sure the apple is thoroughly sealed in the crust. It is imperative to cut a 3/4-inch vent hole in the top of the pastry crust to allow the steam to ventilate during cooking. Prior to baking, coat the crust with any excess egg/milk mixture and place on a pre-greased baking pan, allowing one-inch between the apples. Bake 1 hour and 15 minutes or until crust is golden brown and apples are tender. When done, remove from oven and cool 10 - 15 minutes prior to serving. Serve warm with a scoop of vanilla or rum raisin ice cream. Because the portions are extremely large, you may wish to cut the dumpling in half, creating two servings from one apple.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

DESSERTS

Strawberry Dipping Recipe

COMMENT:

It's best to use the chocolate in the store - dark or dipping chocolate because it's already tempered. Even Nestles Tollhouse chips melted will work!

METHOD:

Wash the strawberries and dry them COMPLETELY. (Even the slightest bit of water can cause the chocolate to "seize." If this happens you won't be able to dip with it but you can add milk or cream and heat it up for a nice chocolate sauce ---it beats throwing it away!)

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
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 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Campfire Biscuit Cobbler

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

New Mexico is still a ranchers paradise. One of the few "open-range" states left in our country- the old tradition runs strong.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup corn starch
- 1/2 cup water
- 3 cups water
- 3/4 cup Jack Daniels whiskey
- 3/4 cup Steen's 100% Pure Cane Syrup
- 1/2 tbsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1 1/2 cups apples, peeled and diced
- 1 1/2 cups rhubarb, diced
- 1 1/2 cups sweet potatoes, peeled

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, place corn starch and 1/2 cup water. Using a wire whisk, blend ingredients thoroughly. Set aside. In a 3-quart cast iron Dutch oven, place 3 cups water, Jack Daniels, Steen's Cane Syrup, cinnamon and nutmeg. Bring mixture to a rolling boil and reduce heat to simmer. In separate batches, blanch apples, rhubarb and sweet potatoes in syrup until tender. When fruit is tender, remove and drain. Bring liquid back to a rolling boil. Blend corn starch thoroughly and, using a wire whisk, add to the simmering liquid until thickened. Remove from heat and add poached fruit. Transfer mixture to a 12-inch cast iron skillet and cool slightly. Cover fruit with biscuit topping and bake 25 - 30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm with your favorite ice cream.

INGREDIENTS FOR BISCUIT TOPPING:

- 4 cups all purpose flour
- 1 1/2 cups shortening
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tablespoon salt
- 1/4 cup baking powder
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 3 whole eggs

METHOD:

In a small mixing bowl, sift all dry ingredients together. Cut in shortening and set aside. In another small mixing bowl, combine buttermilk and eggs. Pour buttermilk mixture into shortening mixture and combine. Do not over mix. Form biscuit dough into a circle approximately 1/2-inch thick and large enough to cover the fruit. Place dough over fruit mixture in the skillet prior to baking. Bake for

25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

PURPLE PLUM TORTE

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment:

Gaston and Olga Hirsch arrived in the United States shortly after World War II. They settled in Donaldsonville, La., 45 miles west of New Orleans. The Hirsch's were both trained in the restaurant and hotel business. Gaston's family owned "La Marne" a grand hotel in Saverne, France, and Olga's family owned "La Forestiere," a family restaurant in the town of Veymerange, Lorraine. Her specialties were pâtés, terrines and tortes.

Ingredients for Crust:

1 1/3 cups flour
 ¼ pound chipped cold butter
 1 tbsp sugar
 ¼ cup ice water

Method:

In a food processor equipped with a metal blade, combine flour, butter and sugar. Pulse 1 minute or until mixture reaches texture of coarse meal. Slowly pour in water until dough forms into a ball. Remove and place on a floured surface. Roll dough into a circle approximately 7-inch thick. Firmly press into a 9-inch pie or torte pan and set aside.

Ingredients for Filling:

12 ripe purple plums
 2 tbsps sugar
 ¼ cup heavy whipping cream
 2 eggs
 ½ cup sugar
 ¼ cup pure vanilla extract
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 ¼ cup powdered sugar

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Using a sharp paring knife, cut plums into ¼-inch slices and discard seeds. In a large mixing bowl, toss plums and 2 tablespoon sugar to coat. Arrange slices neatly around dough until all have been used. Place pie on bottom oven rack and bake approximately 20 minutes to render juices from fruit. While pie is baking, combine cream, eggs, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg in a mixing bowl. Whisk until well blended. When piecrust is done, remove from oven and pour cream mixture evenly over baked plums. Return to oven and cook 20 minutes or until custard is set. Remove from oven and dust generously with powdered sugar. This pie may also be made with red or green apples.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Strawberry Parfait St. Valentine

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 2 Servings

Comment: This dish is traditionally prepared by steeping fresh strawberries in orange liqueur then folding them into whipped cream. We've modified the recipe slightly using Louisiana strawberry wine and, as always, fresh Ponchatoula strawberries to make a perfect Valentine's Day dessert that anyone can easily prepare.

Ingredients:

- 1 pint fresh Louisiana strawberries, cleaned and sliced
- 1 container pre-made whipped cream, or 1 pint heavy cream whipped to soft peaks
- ¼ cup sugar
- 1 ounce Louisiana strawberry wine
- 1 bottle chocolate sauce



Method:

Place sliced strawberries in a bowl with sugar and wine and toss gently to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least one hour, or overnight. When berries are done, place whipped cream in a bowl. Spoon out ½ cup of juice from berry mixture and fold into whipped cream. Place some chocolate syrup in the bottom of a parfait, wine or martini glass. Top with a spoon of the berries. Next, put a spoonful of flavored whipped cream. Continue to layer in this order until glass is full. Garnish with plain whipped cream, fresh mint and a fanned strawberry.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Louisiana Strawberry and Creole Cream Cheese Crêpes

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

Start your day off with a great mix of berries and Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese. We have wrapped fresh mixed berries and cool Creole cream cheese in warm, delicate crêpes for a breakfast beyond compare.

Ingredients for Crêpes:

- 2 eggs
- ½ cup flour
- 1½ tsps sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla
- 1 tbsp triple sec
- 1 tbsp melted butter
- ¾ cup milk
- salt to taste
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp sugar (for topping)

Method: In a large mixing bowl, whisk together eggs, flour, sugar, vanilla and triple sec until silky smooth. Add butter and milk and continue to blend, making sure that all lumps are removed, until batter reaches the consistency of heavy whipping cream. Season to taste with salt. It is best to make the batter prior to use and refrigerate it for 6-12 hours. Place two 6-inch crêpe pans over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil into one pan and swirl until the bottom of the pan is coated, then pour excess oil into the second pan and heat. Pour 2 ounces of batter into the first pan swirling until batter spreads evenly. Cook crêpe until outer edge browns and loosens from the pan then flip and cook 1 additional minute. Using a thin spatula, remove crêpe from the pan and sprinkle with sugar. Continue cooking process, using both pans, until all batter is used. If you wish to store overnight or freeze, place plastic wrap between each crêpe to prevent sticking and place in a large plastic zipper bag.

Ingredients for Filling:

- 1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese, drained
- 16 ounces cream cheese
- 1 cup powdered sugar
- 2 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp vanilla
- pinch of nutmeg

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup diced Louisiana strawberries
2 tbsps sugar

Method: In a mixer with a wire whisk attachment, whip cream cheese. Add powdered sugar, lemon juice, vanilla and nutmeg. Whip until fluffy. Blend in Creole cream cheese, a little at a time. Continue to beat 3 minutes or until light and fluffy. In a mixing bowl, combine strawberries and sugar. Mix well then fold strawberries into cream cheese mixture.

Top each crêpe with $\frac{1}{4}$ of the berry mixture. Fold into quarters and serve with syrup or puréed mixed berries and sugar.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Apple and Mixed Berry Crumble

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 4 Servings

Comment:

This magnificent dessert is filled with fresh apples, blueberries and raspberries to create a unique flavor.

Ingredients:

- 1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
- 1½ cups blueberries
- 1½ cups raspberries
- 2 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsps sugar
- 2 tbsps apple juice concentrate
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1 cup quick cooking oats
- 1 cup light brown sugar, lightly packed
- ½ cup flour
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 stick and 3 tbsps cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces

Method: Preheat oven to 375°F. In a medium mixing bowl, toss apples, lemon juice, sugar, apple juice concentrate and ¼ teaspoon of cinnamon. Layer bottom of 4 (1-cup) ramekins with apple mixture. Reserve liquid. Add berries to reserved liquid and toss. Distribute berry mixture evenly among ramekins. Drizzle with remaining liquid. In large mixing bowl, combine oats, brown sugar, flour, ginger, salt and remaining cinnamon. Mix well and cut butter into mixture until crumbly. Spoon crumble mixture over berries. Set ramekins on baking sheet. Bake 30 minutes or until fruit is bubbling and topping is golden brown. Cool on wire rack for 30 minutes. Serve with yogurt.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#) |
 [Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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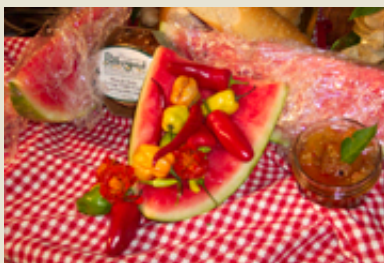
- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Watermelon Rind Chutney

Prep Time: 1 Hour 15 Minutes

Yields: 3 Cups



Comment:

When eating watermelon, most people throw away the rind. After trying this chutney recipe, you will never again discard the rind as something inedible.

Ingredients:

- 1 (8-pound) piece watermelon, flesh and rind
- 1½ cups cider vinegar
- 1½ cups water
- 2 cups sugar
- ¼ cup fresh ginger, minced and peeled
- 2 tbsps minced cayenne peppers, with seeds
- 1½ tbsps minced garlic
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp crushed black peppercorns

Method:

Remove watermelon flesh from rind. Scrape off and discard any remaining pink flesh from rind. Cut rind crosswise into 2-inch wide strips. Using a sharp knife, remove green peel and discard. Cut white rind into ½-inch cubes. In a 4-quart saucepan, combine rind, cider vinegar, water, sugar, ginger, cayenne peppers, garlic, salt and black pepper. Bring to a boil, and stir until sugar dissolves. Simmer 45–55 minutes or until rind is tender and translucent and liquid is syrupy. Cool chutney and chill in airtight container for 1–3 days to allow flavors to mellow.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Louisiana Blueberry Trifle

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 12 Servings



Comment:

Trifles are relatively easy to prepare, and everyone seems to love to eat them. We have simplified this recipe by purchasing a ready-made pound cake at the local grocery store.

Ingredients for Whipped Cream:

- 1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- ½ tsp ground nutmeg
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¾ cup sugar

Method:

In an electric mixer, combine Creole cream cheese, whipping cream, nutmeg and cinnamon. Whisk on medium-high speed. When mixture starts to thicken slightly, add sugar slowly and beat until very soft peaks form. Do not over mix. Set aside.

Ingredients for Trifle:

- 1 quart blueberries
- ¾ cup sugar
- ¼ cup Grand Marnier

Method:

In a mixing bowl, combine blueberries, sugar and liquor. Mix well. In a glass trifle bowl, alternate layers of cake, berries and whipped cream. Garnish with fresh berries. Refrigerate for a couple of hours before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Baked Pumpkin and Apple Casserole

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

Bring together the best of the autumn harvest with this pumpkin and apple casserole. It makes a nice dessert and will make your home smell absolutely wonderful.

Ingredients:

- 1 medium (6-pound) pumpkin
- 4 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored and diced
- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1¼ cup brown sugar
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ½ cup raisins
- ¼ cup Jack Daniels whiskey (optional)
- 2 tsps fresh minced ginger root
- 1 tbsp freshly grated nutmeg
- 1 tbsp cinnamon 2 tsps flour
- ½ tsp salt
- ½ cup melted butter
- powdered sugar for garnish

Method:

Cut pumpkin in half, scrape out seeds and pulp. Cut into large chunks, and rinse in cold water. Place pieces in a large kettle with 2 cups water. Water does not need to cover pumpkin pieces. Bring to a boil and reduce to simmer. Cover and steam 15 minutes or until fork tender. Drain pumpkin, and set aside to cool. When pumpkin is cool enough to handle, remove peel using a sharp knife. Cut pieces into 1-inch cubes and measure out 6 cups. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease a casserole dish with 1 tablespoon butter. In a large bowl, combine pumpkin, apples, pecans, brown sugar, cranberries, raisins and Jack Daniels. Mix well. Add ginger, nutmeg, cinnamon, flour and salt. Toss gently. Spoon mixture into buttered casserole dish. Drizzle melted butter over pumpkin, cover and bake 45–50 minutes or until bubbly. Dust with powdered sugar.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

PEACH COBBLER

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

In the 1800s, Houmas House Plantation was famous for ending meals with peach cobbler. This recipe is a rendition of the dish served during those plantation dinners.

Ingredients for Filling:

6 cups sliced fresh Ruston peaches
 1½ cups sugar
 ¼ cup water
 3 tbsps flour
 ¼ cup sugar
 pinch of salt
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 pinch of allspice

Method:

Preheat oven to 400°F. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine peaches, sugar and water. Bring to a rolling boil then reduce to simmer. Cook until fruit is softened. In a measuring cup, blend flour, sugar, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and allspice. Pour seasoned flour into peach mixture, stirring constantly until thickened. Remove from heat and pour into a 9-inch cast iron skillet or cobbler pan. Allow to cool slightly.

Ingredients for Topping:

1 cup flour
 ½ cup sugar
 2 tsps baking powder
 ¾ cup milk
 ½ tsp salt

Method:

In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except salt. Whisk until well blended. Season with salt. Pour batter in an irregular pattern over center of cobbler. Bake 45 minutes or until golden brown. If desired, garnish cobbler with fresh sliced peaches, powdered sugar and a sprig of mint.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

BLUEBERRY BUCKLE

Prep Time: 1½ Hours
Yields: 1 (8-inch) Cake

Comment:

A buckle is a dense old-fashioned, single-layer cake with a streusel topping. As the cake bakes, the batter sinks to the bottom, and the streusel on top buckles, giving way to its name. This version is filled with blueberries, but feel free to substitute other fruits or nuts.

Ingredients for Cake:

1 pint blueberries
 2 cups plus 1–2 tbsps flour, sifted
 2 tsp baking powder
 ½ tsp salt
 ¼ cup unsalted butter, softened
 ¾ cup sugar
 1 egg
 1 tsp grated lemon zest
 ½ cup milk

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Grease an 8-inch springform pan. Set aside. In a medium mixing bowl, sift 2 cups of flour, baking powder and salt. Set aside. In a separate mixing bowl, cream together butter and sugar 3 minutes or until fluffy. Whisk in egg and lemon zest. Add flour mixture in 3 parts, alternating with adding milk. Toss berries in remaining 1–2 tablespoons of flour. NOTE: Coating berries in flour will separate them and allow them to distribute evenly throughout batter. Fold in blueberries. Pour batter into prepared pan and set aside while preparing topping.

Ingredients for Topping:

¼ cup unsalted butter, softened
 ½ cup sugar
 1/3 cup flour, sifted
 ½ tsp cinnamon

Method:

In a small mixing bowl, combine all ingredients. Use a fork to make mixture crumbly. Sprinkle topping over batter in prepared pan. Bake 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. When cake has cooled, run a knife around edges and lift out of pan. If desired, top with whipped cream.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Cool Ruston Peach Sorbet

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT:

Sorbet is the ultimate summer dessert. It can be made with any seasonal fruit and is much easier to make than ice cream. For an elegant presentation, serve in a long-stemmed wine glass or a martini glass.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups peaches, peeled, pitted and chopped
 ½ cup sugar
 1½ cups water
 1 tbsp lemon juice



METHOD:

In a small saucepan, bring sugar and water just to a boil to create a simple syrup. Put in a container and chill in the refrigerator. Place peaches and lemon juice in a blender and blend until smooth. Add simple syrup to the blender and process for 1 additional minute. Freeze in a 1-quart ice cream maker according to manufacturer's directions.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Double Chocolate Peach Creole Cream Cheese Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

MAKES: 1 Quart

COMMENT:

Summer months are the perfect time to have a great, cold bowl of ice cream. Sweet peaches and rich chocolate make this recipe a perfect combination.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (11.5-ounce) package Chef John Folse's Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese [BUY NOW](#)
- 3/4 cup finely diced fresh Ruston peaches, peeled
- 1-3/4 cups sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1-1/2 cups half and half
- 1/2 cup cocoa powder
- 1-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg

METHOD:

Combine sugar and eggs. Whisk until fluffy and pale yellow in color. In a saucepot, combine half and half, cocoa powder and cream. Bring to simmer. Do not boil. Remove milk from heat and slowly blend 1 ladle at a time into the egg mixture, stirring constantly to keep eggs from scrambling. Continue blending until all is incorporated. Add vanilla, nutmeg and cinnamon. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve and chill overnight or a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to use, thoroughly blend the Creole cream cheese and peaches into the custard mixture and whisk until all lumps are removed. Pour mixture into a home-style ice cream maker and freeze according to manufacturer's directions. Place ice cream in the freezer or allow it to temper 2 hours prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

White Chocolate Pecan Ice Cream Sandwiches

PREP TIME: 45 minutes

SERVES: 12

COMMENT: This frozen treat is great for the kids to make at home during those long summer days. Have fun making the cookies, filling them, and then have even more fun eating them.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups white chocolate chips
 1 cup chopped pecans
 2/3 cup butter flavored shortening
 2/3 cup butter, softened
 1 cup white sugar
 1 cup packed light brown sugar
 2 eggs
 1 tbsp vanilla
 3½ cups flour
 1 tsp baking soda
 1 tsp salt
 premium vanilla ice cream



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a large bowl, cream together shortening, butter, white sugar and brown sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs one at a time, then stir in vanilla. Combine flour, baking soda and salt, and stir into creamed mixture. Stir in pecans and chocolate chips. Using a 2-ounce scoop, place leveled scoops 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet. Flatten out each scoop slightly so that cookie is not too tall once it is baked. Bake for 15-18 minutes or until centers are set and very lightly browned. Cool 2-3 minutes before removing from baking sheets. Cool completely before filling. To fill, take 2 cookies that are the same size in diameter, and place one upside down on a piece of plastic wrap. Place a 2-ounce scoop of ice cream on one, and place the other cookie on top of the ice cream. Press down firmly until ice cream is coming out of sides of cookie and it is of desired thickness. Remove any excess ice cream with a butter knife and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Place in freezer until firm or eat immediately. If keeping in freezer for later use, let stand at room temperature for about 3-5 minutes to soften cookie before serving. Any soft cookie recipe and any flavor ice cream can be substituted to make this kid-friendly summer treat.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mike Graham's Golden 25 Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 Quart

COMMENT:

This recipe was originally done my good friend, the late Chef Warren LeRuth. It is called Golden 25 because of its rich yellow color and the 25% butter fat in the custard, which makes it one of the richest and creamiest ice creams you will ever taste.

INGREDIENTS:

¾ cup sugar
 2 tbsps water
 5 egg yolks
 ½ vanilla bean, split
 ½ tsp vanilla
 2½ cups cream

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and yolks. Whisk until fluffy and pale yellow in color. In a saucepot, bring cream to simmer, but do not boil. Remove cream from heat and slowly blend, one ladle at a time, into the egg mixture, stirring constantly to keep eggs from scrambling. Continue blending until all is incorporated. Add vanilla bean and vanilla. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve and chill overnight or a minimum of four hours. Pour mixture into a home-style ice cream maker and freeze according to manufacturer's directions. Place ice cream in the freezer and allow it to temper 2 hours prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

STRAWBERRY CREOLE CREAM CHEESE ICE CREAM

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 1 Quart

Comment:

Creole cream cheese is a uniquely Louisiana dairy item. The product can be used in place of sour cream in many different recipes and is especially good in pastries and ice cream.

Ingredients:

1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese [BUY NOW](#)
 ¾ cup diced fresh strawberries
 1½ cups sugar
 3 eggs
 1½ cups half-and-half
 1½ cups heavy whipping cream
 2 tbsp pure vanilla extract
 1/8 tsps nutmeg
 1/8 tsps cinnamon

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together sugar and eggs until fluffy and pale yellow. In a saucepot, combine half-and-half and cream. Simmer, but do not boil. Remove from heat. Slowly blend hot milk into egg mixture, 1 ladle at a time, stirring constantly to prevent eggs from scrambling. Continuing to blend, add vanilla, nutmeg and cinnamon. Strain mixture through a fine sieve and chill overnight or a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to use, thoroughly blend Creole cream cheese and strawberries into custard mixture and whisk until all lumps are removed. Pour mixture into a home-style ice cream maker and freeze according to manufacturer's directions. Temper ice cream in freezer 2 hours prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Louisiana Fig Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

MAKES: 1 Quarts

COMMENT:

During the late summer, when figs are plentiful, it is not uncommon to find fig preserves topping a bowl of vanilla ice cream. This combination inspired the following ice cream recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup mashed fig preserves
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1 1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, combine milk, cream and vanilla. Using a thermometer, bring the mixture to 190 degrees F, whisking occasionally; do not boil. In a separate bowl, combine eggs and sugar, whisk to blend thoroughly. NOTE: If you like your ice cream less sweet, you may cut the sugar to 1/4 cup since the fig preserves are already sweetened. Once the milk is heated, slowly pour the hot milk into the egg mixture whisking constantly. Pour the mixture back into the saucepan and return to 190 degrees F. Do not boil, otherwise eggs will scramble. Remove from heat and pour the mixture through a fine sieve and refrigerate, preferably over night. Prior to pouring the mixture into an ice cream freezer, whisk in the chopped fig preserves. Pour the contents into a home-style freezer and follow manufacturer's directions. NOTE: If you wish to add more lightness to the texture of this ice cream, separate the egg yolks and whites. Whip the egg whites separately and fold into the mixture prior to freezing.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Spiced Ruston Peach Topping for Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Ruston peaches, although smaller than those big Georgia or California peaches, sure have a fantastic flavor. Most people don't associate peaches with Louisiana. However, the town of Ruston in the northern part of the state is the peach capital of Louisiana. There's even a peach festival held in its honor. Try this simple topping with vanilla or praline ice cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 fresh peaches
- ¼ cup butter
- ½ cup brown sugar
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1/8 tsp allspice
- 2 ounces brandy

METHOD:

Peel peaches and slice 1/2-inch thick. In a 10-inch sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add peaches and sauté until tender. Add brown sugar, cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg and allspice. Stir until brown sugar is melted and creates a smooth sauce with the butter. Remove skillet from heat and pour in brandy. NOTE: Be extremely careful as brandy will flame up when placed back onto the fire. However, it will extinguish itself quickly. Serve sauce over ice cream.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

White Chocolate Strawberry Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 Quart

COMMENT:

All great ice cream recipes begin with a basic vanilla custard such as this one. The addition of flavors such as liqueurs, chocolate, herbs or even fresh fruit, may be added to convert this simple dessert into a magnificent creation. This version features fresh Louisiana strawberries for a cool summer treat.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 ounces Bakers white chocolate squares
- 3/4 cup strawberries, largely diced
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1 1/2 cups cream
- 1 tbsp pure vanilla
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar

METHOD:

Prior to beginning your recipe, place the white chocolate in a stainless steel bowl over a pot of 120 degree F water until chocolate is totally melted. Stir occasionally to maintain a liquid state. In a sauce pot, combine milk, cream, vanilla and nutmeg and place over medium heat. Bring the milk to 190 degrees F or a very low simmer. Do not boil. While milk is heating, combine eggs and sugar in a stainless steel mixing bowl and whisk to blend. Slowly pour the hot milk into the eggs and sugar while whisking constantly to blend thoroughly. While whisking, pour the melted chocolate into the custard mixture until all is incorporated. Pour the mixture back into the sauce pot and stir constantly over medium heat until mixture returns to 190 degrees F. Do not cook to a boil, otherwise eggs will scramble. Pour the mixture through a fine sieve and refrigerate, preferably overnight. When fully chilled, place the contents in a home-style freezer and follow manufacturer's directions. When custard is half frozen add diced strawberries and continue to churn. NOTE: If you wish to add a little lightness to the texture, separate the egg yolks from the whites. Whip the whites separately with half the sugar and fold the whites into the custard mixture immediately before freezing. Garnish your white chocolate strawberry ice cream with sliced berries and strawberry syrup.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creole Cream Cheese Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

MAKES: 1 Quart

COMMENT:

Creole cream cheese was a very popular item in early Louisiana and may be found at many grocery stores today. Additionally, Chef John Folse's Bittersweet Plantation Dairy began manufacturing and distribution of Creole cream cheese in the fall of 2002. Pick up a package of this unique Creole favorite and use it in this recipe or as you would sour cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese [BUY NOW](#)
- 1-1/2 cups sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1-1/2 cups half and half
- 1-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and eggs. Whisk until fluffy and pale yellow in color. In a saucepot, combine half and half and cream. Bring to simmer. Do not boil. Remove milk from heat and slowly blend one at a time into the egg mixture, stirring constantly to keep eggs from scrambling. Continue blending until all is incorporated. Add vanilla, nutmeg and cinnamon. Strain the mixture through a fine sieve and chill overnight or a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to use, thoroughly blend the Creole cream cheese into the custard mixture and whisk until all lumps are removed. Pour mixture into a home-style ice cream maker and freeze according to manufacturer's directions. Place ice cream in the freezer or allow it to temper 2 hours prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creole Country Vanilla Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 Quart

COMMENT:

Country ice cream derives its name from the country fresh milk, cream and eggs that go into it. There seem to be as many versions to the recipe as there are people who make it. Each differs in its proportion of milk to cream and in the number of eggs added to achieve the desired texture and richness. This ultra-rich version is one of my favorites.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cup milk
- 1 1/2 cup cream
- 1 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup sugar

METHOD:

Combine milk, cream and vanilla in a saucepot and bring to 190 degrees F. Do not boil. While milk is heating, combine eggs and sugar in a stainless steel mixing bowl and whisk to blend. Slowly pour the milk into the eggs and sugar while whisking constantly to blend thoroughly. Pour the mixture back into the saucepot and stir constantly over heat until mixture returns to 190 degrees. Do not cook to a boil. Otherwise, eggs will scramble. Pour the mixture through a fine sieve and refrigerate preferably overnight. When fully chilled, place the contents in a home-style ice cream freezer and follow manufacturer's directions. NOTE: If you wish to add a little lightness to the texture, separate the egg yolks from the whites. Whip the whites separately with half the sugar and fold the whites into the mixture at the last minute. When adding fresh fruit to this recipe, remove the milk and add 1/2 cup of heavy whipping cream and 2 cups of pureed fresh fruit to the formula.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Chocolate & Clover Honey Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 4 Quarts

COMMENT:

Liquor and liqueurs are often used to flavor ice creams and sorbets. In the South, sour mash whiskeys provide that Southern flavor which adds the perfect finish to chocolate ice cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2/3 cups Jack Daniels Whiskey
- 1 2/3 cups unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 (5 1/3 ounce) package semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 quart heavy whipping cream
- 1 quart half and half
- 1/2 cup honey
- 12 large eggs, room temperature

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom sauce pan, sift together the cocoa powder and sugar. Add heavy whipping cream, half and half and, using a wire whisk, stir until well-blended. Add chocolate and honey and cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly until chocolate is melted. Remove sauce pan from heat and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, whisk eggs until frothy. Add 1/4 of the chocolate mixture to eggs, whisking constantly. Add remaining egg mixture to chocolate until well-blended. Cook mixture over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally for 4-5 minutes, or until chocolate coats the bowl. Place bowl into a larger bowl of ice cold water to help chill mixture. While chocolate is cooling, place Jack Daniels in a small sauce pan over medium-high heat. Cook until liquor ignites. NOTE: Take care as flame will flare up and extinguish itself quickly. Stir the Jack Daniels into the chocolate mixture and allow to cool. Place chocolate custard into a home-style ice cream machine and freeze according to manufacturer's directions.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Jack Daniel's® Chocolate Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 4 Quarts

COMMENT:

Liquor and liqueurs are often used to flavor ice creams and sorbets. In the south, sour mash whiskeys provide the Southern flavor that adds the perfect finish to chocolate ice cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2/3 cup Jack Daniels® Whiskey
- 1 (5 1/3 ounce) package semi-sweet chocolates, chopped
- 1 2/3 cups unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 quart heavy whipping cream
- 1 quart half and half
- 12 large eggs, room temperature

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom sauce pan, sift together the cocoa powder and sugar. Add heavy whipping cream and half and half and, using a wire whisk, stir until well-blended. Add the semi sweet chocolate and cook over medium-high heat, stirring constantly until chocolate is melted. Remove sauce pan from heat and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, whisk eggs until frothy. Add 1/4 of the hot chocolate mixture into the eggs, whisking constantly. Add remaining egg mixture into the hot chocolate whisking until well-blended. Stir mixture over medium-high heat for 4-5 minutes until chocolate coats the back of the spoon. Do not allow mixture to boil as eggs will scramble. Pour the chocolate into a metal bowl and place it into a larger bowl of ice cold water to help chill the mixture. While chocolate is cooling, place the Jack Daniels® in a small sauce pan over medium-high heat. Heat until liquor ignites. NOTE: Take care as flame will flare up and extinguish itself quickly. Stir the Jack Daniels® into the chocolate mixture and allow to cool. Once chocolate custard is completely cooled, place into a home style ice cream machine and freeze according to manufacturer's directions.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

French Vanilla Ice Cream (No Turning)

PREP TIME: Overnight

MAKES: 1½ quarts

COMMENT:

This recipe is from the library of Chef Warren LeRuth, the award-winning restaurateur and food scientist from New Orleans. In addition to his fabulous cuisine, Warren is known for his unique Vanilla Bean Marinade that sets so many of our desserts apart from the ordinary.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 large egg yolks
- 1/4 cup light corn syrup
- 1 cup sweetened condensed milk
- 1 tablespoon LeRuth's Vanilla Bean Marinade (available on The Company Store, Internet)
- 3 cups whipping cream

METHOD:

Whip yolks and corn syrup until thick and fluffy (about 6 to 7 minutes). Fold in condensed milk and vanilla bean marinade. Carefully fold in whipping cream. Pour into mold and freeze overnight.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

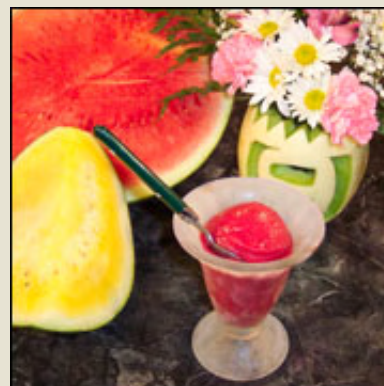
Watermelon & Black Pepper Sorbet

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: ½ Gallon

COMMENT:

If you live south of the Mason-Dixon Line, you've probably had friends or neighbors come to visit carrying a jar of preserved watermelon rind or pickled watermelon rind as a gift. There are even some who may remember that famous "Pim Pom Ice Cream," which was nothing more than fruit juice or Kool-Aid frozen in ice cube trays. We had a special version that we made with watermelon juice that was reserved for family ONLY and hidden away when folks came to visit!



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 quarts watermelon juice
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups water
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tsps coarse ground black pepper

METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed sauce pot, combine sugar, water and lemon juice. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and, using a wire whisk, stir until sugar is melted. Skim off any foam that rises to the surface. Cool in the refrigerator. (You may wish to make this simple syrup one day ahead.) When ready to freeze, combine cold syrup with watermelon juice and black pepper. Freeze in your home-style ice cream freezer according to manufacturer's directions. Enjoy!

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Praline and Peach Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1½ hours

SERVES: 2-3 quarts

COMMENT:

During the early summer, when peaches are plentiful, it is not uncommon to find peach preserves topping a bowl of vanilla ice cream. I am sure that this combination inspired the following praline ice cream variation.

INGREDIENTS:

3 cups fresh peaches
 1 cup milk
 1½ cups sugar
 2 tbsps lemon juice
 ½ cup Praline Liqueur or Frangelico
 3 eggs
 2 cups milk
 3 cups heavy whipping cream
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg

METHOD:

In the bowl of a food processor, combine peaches, one cup of milk, one cup sugar, lemon juice and liqueur. Blend until pureed. In a large mixing bowl, combine peach mixture, eggs, remaining sugar, two cups milk and whipping cream. Using a wire whisk, whip until all ingredients are smooth and well blended. Add cinnamon and nutmeg. Place mixture in a four quart ice cream freezer and freeze according to manufacturer's directions. Once frozen, place container in your home freezer for two to three hours for best results.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Candied Yam and White Chocolate Ice Cream

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 2 Quarts

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (16-oz) can Bruce candied yams
- 12 oz white chocolate
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1 1/2 cups water
- 8 egg yolks
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 3 cups heavy whipping cream

METHOD:

Mash yams with syrup until fine purée is achieved. Chill in refrigerator for later use. Place the white chocolate in a stainless steel bowl over a pot of 120 degree F water until chocolate is totally melted. Stir occasionally to maintain a liquid state. In a 1-quart sauce pan, combine sugar and water. Stir well and bring to a low boil. Use a candy thermometer, bring the simple syrup to 234 degrees F, which is the soft-ball state. While syrup is heating, place egg yolks in the bowl of an electric mixer. Blend on low speed until eggs are slightly whipped. Once sugar has reached 234 degrees F, slowly pour the mixture into the eggs, whipping on medium speed. Take special care as the sugar will be extremely hot. Continue to whip eggs on medium-high until thick, approximately 5 minutes. Pour in the melted white chocolate and add the nutmeg, cinnamon and vanilla. Continue to blend until all is incorporated. Reduce speed to low and pour in whipping cream. Remove beaters and, using a rubber spatula, fold in the puréed candied yams. Place the entire mixture in the refrigerator until well chilled, preferably overnight. Freeze mixture in a home-style ice cream freezer according to manufacturer's directions.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

LOUISIANA PONCHATOULA STRAWBERRY SORBET

Prep Time: 35 Minutes

Yields: 1 Quart

Comment:

Sorbets are smooth, frozen ices made without milk or other dairy products. The fine, silky texture of a sorbet is at its best when freshly made and still soft. It should never be rock-hard, and it should always be free of ice crystals.

Ingredients:

1 pound Louisiana strawberries, cleaned and stemmed
 ½ cup water
 1 cup sugar
 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice

Method:

Place all ingredients in a food processor. Purée on high speed 3–5 minutes or until ingredients are totally liquefied. Remove from food processor and place in a bowl covered with plastic wrap for 3 hours in refrigerator, preferably overnight. When ready to make, pour cold contents of bowl into your home-style ice cream freezer. Freeze according to manufacturer's instructions for sorbet.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

PONCHATOULA STRAWBERRY SHERBET

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 1 Quart

Comment:

Sherbets are ices, usually fruit flavored, similar to sorbets, but usually having more ingredients such as milk, egg whites or gelatin. Any fruit sorbet recipe can be turned into sherbet by adding a beaten egg white to the mixture after it is partially frozen.

Ingredients:

1 pint strawberries, cleaned, stemmed and chopped
 2 cups skim milk
 1/3 cup sugar
 6 tbsps non-fat dry milk
 1½ tsps pure vanilla extract
 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice

Method:

In a saucepan over medium heat, heat milk, sugar and non-fat dry milk until sugar and dry milk have dissolved, stirring constantly. Cool thoroughly. Stir in strawberries, vanilla and lemon juice. Place in a home-style ice cream maker and freeze 25–30 minutes or according to manufacturer's instructions.

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

PEACH CREOLE CREAM CHEESE ICE CREAM

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 1 Quart

Comment:

Creole cream cheese is a uniquely Louisiana dairy item. The product can be used in place of sour cream in many different recipes and is especially good in pastries and ice cream.

Ingredients:

1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
 1 cup diced fresh Ruston peaches
 1½ cups sugar
 3 eggs
 1½ cups half-and-half
 1½ cups heavy whipping cream
 1 tsp peach extract
 1/8 tsp nutmeg
 1/8 tsp cinnamon

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together sugar and eggs until fluffy and pale yellow. In a saucepot, combine half-and-half and cream. Simmer, but do not boil. Remove from heat. Slowly blend hot milk into egg mixture, 1 ladle at a time, stirring constantly to prevent eggs from scrambling. Continuing to blend, add peach extract, nutmeg and cinnamon. Strain mixture through a fine sieve and chill overnight or a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to use, thoroughly blend Creole cream cheese and peaches into custard mixture and whisk until all lumps are removed. Pour mixture into a home-style ice cream maker and freeze according to manufacturer's directions. Temper ice cream in freezer 2 hours prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

LOUISIANA FIG AND FROZEN YOGURT ICE CREAM

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 1 Quart

Comment:

This recipe combines two of my summer favorites—figs and ice cream into a sweet, sultry day treat.

Ingredients:

1 cup chopped figs with syrup or ½ cup Braswell's® fig preserves
 1 (8-ounce) jar Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Bulgarian-Style Sugar & Vanilla Yogurt
 1½ cups sugar
 3 eggs
 1½ cups half-and-half
 1½ cups heavy whipping cream
 2 tbsps pure vanilla extract
 1/8 tsp nutmeg
 1/8 tsp cinnamon

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, whisk together sugar and eggs until fluffy and pale yellow. In a saucepot, combine half-and-half and cream. Simmer, but do not boil. Remove from heat. Slowly blend hot milk into egg mixture, 1 ladle at a time, stirring constantly to prevent eggs from scrambling. Continuing to blend, add vanilla, nutmeg and cinnamon. Strain mixture through a fine sieve and chill overnight or a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to use, thoroughly blend yogurt and figs into custard mixture and whisk until all lumps are removed. Pour mixture into a home-style ice cream maker and freeze according to manufacturer's directions. Temper ice cream in freezer 2 hours prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

CARAMELIZED BANANA SPLIT SUNDAES

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Yields: 2 Servings

Comment:

Two childhood favorites become one with a sophisticated twist.

Ingredients:

1 ripe banana
 2 tbsps sugar
 2-3 flavors ice cream
 ¼ cup chocolate or caramel sauce
 4 tbsps whipped cream
 2 tbsps chopped peanuts
 2 Maraschino cherries

Method:

Peel banana. Cut in half lengthwise and again across. Pour sugar on a small plate. Dip cut sides of banana into sugar. Caramelize with a blowtorch or under broiler. Place banana pieces at back of a martini glass, standing up. Place 1 scoop of each ice cream flavor in glass. Drizzle with favorite chocolate or caramel sauce. Top each with 2 tablespoons whipped cream. Sprinkle with chopped nuts and top with a cherry. NOTE: The topping suggestions are endless. If desired, use coconut, crushed pineapple, chocolate chips or sprinkles, berries, brownies or chopped up candy bar pieces.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Satsuma Cane Syrup Pecan Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour, 15 Minutes

YIELDS: 1 (9-inch) Deep Dish Pie

COMMENT:

Signs of fall are everywhere. You can see them in the ripe Satsumas in the trees to the pecans littering the ground. With the sweet, smoky smell of the sugarcane harvest, everyone knows that cool weather and holidays are quickly approaching. This recipe uses the produce of the season to create a delicious pie.

INGREDIENTS:

- 5 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 1/4 cups Karo Light Corn Syrup
- 1/4 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- 3 tbsp grated satsuma rind
- 1/3 cup satsuma juice
- 1 1/4 tbsps all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1 unbaked 9-inch pastry shell
- pecan halves



METHOD:

Combine eggs, sugar, syrups, satsuma rind, satsuma juice, flour and salt. Using an electric mixer, beat at medium speed until blended. Stir in chopped pecans then pour mixture into pastry shell. Arrange pecan halves on top of pie. Bake at 350°F for 55-60 minutes. Allow to cool overnight. Slice into eight wedges.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Bananas Foster Cream Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELDS: 12 Servings

COMMENT:

Almost every Louisiana restaurant has some form of the famous Bananas Foster dessert on their menu. At Lafitte's Landing Restaurant at Bittersweet Plantation, our Bananas Foster soufflé is a perennial favorite. In this dessert we have enrobed the sweet, tender banana with vanilla pastry cream spiked with a shot of dark rum and placed it in a chocolate cookie crust.



INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

2½ cups Oreo cookie crumbs
 ¼ cup sugar
 1 tsp cinnamon
 5 tbsps melted butter

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

¼ cup unsalted butter
 ¾ cup packed brown sugar
 1 tsp cinnamon
 1 tsp ground ginger
 ½ tsp allspice
 4 bananas, peeled and sliced

INGREDIENTS FOR PASTRY CREAM:

3 cups half and half
 1 vanilla bean, split in half lengthwise
 8 egg yolks
 ½ cup sugar
 ¼ cup dark rum
 3 tbsps cornstarch

METHOD:

Grease a 10-inch spring form pan. To prepare crust, in a medium bowl, combine cookie crumbs, sugar and cinnamon and mix well. Stir in melted butter. Press mixture into prepared pan on the bottom and up the sides of the pan about 2½ inches and place it in the refrigerator to chill. To prepare the filling, put the butter and brown sugar in a large sauté pan over high heat and heat until bubbling, about 2 minutes. Add cinnamon, ginger, allspice and bananas and sauté until tender, about 3 minutes. Remove the crust from the

refrigerator and spoon the bananas evenly over the bottom of the crust. Set aside. To prepare the pastry cream, put the half and half in a saucepan with the vanilla bean and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium, remove and discard vanilla bean. In a medium bowl, place egg yolks, sugar, dark rum and cornstarch and whisk together. Whisk about 1 cup of half and half mixture into the egg mixture to temper it. Add the egg mixture to the remaining half and half and place the pan over medium heat, stirring frequently until thick, 3-5 minutes. Pour the mixture over the roasted bananas in the crust and refrigerate for 2-3 hours or until well chilled. To serve, carefully remove the outer ring of the pan, cut the pie into slices, and top each slice with whipped cream and several mint leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

No-Bake Coconut Cream Pie

PREP TIME: 2½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

It is so hot outside in Louisiana this time of year that no one wants to turn on the oven. This cool, refreshing pie tastes great and keeps the oven off, too. All it takes is a couple of minutes on the stove and a couple of hours in the refrigerator, and you stay as cool as a cucumber, or a coconut in this case.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup flaked coconut
- 3 cups half and half
- 2 eggs
- ¾ cup sugar
- ½ cup flour
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 (9-inch) graham cracker pie crust
- 2 cups whipped topping, thawed



METHOD:

In a small skillet, brown the coconut, stirring and folding constantly so it does not scorch, until it is golden. In a medium saucepan, combine half and half, eggs, sugar, flour and salt. Bring to a boil over low heat, stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir in coconut and the vanilla, reserving 2 teaspoons of coconut for garnish. Pour into pie shell and chill for 2-4 hours. Before serving, top with whipped topping and garnish with additional toasted coconut.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Key Lime Pie

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT: For Mother's Day, give mom a taste of the islands with this tangy, sweet Key Lime Pie. You can use a prepared crust or make your own. With only 4 other ingredients, even the kids can have a great time making this special dessert for mom.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

1 (9-inch) prepared graham cracker crust

or

1½ cup graham cracker crumbs
3 tbsps sugar
1/3 cup butter or margarine

METHOD FOR CRUST:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees F. If you are using a prepared crust, you do not need to do any part of the method for the crust. Combine crumbs and sugar in medium mixing bowl. Stir in melted butter or margarine until thoroughly blended. Pack mixture firmly into 9-inch pie pan and press firmly to bottom and sides, bringing crumbs evenly up to the rim. Bake in oven for 10 minutes. Allow crust to cool to room temperature before filling.

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

4 egg yolks
1 (14-ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
2 key limes, zested
½ cup key lime juice, bottled or fresh

METHOD FOR FILLING:

In a medium mixing bowl, combine yolks, sweetened condensed milk, key lime zest and juice. Pour mixture into cooled pie crust and bake for 18 minutes or until just set. Place on a rack to cool. Once cooled, refrigerate until chilled. Garnish with whipped cream and key lime twists or lime zest.

To create a lime twist, slice a key lime thinly. Place one slice flat on a cutting surface and cut from the center of the slice through one side. Pull each side of the cut gently in opposite directions to create the twist. Do not tear through the other side of the lime slice.



[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creole Christmas Pear Tart

PREP TIME: 3 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Rustic fruit tarts took the place of the more classic pies and tarts of the French kitchen here in South Louisiana. During the holiday season, canned or jarred fruits were mixed with fresh seasonal varieties to create these seasonal delicacies. This pear tart is a magnificent example of these homespun desserts.

INGREDIENTS:

4 pears, halved, cored and peeled
 1 quart water
 2 cups sugar
 2 cups Cabernet Sauvignon
 ¼ pound butter (one stick)
 2 red apples, skin-on, ¼" diced
 2 green apples, skin-on, ¼" diced
 ½ cup sugar
 1/8 tsp cinnamon
 1/8 tsp nutmeg
 4 tbsps flour
 1 tbsp vanilla
 ½ cup golden raisins
 1 cup Calvados, or apple brandy
 1-1/3 cups flour
 ¼ pound chipped cold butter
 1 tbsp sugar
 ¼ cup ice water

METHOD:

In a large pot, place water, sugar, wine and pears. Slightly simmer pears until fork tender, but not falling apart, about 30 minutes. The pears must remain in poaching liquid overnight to soak up the color and flavor of the wine. The next step is to make the apple filling. In a large sauté pan, melt butter over medium high heat. In a mixing bowl, toss diced apples in sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg and flour. Add to sauté pan and stir constantly. Cook until apples are cooked al dente. Add vanilla, raisins, and Calvados. Place mixture in a mixing bowl and set aside to cool. The next day, make the crust by placing the flour, butter and sugar into the bowl of a food processor equipped with a metal blade. Using pulse button, blend mixture until a coarse meal texture is achieved, approximately one minute. Slowly add ice water, a little at a time, until dough forms into a ball. Remove and place on floured surface. Roll dough to a one eighth inch thickness, about 12 inches in diameter. Carefully place rolled dough onto a ceramic pizza stone. Leaving about 1 ½ -2 inches around the edge place the cold apple filling onto the dough. Arrange the 8 pear halves on top of the filling about 1 inch in from the edge. Fold the dough over the edges of the filling to create the rustic pie crust, being careful not to cover the

pears. Bake on the pizza stone in a 400-degree oven until crust is golden, about 20-30 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Blueberry Pie

PREP TIME: 1 hour

Serves: 8

COMMENT:

Fresh summer blueberries are a seasonal treat that can be incorporated into pies, bread, tarts and sauces. Try this delightful, yet simple dessert for your family reunion or after Sunday dinner.

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups fresh blueberries
 3/4 cup sugar
 3 tbsp cornstarch
 1/4 tsp salt
 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
 1 recipe pastry for a 9-inch double crust
 1 tbsp butter

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Mix sugar, cornstarch, salt and cinnamon and sprinkle over blueberries. Line the pie dish with one pie crust. Pour berry mixture into the crust and dot with butter. Cut remaining pastry into 1/2 to 3/4 -inch strips and make a lattice top. Crimp and flute edges. Bake pie on lower shelf of oven for about 50 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Ponchatoula Strawberry and Lemon Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

When spring rolls around, the refreshing flavor of lemon pie is the dessert of choice. However, the tart flavor of the pie can often be enhanced with the addition of fresh strawberries or blueberries. Here is an example

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup Louisiana strawberries, diced
- 3 pints Louisiana strawberries, sliced
- 3 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp grated lemon zest
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 1 3/4 cups sugar
- 4 egg yolks
- 2 tbsps butter
- 1 (9-inch) baked pie shell
- 1 package cool whip

METHOD:

In a saucepan, dissolve cornstarch in water. Using a wire whisk, blend until smooth. Add lemon juice, strawberries, sugar and beaten egg yolks. Stir mixture over medium heat until sauce has thickened and resembles a pie filling, approximately 5 minutes. Remove saucepan from heat and add lemon zest and butter, stirring constantly until butter is incorporated. Pour pie filling into pre-cooked shell. Set aside to cool slightly. When totally cool, top the pie with a generous amount of cool whip and swirl the topping in a decorative fashion. Beginning in the center of the topping, shingle the sliced strawberries in a circular fashion until the top of the cool whip is covered totally with the berries. If there are any sliced berries remaining, place in a bowl and sprinkle with 2 tbsps sugar, stir and refrigerate along with the pie for a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to serve, slice pie and top each slice with a teaspoon of the sugared berries.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Cajun Skillet Apple Pie

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Although apple pie is considered America's favorite, most people avoid making it because they consider it difficult. I have solved the problem! Try this simple, black skillet version with biscuit topping and you'll see what I mean.

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

5 each Golden Delicious and Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored, sliced thin
 1/4 pound butter
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1 tbsp vanilla
 1/2 cup brown sugar, firmly packed
 1/2 cup sugar
 1/2 tsp cinnamon
 1/4 tsp nutmeg
 1/4 tsp salt
 1 tsp cornstarch
 2 tbsps flour

METHOD:

To prepare filling, melt butter in a 10-inch cast iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add apple slices, lemon juice and vanilla and cook, stirring frequently for about 5 minutes. In a bowl, mix sugars, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and cornstarch and gently stir mixture into apples. Continue to cook until apples are soft but not mushy, approximately 5 minutes.

INGREDIENTS FOR TOPPING:

1 1/2 cups all purpose flour
 1/4 cup plus 1 tbsp sugar
 1 1/4 tsps baking powder
 1/2 tsp salt
 1/4 cup unsalted butter, chilled
 1 cup half and half
 3/4 tsp vanilla

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. Mix flour, 1/4 cup sugar, baking powder and salt together in a large bowl. Using 2 knives or a pastry blender, cut in the butter until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add milk and vanilla and quickly blend together with a spatula. To assemble the pie, drop heaping tablespoons of biscuit mixture on top of apples, covering most of the center of the mixture. Sprinkle top with remaining sugar and bake for 25-30 minutes, or until top is

golden. Remove pie from oven and let stand for at least 5 minutes before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Honey Pecan Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 1 (9-inch) pie

COMMENT:

There are as many variations for pecan pie in Louisiana as there are pastry shops. This recipe was given to me many years ago by a wonderful African American chef. I often wonder how wealthy she could have become, had she sold this recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup honey
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1/2 cup Karo syrup
- 1/2 tsp lemon juice
- 1 tsp vanilla
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of nutmeg
- 1 (9-inch) uncooked pie shell

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a heavy-bottom sauté pan, brown butter over medium-high heat. Do not burn. Remove and allow to cool slightly. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar, eggs, Karo syrup and honey. Using a wire whisk, blend all ingredients well. Add the browned butter, lemon juice, vanilla and pecans. Season to taste using cinnamon and nutmeg. Continue to whip until all ingredients are well blended. Pour into pie shell and bake on center rack of oven for 10 minutes. Reduce temperature to 375 degrees F and bake for an additional 35 minutes. Remove from oven and allow to cool.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

CLASSIC APPLE PIE

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

Ever since that first apple orchard was planted on Beacon Hill, overlooking Boston Harbor, apples have been the chief ingredient in America's premier dessert. After all, nothing is more American than apple pie.

Ingredients:

6 Fuji apples, peeled, cored and thinly sliced
 2 (9-inch) prepared pie crusts
 ¼ cup sugar
 2 tbsps flour
 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
 ½ tsp cinnamon
 ¼ tsp ginger
 1/8 tsp mace
 2 tbsps butter or margarine
 heavy whipping cream or whole milk, for brushing crust

Method:

Heat oven to 425°F. Line a 9-inch pie pan with 1 prepared crust. In a large bowl, combine apples, sugar, flour, vanilla, cinnamon, ginger and mace. Pour apple mixture into pie crust then dot with butter. Cover apple filling with remaining pie crust. Pinch together edges of bottom and top crust to seal. Brush top crust with whipping cream or milk and cut several slits to vent steam. Place in oven and bake 25 minutes. Reduce oven heat to 375°F and bake 45 minutes or until apples are tender and crust is golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mamere's Country-Style Lemon Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Mamere Zeringue was my grandmother on Mom's side of the family. She was not only a fabulous cook, but would have been considered a top pastry chef for her day and time. Although most country-style lemon pies are made with a similar recipe, this one has a bit less lemon juice so it's not quite as "citrusy" as a tart lemon pie. If you like a tart flavor just add 2 additional tablespoons of fresh lemon juice.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tbsps fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp grated lemon zest
- 1/2 cup cornstarch
- 1 1/4 cups water
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 eggs, separated
- 2 tbsps butter
- 1 tsp cream of tartar
- 1 (9-inch) baked pie shell

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. In a saucepan, dissolve cornstarch in water. Using a wire whisk, blend until smooth. Add lemon juice, 1 3/4 cups sugar and beaten egg yolks. Stir mixture over medium heat until sauce has thickened and resembles a pie filling. Remove saucepan from heat and add lemon zest and butter. Stir constantly until butter is incorporated. Pour pie filling into pie shell. Set aside to cool slightly. In the bowl of an electric mixer, place egg whites and cream of tartar. Whip mixture on high speed until soft peaks form. Add remaining 1/4 cup sugar and continue to whip egg whites constantly until sugar is dissolved and stiff peaks form. NOTE: It is important to whip the meringue until there are no visible signs of granulated sugar, otherwise the meringue will weep after sitting for a few hours. Using a tablespoon, drop dollops of the meringue on top of the pie beginning at the outer edge of the pie and working toward the center. Continue this process until pie is completely covered. If meringue is allowed to adhere to the pie crust, it will not shrink during baking. Place pie on the center shelf of the oven and bake for 10 minutes or until peaks are lightly browned. Remove from oven, allow to cool and refrigerate until ready to serve. This pie is best when refrigerated overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Sacred Heart Chocolate Pecan Pie

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 8

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup semi-sweet chocolate
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 1/4 cup dark corn syrup
- 1/4 cup lite margarine, cut into small pieces
- 3/4 cup egg substitute
- 1 1/2 tsps vanilla
- 1/2 cup Grape Nuts cereal
- 1 (9-inch) unbaked pie shells

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. In a small sauce pan, combine sugar, salt and corn syrup. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until sugar dissolves. After sugar is completely melted, remove from heat and add margarine, one piece at a time, until melted. Add egg substitute, vanilla, pecans and Grape Nuts, while continuing to stir constantly. Fold in the chocolates. Pour the mixture into the pie shell. It is a good idea to put the pie pan on a cookie sheet to catch any spills. Bake 45-50 minutes. Allow to cool thoroughly on a wire rack.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Bouche Noire

Prep Time: 1 1/2 Hours

Yields: 8-10 Servings

Comment:

The French name of this dish, bouche noire, translates to black mouth. The name becomes immediately apparent when you see 12 ounces of dark chocolate as the main ingredient in this recipe. I must caution you however, do not attempt this recipe if you don't consider yourself a chocolate addict! Undecorated layer cakes such as this one were often served in early Creole homes with a topping of fresh fruit and unsweetened whipped cream.

Ingredients:

- 12 ounces Baker's bittersweet chocolate
- 1½ cups sugar
- ½ cup bourbon
- 1 cup butter chips, softened
- 6 eggs, room temperature
- 1½ tbsps flour
- 1 cup whipped cream, optional
- 2 cups sliced Louisiana strawberries, optional
- mint leaves, optional

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Butter a 9-inch springform pan. Place a buttered parchment sheet in the bottom of the pan. Cover the outside of the springform pan with aluminum foil to keep water from entering during the cooking process. Place the cake pan into a large roasting pan with 1-inch sides. Set aside. Chop chocolate into 1/4-inch pieces and place into a large stainless steel mixing bowl. Place 1-inch of water in the bottom of a saucepan and bring to a simmer. Place the bowl of chocolate on top of the saucepan, stirring occasionally as chocolate melts. In a separate saucepan, combine 1 cup sugar and bourbon. Bring mixture to a low boil, stirring occasionally. When sugar is fully dissolved, pour the syrup over the chocolate, stirring constantly, until all is thoroughly melted. Remove the bowl from the saucepan and add butter chips, a few at a time, melting completely before the next addition. In a separate stainless steel mixing bowl, whip the eggs on high speed with flour and remaining ½ cup sugar 5 minutes or until pale yellow and thickened. Using a rubber spatula, fold the egg mixture into the melted chocolate and blend until well incorporated. Pour the batter into the springform pan and smooth the top with the spatula. Fill roasting pan with hot tap water until it reaches half way up the side of the springform pan. Place cake in oven and bake for 1 hour. The top of the cake should have a thin dried crust when cooked. Do not over bake. Remove cake from oven and allow to cool 1 hour at room temperature. Cover the pan with clear wrap and place in the refrigerator a minimum of 4 hours. When ready to serve, carefully remove the sides of the springform pan. Place a cake plate or cardboard cake circle on top of the cake and

invert to remove the bottom of the pan and parchment paper. This cake is extremely rich and truffle-like in consistency. Cut portions into 1 1/2-inch slices and top with fresh fruit and unsweetened whipped cream. Garnish with julienned mint leaves.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Best Damn Lemon Ice Box Pie on Earth

PREP TIME: 40 Minutes

MAKES: 1 Pie

INGREDIENTS:

3 eggs, room temperature
 1/2 cup lemon juice
 1 tsp lemon rind, grated
 1 (14-ounce) can condensed milk
 1 graham cracker crust, prepared

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Separate eggs, making sure that no yolk gets into the whites. Set whites aside. In a mixing bowl, beat egg yolks well. Add lemon juice, grated rind and condensed milk. Continue to whisk well. When blended, pour mixture into graham cracker crust.

INGREDIENTS FOR THE MERINGUE:

3 egg whites
 1 tbsp water
 pinch of salt
 1/4 tsp cream of tartar
 5 tbsps sugar
 1 tsp vanilla

METHOD:

In a large mixer bowl, beat egg whites, water and salt on high until foamy. Add cream of tartar and beat until stiff. Add 1 tbsp of sugar at a time, mixing well with each addition until all has been added. Add vanilla and blend for 30 seconds more. Cover the top of the pie with meringue. Bake at 350 degrees F. for 25-30 minutes, or until the top is a golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Fig and Pecan Pie

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment:

Figs were the most plentiful fruit available to the early Cajuns and Creoles. During the late summer, figs were canned in every household in bayou country. To combine fig preserves with pecan pie is a natural.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup chopped fig preserves
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 tbsp cornstarch
- 1 cup Karo syrup
- ¼ cup Louisiana cane syrup
- 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
- 3 eggs, beaten
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of nutmeg
- 1 (9-inch) uncooked pie shell

Method:

Preheat oven to 325°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and cornstarch. Add syrups, vanilla and eggs. Whisk thoroughly. Add chopped pecans and fig preserves. Blend well into mixture. Season with a pinch of cinnamon and nutmeg. Pour ingredients into pie shell and bake 45 minutes on center rack of oven.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Classic American Pie Crust

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 2 (9-inch) Pies

COMMENT:

This dough keeps in the freezer for 3 months and yields enough dough for 1 (9-inch) double-crust pie.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 ½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp sugar
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ cup and 2 tbsp water, very cold
- ¼ pound unsalted butter, cold and cut in ½-inch pieces
- ¼ cup vegetable shortening, cold and cut in ½-inch pieces
- 2 tsp lemon juice, fresh

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees. In the bowl of a food processor, blend flour, sugar, and salt briefly to combine. Add butter and shortening and blend until coarse crumbs form (approximately 30 seconds) then blend in lemon juice and water until moist crumbs form. Gently shape into 2 equal circles about 4 or 5 inches in diameter. Wrap in plastic and refrigerate at least 1 hour or up to 1 day. Place one circle of dough between two large pieces of lightly floured parchment. Roll until 1/8 inch thick and 14-inches in diameter, then remove the top sheet of parchment. Gently roll the dough around the pin and position the pin over the pie pan. Ease the dough into the pan, gently but firmly pressing the dough against the sides and bottom. Take care not to pull or stretch the dough. With scissors, trim the edge of the dough allowing the dough to hang over the outer edge of the pan. Tuck this dough under to rest on top of the rim. Pinch-crimp the edges. Freeze the crust for at least 30 minutes. Line the frozen crust with large piece of foil, fill with pie weights and bake 12 minutes. Remove the foil and weights and continue baking about 8 minutes longer or until the shell gold.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Orange Cane Syrup Pecan Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour, 15 Minutes

YIELDS: 1 (9-inch) Deep Dish Pie

COMMENT:

Everyone has a great pecan pie recipe, but this recipe tops them all. With sweet orange juice and rich Steen's cane syrup, this pie will win over everyone. Serve with a scoop of your favorite ice cream or with whipped cream and a thin slice of orange.

INGREDIENTS:

5 eggs, beaten
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 1/4 cups light Karo corn syrup
 1/4 cup Steen's cane syrup
 3 tbsp grated orange rind
 1/3 cup orange juice
 1 1/4 tbsps all-purpose flour
 1/4 tsp salt
 1 cup chopped pecans
 1 unbaked 9-inch pastry shell
 pecan halves

METHOD:

Combine eggs, sugar, corn syrup, cane syrup, orange rind, orange juice, flour and salt. Beat at medium speed of electric mixer until blended. Stir in chopped pecans. Pour mixture into pastry shell. Arrange pecan halves on top of pie. Bake at 350°F for 55–60 minutes. Cool overnight. Slice into 8 wedges.

[print this page >>](#)

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- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

DESSERTS

Pumpkin Eggnog Pie

PREP TIME: 50 Minutes

SERVES: 1 (9-inch) Pie

COMMENT:

This is a classic example of how to use eggnog to spice up an old holiday favorite like pumpkin pie.

INGREDIENTS:

½ cup brown sugar, firmly packed
 ½ cup sugar
 ½ tsp salt
 ½ tsp cinnamon
 ½ tsp ground ginger
 ½ tsp ground nutmeg
 1 cup prepared eggnog
 3 eggs
 1 cup mashed pumpkin, canned
 1 tbsp cornstarch
 1 (9-inch) unbaked pie shell

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients, until well blended. Pour into unbaked pie shell. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until knife inserted in center of pie comes out clean.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mincemeat Pie

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4 Deep-dish pies or 8 (9-inch) Pies

COMMENT:

Since it takes approximately 1 quart to fill a deep dish pie, this recipe creates 4 deep-dish pies or 8 (9-inch) pies. Further, these pies freeze well. It is recommended to make entire recipe and freeze in portions for later use.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound lean beef, ground
- 2 cups water
- 5 cups shredded apples, firmly packed
- ¾ cup each diced candied lemon peel and orange peel
- ¼ cup candied citron
- 1 pound seedless raisins
- 1 large orange, juice and grated rind
- ½ pound dark brown sugar
- 1 ½ tsps each cinnamon, allspice, cloves coriander, mace
- 1tsp salt
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1cup brandy or bourbon
- 1 cup rum or sherry

METHOD:

In a 5-quart stockpot, simmer beef with water 20 minutes. Add remaining ingredients, except liquors. Bring to a rolling boil. Simmer 5 minutes, stirring. Cool and add liquors. Store in refrigerator 3 weeks before using. Divide into 4 portions. Place in prepared piecrusts. (See Classic American pie crust for instructions) Will keep in refrigerator 2 months. Can be frozen.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mason Dixon Pecan Pie

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 8-10 slices

COMMENT:

There are literally fifty varying recipes for pecan pies in Louisiana. Most call for white sugar and Karo syrup. This particular version is not only unique in flavor but different in its primary ingredients. Give it a try and you will throw away the recipe for that old standby.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 pound butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3/4 cup cane syrup
- 1 uncooked pie shell
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- pinch of nutmeg
- pinch of cinnamon
- 1 ounce bourbon

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a sauté pan melt butter over medium high heat. Allow butter to slightly brown around the edges as it melts as this will help create a nutty flavor in the pie. Allow butter to cool slightly and pour into a mixing bowl. Add eggs, brown sugar, cane syrup, honey and vanilla. Blend well after each addition into the bowl. Add all remaining ingredients except the pecans and using a wire whip whisk to remove any lumps from the sugar or powdered spices. Fold in pecans and pour the mixture into the pie shell. Bake 10 minutes and reduce temperature to 385 degrees F then allow to cook for 35 additional minutes. Check for doneness and when cooked remove and allow to cool thoroughly before slicing. It is best to make the pie one day before serving and hold in the refrigerator overnight to ensure a solid set.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Juirdmon (Cushaw Pumpkin Pie Filling)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 3½ Pounds

COMMENT:

I'm really not sure of the French spelling or even the translation, but most of the old Cajun and Creole cooks referred to the meat of a crooked-neck pumpkin, simmered in sugar and spices as Juirdmon. I first tasted this dish at the hands of Mary Farchaud, the woman who not only cooked for us but instilled in me, my five brothers and two sisters an appreciation for Louisiana's unique culture and cuisine. The green and white striped pumpkin would be chopped into 2-inch squares, the seeds removed and the pumpkin boiled in lightly sugared water. The tender meat was then scraped from the shell and returned to the pot along with butter, sugar and spices to create the dish. This filling could then be placed into a pie shell or made into turnovers. As children we ate it simply from a cereal bowl...hot from the pot.



INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (9-pound) cushaw
- ¾ pound butter
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup dark brown sugar
- ½ cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
- ½ tsp allspice
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp cinnamon
- 3 tbsps vanilla

METHOD:

Select a cushaw with a main section approximately the size of a soccer ball. Using a large French knife, chop the cushaw into 2-inch squares. Using a paring knife, scrape or cut away the seeds and stringy matter from each square. Place the cushaw squares in a large pot and cover by two inches with hot water. Add 1 cup of sugar and bring to a rolling boil. Boil the pumpkin approximately 30 minutes or until the pulp is extremely tender, but not mushy. Remove from heat, strain, then chill under cold water. Once pumpkin is cool to the touch, scrape the meat into a large mixing bowl and discard the shell.

Cooked meat should equal approximately 4½ pounds. Using a pastry cutter, mash the pumpkin. In a heavy bottom sauce pot, melt butter over medium high heat. Add mashed pumpkin, remaining sugar and cane syrup. Blend well into the pumpkin mixture, then add all remaining spices. Bring to a low simmer and cook 15-20 minutes to

blend flavors thoroughly. The pumpkin will be slightly dry so it will be necessary to stir occasionally. When tender and creamy, the pumpkin may be removed and used as a pie filling or eaten as a sweet vegetable side dish.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

PEACH CUSTARD PIE

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6–8 Servings

Comment:

This recipe is a favorite among the residents of Ruston, La. Over the years, Ruston has become known as the peach capital of the Louisiana. The filling in this pie is typical of French and English custards.

Ingredients for Pie Crust:

1 1/3 cups flour
 ¼ pound cold butter, chipped
 1 tbsp sugar
 ¼ cup ice water

Method:

In a food processor equipped with a metal blade, combine flour, butter and sugar. Pulse 1 minute or until texture of mixture resembles coarse meal. Continuing to pulse, slowly add a little water at a time, until dough forms into a ball. Remove and place on a floured surface. Roll dough 7-inch thick. Firmly press into a 9-inch pie or tart pan. Set aside.

Ingredients for Filling:

6–8 medium peaches
 ¼ cup heavy whipping cream
 2 eggs
 ½ cup sugar
 ¼ cup pure vanilla extract
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 ¼ cup powdered sugar

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Using a sharp paring knife, cut peaches into ¼-inch slices and discard seeds. Arrange slices neatly around dough until all have been used. Place pie on bottom oven rack and bake approximately 20 minutes to render juices from fruit. While pie is baking, combine all remaining ingredients, except powdered sugar, in a mixing bowl. Whisk until well blended. Remove pie from oven and pour egg mixture evenly over baked peaches. Return pie to oven and bake 20 minutes or until custard is set. Remove from oven and dust generously with powdered sugar. This pie may be duplicated using red or green apples.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Individual Meringues with Sliced Strawberries and Chocolate Sauce

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 12

INGREDIENTS:

5 large egg whites
 Pinch of coarse salt
 1¼ cups plus 3 tbsps sugar
 12 ounces semisweet chocolate, chopped
 3 (1-pound) baskets strawberries
 6 tbsps water

METHOD:

Position 1 rack in bottom third and 1 rack in top third of oven and preheat to 250 degrees F. Line 2 large baking sheets with parchment paper. Draw six, 3 ½-inch circles on each piece of parchment paper. The bottom of a 6-ounce tuna can makes a convenient template for these circles. You will use these circles when making the meringue shells. Using an electric mixer, beat egg whites and salt in large bowl until soft peaks form. Gradually add 1¼ cups sugar, beating until whites are stiff and glossy. Spoon approximately 1/3 cup of the whipped egg whites into the center of each circle. Using the back of a cooking spoon, spread the meringue evenly within the circle and depress the center to form a shell. Bake meringues until crisp and almost dry, about 1 hour 15 minutes. Turn off oven; leave door closed. Let meringues dry in oven for 1 hour. Remove from oven and lift meringues from parchment. (These can be made 1 week ahead. Wrap airtight and freeze.) Place chocolate in a stainless steel bowl and set over a saucepot containing 1-inch of hot water. Do not allow the bottom of the bowl to touch the water. Bring to a low simmer and as the chocolate begins to melt, stir constantly until smooth. Grasp the stem end of 12 strawberries and dip into chocolate allowing a small portion of the stem end to remain uncoated. Remove and place the berries on foil-lined plate; refrigerate until chocolate sets. Whisk 6 tablespoons of cold water into remaining chocolate to create a sauce. Keep warm. Hull and slice remaining strawberries, then sprinkle with remaining 3 tablespoons of sugar. When ready to serve, place meringues in center of 10-inch serving plate. Top with sliced berries, drizzle with chocolate and garnish with whole dipped strawberry.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Oeufs Aux Lait (Egg Custard) - (Something Old)

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

As children, we often had Sunday dinner at Grandmother's house. It was so impressive because she never had less than seven courses. One was always her wonderful baked custard. She made it from scratch and always served it from a baking pan rather than custard cups. When I asked her for the recipe, she said that she had learned it from her mother, who had learned it from her mother, and so on, but that she would be happy to share it with me. However, it wasn't quite that simple. In fact, I had to watch my grandmother and mother prepare the dish many times to really determine the measurements. It is a simple but great recipe and I am happy to share it with you. Cherie Zeringue - Shreiver, LA.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 eggs
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 3 (5-ounce) cans evaporated milk
- 2 cups whole milk
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, whip eggs and sugar until pale yellow and ribbony. Add evaporated and whole milk while continuing to blend. Once eggs and milk are thoroughly incorporated, add vanilla and nutmeg. Pour the mixture into a 9" x 13" baking pan. Place on the center rack of the oven and bake for 25 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees F and bake an additional 30 minutes or until custard is golden brown on top. Remove from oven and allow to cool thoroughly. You may wish to cook the custard in individual custard cups or with caramel sauce for additional flavor.

Oeufs Aux Lait (Egg Custard) - (Something New)

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 10

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups egg substitute
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 2 tbsps corn starch
- 6 (5-ounce) cans evaporated skim milk
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and corn starch and blend well. Add egg substitute and, using a wire whisk, whip until pale yellow and ribbony. Add evaporated milk and blend into the egg mixture. Once incorporated, add vanilla and nutmeg. Pour the mixture into a 9" x 13" baking pan. Place on the center rack of the oven and bake for 25 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees F and bake an additional 30 minutes or until custard is golden brown on top. Remove from oven and allow to cool thoroughly. I find that it is best to cook the custard in ten individual custard cups. The cups should then be placed into a baking pan with 1-inch of water, surrounding the cups. This cooking process gives the custard a creamier flavor.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Holiday Chocolate Pecan Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Why not create an unusual holiday twist to an otherwise great pecan pie recipe? Here, I have added chocolate to enrich the basic pie to a seasonal masterpiece.

INGREDIENTS:

½ cup sugar
 1 tbsp corn starch
 1 cup Karo syrup
 1/4 cup Louisiana cane syrup
 1 tbsp vanilla
 3 eggs, beaten
 1 cup chopped pecans
 ½ cup Hershey Chocolate Morsels
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 1 9-inch uncooked pie shell

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and corn starch. Add syrups vanilla, and beaten eggs and, using a wire whisk, blend thoroughly. Add chopped pecans and chocolate morsels and blend well into the mixture. Season with a pinch of cinnamon and nutmeg. Pour into pie shell and bake on the center rack of oven for 10 minutes. Then reduce temperature to 375 degrees F and bake for 35 minutes. Remove and allow to cool.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creamy Coconut Cream Pie

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This no-bake coconut cream pie is simple to make, but at the same time tastes like it took all day! In fact, the only time the oven needs to be heated is to pre-bake the pie shell. If you wish to crack and grate a fresh coconut, two cups of the freshly grated product may be substituted for the canned product in the recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 3 ½-ounce cans Angel Flake coconut or similar brand
- ¾ cup sugar
- 3 tablespoons corn starch
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 3 egg yolks
- 2 cups milk
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon almond extract
- 1 9-inch pre-baked pie shell
- 1 cup chilled whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons powdered sugar

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl combine sugar, corn starch and salt. Blend thoroughly, then add the egg yolks and using a wire whisk whip until well blended and creamy in texture. Into a one-quart sauce pan, heat milk over medium high heat. When milk begins to boil slightly, remove from heat and using a four-ounce ladle gradually add the hot milk to the egg mixture while whisking constantly. Continue until all of the milk has been incorporated. Return the mixture to the sauce pan and heat over low heat, stirring constantly, for approximately 3 to 4 minutes or until the mixture is thick and shiny. Remove from heat. Blend in the vanilla and almond extracts, and fold in one can of coconut flakes. Pour the mixture back into the mixing bowl. Cover and chill for one hour. While cream filling is cooling, place the whipping cream into a mixing bowl along with the powdered sugar. Using an electric mixer, beat until cream is stiff and firm. Cover and refrigerate. Pour the cold coconut filling into the baked pie shell. Top with whipped cream and sprinkle the remaining coconut on top. Refrigerate one hour and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Old-Fashioned Creole Coconut Pie

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

The Creole-style Coconut Pie was prepared using similar ingredients and techniques of a simple Pecan Pie, just substituting coconut. Although the early recipes called for cracking and grating your own coconut, this updated version uses the store-bought package.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Angel Flake (or similar brand)
- grated coconut
- 3 whole eggs, beaten
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 1/2 cup melted butter
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 9-inch unbaked pie shell

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Bake the pie shell approximately 2 minutes, which will prevent the shell from becoming soggy. Remove from oven and set aside. In a mixing bowl combine eggs and sugar. Using a wire whisk, blend well to ensure that sugar is dissolved. Add butter and vanilla and continue to blend until well mixed. Add coconut and using a mixing spoon stir to distribute evenly into the egg mixture. Pour into the pie shell and bake at 400 degrees for 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 375 and cook 15 minutes. Reduce heat once again to 350, and cook 15 to 20 additional minutes, or until pie is well set. Remove from oven and cool completely prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mason Dixon Pecan Pie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10 Slices

COMMENT:

There are literally fifty varying recipes for pecan pies in Louisiana. Most call for white sugar and corn syrup. This particular version is not only unique in flavor but different in its primary ingredients. Give it a try and you will throw away the recipe for that old standby.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1/2 cup apple preserves
- 1/4 pound butter
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 3/4 cup cane syrup
- 1/4 cup honey
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of nutmeg
- 1 ounce bourbon
- 1 uncooked pie shell

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a heavy bottom pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Allow butter to slightly brown around the edges as it melts. This will help create a nutty flavor in the pie. Allow butter to cool slightly and pour into a mixing bowl. Add eggs, brown sugar, cane syrup, honey and vanilla, blending well after each addition. Season mixture using cinnamon, nutmeg and bourbon. Using a wire whisk to remove any lumps from the sugar or powdered spices. Fold in pecans and apples. Pour mixture into the pie shell. Bake for ten minutes and reduce temperature to 375 degrees F. Allow cake to cook for an additional thirty-five minutes. Remove and allow to cool thoroughly before slicing. It is best to make the pie one day before serving and hold in the refrigerator overnight to ensure a solid set.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Tartea` la Bouie

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This is one of the oldest desserts to come out of bayou country. Since eggs and milk were so plentiful, custard-based desserts were constantly available. My mother made beautiful boiled custards but the best custard pie I ever ate was one cooked by Betsy Ayo, wife of Dr. Donald Ayo, President of Nicholls State University in Thibodaux. Although she never gave me all of her secrets, she shared most of them; I in turn will share them with you. John Folse, Donaldsonville.

INGREDIENTS FOR CUSTARD:

2 cups milk
 1 cup half and half cream
 1 egg
 1/2 cup sugar
 4 tbsps cornstarch
 1 tbsp vanilla
 1/2 cup butter

INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

2 eggs
 1 cup sugar
 1/4 pound butter
 1 tsp vanilla
 2 1/2 tsps baking powder
 2 cups all purpose flour

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. You should begin the recipe by combining the milk and cream and scalding the mixture over a low fire until skin forms on the surface but milk does not boil, approximately 200 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine egg, sugar and cornstarch. Using a wire whisk, whip gently until cornstarch and sugar are dissolved. Add approximately one cup of the hot milk to the egg mixture while beating constantly. This will temper the eggs, prior to adding them to the hot milk. While whisking the scalded milk, add the egg mixture and continue to whip until mixture thickens to the texture of a very heavy cream. Add vanilla and butter and continue to cook until thick custard is achieved. Remove from heat and cool thoroughly before pouring into the uncooked pie crust. In the bowl of a food processor fitted with a metal blade, combine eggs, sugar, butter and vanilla. Blend 1-2 minutes until ingredients are incorporated. Add baking powder and flour and continue to process until flour is absorbed and a dough ball forms in the process. Remove dough and refrigerate one hour. Roll dough into a large pie-shaped crust, approximately 1/8-inch thick. Place the dough in a pie pan,

allowing the excess to rest out on the work surface. When the custard is cooled, pour it into the pie shell and fold the pie dough over to the center of the pie in an uneven fashion. It isn't necessary for the crust to be sealed on the top. Bake 30-45 minutes or until crust is golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Cranberry and Candied Yam Cheesecake Tart

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Serves: 8-10

Comment: This rich and creamy dessert is almost like an entire Thanksgiving dinner all in one dish. We have combined candied yams with cream cheese and Creole cream cheese then topped the tart with cranberry sauce to create a unique blend of flavors.



Ingredients for crust:

- ¼ cup sliced or slivered almonds
- 1 1/3 cups flour
- 1 tbsp sugar
- ¼ pound cold, chipped butter
- ¼ cup ice water

Method for crust:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a food processor, pulse almonds until coarsely ground. Add flour and sugar and pulse for 1–2 minutes or until well blended. Add butter and pulse food processor 1 minute or until a coarse meal texture is achieved. Continuing to pulse, slowly add ice water, a little at a time, until dough forms into a ball. Remove and place on floured surface. Roll dough into a 1/8-inch thick circle that is about 12 inches in diameter. Carefully place rolled dough into an 11-inch fluted tart pan with a removable bottom. Gently press the pastry into the rim. Fold in the overhanging dough and press to reinforce the side. Trim any excess pastry and refrigerate until firm. Line the pastry with parchment paper and fill with pie weights or dried beans. Bake 12 minutes or until the crust is set. Remove the weights and the paper then bake another 8–10 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from the oven and cool on a wire rack. While the crust is cooling make the filling.

Ingredients for filling:

- 1 cup plus 2 tbsps canned candied yams, drained and puréed
- ¼ cup Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- 1 (8-ounce) package of cream cheese
- 1 (3 -ounce) package of cream cheese
- ½ cup packed light brown sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ¼ tsp ground ginger
- 1/8 tsp ground nutmeg
- pinch ground cloves
- pinch ground allspice
- pinch of salt
- 3 tbsps heavy cream

3 tbsps pure maple syrup
1 ½ tsps vanilla
2 eggs

Method for filling:

In a large bowl, combine the Creole cream cheese, cream cheese, brown sugar, ground spices and salt. Using an electric mixer, beat ingredients at medium speed until smooth. Beat in candied yam purée until smooth. Blend in cream, syrup, vanilla and eggs at low speed. Place the crust on a large, sturdy baking sheet and set it in the oven. Pour filling into the crust and bake for 30 minutes until the filling is just set but still slightly jiggly in the center. Cover the edge with foil if the crust starts to brown too much. Transfer to a rack and let cool completely while making the topping.

Ingredients for Topping:

2 cups fresh cranberries (½ pound)
½ cup sugar
¼ cup orange juice
1 ½ tsps unflavored gelatin
¾ cup plus 2 tbsps water

Method for Topping:

In a medium saucepan, combine the cranberries with ½ cup of water and cook over medium-high heat 5 minutes or until they begin to pop. Let cool then transfer to a blender and purée until smooth. Strain the purée through a fine sieve. Rinse out the saucepan and add sugar and ¼ cup water. Bring to a boil and stir until dissolved. Let cool. Stir in the orange juice and cranberry purée. In a small bowl, sprinkle the gelatin over the remaining 2 tbsps of water and let stand until softened, about 5 minutes. Microwave for 10 seconds, or until completely melted. Whisk gelatin into the cranberry mixture and pour the topping over the cooled tart. Shake gently to even out the topping. Refrigerate tart until set, at least 1 hour and up to 2 days. Remove the tart ring and serve with whipped topping and dried cranberries.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Algie Petrere's Top Gun Bourbon and Sweet Potato Pie

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 8-10 Servings

Comment: Algie Petrere is another winner in our 2003 Stirrin' It Up for the Holidays recipe contest. The bourbon gives this wonderful sweet potato pie a piquant kick. If you want to cut back on the liquor, Algie recommends that you substitute half of the bourbon with another liquid such as juice from canning figs or pears.

Ingredients:

2 cups mashed sweet potatoes
 ½ cup bourbon
 3 eggs
 4 tbsp softened margarine
 1 cup sugar
 1 tsp vanilla
 1 tsp nutmeg
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1 (9-inch) uncooked pie shell

Method:

Preheat oven to 325° F. Combine all ingredients. Using a wire whisk, mix ingredients thoroughly. Pour mixture into the pie shell. Bake for 45 minutes, or until crust is golden brown and center is just set.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Lemon Buttermilk Pie with Golden Raisins

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment: Lemon buttermilk pie is often a forgotten country recipe. The simplicity of preparation makes this dessert perfect after any meal.

Ingredients:

- 1 ½ cups buttermilk
- ¾ cup golden raisins
- 4 eggs
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 tbsps flour
- ¼ cup unsalted butter, melted
- grated peel of 1 lemon
- 3 tbsps lemon juice
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- ¼ tsp nutmeg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 (9½-inch) deep-dish pie shell



Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Bake pie shell according to package instructions. In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs and sugar until light and lemon-colored. Beat in flour, buttermilk, butter, lemon peel, lemon juice, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg and vanilla. Sprinkle raisins evenly over the bottom of the baked pie shell. Pour custard on top of raisins. Bake pie at 375°F for 30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Place on a rack to cool.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Coconut Cream Pie

Prep Time: 4 Hours

Yields: 1 (9-inch) Pie

Comment: Comment: I have at least two no-bake coconut cream pies on my website, but for a real homemade flavor, you might want to try this one. Of course, it takes a little more time, but the effort is worth it. You can cut your cooking time by using a ready-made vanilla wafer crust rather than baking your own.



Ingredients for Crust: *

- 6-8 ounces vanilla wafers
- 2 tbsps unsweetened shredded coconut
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 5 tbsps unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- *You may substitute a ready-made vanilla wafer crust

Method:

Place oven rack to lower-middle position. Preheat oven to 325°F. In a food processor, pulse vanilla wafers, coconut and sugar to fine crumbs. In a medium bowl, blend together crumbs and butter until evenly moistened. Place mixture in a 9-inch glass pie plate. Press crumbs evenly into bottom and sides of plate. Bake 15 minutes or until medium brown. Rotate pie shell halfway through baking time. Place on wire rack and cool for 30 minutes.

Ingredients for Filling:

- 1 (14-ounce) can coconut milk
- 1 cup whole milk
- ½ cup unsweetened shredded coconut
- ½ cup sugar
- 3/8 tsp salt
- 5 large egg yolks
- ¼ cup cornstarch
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 2 tbsps unsalted butter, cut into 2 pieces
- 1 tsp vanilla extract

Method:

In a saucepan, combine coconut milk, whole milk, shredded coconut, ½ cup sugar and salt. Simmer over medium-high heat stirring occasionally until sugar dissolves. In a medium bowl, whisk egg yolks, cornstarch and 1 tablespoon sugar until well blended. Pour in 1 cup of

hot milk mixture, whisking constantly until combined. Gradually add remaining milk 3-4 additions while whisking constantly. Return mixture to saucepan and whisk constantly for 1 minute until thickened and boiling. Filling must boil in order to thicken properly. Remove from heat and whisk in butter and vanilla. Pour hot filling into cooled piecrust. Smooth with a rubber spatula. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate 3-12 hours or until firm.

Ingredients for Whipped Cream:

1½ cups cold heavy whipping cream
2 tbsps sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract
1 tbsp unsweetened shredded coconut, toasted

Method:

Just before serving, beat cream, sugar and vanilla with mixer 1½-2 minutes or until soft peaks form. Top pie with whipped cream and then sprinkle with coconut. Cut pie into wedges and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Peach and Praline Pie

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 1 (9-inch) Pie

Comment: The combination of wonderful Ruston peaches and decadent Creole pralines make this pie special. Fresh peaches from Ruston, La. are recommended, but any variety of peaches can be used. This dessert will satisfy your sweet tooth and leave you wanting more.

Ingredients:

- 1 (9-inch) refrigerated pie crust
- 1 teaspoon flour
- 1/3 cup flour, divided
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
- ½ cup light corn syrup
- 3 large eggs
- 3 cups chopped peach slices
- ¼ cup melted butter
- ¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar
- 2 tbsps butter, softened
- ½ cup coarsely chopped pecans

Method:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Fit piecrust into a 9-inch pie plate according to package directions. Fold edges under and crimp. Sprinkle piecrust with 1 teaspoon flour and set aside. With an electric mixer set on medium, beat 3 tablespoons flour, sugar, salt, nutmeg, corn syrup and eggs for 1 minute. Stir in peaches and melted butter. Pour batter into pie crust. Combine remaining flour and brown sugar in a small bowl. Cut in softened butter with a pastry blender until crumbly. Stir in chopped pecans and sprinkle evenly over peach mixture. Bake 35 minutes, remove and cover with foil to prevent crust from over browning. Bake an additional 10–15 minutes or until center is set.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Lemon Crème Brûlée Tart

Prep Time: 2½ Hours

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

This classical dessert is ideal for any occasion. The tart lemon taste is the perfect accompaniment to chicken or fish.

Ingredients for Crust:

- 1 cup flour
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- pinch of salt
- 6 tbsps unsalted butter, chilled, cut into ½-inch cubes
- 4 tps heavy whipping cream
- 1 egg white, beaten

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a food processor, combine flour, sugar and salt. Pulse 5 seconds. Add butter, and pulse until coarse meal forms. Add cream, 1 tablespoon at a time and continue to pulse until moist clumps form. Gather dough into ball and flatten into disk. Wrap and chill 2 hours. On lightly-floured surface, roll dough into 12-inch circle. Place dough in 9-inch tart pan with removable bottom. Fold overhanging dough into side of pan to form double-thick sides. Bake crust 18 minutes or until golden. While baking, brush inside of crust twice with beaten egg. If you notice crust beginning to bubble, press with back of fork. Be careful to maintain oven temperature.

Ingredients for Filling:

- ¾ cup sugar
- ¾ cup heavy whipping cream
- 4 large egg yolks
- 2 large eggs
- ½ cup fresh lemon juice
- 1 tbsp finely-grated lemon peel
- 2 tbsps sugar
- Lemon slices (optional)

Method:

Preheat broiler. In a mixing bowl, whisk ¾ cup sugar, cream, egg yolks and eggs. Blend well. Add lemon juice and lemon peel. Pour filling into warm crust. Bake 30 minutes or until filling is slightly puffed at edges and set in center. Cool 1 hour. Place tart on baking sheet. Cover edge of crust with foil to prevent burning. Sprinkle tart with remaining sugar. Broil tart 2 minutes or until sugar is melted and caramelized, turning baking sheet while broiling for even browning. Place on rack to cool until topping is crisp. Push bottom of tart pan up

to release tart. Place on serving platter and garnish with lemon slices.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Cranberry Bourbon Pecan Pie

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

North meets South in this sinful holiday pie. Tart cranberries, smooth bourbon and crunchy pecans make this hard to resist.

Ingredients for Pie Filling:

- 3 cups fresh or frozen cranberries
- 1 tbsp bourbon
- 1 cup orange juice
- ¾ cup honey
- 1 cup sugar
- 4 tbsps cornstarch
- 2 tbsps cold water
- 1 (9-inch) pie shell with fluted rim, baked

Method:

In a medium saucepan, combine cranberries, orange juice, honey and sugar. Cover and simmer 15 minutes over low heat if using fresh berries. If using frozen berries, simmer 20–30 minutes. Cool briefly. Puree cranberry mixture in blender or food processor. Return to saucepan. Combine cornstarch and water in a cup. Stir into cranberry mixture. Bring mixture to a boil over high heat and cook until thickened, stirring constantly. Add bourbon. Cool, then pour into pie shell. Preheat oven to 350°F.

Ingredients for Pecan Topping:

- 2 cups pecan halves
- ½ cup honey
- 3 tbsps butter
- powdered sugar for garnish
- fresh cranberries for garnish

Method:

Combine honey and butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Cook and stir until mixture is smooth. Add pecan halves and stir until well coated. Remove from heat and spread over cranberry mixture. Bake pie 20 minutes or until top is bubbly. Cool on a wire rack. Serve at room temperature or chilled. Dust with powdered sugar and garnish with cranberries.

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Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

DESSERTS

LEMON BUTTERMILK PIE WITH STRAWBERRY TOPPING

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 1 (9-inch) Pie

Comment:

Buttermilk pie is one of the treasured rural confections of the South. Not only is it delicious, but it gave the dairy farmers a perfect outlet for the buttermilk remaining in the churn after whipping butter. Although the name of the pie might indicate that it is "sour cream" in flavor, it is quite the opposite. It has a wonderful, sweet finish especially when topped with fresh strawberries.

Ingredients:

1 cup buttermilk
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1 tbsp grated lemon zest
 2 cups fresh Louisiana strawberries, sliced
 2¼ cups sugar
 1 tbsp flour
 pinch of salt
 2 eggs
 2 egg yolks
 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
 1 (9-inch) unbaked pie shell

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a small mixing bowl, combine sliced strawberries with ¾ cup sugar, stir, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate. This should be done at least 6 hours prior to serving. In a large mixing bowl, combine remaining sugar, flour and salt. Blend well. Add eggs and egg yolks, and using a wire whisk, cream into sugar mixture. Once blended, add buttermilk, vanilla, lemon juice and zest. Whisk well to incorporate and dissolve sugar. Pour into pie shell and place on a cookie sheet. Bake 50 minutes or until pie is lightly browned and filling is just set. Remove and cool a minimum of 30 minutes prior to serving. Top each slice with a generous portion of sugared strawberries.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

TENDER PIE CRUST

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 2 (9-inch) Pie Crusts

Comment:

When making pie crusts, it is important to use all-purpose flour for a tender crust. Also, sugar sweetens and tenderizes the dough, while the flavor of the dough can be enhanced by spices such as nutmeg, ginger or cinnamon. For easier rolling, chill dough at least 1 hour.

Ingredients:

3 cups flour
 2 tbsps sugar
 1¾ tps salt
 1 cup plus 2 tbsps chilled, unsalted butter, cubed ½-inch
 8 tbsps ice water
 1½ tps apple cider vinegar

Method:

In a food processor, blend flour, sugar and salt. Add butter, using on/off turns, and process until a coarse meal forms. Add ice water and cider vinegar. Blend until moist clumps form, adding ice water by teaspoonfuls if dough is too dry. Gather dough together and turn out onto a lightly floured work surface. Divide dough in half. Form each half into a ball and flatten into a disk. Wrap disks separately in plastic wrap, and refrigerate at least 1 hour. NOTE: This dough can be made ahead of time. It will keep up to 2 days in the refrigerator or 1 month frozen in a plastic zipper bag. If freezing, refrigerate overnight to thaw prior to using. Allow it to soften at room temperature before rolling out.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Bread Pudding with Rum Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENT: Like red beans and rice, bread pudding is a traditional New Orleans dish. Why should one have to give it up when modifying one's diet? If you are cutting back fat and sugar in your diet, we have replaced whole eggs with egg substitute and used skim and evaporated skim milk instead of whole milk and heavy cream. I guarantee it is just as good as the original.

INGREDIENTS FOR BREAD PUDDING:

2½ cups stale French bread broken into ½ inch pieces
 ½ cup egg substitute
 2 cups skim milk
 2 tbsp + 2 tsp Splenda brand sweetener
 ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
 ¼ tsp ground nutmeg
 ½ cup regular or golden raisins
 4 tsp vanilla

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In a mixing bowl, blend the egg substitute, skim milk, sweetener and cinnamon. Add the bread to the liquid mixture and soak for 1 minute. Add the raisins and vanilla and mix well. Pour the mixture into an 8" x 8" baking dish. Bake for 30 minutes or until a knife inserted into the center comes out clean.

INGREDIENTS FOR RUM SAUCE:

½ cup skim milk
 ½ cup evaporated skim milk
 1 tbsp cornstarch
 2 tbsp dark rum
 2 tbsp + 2 tsp Splenda brand sweetener
 pinch cinnamon

METHOD:

In a small saucepan, blend the skim milk, evaporated skim milk, cornstarch, rum, Splenda and cinnamon. Heat over medium high heat. Once sauce comes to a boil, remove from heat and stir constantly so sauce will not coagulate. Foam forming on the sauce is normal and will disappear when cooling. To serve, spoon the hot bread pudding onto dessert plates and top with the rum sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Feliciana Summer Pudding

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

England was one of the seven nations contributing to the development of Creole cuisine. English fare became commonplace in the St. Francisville area once they began building their plantation empires in these hills known as the "Rolling Felicianas." Summer pudding was a spring and early summer staple found on most English tables during this period.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pints strawberries, stemmed and quartered
- 2 pints blueberries
- 1 1/2 cups Champagne
- 1 cup water
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 1 tbsp honey
- 3-4 tsps Grenadine
- 2 tsps lemon juice
- pinch of salt
- 3 (10-inch) loaves French bread
- 6 (6-ounce) ramekins
- 1 large cookie sheet

METHOD:

If French bread or baguettes are not available in your area, substitute sliced bread with the crust removed. In a 4-quart saucepan, combine Champagne, water and sugar over medium-high heat. Bring to a low simmer, stirring constantly with a wire whisk. At this point, all of the sugar should be dissolved. Add berries and cook 10-12 minutes or until fruit is softened and juice has been extracted into the Champagne mixture. Add lemon juice and salt. Check for sweetness of juice and adjust with additional sugar if necessary. Set aside and cool slightly. Slice French bread into 1/2-inch rounds. Place the ramekins on the cookie sheet and spoon 2-3 tsps of the berry mixture into the bottom of each ramekin. Tear French bread circles into appropriate shapes as to fit evenly into a single layer in the ramekin. Press gently into the fruit and juice. Spoon 2-3 tsps of mixture over the bread and continue to layer until ramekins are filled, pushing gently on the bread after each addition. This pressing technique will cause the juice to be absorbed by the bread, thus creating the pudding texture. Once all ramekins are filled, spoon in the remaining juice evenly until the cups are nearly overflowing. Cover each ramekin with plastic wrap and place a can or other heavy object over each ramekin as a weight to help further press the ingredients into the mold. Refrigerate overnight with the weight in place. When ready to serve, place a generous serving of crème anglaise on the bottom of a 10-inch plate and unmold the pudding in the center.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Oeufs Aux Lait (Egg Custard)

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Egg custard, like flan and bread pudding, is considered a premier Creole dessert. Eggs and milk were plentiful in early New Orleans due to the large German settlements surrounding the city, therefore it was just natural that custard-based desserts evolved out of the Cajun and Creole kitchens.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups egg substitute
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 tbsps corn starch
- 6 (5-ounce) cans evaporated skim milk
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 350 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine sugar and corn starch and blend well. Add egg substitute and, using a wire whisk, whip until pale yellow and ribbony. Add evaporated milk and blend into the egg mixture. Once incorporated, add vanilla and nutmeg. Pour the mixture into a 9" x 13" baking pan. Place on the center rack of the oven and bake for 25 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees F and bake an additional 30 minutes or until custard is golden brown on top. Remove from oven and allow to cool thoroughly. I find that it is best to cook the custard in 10 individual custard cups. The cup should then be placed into a baking pan with 1-inch of water surrounding the cups. This cooking process gives the custard a creamier flavor.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

White Chocolate Bread Pudding

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Bread pudding is considered the "apple pie" of South Louisiana. Because of our heavy French influence, crusty French bread is in abundance here. Our German population gave us a good supply of milk and eggs, and when combined with leftover bread one of our premier desserts emerged. The addition of white chocolate gussies up this country dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 9 ounces Bakers white chocolate
- 3 (10-inch) loaves French bread
- 4 whole eggs
- 6 egg yolks
- 4 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup sugar

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. Slice French bread into 1/2 -inch thick round croutons and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine eggs and egg yolks. Using a wire whisk, whip until well-blended and set aside. In a large saucepan, combine whipping cream, milk and sugar. Bring mixture to a low simmer then add white chocolate. Using a wire whisk, stir until chocolate is completely melted. Remove pot from heat and, stirring quickly, add whipped eggs to the cream mixture. Blend thoroughly to keep eggs from scrambling. In a 9" x 13" baking dish, place bread slices in 2 to 3 layers. Pour 1/2 of the cream mixture over the bread, allowing it to soak up most of the mixture prior to adding the rest. Using your fingertips, press the bread gently allowing the cream mixture to be absorbed evenly into the bread. Pour remaining cream mixture over the bread and repeat process. Cover dish with aluminum foil and allow to soak a minimum of 5 hours prior to baking. Bake, covered, for approximately 1 hour then remove foil and bake 45 additional minutes or until top is golden brown. This bread pudding is actually better if chilled in the refrigerator overnight, after baking, then cut into squares and heated in individual portions in the microwave. You may wish to create a white chocolate sauce for topping the bread pudding by combining 8 ounces of melted white chocolate and 3 ounces of heavy whipping cream. This may be done in a double boiler or microwave.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Bread and Butter Pudding

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

No doubt this recipe was invented to use up the endless slices of bread and butter left over from every Victorian tea table. however, don't let an oversupply of bread be your only excuse for making this dessert. For an interesting variation, use slices of brown bread and spread them with marmalade as well as butter. Serve with cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups milk
- 1 grated lemon rind
- 2 tbsp. sugar
- 4 slices white bread, crusts removed, spread with butter
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 3 eggs
- 1 tbsp brandy
- 1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 1 tbps dark brown sugar

METHOD:

Preheat oven at 325° F. In a small saucepan, heat milk with the lemon rind and sugar. When mixture reaches the simmering point, set it aside and allow the milk to infuse the lemon peel for at least 10 minutes. Butter a 1 1/2-pint pie dish. Cut the bread slices in half and place in layers in the dish, sprinkling raisins between layers. Beat the eggs, add the brandy and pour into the milk. Pour the whole mixture over the bread and allow to soak for 1/2 hour. Sprinkle the nutmeg and brown sugar over the top of the pudding and bake at 325° F for 45 minutes, or until the top is golden.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Summer Pudding

PREP TIME: 1 Hour 45 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Summer Pudding, known as Hydropathic Pudding, was an eighteenth-century invention expressly created for those who could not tolerate the rich pastry desserts so fashionable at the time. It turns out to be one of the very best of all English puddings and should be served with lots of whipped cream.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups milk
- 1 grated lemon rind
- 2 tbsp sugar
- 4 slices white bread, crusts removed, spread with butter
- 1/2 cup raisins
- 3 eggs
- 1 tbsp brandy
- 1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- 1 tbsp dark brown sugar

METHOD:

Preheat oven at 325° F. In a small saucepan, heat milk with the lemon rind and sugar. When mixture reaches the simmering point, set it aside and allow the milk to infuse the lemon peel for at least 10 minutes. Butter a 1 1/2-pint pie dish. Cut the bread slices in half and place in layers in the dish, sprinkling raisins between layers. Beat the eggs, add the brandy and pour into the milk. Pour the whole mixture over the bread and allow to soak for 1/2 hour. Sprinkle the nutmeg and brown sugar over the top of the pudding and bake at 325° F for 45 minutes, or until the top is golden.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Persimmon Buttermilk Pudding

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This is one of the best persimmon puddings ever, moist and dense and subtly spiced. Serve it either warm or cold with whipped cream or a sauce of your choice.

INGREDIENTS:

4 to 6 very ripe large persimmons
 4 eggs
 2 1/2 cups buttermilk
 1/4 cup (1/2 stick) butter, melted,
 plus extra for greasing dish
 1 cup sugar
 1 1/2 cups flour
 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
 1 1/2 tsp baking soda
 1/2 tsp cinnamon
 1/2 tsp freshly grated nutmeg
 1/2 tsp salt

METHOD:

This pudding is best when made with overripe persimmons that can be squeezed easily from the tough outer skin. Remove pits from persimmons, then scrape pulp free from skins with teaspoon. Puree pulp in blender or food processor. Whisk eggs until light in large bowl and beat in 1 1/2 cups persimmon pump, buttermilk and melted butter. Combine sugar, flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt in separate bowl and whisk to blend. Add dry ingredients to persimmon mixture and mix well. Pour batter into buttered shallow 3-quart baking dish. Bake in water bath at 400 degrees F until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, approximately 1 hour.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Rum Raisin Rice Pudding

PREP TIME: 20 minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Rice pudding runs a close second to bread pudding in Louisiana. While some special-occasion versions might add a splash of brandy to the recipe, this variation nods to the Creole by including raisins and a bit of rum.

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup golden raisins
- ½ cup dark rum
- 6 cups whole milk
- 2 cups half and half
- 2 ½ cups long grain rice
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon
- 4 egg yolks
- 2 ½ cups sugar

METHOD:

Rinse rice until water is clear. In a saucepot combine raisins and rum and bring to a boil. If rum flares up, remove from heat and allow to burn out naturally. Remove from heat and allow raisins to steep in remaining rum. In a large heavy bottom pot, place milk, 1 cup of the half & half, vanilla, salt, cinnamon, and rice. Heat to simmer, but do not boil. Cover and cook until tender, stirring occasionally. In a separate mixing bowl, blend egg yolks, sugar, and the remaining half and half and whip well. When the eggs are well blended add a small amount at a time of the hot rice mixture into the eggs while whisking, as to not scramble the eggs. When about a quarter of the rice mixture has been added to the eggs, pour the mixture back into the pot and heat gently until pudding begins to thicken, do not boil. Do not stir excessively as the custard will break and pudding will become dense. Place pudding into serving bowl and sprinkle the top with rum raisins. Cover pudding with plastic wrap pressing it directly onto the pudding surface so a skin does not form on the pudding. Serve warm or cold.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Brown Sugar Bread and Butter Pudding - With Cane Syrup Glaze

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10

COMMENT:

Whenever sugarcane harvest season begins in the fall here in Louisiana, we turn our attention to creating this old sugarhouse favorite. Normally it is made with raw sugar from the mill and glazed with warm sugarcane syrup. Enjoy our version of this classic.

INGREDIENTS:

- 7 cups (1-inch) cubed, croissants or hamburger buns
- 3 cups half and half
- 2 cups heavy cream
- Pinch salt
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 6 eggs, whole
- 1 tbsp cane syrup
- 1 cup brown sugar
- ¼ pound butter, sliced
- ½ cup cane syrup
- 2 tbsps bourbon

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Butter the bottom of a 10-inch round cake pan and line with a circle of parchment paper. Place the cubed croissants into a large mixing bowl. In a medium saucepan, simmer the half and half, cream, salt, vanilla bean and vanilla over medium heat. Stir often to make sure it does not scorch. Do not boil. Set aside to infuse for 10 minutes. In a large mixing bowl, whisk the eggs, 1 tbsp cane syrup and brown sugar. Remove the vanilla bean and, whisking constantly, gradually add the hot cream mixture. Pour the cream mixture over the croissants. Let soak 1 hour, gently turning the cubes over occasionally. Pour the pudding mixture into the baking pan. Place the baking pan in a hot water bath. Carefully place the sliced butter over the pudding mixture and bake until just set and very light brown on top, about 40 - 45 minutes. Chill the pudding until cold and turn out onto a serving platter, removing the parchment paper. While the pudding is chilling, mix ½ cup cane syrup and bourbon in a small saucepan and heat until warm. Serve the cold pudding drizzled with the warm cane syrup glaze.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

King Zulu's Bread Pudding

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 6-8 Servings

Comment:

Here is an interesting use for king cake on or after Mardi Gras. This bread pudding contains the cinnamon sweet taste of king cake as well as an accent of semi-sweet chocolate. Surprise your guest with this pudding at your Mardi Gras party.



Ingredients:

- 4½ ounces Baker's semi-sweet chocolate
- 4 cups king cake, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 whole eggs
- 3 egg yolks
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup sugar

Method:

Preheat oven to 325°F. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together eggs and egg yolks until well blended then set aside. In a large saucepan, combine whipping cream, milk and sugar. Bring mixture to a low simmer then add chocolate. Whisk mixture until chocolate is completely melted. Remove pot from heat and, stirring quickly, add whipped eggs to the cream mixture. Blend thoroughly to keep eggs from scrambling. In a 8" x 8" baking dish, place king cake cubes. Pour chocolate mixture over the cake. Using your fingertips, press cake gently allowing the cream mixture to be absorbed evenly. Cover dish with aluminum foil and allow to soak a minimum of 30 minutes prior to baking. Bake, covered, for approximately 1 hour. Remove foil and bake 20 additional minutes or until top is golden brown. This bread pudding is actually better if chilled in the refrigerator overnight, after baking, then cut into squares and heated in individual portions in the microwave. You may wish to create a chocolate sauce for topping the bread pudding by combining 8 ounces of melted chocolate and 3 ounces of heavy whipping cream. This may be done in a double boiler or microwave.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Watermelon Pudding

Prep Time: 3 Hours 45 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Watermelon pudding is a perfect dessert for those long, summer days when the watermelon are so plentiful. Enjoy this with friends after the next barbecue.

Ingredients:

6 cups chopped, seeded watermelon
 5 tbsps cornstarch
 ½ cup sugar
 1 tsp anise seeds
 2 tsps fresh lemon juice
 1/3 cup heavy whipping cream
 1 tsp sugar
 chopped pecans for garnish
 chocolate shavings for garnish

Method:

In a blender, purée watermelon until smooth. Pour through a sieve into a 2-quart saucepan. Discard any remaining solids. Take ¼ cup of puréed watermelon juice and place it in a mixing bowl to combine with cornstarch. Stir until smooth. Boil remaining watermelon purée, ½ cup sugar and anise until sugar dissolves. Whisk cornstarch mixture into boiling watermelon juice, reduce heat and simmer 3 minutes, whisking occasionally. Blend in lemon juice. Pour pudding mixture through a sieve into a bowl. Transfer mixture into a 1-quart serving dish. Chill uncovered for 30 minutes. Cover and chill 3 hours or until set. NOTE: If desired, pudding can be chilled for 1 day. Prior to serving, beat cream with 1 teaspoon sugar in an electric mixer until stiff peaks form. Top with whipped cream, and garnish with chopped pecans and chocolate shavings.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creole Cream Cheese Cannoli

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

YIELDS: 60 Servings

COMMENT:

Coming from bayou country, I was more a fan of pralines than I was cannoli...that is, until I ate cannoli made by Bert Cutino of Monterey, CA. The recipe came from his mother-in-law, and the filling is light and airy with just the right hint of sugar. We have taken this traditional recipe and given it a Creole twist by adding our own Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese. The shells are fried crisp and brown, yet flaky and tender.



INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

- 2 pounds Ricotta cheese
- 4 (11.5-ounce) containers Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese
- 2 tsp vanilla
- 1½ cups powdered sugar
- ½ tsp nutmeg
- ¼ cup milk
- 1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips
- ½ cup glazed fruit, optional

METHOD:

Place Ricotta and Creole cream cheese together in a strainer lined with cheesecloth. Allow to drain in the refrigerator overnight. The next day, divide the cheese mixture into three parts. Place one portion of the cheese into a mixer and blend in the vanilla, sugar and nutmeg. Add the two remaining portions, one at a time, with the mixer running. If the mixture gets too thick at any point, add a little milk. When adding the third portion, pour in any remaining milk and add the chocolate chips. Taste for sweetness and add more sugar if necessary. Blend gently so as not to break up the chocolate. If desired, add glazed fruit at this point. Cover and set aside for later use.

INGREDIENTS FOR SHELLS:

- 6 cups sifted flour
- ¼ pound softened butter
- 2 tbsps Crisco
- 2 tbsps sugar
- 3 whole eggs
- 1 cup Marsala wine

¼ cup red wine vinegar
30 maraschino cherries, halved

METHOD:

Have your local hardware store cut a 1-inch dowel pin into 6-inch links. Prior to using, place the dowel pins in your home-style fryer to heat thoroughly and coat with oil. Remove and drain. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, butter, Crisco and sugar. Blend eggs into mixture. Add wine and vinegar and continue to blend until dough ball is formed. Place dough on a floured surface and knead to a silky finish. Let rest a minimum of 2 hours. Cut the dough into manageable portions. Using a pasta machine, roll to a thickness of approximately 1/8-inch. Using a round pastry cutter, cut the dough into 4-inch circles. Wrap each circle around a dowel and seal the ends using water or egg wash. Fry at 350°F until browned and beginning to blister. Remove from oil and slide the shells off the dowel pins, allowing them to cool. Fill a pastry bag with the Ricotta filling. Fill each shell with the filling and place a cherry half on each end. Sprinkle with powdered sugar and serve.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Bavarian Apple Walnut Bread

PREP TIME: 1½ Hours

YIELDS: 2 (8" x 4" inch) loaves

COMMENT:

Apples are widely used in German cooking. You can find them in desserts, salads and even main dishes. In this recipe we have combined apples and walnuts to create a moist, sweet bread that can be served as a dessert or as a breakfast or brunch item.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups grated apples or applesauce
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts
- 2/3 cup shortening
- 2 2/3 cup sugar
- 4 eggs
- 2/3 cup water
- 3 1/3 cup flour
- 2 tsps baking soda
- 1 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp ground cloves
- 1 tsp salt



METHOD:

Preheat oven to 325°F. Spray 2 (8" x 4" inch) loaf pans with vegetable spray. In the bowl of your home-style mixer, cream shortening and sugar on medium-high speed. Beat in eggs, apples (or applesauce) and water. In a separate bowl, sift together flour, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves and salt and blend into the creamed shortening mixture. When well blended, add walnuts. Divide the batter evenly between the loaf pans. Bake on the middle rack of the oven for 1 hour or until a toothpick inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean. Remove from oven and allow to cool for 10 minutes before removing from the pans. Serve thick slices with a dollop of applesauce, sour cream or Creole cream cheese.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Raspberry Creole Cream Cheese Panna Cotta

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

These eggless custards are a great refreshing dessert for warm spring days. Garnish with a sprig of mint for a creamy dessert everyone is sure to love.

INGREDIENTS FOR PANNA COTTA:

- 5 tbsps fresh raspberries, puréed and strained
- 1 (11.5-ounce) package Chef John Folse's Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese [BUY NOW](#)
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- ½ vanilla bean, split lengthwise
- 3½ tps unflavored gelatin
- ½ cup sugar



INGREDIENTS FOR RASPBERRY SAUCE:

- 3 cups fresh raspberries
- ½ cup sugar

METHOD:

Lightly oil 6 (1-cup) ramekins or custard cups. Mix milk and cream in a small heavy-bottomed saucepan. Scrape in seeds from vanilla bean; add bean. Bring to simmer. Remove from heat, cover and let steep for 30 minutes. Remove vanilla bean. Stir sugar, gelatin and raspberry purée into milk mixture. Stir over low heat until sugar and gelatin dissolve, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat. Whisk in Creole cream cheese. Divide evenly among ramekins or custard cups. Cover and chill until set, at least 6 hours or overnight.

For sauce, combine ingredients and blend until smooth in a blender. Strain through a fine sieve. Add more sugar if necessary to bring to desired sweetness. To serve panna cotta, run a small knife around each ramekin. Place bottoms of ramekins, 1 at a time, in a small bowl of hot water for 45 seconds. Invert each panna cotta onto a plate or shallow bowl and surround with raspberry sauce. Garnish with whole berries and a sprig of mint.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Sufganyiot

PREP TIME: 3 Hours or Overnight

SERVES: 24

COMMENT:

These jelly doughnuts without the hole are dropped into hot oil without being shaped. This causes them to come out in odd, funny shapes to then be covered in powdered sugar and cinnamon. These Jewish doughnuts are popular in Israel, where they are sold on street corners during Hanukkah.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2½ tsps active dry yeast
- ¼ cup white sugar
- ¾ cup warm milk (110 degrees F/45 degrees C)
- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 2 egg yolks
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 tbsps butter, softened
- ½ cup drained cottage cheese
- 1 egg
- 2 tbsps white sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup shredded Pecorino Romano
- 2 cups vegetable oil
- ½ cup confectioners' sugar

METHOD:

Dissolve the yeast and 2 tablespoons white sugar in the warm milk. Sift flour into a large bowl, make a well in the center and add the yeast mixture, egg yolks, salt, nutmeg, butter and remaining sugar. Stir flour into center. Once combined turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface knead until dough is elastic. Cover and let dough rise overnight in the refrigerator. Remove dough from the refrigerator and roll on a lightly floured surface to 1/8 to 1/4 inch thick. Cut into 2 inch rounds. Cover and let rise for about 15 to 20 minutes. In a medium bowl combine the cottage cheese, egg, 3 tablespoons white sugar and vanilla. Beat until well combined. Form dough rounds into a ball and insert about 2 teaspoons of cheese filling into half of the rounds and 2 teaspoons of preserves into the other half. In a heavy pot, pour in oil to about the 2 1/2 inch mark. Heat to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Drop sufganyiot (doughnuts) into the oil, turning when browned. Drain on paper towels and roll in confectioners' sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creole Country Ambrosia with Twin Chocolate Shavings

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 10

Comment:

According to Greek mythology, ambrosia (meaning "immortality") was the food of the gods on Mt. Olympus. This ambrosia is definitely fit for the gods when we combine fruit with Creole cream cheese and shaved white and milk chocolate.



Ingredients:

- 2 (11.5-ounce) packages Chef John Folse's Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese [BUY NOW](#)
- 4 cups heavy whipping cream
- 1½ tsps ground nutmeg
- ½ tsps ground cinnamon
- 1½ cups sugar
- 2 (8-ounce) cans fruit cocktail, drained
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 2½ cups seedless green grapes
- 2 cups shredded coconut
- 2 (11-ounce) cans mandarin oranges, drained
- 2½ cups miniature marshmallows
- 1 (10-ounce) jar maraschino cherries, drained
- 2 (8-ounce) cans pineapple chunks, drained
- 1 cup Baker's® white chocolate, shaved
- 1 cup Baker's® milk chocolate, shaved

Method:

It is important to drain the fruit very well so that there will be no excess moisture in the finished dessert. In the bowl of a mixer, combine Creole cream cheese, whipping cream, nutmeg and cinnamon. Whip on medium-high speed. When mixture starts to thicken slightly, add sugar slowly and beat until stiff peaks form. Set aside. When layering the whipped cream between fruit, use a generous amount. In a glass trifle bowl, layer in order: fruit cocktail, whipped cream, pecans, whipped cream, grapes, coconut, mandarin oranges, marshmallows, cherries, whipped cream and pineapple chunks. Top with remaining whipped cream and sprinkle with white and milk chocolate. Garnish with mint and maraschino cherries. This recipe can be created in individual servings by layering the ingredients in the same manner in parfait or pilsner glasses.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Louisiana Fruit Trifle

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

Serves: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

Fruit trifle, the layered fruit and custard dessert, was brought to Louisiana by the English many years ago. The abundance of fresh berries and other seasonal fruit made the creation of this dish simple in bayou country. Try substituting a variety of mixed fruit.

INGREDIENTS FOR CUSTARD:

- 2 cups half and half cream
- 4 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- pinch of cinnamon
- pinch of nutmeg
- 3/4 tsp corn starch
- 1 tsp water

METHOD:

Place the cream in a sauce pan over medium-high heat and bring to a low boil. In a mixing bowl, whip eggs, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg. In a measuring cup, combine corn starch and water. Dissolve well and set aside. Once cream begins to boil, remove from heat and pour approximately one cup into the egg mixture. Using a wire whisk, whip constantly. Pour the egg and cream mixture back into the pot with the remaining one cup of milk and continue to stir. Return the sauce pan to heat, pour in corn starch and stir until custard begins to thicken. Remove from heat and continue to stir three to five minutes. Set aside.

INGREDIENTS FOR TRIFLE:

- 1 angel food cake
- 1/4 cup praline liqueur
- 1 cup sliced strawberries
- 1 cup sliced blueberries
- 1 cup sliced bananas
- 1 cup blackberries or raspberries
- 2 cups prepared custard sauce (see above)
- 1 cup sweetened cream, whipped

METHOD:

Cut angel food cake into one-inch squares. Place squares in large mixing bowl and sprinkle with brandy. In a large footed trifle dish, layer the cake, fruit and custard sauce until all is used. Top with the whipped cream and garnish with a sprig of fresh mint and a sprinkle of cinnamon.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Skillet Peach Cobbler with Blueberries

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This recipe comes from my good friend, Lolita DeFelice. She tells the story of growing up in a small town in Lafourche Parish during the 1920s and '30s and how her family of eleven brothers and sisters would enjoy their mother's baking. Use an 8- or 10-inch cast iron skillet to bake this wonderful dessert.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (29-ounce) can sliced peaches
- 1/2 cup fresh blueberries
- 1 tsp corn starch
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup self-rising flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Using a wire whisk, whip approximately 1/4 cup of the peach syrup with the corn starch until well-blended. Set aside. Place the butter in an 8- or 10-inch cast iron skillet to melt over medium heat. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour and sugar. Slowly pour in milk, whisking constantly. Add baking powder and continue to whip until well-blended. Batter will appear to be slightly lumpy. Once the butter is melted, remove from heat and allow to cool slightly. Pour the batter directly into the skillet over the melted butter. Blend the dissolved corn starch with the remaining syrup, peaches and nutmeg. Gently fold in blueberries. Pour fruit over the batter. Bake on the bottom shelf of the oven for 50-60 minutes or until cobbler is golden brown. Allow to cool slightly before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Praline Pecan Fudge

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 20 Pieces

COMMENT:

Chocolate, peanut butter and divinity are typical flavors of fudge created in any home in Bayou Country. The addition of roasted pecans and praline liqueur adds an interesting twist to this simple recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 ounce praline liqueur
- 1 cup pecans, chopped
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 5 ounces evaporated milk
- 1 (12-ounce) package Hershey's semi-sweet chocolate morsels
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1 (7-ounce) jar marshmallow creme

METHOD:

Line a 9-inch Pyrex dish in aluminum foil and set aside. In a two quart heavy bottom pot, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add sugar and evaporated milk and blend well into butter. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce heat to simmer and cook approximately five minutes stirring constantly. Be careful not to scorch butter as mixture will caramelize. Remove from heat and using a large cooking spoon, stir in morsels, vanilla, marshmallow creme, praline liqueur and pecans, whipping constantly. Stir until mixture becomes creamy and slightly thickened. Pour into the Pyrex pan and allow to cool. Cut fudge into 1-inch squares and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Praline au Bénê

PREP TIME:

MAKES:

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups sesame seed
 3/4 stick butter or margarine
 pinch of salt
 4 cups sugar
 1 cup milk
 1 tbs white syrup

METHOD:

Parch sesame seed in heavy dry skillet on medium-high heat, stirring constantly until brown. Set aside to cool. Combine butter, salt, sugar, milk and syrup in heavy saucepan and cook to the soft ball stage (test in cold water). Stir in parched seed and continue to stir until it holds shape. Pour into a well-oiled cake pan. When cold, break into pieces.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Pumpkin and Praline Cheesecake

PREP TIME: 1 ½ Hours

MAKES: 1 (10-inch) cake

COMMENT:

The flavors of pumpkin and pralines are as indigenous to Louisiana as gumbo is to Bayou Country. Adapting this wonderful pecan candy taste to a classical pumpkin cheesecake makes good sense to a Louisiana cook.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRUST:

- 1 ½ cups graham cracker crumbs
- ¼ cups sugar
- 4 tbsps melted butter

METHOD:

Combine cracker crumbs and sugar. Drizzle melted butter into the mixture to moisten. Using your fingertips, press the graham cracker mixture into the bottom of a 10-inch round spring form pan. Place the pan in the refrigerator for 15 minutes or until crust is firm to the touch.

INGREDIENTS FOR CHEESECAKE:

- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1 ½ pounds cream cheese
- ¼ cup heavy whipping cream
- 4 medium eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 ounce praline liqueur
- 1 tbsps vanilla
- ½ cup pecans, chopped

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, combine softened cream cheese and heavy whipping cream. Blend well to remove all lumps from the cream cheese. This can be done in a blender or with a hand-held mixer. Add one egg at a time, whipping completely before the next one is added. Continue until all are incorporated. Add sugar and pumpkin while continuing to whip. Add the praline liqueur and vanilla flavorings, blending well after each is added. Fold in chopped pecans. Remove crust from the refrigerator and fill with batter. Rotate pan until batter mixture flattens out. Place in oven and bake approximately 1 hour or until firm to the touch. The cake may be topped with a sour cream topping made by combining one pound of sour cream, 4 tbsps of sugar and ½ tsp vanilla. Blend all ingredients together until creamy. Add to the top of the slightly cooled cheesecake and place in a preheated, 400 degrees F oven for 5 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Pumpkin Flan

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This tasty dish is a gift of the Spanish, who gained control of Louisiana in 1762 when the French King, Louis XV, gave the "Island of New Orleans" and all of Louisiana west of the Mississippi to his cousin, Charles III. The addition of pumpkin makes this dessert the perfect addition to any fall menu.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 4 whole eggs
- 4 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1 tbsp praline liqueur

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. In the bowl of a food processor, combine pumpkin, milk, whipping cream, eggs and egg yolks. Blend until pumpkin is pureed and all ingredients are combined. Pour ingredients into a mixing bowl and add sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla and praline liqueur. Using a wire whisk, blend gently until sugar is dissolved and spices are incorporated. Pour the mixture into 8 custard ramekins or 1 large flan mold. Place about 1/2-inch of water into a baking pan to act as a water bath. Place ramekins or flan mold in baking pan and bake 45 minutes to 1 hour for the ramekins or 1 1/2 hours for the mold. Insert a tester into the custard to ensure that it has set properly prior to removing from the oven. The custard is best when chilled overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Sugared Bourbon Pecans

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 2 cups

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups pecans, halved
 1 cup white sugar
 1/4 tsp nutmeg
 1/4 tsp cinnamon
 1/4 tsp salt
 1/3 cup bourbon
 1/3 cup water

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients except pecans and bring to soft, ball stage (238-240 degrees F), stirring constantly. Stir in pecan halves and mix thoroughly. Spoon out on buttered wax paper, aluminum foil or parchment paper to cool. (When using wax paper, be sure to buffer with newspaper underneath as hot wax will transfer to whatever is beneath.)

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Cajun Pralines

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 50

COMMENT:

Desserts and candies tended to be a little understated in Louisiana, prior to the arrival of the Ursuline nuns in the 1700s. With them came the knowledge of great pastry making and other confectionery, but most important was their gift of praline candy to the city of New Orleans. Although this sugar candy was originally made with hazelnuts, Bayou Country recipes adapted the pecan because of its regional abundance.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups sugar
- 3/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 1/2 cup milk
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 3/4 stick butter
- 1 1/2 cups pecans, roasted (optional)

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients and bring to soft, ball stage(238-240 degrees F), stirring constantly. Remove from heat and stir until mixture thickens, becomes creamy and cloudy and pecans stay suspended in mixture. Spoon out on buttered wax paper, aluminum foil or parchment paper. (When using wax paper, be sure to buffer with newspaper underneath as hot wax will transfer to whatever is beneath.)

NOTE: To roast pecans, bake them on a sheet pan at 275 degrees for 20-25 minutes, until slightly browned and their smell permeates throughout the room.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Mother's Cream Puffs

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Although I was too young to remember the flavor and flakiness of Mother's homemade cream puffs, throughout the years I've been constantly reminded of their superior quality by older relatives. Because Mom died when I was seven, I never had an opportunity to create one of my great Mother's Day dishes for her. I hope this cream puff recipe from our family archives will do justice to what she would have served.

INGREDIENTS FOR PUFF PASTRY:

- 1/2 cup water
- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 2 eggs

METHOD:

Heat oven to 400 degrees F. Grease cookie sheet. In a medium saucepan, combine water and butter. Bring to a rolling boil over medium heat. Stir in flour and salt and cook, stirring vigorously, until mixture leaves sides of pan in a smooth ball. Remove from heat. Add eggs, one at a time, beating vigorously after each addition until mixture is smooth and glossy. Spoon 6 mounds of dough (about 1/4 cup each) 3 inches apart onto a greased cookie sheet. Place in oven and bake for 30 to 40 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and prick puffs with sharp knife to allow steam to escape. Remove from cookie sheet, split in half and extract any filaments of soft dough. Add vanilla pastry cream (see recipe below) and serve.

INGREDIENTS FOR VANILLA PASTRY CREAM:

- 2 whole eggs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1 tbsp plus 2 tsps cornstarch
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1 cup milk
- 1 tbsp pure vanilla extract
- 2 tbsps cold butter

METHOD:

In a stainless steel mixing bowl, whisk eggs and sugar. Add cornstarch and nutmeg, blending to mix thoroughly. In a heavy-bottomed saucepot, heat milk and vanilla over medium-high heat until steam rises, but milk is just short of boiling. Remove from heat, whisking constantly, and slowly pour into the egg mixture. Stir

constantly to keep eggs from scrambling. Return to medium heat, stirring until mixture becomes stiff. As it begins to thicken, you must whisk vigorously to keep the mixture from scorching and the eggs from scrambling. Once thickened to the consistency of custard, remove from heat and stir in butter. Place the hot custard in a ceramic bowl, cover with clear wrap and leave to cool. It is important to cover the custard so that it does not form a skin. Once cool, pipe into pastry puffs and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Honey Roasted Nuts

PREP TIME: 10 Minutes

MAKES: 3 cups

COMMENT:

This simple recipe makes a great "last minute" gift idea. Additionally, honey roasted nuts are a great addition to any holiday party menu.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 cups nuts
- 1/2 cup honey
- 2 tbsp butter or margarine
- 1/2 tsp grated orange peel
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and mix well until nuts are coated thoroughly. Place bowl in microwave on high for 4 to 7 minutes until nuts are toasted, stirring halfway through cooking time. Spread nuts on foil to cool and serve.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Caramel Custard

PREP TIME: 15-20 minutes

MAKES: 16 - 8oz. cups

COMMENT:

This recipe is from the library of Chef Warren LeRuth, the award-winning restaurateur and food scientist from New Orleans. In addition to his fabulous cuisine, Warren is known for his unique Vanilla Bean Marinade that sets so many of our desserts apart from the ordinary.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 gallon milk
- 1 3/4 lbs. granulated sugar
- 1 dozen extra large eggs
- 1 oz. LeRuth's Vanilla Bean Marinade (available on The Company Store, Internet)

METHOD:

Make caramel with ½ lb. of sugar. Cook until brown. Place spoonful of caramel in each custard cup. Place milk in double boiler and slowly cook to a boil. Mix eggs, sugar and vanilla bean marinade and slowly add milk, stirring all the time. Do not cook too long for the cream will curdle. Pour custard mix into cups. Bake at 325° in water until set.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Marbled Cheesecake Hearts

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 12 (3-inch) hearts

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies, finely crushed
- 3 tbsps butter or margarine, melted
- 3 (8 -oz) packages cream cheese, softened
- 1 (14-oz can) sweetened condensed milk
- 3 eggs
- 2 tsps vanilla extract
- 2 (1-oz) squared unsweetened chocolate, melted

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees. Line a 13 x 9-inch baking pan with heavy foil. Set aside. Combine crumbs and butter; press firmly on bottom of foil-lined pan. With mixer, beat cream cheese in large bowl until fluffy. Gradually beat in sweetened condensed milk until smooth. Add eggs and vanilla; mix well. Pour half the batter evenly over prepared crust. Stir melted chocolate into remaining batter; spoon over vanilla batter. With table knife or metal spatula, gently swirl chocolate batter through vanilla batter to marble. Bake 45 to 50 minutes or until set. Cool. Chill at least 1 hour. Use foil to lift out of pan. For hearts, cut with heart-shaped cookie cutter, or with knife, cut around waxed paper heart shape or cut into bars. Store covered in refrigerator.

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Floating Island

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

One of the original desserts of early Louisiana, the floating island, arrived with the French in the late 1600s. I remember thinking at one time in my life there was no better dessert on the face of the earth than "Isle Flotante."

INGREDIENTS:

6 cups heavy whipping cream
 8 eggs separated
 1 1/2 cups sugar
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg
 2 tbsps cornstarch
 3 tbsps vanilla
 1/2 cup sugar

METHOD:

In a 2-quart sauce pot, heat cream over medium-high heat. In a large mixing bowl, combine egg yolks, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, cornstarch and vanilla. When cream has come to a low boil, ladle one cup of the hot cream into the egg mixture, stirring constantly while pouring. Once the cream has been incorporated, pour the egg mixture slowly into the pot of hot cream. Remember, you must stir constantly, otherwise eggs will scramble. Reduce heat to simmer and, stirring constantly, cook until slightly thick custard is achieved. Pour into a serving bowl and allow to cool. In a large mixing bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Add sugar and continue beating for an additional 1-2 minutes. Poach spoonfuls of these floating isles in hot water over low heat, approximately 2 minutes on each side. When done, remove from hot water and place on top of the custard in the bowl. Serve two floating isles in a soup bowl of custard.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Creole Cream Cheese Tiramisu

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 10-12

COMMENT:

Tiramisu is a classic Italian dessert recreated in restaurants worldwide. Tiramisu translated means "pick me up" which refers to the little jolt one gets from the chocolate, coffee and Marsala wine.

1 (11.5-ounce) package Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese

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6 egg yolks

1½ cups sugar

¼ cup Marsala wine

2½ cups heavy whipping cream

¼ cup sugar

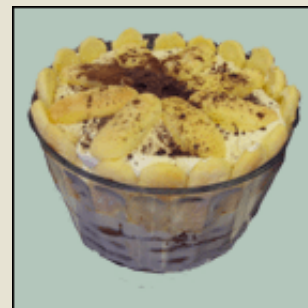
3 dozen lady fingers (see note)

1 cup instant espresso or dark roast coffee

1 ounce brandy

2 tbsps unsweetened cocoa powder

chocolate curls for garnish



METHOD:

Note: I recommend the soft, 3- inch lady fingers produced by Specialty Bakers Inc. at 1-800-755-9890 for this recipe. However, feel free to choose lady fingers that are available at your local grocer or Italian specialty food shop.

Combine egg yolks, sugar and Marsala wine in a mixing bowl and whip until thick and ribbony. Place bowl on top of a double boiler over 1 inch of boiling water. Reduce heat to low and cook egg mixture 8-10 minutes stirring constantly. Remove from heat and place in the refrigerator to cool 30 minutes. In a separate bowl combine heavy whipping cream and remaining ¼ cup sugar. Using an electric mixer, whip until cream holds stiff peaks. Remove 1½ cups of the whipped cream from the bowl and place it into the refrigerator for later use. Remove egg mixture from refrigerator and add Creole cream cheese, folding gently into the mixture. Add the remaining whipped cream from the bowl into the egg mixture and using a rubber spatula gently fold the whipped cream into the custard. Place the mixture in the refrigerator. Line the bottom and sides of a 3-quart crystal bowl with lady fingers. Combine the espresso and brandy in a small bowl and using a pastry brush coat the lady fingers well with the mixture. Cover the lady fingers with a generous portion of the egg/cream cheese custard. Sprinkle in a small amount of the cocoa powder and continue layering until all is used up. Remove the remaining whipped cream from the refrigerator and top the dessert. Garnish the cream with chocolate curls and a sprinkle or two of cocoa powder.

Refrigerate a minimum of 4 hours or preferably overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Tirami Su - ("Pick-Me-Up" Cake)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This recipe is from Chef Andrea Apuzzo's *Andrea's Light* cookbook. Tirami Su is a relatively new Italian dessert, but it's all the rage in Italy and New York. The original version was made with lady fingers, and was scooped out in the manner of an English trifle. In this recipe sponge cake is substituted for the lady fingers, and it's so light that you don't eat it - you inhale it.

FILLING INGREDIENTS:

- 2 egg yolks
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 cup mascarpone cheese
- 3/4 cup espresso or strong coffee
- 1 oz. Rum
- 2 tbsp cocoa powder
- 1 pint whipping cream, chilled
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 genoise (sponge) cake, sliced into three layers
- 1/4 cup sugar

METHOD:

Whisk egg yolks and 1/4 cup sugar together. Whisk in the mascarpone cheese. In a separate bowl, whip the cream, the rest of the sugar, and the vanilla until almost stiff - no peaks. Fold the mascarpone cheese mixture into the whipped cream and continue to whip, until stiff. Set aside. Make a fully-dissolved syrup with 1/4 cup sugar, 2 tbsp water, espresso and rum. Brush a layer of the sponge cake with espresso mixture. With a spatula, smooth about a half-inch-thick layer of the mascarpone cheese mixture on top. Brush the second cake layer with espresso, and place it espresso side down on the first layer. Brush the top with espresso. Spread on another half-inch of the mascarpone cheese mixture. Repeat the procedure with the third layer of cake. Cover the top and sides of the cake with a thin layer of the mascarpone filling. With a sieve and a spoon, sprinkle the top of the cake with cocoa powder. Cover the sides of the cake with chocolate shavings. Refrigerate at least three hours. This cake does not hold up well when exposed to any heat, so keep it cool.

Pan di Spagna - (Basic Genoise - Sponge Cake)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: Two Cakes

COMMENT:

At Andrea's Restaurant all the cakes are baked fresh. Pan di Spagna is the one probably baked most often. It's the basis for tirami su, strawberry cake and a few others.

INGREDIENTS:

5 eggs
2 egg yolks
6 1/2 oz. sugar
1 tsp vanilla
6 1/2 oz. cake flour
1/4 tsp cornstarch
Pinch salt

METHOD:

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Blend the eggs, egg yolks and sugar in a mixer bowl with a wire whip attachment until the mixture doubles in volume-about 15 minutes on high speed. Just before stopping the mixer, add the vanilla and mix in. Sift together the cake flour, cornstarch and salt. Fold dry mixture into egg mixture with a wooden spoon or rubber spatula, just until blended. Coat two 10-inch round cake pans with shortening. Pour the batter into the pans and put them immediately into a preheated 350 degree F oven. Bake until tops are springy to the touch - about 45-50 minutes. Remove the cakes from the pans and cool on a wire rack. When cool, use a long serrated knife to slice off the tops of the cakes. For tirami su or other layer cakes, divine each cake into three uniform layers with a serrated knife.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

The Perfect Lemon Bars

PREP TIME: 1 hour

MAKES: 2 dozen bars

COMMENT:

It is hard to find a really good lemon bar recipe. Some have too much crust and not enough filling while others are not lemony enough. Here is the recipe that I recommend. It is just right.

INGREDIENTS FOR THE CRUST:

- 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup powdered sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cornstarch
- $\frac{3}{4}$ tsps. Salt
- 12 tbsps. unsalted butter (1 $\frac{1}{2}$ sticks) at room temperature, cut into 1 inch pieces, plus extra for greasing pan

INGREDIENTS FOR THE FILLING:

- 4 large eggs, beaten lightly
- 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar
- 3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 tsps. finely grated lemon zest
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh squeezed lemon juice, strained
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole milk
- $\frac{1}{8}$ tsps. salt
- 1 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup sugar

METHOD FOR CRUST:

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly butter a 13 x 9 inch baking dish and line with parchment or wax paper allowing edges to come over the sides. Pulse flour, powdered sugar, cornstarch, and salt in food processor. Add butter and blend, 8 to 10 seconds, and then pulse until mixture resembles coarse meal. Sprinkle mixture into lined pan and press firmly into an even layer with slightly raised sides to hold in the filling. Refrigerate for about 30 minutes and then bake until golden brown, about 20 minutes. After crust is finished baking, reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees.

METHOD FOR FILLING:

While the crust is baking, whisk eggs, sugar and flour in medium bowl, then stir in lemon juice, zest, milk and salt, blending well. You may set aside until crust is finished baking. Re-blend filling mixture and pour into the warm crust. Bake until filling is firm when touched, about 20 minutes. Transfer pan to wire rack; cool to near room temperature, 1 hour. To cut, lift out of the pan using the sides of the parchment or wax paper. Fold the paper down off of the sides and cut using a sharp knife, wiping knife between each cut. Sprinkle bars with powdered sugar to garnish.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Bananas Foster

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

New Orleans, as a major port city, has always enjoyed fresh bananas shipped in from Latin America. Chef Paul Blange was asked by Owen Brennan of Brennan's Restaurant to create a recipe using this fruit. In 1951, Chef Paul created Bananas Foster naming it for Owen's good friend and fellow member of the New Orleans Crime Commission, Richard Foster. Today, almost 20 tons of bananas are flamed each year at Brennan's in the preparation of this now world-famous dessert.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 bananas
- 1/4 pound butter
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/4 cup banana liqueur
- 1/4 cup dark rum

METHOD:

Cut bananas in half lengthwise then dice into 1-inch cubes. In a heavy bottom sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add sugar and cinnamon and whisk until bubbly and sugar is melted. Stir in banana liqueur and diced bananas and sauté until softened. Remove the pan from the flame. Add rum then return pot to heat, taking care, as rum will ignite. Stir constantly and when flames subside, remove from heat and serve as a topping over vanilla ice cream or your favorite cheesecake.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

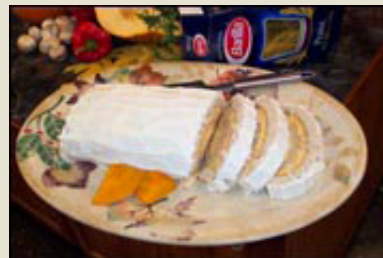
DESSERTS

Pumpkin Cheesecake Roll

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 8–10 Servings

Comment:

Everyone loves jellyrolls filled with their favorite preserves. We have taken the traditional jellyroll recipe and added spice to the cake and a pumpkin and cream cheese as the filling, creating a perfect fall treat.



Ingredients for filling:

1 (8-ounce) package of cream cheese
 1/3 cup pumpkin puree*
 1/2 cup sugar
 pinch of cinnamon

Method:

Allow cream cheese to soften to room temperature then combine with pumpkin, sugar and cinnamon. Blend with a hand mixer or stand mixer about 3 minutes or until fluffy.

Ingredients for cake:

3 eggs
 1 cup sugar
 1/4 cup cold water
 1 tbsp vanilla
 3/4 cup flour
 2 tsps baking powder
 pinch of salt
 1/4 tsp cinnamon
 1/8 tsp nutmeg
 1/4 cup powdered sugar

Method:

Preheat oven to 300°F. Line a 15x10? cookie sheet with lightly oiled parchment paper. Make sure to also oil the sides of the pan. In a mixing bowl, cream eggs and sugar with a wire whisk until smooth and fluffy. Add water and vanilla and continue to whip. Blend flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg into the egg mixture. When well blended, pour mixture onto cookie sheet and spread out evenly. Bake 10–15 minutes, but do not overcook. When done, remove and allow to cool slightly. Place a large dishtowel on the counter and cover with parchment paper. Sprinkle powdered sugar evenly over the paper. After cake has cooled 5–6 minutes, turn out onto the sugared paper. Beginning at the 10-inch end, roll the cake, jellyroll style using the towel and parchment. Allow to sit 10 minutes. Unroll and spread the filling evenly over the cake. Roll again, using the parchment paper as a lifter to ease the process. When set, ice

with your favorite cream cheese or vanilla icing and slice with a serrated knife.

***Pumpkin Purée**

You can purchase canned pumpkin or make your own fresh purée using. To make fresh pumpkin purée, cut a large pumpkin in half and remove the stem and seeds. Cut into 2-inch squares. In a large stockpot, place pumpkin squares and cover with water by 2 inches. Bring to a rolling boil and cook 20–30 minutes until pumpkin is completely tender. Drain and cool under cold running water. When completely cooled, scoop pumpkin off of the skin and discard skin. Place cooked pumpkin into a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Any remaining purée can be frozen for up to a year.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

Pumpkin Soufflé

Prep Time: 1 Hour 15 Minutes

Yields: 10–12 Servings

Comment: This delicious pumpkin recipe is a sweet dish that would be a great side at any meal. You can even enjoy this soufflé for a dessert by topping it with powdered sugar or ice cream!

Ingredients:

- 2 cups pumpkin purée*
- 1 cup half & half
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ cup flour
- ¾ tsp baking powder
- pinch salt
- 2 eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla
- ½ cup butter, melted
- cinnamon to taste



Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Combine all ingredients and blend well. Pour into a greased 2-quart casserole dish or 9x13 inch glass dish. Bake for 1 hour. Sprinkle with powdered sugar before serving. You may wish to top the soufflé with miniature marshmallows and bake for 10–15 more minutes until marshmallows are slightly browned.

*Pumpkin Purée

You can purchase canned pumpkin or make your own fresh purée using. To make fresh pumpkin purée, cut a large pumpkin in half and remove the stem and seeds. Cut into 2-inch squares. In a large stockpot, place pumpkin squares and cover with water by 2 inches. Bring to a rolling boil and cook 20–30 minutes until pumpkin is completely tender. Drain and cool under cold running water. When completely cooled, scoop pumpkin off of the skin and discard skin. Place cooked pumpkin into a food processor or blender and process until smooth. Any remaining purée can be frozen for up to a year.

DESSERTS

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

Sooo Good Sweet Potato Casserole

Prep Time: 1½ Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Recipe Courtesy of Toni Higgins

Ingredients for Casserole:

6 sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
 3 cups water
 2 cups orange juice
 1½ cups sugar
 1 stick butter, melted
 1 cup milk
 OR 1 (5-ounce) can evaporated milk
 1 cup shredded coconut
 2 eggs, beaten
 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
 1 tsp cinnamon
 1/8 tsp salt

Method:

In a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat, combine potatoes, water and orange juice. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook until tender. Drain. Preheat oven to 300°F. In a large bowl, mash cooked potatoes. Stir in sugar, butter, milk, coconut, eggs, vanilla, cinnamon, salt. Mix well. Spread into a greased 10" x 12" ovenproof casserole dish. Set aside.

Ingredients for Topping:

1 cup brown sugar
 1 cup chopped pecans
 ¾ stick butter
 ½ cup flour
 powdered sugar (optional)

Method:

In a large bowl, combine all ingredients except powdered sugar. Using a fork, stir until crumbly. Spoon crumb mixture evenly over potatoes and bake 45 minutes. Cool and dust with powdered sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

DESSERTS

CINCO DE MAYO ORANGE FLAN

Prep Time: 1 Hour
Yields: 1 (9-inch) Flan

Comment:

Although it is Spain's national dessert, flan is most welcome in Mexico. Cinco de Mayo celebrations are often larger and more elaborate in the United States than in Mexico where they simply eat lavish meals to celebrate the Mexicans' victory over the French in 1862. Whether having a fiesta or a nice dinner, this flan is the perfect finishing touch.

Ingredients:

3 cups whole milk
 1 cup half-and-half
 1 tbsp grated orange zest
 2¼ cups sugar
 ¼ cup water
 6 eggs
 2 egg yolks
 2 tbsps pure vanilla extract
 pinch of salt
 pinch of cinnamon
 pinch of nutmeg

Method:

In a small saucepan, boil 1¼ cup sugar and water, washing down sides until sugar melts and turns golden brown or a dark honey color. Remove from heat and pour into a 9-inch flan mold, tilting to cover bottom with caramelized sugar. Preheat oven to 300°F. In a stainless steel bowl, beat eggs, yolks, remaining sugar, vanilla extract, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg. In a saucepan over medium heat, heat milk, half-and-half and orange zest until steaming. Add to egg mixture, stirring constantly. Strain through a sieve into flan mold. Place flan mold in a baking pan. Pour warm water about halfway up side of mold. Bake 40–45 minutes or until cooked, but still wobbly. Allow to cool. NOTE: To unmold flan, run a paring knife around edge of flan to loosen it. Place a platter on top and flip mold over onto platter. This recipe will also fill 12–14 (4-ounce) ramekins. Pour a small amount of caramelized sugar to coat each ramekin.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Blackberry Beverages

COMMENT:

Blackberries were found growing wild through out the South during the Civil War, and many families made these two beverages for enjoyment and medicinal uses.

Blackberry Tea

METHOD:

Pick blackberry leaves and dry them.

When you want to make tea, just crumble 2 teaspoons of leaves in one cup of boiling water. Steep for 5-10 minutes, and you have blackberry tea.

Blackberry Cordial

METHOD:

Mash and strain blackberries. Put the juice on to boil in a glass or enameled pot. Skim it well, and to each gallon of juice, put three pounds of sugar and a quart of brandy. Press cloves in mortar and pestle or with the bottom of a frying pan to release essential oils and add to taste along with 1 cinnamon stick. *Note: This was valuable as a medicine for children in summer and was often used because of its binding qualities.*

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Warm Christmas Cider

PREP TIME: 40 Minutes

SERVES: 15-20

Comment:

The weather in the winter months in South Louisiana can be hard to predict; however, it seems that the two or three weeks of Christmas party season are almost always very cold. Here is an elegant and warming cider to serve on those chilly nights. This red punch with fresh, green rosemary sprigs is the perfect color for your next big holiday celebration.

Ingredients:

- 4 ½ cups cranberry juice
- 1 ½ cups orange juice
- 3 cups apple cider
- 2 tbsps packed dark brown sugar
- 1 tsp fresh rosemary, finely chopped
- 3 tbsps grenadine
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- ¾ tsp whole cloves
- 1 orange thinly sliced
- ½ cup fresh cranberries
- 3 sprigs fresh rosemary, rinsed

Method:

In a large pot, combine cranberry juice, orange juice, apple cider, brown sugar, rosemary, grenadine, cinnamon sticks, cloves and orange slices. Bring to a boil, reduce heat, and simmer for 15-20 minutes. Remove from heat and add fresh cranberries and rosemary sprigs. Serve in a decorative punch bowl immediately or keep heated by serving in a crock pot set on low.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Blood Orange and Rosemary Daiquiri

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 10 Cups

COMMENT:

Blood oranges may be found in most upscale grocery stores during the late fall to early spring. The blood-red juice from these oranges is perfect as a base for holiday punch. When garnished with a bright green herb, it shouts Christmas!

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 cups blood orange juice, freshly squeezed (15 large blood oranges)
- 3 cups water
- 1 1/4 cups sugar
- 2 large sprigs fresh rosemary
- 2 tsps fresh rosemary, finely chopped
- 1/2 cup sparkling white sugar
- 10 small sprigs fresh rosemary for garnish

METHOD:

In 2 ice cube trays, pour 2 1/2 cups of blood orange juice and freeze until firm. Cover and chill remaining juice. In a saucepan, combine water, sugar and rosemary sprigs. Whisking constantly, bring to a rolling boil. Reduce heat, simmer and cook 10 minutes to form a rosemary simple syrup. Remove from heat and discard rosemary. Pour into a storage container and chill. When ready to serve, process frozen juice cubes with remaining orange juice, simple syrup and rosemary in a homestyle blender or food processor (2 batches may be necessary). Chop for 10 to 15 seconds or until slushy. Press the rim of 10 Champagne glasses in sparkling sugar as you would a daiquiri. Fill with punch mix and garnish with fresh rosemary sprigs.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Mulled Cider with Aromatic Spices

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 20 (6-ounce) Servings

COMMENT:

Well, there's no doubt that apple cider was one of the warm drinks cherished by the Michigan lumber men after leaving their homes in the North for a new life in Bayou Country. However, it didn't take long for apple cider to make its way across the Mason Dixon line and for interesting variations to appear in the Lake Charles area. This was a Ramsay House favorite during the holiday season.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 quarts apple cider
- 1 cup orange juice
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 tsp allspice
- 1/2 tsp mace
- 1 tsp coriander seed
- 2 tbsps whole cloves
- 4 cinnamon sticks
- 2 tbsps orange zest
- 1/4 tsp salt

METHOD:

In a large ceramic sauce pan, combine apple cider and orange juice over medium-high heat. Blend well then add sugar and stir until dissolved. Add allspice, mace, coriander seed, cloves, cinnamon, orange zest and salt. Using a wire whisk, blend spices well into the juices. Bring mixture to a rolling boil and reduce to simmer. Cover and cook 30 minutes. Strain cider and serve hot. For an interesting option, chill cider and serve as a festive cold punch.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Uncle Herman's Blackberry Bounce

PREP TIME: 6 months

MAKES: 4 gallons

COMMENT:

Herman Ledet is married to Anna Mae Zeringue-Ledet, my mother's sister and my God-mother. I've been told his blackberry wine is some of the best in St. James Parish and I'm happy he shared his recipe with me.

INGREDIENTS:

- 15 pounds blackberries
- 12 ½ pounds sugar
- 3 lemons
- 1 package yeast

METHOD:

In a large stockpot, place blackberries with 3 gallons of water. Bring to a rolling boil, remove from heat and allow to cool. Drain the fruit from the water and return water to the stockpot. Squeeze the blackberry juice through a cheesecloth and into the 3 gallons of water. Bring the stockpot to a low simmer and dissolve the sugar into the hot liquid, stirring constantly. Do not boil. Using a wire whisk, stir constantly to ensure that sugar is totally dissolved. Squeeze the juice from 3 lemons and strain into the sugar/juice mixture. Remove from heat and allow to cool to 90 degrees F. Add 1 package of yeast. (NOTE: The yeast will be killed if water temperature is over 90.) In a 5-gallon water bottle place one gallon of cold tap water. Add the 3-gallon juice mixture to the bottle. Shake vigorously to blend well. Place a rubber or cork stopper with manometer attached in the neck of the bottle. Fill manometer with water according to package directions. A manometer is available at your local wine or beer enthusiast store. Let stand in a cool, dark place for 6 weeks. Siphon the contents into approximately 17 fifth-sized bottles, cap and store in a cool place for approximately 6 months. If bounce is desired in place of wine, add ½ cup brandy into each fifth-sized bottle prior to filling with the wine.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Muscadine or Other Wild Berry Wine

PREP TIME: 6 months

MAKES: 4 gallons

COMMENT:

Although most often this recipe is made using the wild fruits of the bayous such as blackberries, cherries, persimmons, loquats or muscadines, you may wish to try it using any fresh fruit in season. I most often place the contents in a ceramic crock topped with a double layer of cheesecloth for the six weeks of fermentation. However, feel free to use a 5-gallon glass or plastic water bottle.

INGREDIENTS:

1 ½ gallons muscadines or other fruit
10 pounds of sugar

METHOD:

In a 2-gallon stockpot, mix sugar with 2 gallons of hot tap water. Over medium heat bring to a low simmer, stirring constantly with a wire whisk to dissolve sugar completely. Remove and set aside to cool. This may be done 1 day in advance. In a crock or 5-gallon water bottle, place fruit that has been mashed slightly to break the skin from the juice. This should be done over a large container to ensure capturing all of the juice and pulp. It is not necessary to crush the fruit totally. Once the fruit has been placed in the bottle, cover with the diluted sugar water and 2 additional gallons of cold tap water. Shake or stir the contents well to incorporate fruit and sugar water. If using a water bottle, purchase a rubber or cork stopper with a small hole drilled in the center. Insert a manometer into the stopper. A manometer may be purchased from any wine or beer hobbyist store. Place 1 inch of water into the manometer to keep air from reaching the contents. Set aside in a cool, dark place for 6 weeks. The contents should be vigorously shaken or stirred once a week. At the end of the six-week period, remove the stopper and siphon the liquid into a second 5-gallon bottle through a cheesecloth-lined funnel. Allow the wine to sit undisturbed for 2-3 hours and siphon from the 5-gallon container into approximately 17 fifth-sized bottles. During this filling process, one should be careful to keep the siphon tube approximately 1 inch off of the bottom to keep the resting sediment from entering the bottles. Place a screw cap or cork on the bottles and store in the refrigerator or cool, dark place six months prior to serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Breakfast Cheer

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

In the South, it's considered good manners to serve a breakfast cocktail prior to the first meal of the day. This custom originated back in the Plantation Days when a mimosa or mint julep was part of a visitor's wake up call. I've often enjoyed reading about a gathering of gentlemen on the veranda of a beautiful antebellum home at 7 o'clock in the morning, each holding a frosty libation. This combination of fruit and champagne will definitely give you a "kick-start" for the day.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (15-15 1/4-ounce) can Bartlett pears
- 1 quart fresh squeezed orange juice
- 1/2 bottle champagne

METHOD:

This delicious breakfast drink should be served in frozen Pilsner glasses. Place glasses in the freezer the day prior to serving this recipe. In the bowl of a blender or food processor, puree pears. Pour pureed mixture into a small pitcher and add orange juice, blending well. Place pitcher in refrigerator until ready to serve. Prior to breakfast, fill the Pilsner glasses 3/4 full of orange juice mixture then top with champagne. (Consider drinking the remaining champagne while preparing breakfast!) Garnish each glass with finely chopped Bartlett pears.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Spiked Eggnog Cabonocey

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 12 - 15

COMMENT:

Although there are many stories of origin for this traditional holiday beverage one thing remains constant, eggnog is found on every table in Cajun Country during the Christmas Season. Many believe that the 'nog' in eggnog comes from the word 'noggin,' a small wooden, carved mug in which the drink was served.

INGREDIENTS:

12 eggs, separated
 1 pound confectioner's sugar
 2 tbsp pure vanilla
 1 cup dark rum
 1 cup bourbon
 2 quarts heavy whipping cream
 1/4 tsp allspice
 Pinch of clove
 Freshly grated nutmeg

METHOD:

Place heavy whipping cream in a heavy bottom sauce pot and heat to 190 degrees. Do not boil or allow the cream to form a skin on top. Take care that cream does not boil over. Place egg yolks in the bowl of an electric mixer and save egg whites for later use. Beat egg yolks until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Slowly add confectioner's sugar, beating constantly until egg yolks take on a ribbony texture. Add vanilla, dark rum and bourbon, blending thoroughly into the egg mixture. Pour in approximately 1 quart of the hot whipping cream into mixing bowl while blending slowly to temper the egg yolks. Remove the tempered eggs from the mixer and slowly pour into pot of remaining cream whisking constantly. Allow to stand covered for approximately one hour to blend the flavors. Add allspice and cloves. Refrigerate the mixture for a minimum of 3 hours. When ready to serve whip egg whites until stiff but not dry. Using a rubber spatula fold whites into the eggnog mixture. Pour into a serving bowl and sprinkle with freshly grated nutmeg.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Mulled Wine

PREP TIME:

SERVES:

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 1/2 pounds Macintosh Apples
- 3 1/3 gallons apple cider
- 20 whole cloves
- 1 1/8 tbsps whole allspice
- 2 1/4 tbsps ground nutmeg
- 1 2/3 pints Country Time Lemonade
- 1 1/4 pints frozen orange juice
- 1 2/3 pints light brown sugar
- 1.67 ounces cinnamon sticks

METHOD:

Cut apples in half crosswise and place cut side down in a baking pan and bake for 25 minutes at 350 degrees. Simmer 2 cups of cider, cloves, allspice and nutmeg for 10 minutes. Add remaining apple cider, lemonade concentrate, orange juice concentrate and brown sugar and heat until hot, but not boiling. Strain cider into punch bowl while hot. Float apple skins side up and cinnamon sticks on top. Sprinkle with sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Wild Dove in Madeira Wine

PREP TIME: 1 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Though Louisiana is the dove capital of the South, many Louisiana hunters today are traveling south of the border to Mexico for their annual hunts. I get many requests for a dove recipe, so here is my favorite.

INGREDIENTS:

18 doves, cleaned
 1 cup butter
 2 cups flour
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 1 cup diced bell pepper
 2 tbsps diced garlic
 2 cups sliced mushrooms
 2 tbsps flour
 6 purple plums, quartered
 3 cups Madeira wine
 1 quart chicken stock
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Wash birds well inside and out and remove any visible shot. In a large dutch oven, melt butter over medium high heat. Dust doves in flour and brown well on all sides in butter. Remove and set aside. Add onions, celery, bell pepper, garlic and mushrooms. Sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately three to five minutes. Sprinkle in two tablespoons of flour and blend well into vegetable mixture. Add purple plums, Madeira wine and chicken stock and blend well until all are incorporated. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and return birds to the hot sauce. Season lightly using salt and pepper. Cover and continue to cook one to one and a half hours. Add a small amount of chicken stock when necessary should mixture become too thick. When cooked, serve three doves per person with a generous amount of sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Cafe Brulot

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

In New Orleans, Cafe Brulot is often served. Brulot in French means spicy or burned with sugar. The recipe for this famous blending of dark roasted Creole coffee with cognac or brandy and vermouth, spiced with cinnamon and orange peel is attributed to Dominique Youx, top lieutenant to the pirate, Jean Lafitte.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lemon
- 1 orange
- 6 whole cloves
- 2 small cinnamon sticks
- 1 1/2 ounces triple sec
- 1 ounce brandy
- 1 1/2 cups cafe noir

METHOD:

Every household in early New Orleans had its brulot bowl on the buffet. A brulot bowl is any silver or copper bowl that can be heated with sterno or candle flames from the bottom. Over your brulot bowl, peel lemon in one continuous motion so that the peel is a long spiral. Any juice from the lemon should fall directly into the bowl. Peel orange in the same fashion. Once peeled, insert cloves into the orange and lemon peels at one inch intervals. Into the brulot bowl, place cinnamon stick, triple sec and brandy. Place a sterno or candle under the bowl and bring the liquid to a slight simmer, stirring constantly. Once the liquor is simmering, carefully ignite using a kitchen match. A ribbon of golden blue flame may be achieved by ladling the liquors into the air above the bowl. While the liquor is flaming, hold the lemon and orange peels in the heat to "cook out" the flavor. Slowly add hot coffee, pouring around the edges of the bowl so that the sizzling sound may be heard. Continue stirring until flame dies out. Squeeze a small amount of orange and lemon juice into the bowl to naturally sweeten the coffee. Ladle hot brulot into hot demi-tasse cups.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Creole Cafe Noir

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

SERVES: 6 - 8

COMMENT:

No coffee compares to the coffee of South Louisiana. No sumptuous Creole feast would be complete without a traditional Cafe Noir, that swarthy blend of dark roasted coffee and chicory, still recognized for its therapeutic values. Many old Cajuns and Creoles have testified to its worth in reaching that ripe old age, as well as adding a lot of pleasure to those years.

INGREDIENTS:

5 level tbsps dark roast coffee and chicory 5 cups cold water

METHOD:

In the top of a French drip coffee pot, place ground coffee and chicory. In a one quart sauce pot, bring water to a rolling boil. Drip the hot water, a few tablespoons at a time, through the coffee until all is used. Once dripped, the coffee pot may be placed in a small frying pan filled with water on low heat to keep warm. However, the coffee may be placed in a glass jar in the refrigerator and heated whenever needed. This coffee is normally served black and only in demitasse cups.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Homemade Blackberry Wine

PREP TIME: 6 weeks

MAKES: 4 1/2 gallons

Comment:

Due to the natural yeast clinging to the outer skin of wild fruit, such as blackberries, mayhaws, muskadines, etc., sweet wine may be made simply by adding sugar and water to the fruit. The sugar not only sweetens the wine, but allows the yeast to grow and fermentation to develop.

Ingredients:

2 gallons fresh fruit (blackberry, muskadine)
 10 pounds sugar
 4 1/2 gallons luke warm water

Method:

Rinse a 10 gallon crock jar or plastic bottled water jar and turn upside down to drain. Thoroughly dissolve 10 pounds of sugar into 4 1/2 gallons of luke warm water, 100 degrees F. Measure out 2 gallons of fresh fruit and pour into the sweetened water. Cover the crock with a cheesecloth and secure tightly with butcher's twine or place an air-lock device, such as in wine making, in the mouth of a water jar. Place in a cool, shady room and allow to ferment for 6 weeks. At the same time each week stir the crock or shake the bottle vigorously to blend the ingredients and agitate the fermentation. When done strain the wine through a cheesecloth 2 to 3 times, then bottle and store.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Mint Lemonade

PREP TIME: 12 Hours

YIELDS: 1 Gallon

COMMENT:

This wonderful, intense beverage comes to us from Robert Whitehurst. His method of extracting the essential oils from the mint is unique.

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup fresh peppermint
 juice of 4 lemons
 peel of 1 lemon, thinly sliced
 2 cups sugar
 2 cups water
 1 gallon water

METHOD:

NOTE: This recipe requires a gallon jar with a tight-fitting lid. In a saucepan, combine sugar with 2 cups water. Heat to boiling, stirring constantly until sugar is completely dissolved, creating a simple syrup. Allow syrup to cool to room temperature. Fill gallon jar with hot tap water. Allow jar to become very hot to touch, then discard water. Immediately put mint into jar and screw lid on tightly. Place jar into refrigerator. Allow jar to cool completely to temperature inside refrigerator. Take jar from refrigerator and remove lid. There will be a hiss as you remove the lid, due to partial vacuum created when the jar cooled, extracting all flavorful oils from mint. Pour lemon juice and simple syrup into jar. Add lemon peel. Shake jar vigorously, then fill to top with water. Replace lid and allow to mature overnight.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BEVERAGES

Pim Pom Punch

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 10 Servings

COMMENT:

This recipe comes from E.J. Ourso, a business mogul born and raised in Donaldsonville, La. Growing up in a country home in Donaldsonville, E.J.'s family had to improvise to enjoy some of the simple pleasures in life.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 (2-liter) bottles root beer
- 4 multi-colored pansies
- 1 cup fresh blackberries (optional)
- 4 large strawberries, diced (optional)

METHOD:

Place an equal amount of blackberries and strawberries in bottom of 4 coffee cups. Fill each coffee cup with root beer, 1 inch from top. Place 1 pansy in each cup. Place in freezer overnight or until soda is solid. NOTE: This berry mixture may also be frozen in ice cube trays. Chill remaining root beer in refrigerator. When ready to serve, pour chilled root beer into a punch bowl. Remove frozen coffee cups from freezer and unmold. A little tap water may be needed to loosen molds. Add to punch bowl. Serve in punch cups

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Chef John Folse's Persimmon Jam

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

YIELDS: 12 (8-ounce) Jars

COMMENT:

Persimmons ripen very quickly and become extremely soft and delicate. This is the perfect time to make jam. This recipe is perfect for toast, English muffins or hot homemade biscuits.

INGREDIENTS:

- 9 cups Persimmon pulp, seeded and puréed
- 4½ cups sugar
- 5 (3-ounce) packages peach or apricot Jell-O
- 2 drops orange food coloring

METHOD:

In a large pot, mix fruit and sugar together. Bring to a rolling boil and hold for 5 minutes. Do not scorch. Add Jell-O and food coloring and stir well. Bring back to a boil. Remove from heat and put in sterilized jars. Place lidded jars in a boiling water bath and allow to boil for 20 minutes. Remove jars from water bath being extremely careful as jars will be hot. Store upside down until jars come to room temperature and create a vacuum seal.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Sausage and Bacon Breakfast Omelette

PREP TIME: 8½ Hours

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This dish is a cross between an omelette and a casserole. It is filled to the rim with seasoned breakfast sausage, smoky bacon and melted cheese. Make it after dinner, put it in the refrigerator overnight and pop it in the oven in the morning for a complete and warming breakfast dish that the kids will love.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound pork breakfast sausage
- ½ cup cooked and crumbled bacon
- 10 slices white sandwich bread, cubed
- ¼ cup sliced green onions
- 2 cups shredded Cheddar cheese
- 9 eggs
- 3 cups milk
- 1½ tsps salt
- 1½ tsps dry mustard
- ½ tsp Worcestershire sauce



METHOD:

Brown sausage in a skillet over medium heat, stirring until it crumbles and is no longer pink. Drain well. Place bread cubes in a lightly greased 13" x 9" baking dish. Sprinkle sausage, bacon, green onions and cheese evenly over bread cubes. In a large mixing bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, salt, dry mustard and Worcestershire sauce. Pour evenly into the baking dish. Cover and chill for 8 hours. Let casserole sit at room temperature for 30 minutes. Preheat oven to 350°F. Bake the casserole for 45 minutes or until set. Cool for 5 minutes before serving.

Note: Leftover casserole can be frozen for later use. Cut the casserole into squares and wrap in plastic before freezing. When ready to use, thaw squares and reheat in the microwave for 2-3 minutes or until heated thoroughly.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

The Best Blueberry Pancakes

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4-6

COMMENT: Blueberries are coming into season now in Louisiana, and these blueberry pancakes are a perfect way to start your day. These pancakes can also be made year-round with rinsed and dried frozen blueberries

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups buttermilk
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsps sugar
- 2 tsps baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 large egg
- 3 tbsps butter, melted
- ½ tsp vegetable oil
- 1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries



METHOD:

Place buttermilk in a medium mixing bowl. In a separate large mixing bowl, whisk flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and salt until combined. Whisk egg and melted butter into milk until combined. Make a well in the center of dry ingredients in bowl. Pour in milk mixture and whisk very gently until just combined. Do not overmix. Heat a 12-inch nonstick skillet over medium heat for 3-5 minutes. Add 1 tsp oil and turn to coat skillet evenly, using a pastry brush if necessary. Pour ¼ cup batter onto skillet and sprinkle 1 tbsp blueberries over each pancake. Cook pancakes until large bubbles begin to appear, 1½ to 2 minutes. Using thin, wide spatula, flip pancakes and cook until golden brown on second side, 1 to 1½ minutes longer. Serve immediately. Repeat with remaining batter, using remaining vegetable oil only if necessary.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Berries and Creole Cream Cheese Crêpes

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT: Start your day off with a great mix of berries and Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole cream cheese. We have wrapped fresh mixed berries and cool Creole cream cheese in warm, delicate crêpes for a breakfast beyond comparison.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRÊPES:

- 2 eggs
- ½ cup flour
- 1½ tsp sugar
- ½ tsps vanilla
- 1 tbsp triple sec
- 1 tbsp melted butter
- ¾ cup milk
- salt to taste
- ¼ cup vegetable oil

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, place eggs, flour, sugar, vanilla and triple sec. Using a wire whisk, whip until ingredients are silky smooth. Add butter and milk and continue to blend until batter reaches the consistency of heavy whipping cream. Make sure that all lumps are removed. Season to taste using salt. It is best to make crêpe batter a minimum of 6 hours prior to use and refrigerate. I recommend refrigerating the batter overnight. Place two 6-inch crêpe pans over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil into one pan and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Once hot, pour excess oil into the second crêpe pan. Place approximately 2 ounces of the crêpe batter into the first pan, tilting in a circular motion, until the batter spreads evenly. Cook crêpe until outer edge browns and loosens from the pan. Flip crêpe and cook 1 additional minute. Using a thin spatula, remove crêpe from the pan and sprinkle with sugar. Continue process until all crêpes are done. If you wish to store crêpes overnight or freeze, place plastic wrap between each crêpe to prevent sticking and place in a large Ziploc bag prior to refrigerating or freezing.

INGREDIENTS FOR FILLING:

- 2 cups fresh mixed berries such as strawberries, blackberries, blueberries and raspberries
- 2 tsps sugar
- ½ lemon
- ½ cup Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole cream cheese

METHOD:

In a bowl, combine berries, sugar and a squirt of lemon. Toss to

combine. Spread 2 tbsps of Creole cream cheese over crêpe. Top with ¼ of the berry mixture. Fold into quarters and serve with syrup or puréed mixed berries and sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Brunch or Afternoon Tea Cream Biscuits

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 10 Biscuits

COMMENT:

These sweet, golden brown biscuits are perfect to go with your brunch buffet or afternoon tea. Serve them with fresh fruit, lemon curd or your favorite homemade preserves.



INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tbsp double acting baking powder
- 3-4 tbsps sugar, depending on desired sweetness
- ½ tsp salt
- 1¼ cups heavy cream
- whole milk, for brushing tops of biscuits

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. In a large mixing bowl, sift together the flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Slowly add the cream and stir the mixture until it just forms a dough. Gather the dough into a ball and turn onto a lightly floured surface. Roll or pat out the dough into a ½ inch thickness. Cut out as many rounds as possible with a 2½-inch cutter and transfer them to an ungreased baking sheet. Gather the scraps, re-roll the dough and cut out more rounds until you have used up all of the dough. Brush the tops of the biscuits lightly with the milk and bake the biscuits for 15 minutes or until they are golden brown. Transfer the biscuits to a rack and let them cool for 5 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Waffles Papa Noel

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Christmas morning is a time for family togetherness. What better to gather around than crispy waffles dotted with dried cranberries and warm cranberry kumquat syrup.

INGREDIENTS FOR WAFFLES:

- 1 ½ cups yellow cornmeal
- 2 ¼ cups flour
- ½ cup sugar
- 3 tbsps baking powder
- 2 ½ tsps salt
- ½ cup pecans, chopped
- ½ cup dried cranberries
- ¼ pound melted butter
- 6 large eggs, beaten
- 3 cups milk
- 2 tbsps vegetable spray

INGREDIENTS FOR CRANBERRY KUMQUAT SYRUP:

- 2 cups fresh cranberries
- 1 cup kumquats, sliced and deseeded
- ½ cup orange juice
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup maple syrup

METHOD:

Preheat waffle iron according to manufacturer's directions. In a large mixing bowl, combine cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Using a wooden spoon, blend well until all ingredients are incorporated. Fold in pecans and dried cranberries and coat thoroughly with the waffle mixture. In a separate bowl, combine butter, eggs and milk. Using a wire whisk, whip until well incorporated. Add liquid ingredients stirring with a wooden spoon. Continue to stir until all of the lumps have been removed. Place a small amount of vegetable oil or spray on the preheated waffle iron. Ladle ¾ cup of batter onto the hot waffle iron and cook approximately 3-3 ½ minutes. Once cooked, keep waffles warm until all are done. In a small saucepan combine cranberries, kumquats, orange juice and sugar, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 5-10 minutes or until cranberries have all popped and are no longer floating. Add maple syrup and warm thoroughly. Serve warm over the waffles topped with whipped cream and powdered sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Creole Homefries

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

These homefries are simple to make and are guaranteed to be tender because of the poaching process. The creole seasoning gives it that magic taste of New Orleans.

INGREDIENTS:

4 Russet potatoes, peeled and diced 1/2-inch
 3 tbsps vegetable oil
 1/2 cup yellow onion, minced
 1 tbsp garlic
 1/4 cup green onions, sliced
 salt and ground black pepper to taste
 Creole seasoning to taste
 cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 375 degrees F. Place potatoes in a medium-sized sauce pan and cover with cold water by about 2 inches. Season water lightly with salt. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce heat and simmer until tender, approximately 6 minutes. Drain, cool and set aside. In a large cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted, approximately 3-5 minutes. Add poached potatoes and season to taste using salt, black pepper, Creole seasoning and cayenne pepper. Add green onions and fold gently until all ingredients are thoroughly incorporated. Do not mash potatoes. Place skillet in oven and bake until tips of potatoes turn golden brown, approximately 15-20 minutes. Remove and serve warm.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Baked Eggs with Crawfish and Mushrooms in Ham Baskets

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

It isn't often that you find a recipe that includes all ingredients necessary to create a complete meal. This is one such dish. It is unbelievably simple to create and one of the most perfect "breakfast-in-bed" dishes imaginable. If you wish to add a creative side dish to this breakfast item, I would recommend my Creole Homefries.

INGREDIENTS:

12 large eggs
 1/2 pound crawfish tails
 3/4 pound mushrooms, finely chopped
 12 slices sugar-cured Virginia ham
 2 tbsps unsalted butter
 1/4 cup shallots, minced
 2 tbsps sour cream
 1 tbsps tarragon, finely chopped
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste
 fresh tarragon leaves for garnish

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees F. In a large heavy skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms and shallots and cook 8-10 minutes, stirring occasionally until liquid has evaporated. Add crawfish tails and cook 3 additional minutes. Season to taste using salt and pepper, remove from heat and stir in sour cream and tarragon. In a lightly greased muffin pan, place 1 slice of ham in each cup. The ends should hang over the edges of each cup. Divide mushroom and crawfish mixture evenly between the cups. Crack 1 egg into each ham basket. Season eggs with salt and pepper to taste. Place on middle rack in oven and bake until egg whites are cooked, but yolks are still runny, approximately 15 minutes. Remove and serve with Creole Homefries.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Strawberry Beignets

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 2 Dozen

COMMENT:

There are thousands of fritter recipes throughout the South. Some are savory and some are sweet. Some are flat and dense and some are light and airy. Using fresh Louisiana strawberries is only natural in this recipe because they are so abundant in our area. The batter is so light and airy that we call them strawberry beignets. Serve with powdered sugar and strawberry syrup for the perfect breakfast item or a sweet treat.

INGREDIENTS FOR FRITTERS:

3/4 cup strawberries, diced
 1 1/4 cup flour
 3/4 cup sugar
 3 eggs
 1 tbsp butter, melted
 1 tsp baking powder
 1/8 tsp salt
 1/4 cup milk
 4 tsp vanilla
 1/8 tsp cinnamon
 oil for frying

METHOD:

In a deep fat fryer or deep frying pan, heat oil to 375 degrees F. In a medium-sized mixing bowl, combine strawberries, sugar, eggs, melted butter, milk, vanilla and cinnamon. Mix well. In a separate bowl, combine flour, baking powder and salt. Mix until well blended. Slowly pour strawberry mixture into dry ingredients while mixing with a wire whisk. Blend just until ingredients are incorporated. Do not overmix. Using a 1-ounce cookie dough scoop, scoop up fritter batter and place in oil. Cook, flipping often, until golden brown approximately 3-5 minutes.

INGREDIENTS FOR SYRUP:

2 pints strawberries, stemmed and pureed
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 cup Smucker's strawberry syrup

METHOD:

Mix all ingredients until sugar is dissolved. Serve over strawberry fritters or ice cream.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Breakfast Muffins En Surprise

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 4 Dozen

COMMENT:

The Feliciana Parishes of Louisiana are quite different from other areas of Bayou Country because of their rolling hills resembling an English countryside. In these rolling hills, one may enjoy the Barrow House creation of bran muffins with a little surprise nestled in the center.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup strawberries, diced small
- 1 (20-ounce) box Raisin Bran cereal
- 4 cups white sugar
- 5 cups all purpose flour
- 1 ½ tbsps baking soda
- 2 tsps salt
- 1 tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 quart buttermilk
- 1 cup vegetable oil

METHOD:

Pre-heat oven to 400 degrees F. Grease muffin tin and dust with flour. In a large mixing bowl, combine all dry ingredients except strawberries. Using a large spoon, blend until all are well incorporated. Add eggs, buttermilk and vegetable oil. Continue to blend ingredients until muffin batter is achieved.

While blending, use the back of a cooking spoon to break the cereal into smaller pieces. Fold in strawberries and set aside. Grease muffin tin and dust with flour. Place 1-ounce ladle of the muffin batter into each muffin compartment then top with 1 teaspoon of the cream cheese filling mixture (see recipe). Top cream cheese mixture with remaining 1-ounce ladle of the muffin batter. Bake muffins 20-25 minutes or until golden brown.

INGREDIENTS CREAM CHEESE FILLING:

- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 4 tbsp flour
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 2/3 cup strawberries, diced small

METHOD:

Allow cream cheese to soften at room temperature. In a large mixing

bowl, combine cream cheese with sugar and flour. When well-blended, stir in vanilla and strawberries. This filling may be refrigerated for up to 2 weeks prior to use.

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Creole Country Cornmeal Pecan Waffles

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 8 Waffles

COMMENT:

This interesting waffle recipe was created by two Creole women, Ms. Young and Ms. Murphy. These frugal women never let a single thing go to waste and often combined leftover fruit with syrups as the perfect topping for waffles. Their favorite flavor was a combination of canned cranberries with maple syrup. Try this recipe sometime!

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups yellow cornmeal
- 1/2 cup pecans, chopped
- 2 1/4 cups flour
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 3 tbsps baking powder
- 2 1/4 tps salt
- 1/4 pound melted butter
- 6 large eggs, beaten
- 3 cups milk
- 2 tbsps vegetable oil

METHOD:

Preheat waffle iron to medium heat according to manufacturer's directions. In a large mixing bowl, combine cornmeal, flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Using a wooden spoon, blend well until all ingredients are incorporated. Fold in pecans and coat thoroughly with the waffle mixture. In a separate bowl, combine butter, eggs and milk. Using a wire whisk, whip until well incorporated. Add liquid ingredients stirring with a wooden spoon. Continue to stir until all of the lumps have been removed. Place a small amount of vegetable oil or spray on the preheated waffle iron. Ladle 3/4 cup of batter onto the hot waffle iron and cook approximately 3-3 1/2 minutes. Once cooked, keep waffles warm until all are done. Serve with cranberry syrup or your favorite fruit-syrup mixture.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Crêpes Estelle

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 20 Crêpes

SERVES: 6-8

COMMENT:

Degas' uncle, Michel Musson, was head of his New Orleans household at the time the artist was in residence in the late 1800s. Musson's daughter, Estelle, was the subject of at least one Degas painting and obviously the inspiration for this tasty crêpe dish.

INGREDIENTS FOR CRÊPES:

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup flour
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 2 tbsps triple sec
- 2 tbsps melted butter
- 1 ½ cups milk
- 1 pinch of salt
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- ½ cup sugar

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, place eggs, flour, sugar, vanilla and triple sec. Using a wire whisk, whip until ingredients are silky smooth. Add butter and milk and continue to blend until batter reaches the consistency of heavy whipping cream. Make sure that all lumps are removed. Season to taste using salt. It is best to make crêpe batter a minimum of 6 hours prior to use and refrigerate. I recommend refrigerating the batter overnight. Place two 6-inch crêpe pans over medium-high heat. Add 2 tablespoons of vegetable oil into one pan and swirl to coat the bottom of the pan. Once hot, pour excess oil into the second crêpe pan. Place approximately 2 ounces of the crêpe batter into the first pan, tilting in a circular motion, until the batter spreads evenly. Cook crêpe until outer edge browns and loosens from the pan. Flip crêpe and cook 1 additional minute. Using a thin spatula, remove crêpe from the pan and sprinkle with sugar. Continue process until all crêpes are done. If you wish to store crêpes overnight or freeze, place plastic wrap between each crêpe to prevent sticking and place in a large Ziploc® bag prior to refrigerating or freezing.

INGREDIENTS FOR SAUCE:

- ¼ pound butter
- 1 tbsp sugar
- zest of 1 satsuma
- juice of 2 satsumas
- 1 tsp Grenadine or cherry juice
- 3 tbsps Cointreau or triple sec

3 tbsps Kirsch liquor

METHOD:

Juice satsumas by peeling and pressing the segments through a fine sieve or chop in the food processor and then push through a sieve, discarding the pulp. In a cast iron skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add sugar and satsuma zest, stirring until sugar is melted. Add satsuma juice, Grenadine and Cointreau. Continue to stir until ingredients are well incorporated. Remove skillet from heat and add Kirsch. Take caution when returning skillet to the heat as alcohol may ignite for a second or two. Fold each crêpe in half then in half again to create a triangle. Gently simmer the crêpes, 1 or 2 at a time, in the hot sauce and serve immediately. Place 2 crêpes on a 10-inch serving plate and garnish with a few sections of fresh satsumas.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Grillades & Gravy Spanish-Style

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Grillades, from the French word "to grill," were first created by the butchers in early Louisiana as they prepared a freshly killed pig into hams, sausages and other fresh cuts of meat. Tiny slivers of meat called "grillade" were cooked in a black iron skillet over the coals of a wood fire. This made a perfect mid-morning meal for the hungry workers, especially when served over steaming grits.



Ingredients:

- 1 (2-pound) round steak
- salt and pepper to taste
- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 2 tbsps flour
- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes in juice
- ½ cup sliced black olives
- 3 cups beef stock
- 2 tbsps chopped basil
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

METHOD:

Cut round steak into 3-inch cubes and pound lightly. Season to taste using salt and pepper. In a cast iron skillet, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Brown round steak on all sides. Remove and keep warm. An additional tablespoon of olive oil may be added to the skillet if necessary. In the same oil, sauté onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic 3-5 minutes or until wilted. Sprinkle in flour and blend well into the mixture, removing any lumps that may form in the blending process. Blend in tomato sauce, diced tomatoes and black olives. Add stock and continue to blend until all is incorporated. Add basil and thyme. Season lightly with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Return round steak to the skillet and bring mixture to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer, cover and cook 1-1 1/2 hours or until meat is fork-tender. Additional stock or water may be needed during the cooking process. Once tender, add green onions and parsley. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve over hot, buttered grits.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Pain Perdu Count Pontchartrain

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Bienville named Lake Pontchartrain in honor of the French Count in the court of Louis XVI at the time New Orleans was established. Pain Perdu or Lost Bread was a simple breakfast dish made from day-old, stale French bread abundant in the Creole cupboard. At Lafitte's Landing, this traditional dish is served as a wonderful dessert.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (10-inch) loaves day-old French bread
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 2 tbsps vanilla
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1 1/2 cups milk
- 3/4 cup melted butter
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 2 tbsps cornstarch
- 2 cups raspberries
- 1 cup blackberries
- 1 cup blueberries
- 1/2 cup strawberries

METHOD:

In a large mixing bowl, combine eggs, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg. Using a wire whisk, whip until well blended. Slowly blend in milk until well incorporated. Cut the French bread on a bias into 1/2-inch thick croutons and discard ends. Soak the croutons in the egg mixture for 1-2 minutes. In a cast iron skillet, heat butter, 1/4 cup at a time, over medium-high heat. Add more butter as needed during the cooking process. Once hot, sauté bread 1-2 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Remove sautéed bread and keep warm. In a separate sauté pan, combine water, wine, sugar and cornstarch. Using a wire whisk, whip to blend thoroughly. Bring the mixture to a rolling boil, stirring constantly, until reduced to 1/2 volume. This simple syrup should thicken quickly with the cornstarch. Remove from heat and add the fruit, coating well in the hot syrup. Allow fruit to sit in syrup until warmed thoroughly and sauce is colored from the natural fruit juices. Place 2 pieces of lost bread in the center of a 10-inch serving plate and top with a tablespoon of the fresh fruit and simple syrup. You may wish to garnish with whipped cream and powdered sugar.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Michigan Man's Apple Pancake

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 4

COMMENTS:

Michigan man was the name given to the early lumber men and carpenters arriving in Lake Charles after the Civil War, seeking their fortune in lumber. This recipe was found by Judy Curtis in an old family cookbook, and like all good cooks, she altered it to create a new version. One must prepare this recipe to appreciate the final product, which is truly spectacular. However, any local fruit may be substituted as a filling.

INGREDIENTS:

1 red apple, cored and diced
 1 green apple, cored and diced
 1/4 cup melted butter
 1/4 cup brown sugar
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1/4 cup golden raisins
 1/8 tsp cinnamon
 1/8 tsp nutmeg
 4 eggs
 2 cup flour
 1/4 cup sugar
 1/2 tsp salt
 1/2 cup milk
 1 tbsp vanilla
 1/2 cup whipped cream
 Powdered sugar (optional)

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Grease a 9-inch, non-stick oven-proof frying pan with approximately 1 tbsp butter. Set aside. NOTE: It is imperative that a non-stick frying pan be used in this recipe, otherwise this pancake will stick to the pan and the presentation will be impossible. In a separate sauté pan, heat melted butter over medium-high heat. Add red and green apples. Sauté apples until tender but not overcooked, approximately 10-12 minutes. Add brown sugar, lemon juice, raisins, cinnamon and nutmeg. Continue to stir until brown sugar is melted and apples are coated with the spices. Remove from heat and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine eggs, flour, sugar and salt. Add milk and continue blending until ingredients are well incorporated. Using a wire whisk, whip to blend thoroughly dissolving any lumps of flour which may appear in the batter. Add vanilla and whisk for 1 additional minute. Pour batter into the greased frying pan and place on the center shelf of the oven. Bake pancake for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown around the edges. During the cooking process, the pancake will rise approximately 2-inches out of the pan in a soufflé-style fashion. When

pancake is done, remove from oven and fill with apple mixture. Slide the pancake onto a large serving platter, folding the top 2 over the apple filling in a half-moon fashion. Cut pancake into 4 equal slices and gently place on serving plates. Top each pancake with an equal portion of whipped cream and powdered sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Buttermilk Pancakes With Orange Honey Butter

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 12 Pancakes

COMMENTS:

The greatest thing about pancakes in general, and certainly these pancakes, is the keyword...simplicity. It's amazing how many "new cooks," those just starting out in the kitchen, think of breakfast foods....other than cereal...as too complicated to do. Well, pancakes are simple...in fact, the batter can be made overnight and with this recipe, the orange honey butter can be whipped together an hour or so before grilling the pancakes.

INGREDIENTS FOR ORANGE HONEY BUTTER:

- ½ cup softened butter
- 1/3 cup honey
- 2 tablespoons orange juice concentrate

METHOD:

Blend well with a wire whisk and allow it to sit at room temperature away from heat, until pancakes are cooked.

INGREDIENTS BUTTERMILK PANCAKES:

- 1 ¾ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 ½ cups buttermilk
- 3 eggs
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon honey

METHOD:

Place the dry ingredients in a mixing bowl and whisk slightly to combine. Into the bowl add buttermilk, eggs, vegetable oil and honey. Whisk these wet ingredients into the flour mixture, just until the batter is smooth. Into a cast iron skillet or a flat non-stick electric griddle, over medium-high heat spread 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Pour batter ¼ cup full at a time onto the hot griddle. When the batter bubbles on top, turn and cook second side until golden brown. Remove and spread a small amount of the orange honey butter on top of each pancake and then stack three high with a dollop of butter on top. Serve with powdered sugar.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

MAMERE'S FIG PRESERVES

Prep Time: 3 Hours

Yields: 2 Quarts

Comment:

No fruit, wild or store bought, has been preserved in Louisiana more often than figs. My grandmother was an expert at preserving figs, and I can't remember a day that a jar of her specialty wasn't sitting in the center of our kitchen table.

Ingredients:

1 gallon figs
12 cups sugar
1 quart water
4 lemon slices

Method:

Sort figs and remove any that are overripe or blemished. Wash figs well in cold, running water. Bring a pot of water to a boil, drop in figs, remove from heat and allow to stand 3 minutes. Quickly remove and drain. The hot water will help set color in fruit. In a 2-gallon, heavy-bottomed saucepot, combine sugar and water and bring to a rolling boil. Stir constantly until sugar is melted and syrup is formed. Add lemon slices then gently place figs into boiling liquid. Reduce heat to medium and cook figs 2½ hours or until transparent. During cooking process, shake pot gently. Stirring will mash fruit. Using a slotted spoon, scoop figs into hot, sterilized jar then top with syrup. Leave ¼-inch headspace in jar. Wipe syrup from rim then tightly cover and seal. Place jars in a hot water bath and simmer approximately 10 minutes. Remove, cool, label and store for later use. NOTE: Figs may be left overnight in syrup to plump prior to packing in jars. Should you decide to do this, fill jars with fruit and syrup, seal and place in a boiling water bath approximately 20 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Madame Begue's Liver & Onions

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Madame Bégué's Coffee Shop was located in the French Quarter on the present day site of Tujague's Restaurant. She became famous for her "second breakfast" or brunch which was served to the workers during mid-morning break. One of her best known dishes was smothered liver and onions. The liver was carefully selected and cut by her husband ---- the French Market butcher, Hippolyte Bégué.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pounds calves liver, sliced
- 2 large onions, thinly sliced
- 1/2 pound bacon
- 1 cup seasoned flour
- 2 cups chicken stock (see recipe)
- Salt and black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom skillet, cook bacon over medium-high heat until crispy. Remove, drain and allow to cool. Chop bacon and reserve drippings for sauteing. Season liver using salt and pepper. Dust liver in flour, shaking off all excess. Reheat bacon drippings over medium-high heat. Pan-fry liver until golden brown on each side, approximately 10 minutes. Remove from pan to a drain board and keep warm. Into the same skillet, add onions and saute over medium-high heat. Stir-fry onions until caramelized, approximately 20 minutes. Return chopped bacon and liver to the skillet. Pour in chicken stock, bring mixture to a rolling boil and cook for 10 additional minutes. Season to taste using salt and pepper. When ready to serve, place liver in the center of a 10-inch dinner plate and top with caramelized onions and bacon.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Upside Down Orange Biscuits

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 10 - 12

COMMENT:

Although these orange glazed biscuits are made "scratch-style," they're so good I often just create the flavoring and serve it over a can of "whack" biscuits. You may also wish to use this orange syrup as a topping over croissants or French toast.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1 tbsp orange zest, grated
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup butter
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3tsp baking powder
- 4 tbsps shortening
- 3/4 cup milk
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Butter 2 eight compartment muffin tins. In a small sauce pan, combine orange juice, zest, 1/2 cup sugar and butter. Using a wire whisk, stir constantly over medium heat until sugar is dissolved. Distribute mixture evenly between each muffin tin. In a large mixing bowl, sift flour, salt and baking powder. Add shortening and, using a pastry cutter, blend well into the flour mixture. Add milk and stir until dough ball forms. Place dough onto a floured surface and knead 15-20 seconds. Roll dough out to 1/4-inch thickness and sprinkle with remaining sugar and cinnamon. Roll dough jelly roll-style and cut into 1-inch slices. Lay each biscuit, cut side down, in the muffin tins over the orange mixture and bake 15-20 minutes. Serve hot.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Fairfield Egg Casserole

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 10

COMMENTS:

Janie Lipscomb, owner of Fairfield Place, created this dish which in my opinion it is the ultimate omelette casserole. What makes it even more special in addition to the great taste, is the fact that one may consume their vegetables, meat and dairy all in one dish. Save this casserole for a holiday when the house is full of guests, because it definitely feeds a crowd. Feel free to cut the recipe in half.

INGREDIENTS:

- 18 eggs
- 3 (10-ounce) packages frozen chopped spinach
- 12 strips bacon, cooked and drained
- 1 cup cubed ham
- 1/4 pound butter, halved
- 1/2 cup minced onions
- 1 cup flour
- 4 cups milk
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Creole seasoning to taste
- 1/2 cup canned fried onion rings, crushed
- 1 cup grated Monterey Jack cheese

METHOD:

Butter a 9" x 13" baking dish and set aside. Cook spinach according to package directions, drain completely and chop once more. In a large sauté pan, melt 2 of the butter over medium-high heat. Pan-fry ham for 3-4 minutes, remove and set aside. In the same skillet, add onions and sauté 2-3 minutes or until wilted. Add flour a little at a time and, using a wire whisk, stir constantly until white roux is achieved (see roux techniques). Add milk, one cup at a time, stirring into the roux mixture. Bring to a low boil and continue stirring until mixture is smooth. Remove from heat and gently fold in the chopped spinach. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. Keep warm. In a large sauté pan, melt remaining butter over medium-high heat. In a large mixing bowl, whisk eggs with whipping cream and season lightly using salt and pepper. Pour mixture into sauté pan and soft scramble the eggs until lightly set. Do not overcook. Spread 2 of the eggs in the bottom of the baking dish. Layer alternately with 2 of the ham, bacon and spinach mixture. Repeat with remaining layers and then top with onion rings and Monterey Jack cheese. This casserole **MUST** be covered and refrigerated overnight prior to baking and may also be frozen for later. When ready to cook, preheat oven to 275 degrees F and bake, uncovered, for 1 hour.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Stuffed Eggs Italian Style

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 24

COMMENTS:

One of the greatest flavors associated with the Italians is pesto. Although normally thought of as a basil-based sauce, pesto may be made with parsley, sage or any other fresh herb. The best thing about it, though, is that it holds well in the refrigerator and has multiple uses.

INGREDIENTS:

12 eggs
 4 1/2 cups fresh basil, loosely packed
 1 cup extra virgin olive oil
 1/2 cup pine nuts or pecans
 5 cloves garlic
 salt to taste
 1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese
 1/2 cup mayonnaise
 1/4 cup minced celery
 1/4 cup red bell pepper
 1/4 cup minced sweet pickles
 salt and cracked pepper to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

Boil eggs in a sauce pan covered with approximately 2 inches of water. Bring to a rolling boil and cook 10 minutes. Remove from heat, drain and plunge in cold water until cool. Peel and set aside. In the bowl of a food processor fitted with metal blade, place basil leaves, olive oil, pine nuts, garlic, salt and Parmesan cheese. Blend on high until pureed. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Remove pesto from processor, place in bowl with lid and set aside. Slice eggs in half lengthwise and place yolks in a mixing bowl. Mash yolks with fork and add mayonnaise, celery, bell pepper and pickles. Blend well to incorporate all flavors. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Gold. Blend 2 tablespoons of pesto into the egg mixture. When thoroughly blended, fill the egg whites with egg/pesto mixture, cover with clear wrap and refrigerate. These eggs may be stuffed one day prior to use and will actually taste better as flavor develops. Refrigerate the remaining pesto as you may wish to use it as a pasta sauce, a flavoring for grilled fish or chicken, or brushed on hot French bread in the place of butter.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Cheese Garlic Grits Soufflé

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

While basic boiled grits is perfect in its simplicity for breakfast, at bigger meals cheese grits are more likely to appear. Adding cheese is the first "company" thing done to grits when it's time to show off a little. Grits and garlic have an ancient affinity in the South. Cooks who wouldn't use garlic in any other form have been slipping a bit into cheese grits for years. Many cooks add a lot more garlic by roasting it first and often refer to it as their "secret ingredient." Cheese Grits Soufflé, is usually served as a brunch or luncheon dish and is very much like a sharply-flavored spoon bread.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 1/2 cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 cup stoned ground grits
- 2 cups water
- 2 cups milk
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsps unsalted butter
- 1/2 tsp ground white pepper
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce
- 1 garlic clove, crushed
- Hot sauce to taste
- 4 eggs, separated

METHOD:

In a large sauce pot, heat water and milk over medium-high heat. Bring mixture to a rolling boil then add salt. Slowly stir in grits and reduce heat to simmer. Continue to cook grits approximately 20 minutes, stirring often, until done. The grits should be quite thick and creamy. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Remove grits from heat and stir in butter, pepper, Worcestershire sauce, garlic, hot sauce and cheeses. Allow cheese grits to cool slightly. Butter a deep 2-quart baking dish. In a small mixing bowl, beat egg yolks lightly with a fork. Pour beaten yolks into grits and stir until well incorporated. In a separate mixing bowl, whip egg whites until soft peaks form and fold into grits. Pour the batter into the buttered dish and bake until lightly browned and well-puffed, approximately 30 minutes.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Eggs à la Crème

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

I've been served many exotic egg dishes in my travels including the thousand-year old eggs of China. However, I can think of no better egg dish or one more beautifully presented than these Eggs A' La Crème from T'Frere House in Lafayette. With a cup of hot black Cajun coffee, nothing more is needed to start the day!

INGREDIENTS:

12 eggs
 1/4 cup melted butter
 1/8 cup minced onions
 1/8 cup minced celery
 1/8 cup minced red bell pepper
 1/8 cup minced green bell pepper
 1/2 tsp flour
 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
 1 tsp fresh thyme, chopped
 2 tbsps fresh basil, chopped
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 2 tbsps chopped parsley
 2 tbsps sliced green onion tops
 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 1 cup crawfish tails
 Salt and black pepper to taste
 Creole seasoning to taste

METHOD:

In a cast iron skillet, heat butter over medium-high heat. Add onions, celery and bell peppers. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add flour, blending well into the vegetable mixture. Add whipping cream, stirring until thickened white sauce is achieved. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. Remove from heat and set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine eggs, thyme, basil, garlic, parsley, green onions, remaining whipping cream and prepared white sauce. Using a wire whisk, blend well to create a whipped egg mixture. Season to taste using salt, pepper and Creole seasoning. In a large cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add crawfish tails and sauté 2-3 minutes or until pink and curled. Add whipped egg mixture and, using a spatula, stir eggs gently until well scrambled but not dry and overcooked. Spoon the eggs into a stemmed champagne goblet and serve with toast. Garnish with chopped parsley and paprika.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Basic Buttermilk Biscuits

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 10 Biscuits

COMMENT:

Most cathead or drop biscuits in the Old South were made with clabber or buttermilk, because of the high acidity that reacted with the baking powder or soda to create a flakier, more tender biscuit. However, in today's modern world of self-rising and soft winter wheat flours most cooks love buttermilk in their biscuits simply because it tastes so doggone good!

INGREDIENTS:

1/3 cup butter or margarine
 2 cups self-rising soft-wheat flour
 3/4 cup buttermilk
 Butter or margarine, melted

METHOD:

Cut 1/3 cup butter into flour with a pastry blender until mixture is crumbly. Add buttermilk, stirring until dry ingredients are moistened. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface; knead 3 or 4 times. Roll dough to 3/4-inch thickness; cut with a 2 1/2-inch round cutter, and place on a baking sheet. Bake biscuits at 425 for 12 to 14 minutes. Brush with melted butter.

VARIATIONS:

Cornmeal-Jalapeno Biscuits:

Substitute 1 cup self-rising cornmeal for 1 cup self-rising flour. Add 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese with peppers or 1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese and 1 unseeded, chopped jalapeno pepper. Bake as directed.

Beer-and-Cheese Biscuits:

Add 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese and 1 teaspoon dried whole leaf or rubbed sage. Substitute 3/4 cup beer for buttermilk. Bake as directed.

Country Ham Biscuits:

Reduce butter to 1/4 cup and buttermilk to 1/4 cup. Add 1 (8-ounce) carton sour cream and 1 cup finely chopped cooked country ham. Bake as directed.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Rollin' Feliciana Bran Muffins

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 4 Dozen

COMMENT:

The Feliciana Parishes of Louisiana are quite different from other areas of Bayou Country because of their rolling hills resembling an English countryside. In these rolling hills, one may enjoy the Barrow House creation of bran muffins with a little surprise nestled in the center.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (20-ounce) box Raisin Bran cereal
- 4 cups white sugar
- 5 cups all purpose flour
- 1 ½ tbsps baking soda
- 2 tsps salt
- 1 tbsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 1 quart buttermilk
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup raisins

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Grease muffin tin and dust with flour. In a large mixing bowl, combine all dry ingredients. Using a large spoon, blend until all are well incorporated. Add eggs, buttermilk and vegetable oil. Continue to blend ingredients until muffin batter is achieved.

While blending, use the back of a cooking spoon to break the cereal into smaller pieces. Fold in raisins and set aside. Grease muffin tin and dust with flour. Place 1-ounce ladle of the muffin batter into each muffin compartment then top with 1 teaspoon of the cream cheese filling mixture (see recipe). Top cream cheese mixture with remaining 1-ounce ladle of the muffin batter. Bake muffins 20-25 minutes or until golden brown.

INGREDIENTS CREAM CHEESE FILLING:

- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese
- 2/3 cup sugar
- 4 tbsp flour
- 2 tbsps vanilla

METHOD:

Allow cream cheese to soften at room temperature. In a large mixing bowl, combine cream cheese with sugar and flour. When well-

blended, stir in vanilla. This filling may be refrigerated for up to 2 weeks prior to use.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Crème Brûlée Lost Bread

PREP TIME: 1 ½ hours

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

One of the most interesting breakfast dishes came about because of a need to use stale or "lost bread." There are numerous recipes in and around New Orleans for this traditional dish, but Crème Brûlée is one of the most unique.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 French bread croutons, cut 1-inch thick
- ½ cup melted butter
- 1 cup brown sugar, lightly packed
- 2 tbsps honey
- 5 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream
- 1/8 tsp cinnamon
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 1 tbsp vanilla
- 1 tbsp praline liqueur or Frangelico

METHOD:

French bread croutons should be cut out of a baguette-style loaf. These slices should be approximately 2 ½ - 3 inches in diameter and 1 inch thick. In a cast iron skillet, combine butter, brown sugar and honey over medium-high heat. Cook mixture, stirring constantly, until bubbly and sugar has dissolved. Pour Brûlée into the bottom of a 13" x 19" x 2" baking dish. Allow Brûlée to cool slightly then top with the French bread croutons. In a large mixing bowl, whisk eggs, milk, whipping cream, cinnamon, nutmeg, vanilla and liqueur. Blend thoroughly the pour evenly over the croutons. Using the tips of your fingers, press bread down gently to force the custard into the croutons without breaking. Cover dish with clear wrap and chill overnight. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Allow custard to sit out at room temperature, approximately 1 hour. Bake, uncovered, until French toast is puffed and edges of the croutons are golden brown, approximately 40 minutes. Allow to cool 10 minutes prior to serving. When ready to serve, remove 2 of the Lost Bread Croutons per guest and invert them onto the center of a 10-inch plate. Top with powdered sugar and drizzle lightly with honey.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Low-Carbohydrate Pancakes

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: 2 Servings

Comment:

The big diet trend is low-carbohydrate foods. Programs such as Atkins or Sugar Busters recommend flourless foods. You can have some of your favorite foods in low-carbohydrate form by substituting flour with wheat gluten. Wheat gluten is the natural protein derived from wheat. It is basically wheat flour with the starch removed. So, the next time you have a craving for pancakes, mix up a batch of these wonderful, fluffy pancakes and don't give a second thought to breaking your diet rules.

Ingredients:

- 2½ tbsps wheat gluten
- ½ tsp baking powder
- 1 tsp Splenda Sweetener
- 2 tbsps heavy cream
- 1 tbsp water
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 eggs

Method:

In a mixing bowl, place wheat gluten, baking powder and sweetener. Whisk in heavy cream, stirring constantly. Add water, olive oil and eggs and blend well. Batter will be thin. Place a flat griddle or skillet over medium-high heat. Coat griddle with vegetable spray. Pour desired amount of batter on the griddle and cook for 2 minutes or until dry bubbles begin to form around the edges of the pancake and the bottom is browned. Turn and cook for 1–2 additional minutes. Makes 6–8 silver dollar-sized pancakes and 4 medium sized pancakes. Serve with sugar-free syrup and fresh fruit.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- **Breakfast & Brunch**
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Flora's Granola

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 8 Cups

Comment:

Flora Landwehr, owner of Elliott House in Amite, LA, received this recipe from her daughter who discovered it while in college. Flora was surprised to find that her bed and breakfast guests preferred granola to a traditional Southern breakfast. This delicious granola has become one of the most requested recipes from Elliott House's kitchen.

Ingredients:

- 1 tbsp peanut butter
- 2/3 cup honey
- 1/2 cup Canola oil
- 3 cups old fashioned oats
- 1 cup wheat germ
- 1/2 cup sunflower kernels
- 1/2 cup sesame seeds
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. In a large mixing bowl, combine peanut butter, honey and oil. Using a wire whisk, whip until peanut butter is liquefied. Add all remaining ingredients. Using a large cooking spoon, stir until dried ingredients are well coated. Oil a 9" x 13" baking sheet with 1-inch lip. Spread the granola evenly over the sheet and bake for 20 minutes, turning pan once, until granola is golden and toasted. Remove granola from the oven and allow to cool. Store in an airtight container. If refrigerated, the granola will keep for approximately one week. Flora recommends serving her homemade granola with plain yogurt and a mixture of fresh seasonal fruit. I recommend serving it with my Bittersweet Plantation Dairy Creole Cream Cheese or eating it as you would cold cereal.

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Bayou Teche Pork and Yam Breakfast Sausage

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 25–30 (3-ounce) Patties

Comment:

Normally, pork is served with fruit or fruit-flavored sauces to enhance the taste. In this recipe cubed yams are added to pork sausage prior to cooking to create tremendous flavor and presentation.

Ingredients:

5 pounds ground pork
 1 (16-ounce) can Bruce's Yams, drained
 2 tsps dried thyme
 1 tbsp cayenne pepper
 1 tbsp black pepper
 2 tsps salt
 1½ tsps rubbed sage
 1½ tsps granulated garlic
 1 tsp ginger
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 1½ tsps nutmeg
 1 cup iced water
 hog casing (optional)

Method:

Dice yams into ¼-inch cubes then place in a single layer on a cookie sheet and freeze for later use. Freezing the yams will guarantee a solid cube that will be visible in the finished sausage. In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except for yams. Using your hands, mix the meat well, turning and pushing for 10–15 minutes to ensure proper blending. Gently fold in the frozen yams. Roll the sausage into 3-inch patties or stuff into hog casing and tie off into 6-inch links. Cook in the same method as any other breakfast sausage or grill the links over charcoal.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Spinach and Three Cheese Grits Soufflé

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 16 Servings

Comment: The holiday season is a great time to treat yourself to a new and interesting recipe. We have created this wonderful, creamy grits soufflé that would be a wonderful dish at a holiday breakfast or brunch. Try mixing diced red bell peppers into the grits to give the soufflé special holiday flair.

Ingredients:

3 cups old fashioned grits, not instant
 1 (10-ounce) box chopped frozen spinach
 1 ½ cups shredded Monterey Jack cheese
 1 cup shredded White Cheddar
 ¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
 8 cups water
 5 tbsps butter
 1 tsp minced garlic
 6 large eggs
 salt and pepper to taste
 1 tbsp melted butter

Method:

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Butter two 9-inch springform pans or coat with vegetable spray. In a medium saucepot, bring water to a boil with a large pinch of salt. Whisk in the grits. Cover and simmer over low heat, whisking often, for 15–20 minutes. Transfer the grits to a large mixing bowl. In a large skillet, melt butter over medium heat. Add spinach and garlic and sauté for 3–5 minutes. Do not scorch. Blend Monterey Jack, Cheddar and spinach mixture into grits. Season with salt and pepper. Add eggs and blend well. Pour half of the mixture into each of the prepared pans. Sprinkle the soufflés with Parmesan cheese and melted butter. Bake for about 40 minutes or until golden brown. Let cool in the pans for 15 minutes. Remove the rings. Cut the soufflés into wedges and serve with Spanish style grillades or your favorite breakfast dish.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Angel Robertson's Homemade Eggnog Pancakes

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 4-6 Servings

Comment: The holiday richness of eggnog makes these pancakes the perfect Christmas breakfast treat. Top them with whipped butter, cinnamon and nutmeg sugar or your favorite syrup. Or add red and green doughnut sprinkles for extra fun!

Ingredients:

- 2 ¼ cups eggnog
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsps sugar
- 2 tsps baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 1 egg
- 3 tbsps butter, melted
- 3 tbsps vanilla
- butter or vegetable spray for skillet

Method: In a large mixing bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, baking soda, and salt until combined. Pour eggnog into a separate medium mixing bowl. Whisk egg, melted butter and vanilla into eggnog until combined. Make a well in the center of dry ingredients. Pour milk mixture into well and whisk very gently until just combined. Do not over mix. Heat a pancake griddle or cast iron skillet over medium heat for 3-5 minutes. Coat cooking surface with vegetable spray or 1 tablespoon butter. Use pastry brush to even oil. Pour ¼ cup batter onto skillet and sprinkle 1 tbsp blueberries over each pancake. Cook pancakes 1½-2 minutes or until large bubbles begin to appear on the surface. Using a thin, wide spatula, flip pancakes and cook 1-1½ minutes longer or until golden brown on second side. If pancake appears to be too dark when flipped, reduce heat slightly. Serve immediately, and repeat with remaining batter, using more vegetable oil or spray only if necessary.

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- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Heart-Healthy Grillades & Gravy Spanish-Style

Prep Time: 2 Hours

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Grillades, from the French word "to grill," were first created by the butchers in early Louisiana as they prepared a freshly killed pig into hams, sausages and other fresh cuts of meat. Tiny slivers of meat called "grillades" were cooked in a black iron skillet over the coals of a wood fire. This made a perfect mid-morning meal for the hungry workers, especially when served over steaming grits. This is our low-fat, low-sodium version of this classic recipe.



Ingredients:

- 1 (2-pound) round steak, trimmed of fat
- salt and black pepper to taste
- 2 tbsps olive oil
- 1 cup diced onions
- ½ cup diced celery
- ½ cup diced bell peppers
- ¼ cup minced garlic
- 2 tbsps flour
- 1 (8-ounce) can no salt added tomato sauce
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can no salt added diced tomatoes in juice
- ½ cup sliced black olives
- 3 cups fat-free, low-sodium beef broth
- 2 tbsps chopped basil
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- Louisiana hot sauce to taste
- ½ cup sliced green onions
- ¼ cup chopped parsley

Method:

Cut round steak into 3-inch cubes and pound lightly. Season to taste using salt and pepper. In a cast iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Brown round steak on all sides. Remove and keep warm. An additional tablespoon of olive oil may be added to the skillet if necessary. Into the same oil, add onions, celery, bell peppers and garlic. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Sprinkle in flour and blend well into the mixture, removing any lumps that may form. Blend in tomato sauce, tomatoes and olives. Add broth and continue to blend until all is incorporated. Add basil and thyme. Season lightly with salt, pepper and hot sauce. Return round steak to skillet and bring mixture to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer, cover and cook 1-1½ hours or until meat is fork-tender. Additional stock or water may be needed during the cooking process. Once tender, add green onions and parsley. Adjust seasonings if necessary. Serve over hot, buttered grits.

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Eggs Sardou

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Try giving Mom a special treat on Mother's Day by preparing this dish as part of a surprise brunch. This famous New Orleans' egg dish is sure to be a hit.

Ingredients:

12 eggs
 3 cups [Spinach Madeleine](#)
 12 small artichoke bottoms
 2 tbsps butter
 salt and black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 3 cups [Hollandaise sauce](#)

Method:

In a sauté pan, melt butter over medium-high heat. Season artichoke bottoms with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. Sauté artichokes in butter for 3 minutes then set aside. Break each egg into an individual small cup. Poach eggs in an egg poacher (4-5 minutes) or in a sauté pan. To poach in a sauté pan, simmer 1-1 ½ inches water and 1 teaspoon of vinegar. Once simmering, slide each egg into the water by lowering the cup to the surface and gently tipping it. Cook each egg 4 minutes for runny yolk or 5 minutes for firmer yolk, spooning some of the water over the egg during cooking time. Remove cooked eggs from water with a slotted spoon. Let the water drain of for a few seconds.

Assembly of Eggs Sardou:

Place ½ cup warm spinach Madeleine on the bottom of each plate, top with 1 or 2 sautéed artichoke bottoms. Then set 2 poached eggs on top and cover with ½ cup Hollandaise sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Shrimp and Tomato Grits

Prep Time: 1 hour

Yields: 6 servings

Ingredients for Shrimp:

2 dozen (21-25 count) shrimp, peeled and deveined
 ½ cup butter
 ¼ cup minced red bell pepper
 ¼ cup minced yellow bell pepper
 ¼ cup minced green bell pepper
 ½ cup minced red onion
 ½ cup minced celery
 1 tbsp minced garlic
 ¼ cup flour
 4 cups shrimp stock
 ½ cup cream
 ¼ cup sliced green onions
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a large sauté pan, heat butter over medium-high heat. Add all vegetables and sauté 3-5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add flour and stir 3-5 minutes or until slightly golden. Add shrimp stock 1 cup at a time stirring until mixture achieves a sauce-like consistency. Blend in cream then bring to a low boil. Add green onions and shrimp. Cook 3-5 minutes or until shrimp are curled and pink. Season with salt and pepper. Serve a generous portion of sauce and 4 large shrimp over each portion of grits.

Ingredients for Grits:

1 cup yellow stone ground grits
 2 large ripe tomatoes, chopped
 ½ cup bacon, chopped
 ¼ cup butter
 ¼ cup sliced garlic
 3 cups water
 ½ cup heavy cream
 1 teaspoon salt
 2 tbsps canned chopped green chilies
 ¼ cup shredded mild cheddar cheese

Method:

In a heavy-bottomed saucepan, cook bacon until crisp. Reserve drippings in pan. Add tomatoes, butter and garlic. Sauté until garlic is tender. Mix in water, cream, salt and chilies then bring to a boil. Gradually stir in grits, blending well. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cover and cook 15-20 minutes stirring occasionally until thickened. Remove from the heat then blend in cheese until melted.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

Cabbage, Bacon and Tasso Frittata

Prep Time: 45 Minutes**Yields:** 6–8 Servings**Comment:**

A frittata is generally defined as an open-face omelet of Spanish or Italian origin, but almost every culture has a version of a family egg dish incorporating meats and vegetables. This particular recipe was made by the Louisiana Germans and traditionally used smoked sausage. Incorporating tasso adds a spicy twist to this delicious New Year's Day dish.

Ingredients:

1 cabbage, cored and coarsely chopped
 ¼ cup water
 ½ pound bacon, chopped
 ½ cup diced tasso or smoked sausage
 1 cup diced onions
 1 cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell peppers
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 3 eggs, beaten
 ¾ cup grated Parmesan cheese
 ¾ cup Italian bread crumbs
 salt and black pepper to taste
 granulated garlic to taste
 ¼ cup olive oil
 2 tbsps unsalted butter

Method:

Place cabbage and water in a large microwaveable bowl. Microwave on high 10 minutes or until wilted. Do not overcook. Cabbage should be tender and crisp. Drain and set aside in bowl to cool. In a 12-inch skillet, brown bacon over medium-high heat. When fat is rendered, add tasso, onions, celery, bell peppers and minced garlic. Cook 3–5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Remove from heat and blend into cabbage. Add eggs, cheese and bread crumbs. Season with salt, pepper and granulated garlic. In same skillet, heat olive oil and butter over medium-high heat. Pour in cabbage mixture. Cook for 3–4 minutes, stirring often so cabbage browns slightly. Using back of a cooking spoon, press mixture evenly into skillet. Cook 6–10 minutes, being careful not to scorch. When frittata is set and heated thoroughly, you may place skillet in a 250°F oven up to 20 minutes prior to serving. Place a large serving plate over skillet and invert frittata onto plate. Cut pizza style into 6–8 pieces.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

CAPTAIN JOHN'S CATHEAD BISCUITS

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 8 Servings

Comment:

The creator of this recipe obviously thought that the uneven shapes of the biscuits resembled cats' heads. Try cathead biscuits plain with melted butter or fold crackling, cheese or herbs into the batter for a unique flavor.

Ingredients:

- 2 cups flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- ½ tsp baking soda
- ½ tsp salt
- 1/3 cup shortening
- 4 tps butter
- 2/3 cup buttermilk

Method:

Preheat oven to 450°F. In a mixing bowl, sift flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt. Blend well. Using a pastry cutter, cut in shortening and butter until it resembles coarse cornmeal. Using a large cooking spoon, blend buttermilk into flour mixture until moistened. On a lightly-floured surface, knead dough until it comes together. Do not overwork dough as the less it is handled, the flakier the biscuits. Break dough into 8 equal portions and pat approximately ½-inch thick onto a baking sheet. Biscuits should be irregular in shape, but no more than ½-inch high and 1-inch apart. Bake 10–15 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and brush with melted butter.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

VERY STRAWBERRY BUTTER

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: ½ Cup

Comment:

Instead of spreading butter and preserves on your toast in the morning, use this quick and easy strawberry butter. The smooth, fruity flavor is sure to please any strawberry lover.

Ingredients:

¼ pound unsalted butter
 2½ tbsps strawberry preserves
 ¼ cup chopped strawberries

Method:

In a small mixing bowl, beat butter with a wooden spoon until it almost resembles the creamy texture of sour cream. Beat in preserves, 1 tablespoon at a time. Butter will acquire a curdled look. Mix in chopped strawberries. Place butter in a serving bowl and refrigerate 1–2 hours or until firm. Prior to use, remove butter from refrigerator, allow to reach room temperature then stir and serve.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

BREAKFAST & BRUNCH

CREAM BISCUITS

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 10 Servings

Comment:

Cream biscuits were normally made to be served with sweets such as fresh strawberries or preserves. They are simple biscuits, getting "shortening" from the fat of the cream. Serve immediately after cooking because they tend to get a little dense when cooled. Try a biscuit for breakfast with a slathering of sweet cream butter.

Ingredients:

2 cups flour
 1 tbsp double-acting baking powder
 3 tbsps sugar, or to taste
 ½ tsp salt
 1½ cups heavy whipping cream
 whole milk (for brushing tops of biscuits)

Method:

In a large mixing bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, sugar and salt. Slowly add cream and stir mixture until it just forms a dough. Gather dough into a ball and turn onto a lightly-floured surface. Roll or pat dough ½-inch thick. Using a 2½-inch cutter, cut out as many rounds as possible and transfer them to an ungreased baking sheet. NOTE: A 4-inch or 1-inch cutter may be substituted. Gather scraps, roll dough and cut out more rounds until all dough has been used. Brush tops of biscuits lightly with milk. Bake 15 minutes or until golden brown.

[print this page >>](#)

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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Beurre Creole

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

YIELDS: 1 Cup

COMMENT:

This sauce is excellent over broiled or sautéed fish or grilled shrimp.

INGREDIENTS:

8 ounces unsalted butter,
chipped
 ½ cup dry white wine
 2 tbsps lemon juice
 2 thin lemon slices
 ¼ cup jumbo lump crabmeat
 ¼ cup diced tomatoes
 1 clove garlic, minced
 1 tbsp sliced green onions
 8–10 whole peppercorns
 1 whole bay leaf
 3 whole basil leaves
 1 tsp tomato sauce
 dash of Louisiana hot sauce
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste



METHOD:

In a sauté pan, combine wine, lemon juice, lemon slices, crabmeat, tomatoes, garlic, green onions, peppercorns, bay leaf and basil over medium-high heat. Sauté approximately 3 minutes or until juices are rendered into the pan. Add tomato sauce, blend well into mixture and continue to cook until juices have been reduced to approximately 2 tablespoons. Swirling pan constantly, add a few chips of butter at a time until all is incorporated. Do not use a metal spoon or wire whisk as hot spots may develop and butter will separate. Season to taste using hot sauce, salt and pepper. Serve as is, or strain if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

STOCKS & SAUCES

Homemade Tomato Sauce

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

COMMENT: Use fresh, vine-ripened tomatoes from your garden to make this wonderful tomato sauce. It can be eaten over pasta, added to your favorite recipe in place of canned tomato sauce or given as a gift.

INGREDIENTS AND SUPPLIES:

Tomatoes
 Large saucepot
 Manual or electric food mill
 Food thermometer
 Garlic
 Basil or Oregano
 Home canning jars

METHOD:

Wash fresh, ripe, whole tomatoes thoroughly and cut in half to expose any brown spots or insects. Place in manageable batches into a large saucepot with ½ cup of water to begin the steaming process. Cover and heat over medium-high heat until tomatoes are well steamed and soft but not falling apart. Over-cooking will remove juice and texture, which are required for the sauce. Drain tomatoes, keeping the juice. Put tomatoes through a hand-cranked food mill or electric food mill to separate the skin and seeds from the pulp. Discard skin and seeds and place pulp back into the saucepot. Bring sauce to 170 degrees F. **Do Not Boil.** Hold for 3-5 minutes. Place 3 cloves garlic and 1 nice large sprig of basil or oregano in sterilized jars and add hot tomato sauce to ½ inch from the top of the jar. Place sterilized cap and lid on jar, closing tightly. Turn jar upside down to cool.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Quick and Easy Tomato Sauce Forestière

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT: Summer gardens are in bloom, and tomatoes are all around us. I have created this simple and wonderful mushroom sauce to use all of these magnificent tomatoes. Use my recipe for Homemade Tomato Sauce to make this even more special.

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups fresh or rehydrated mixed mushrooms including chanterelles
 4 cups Homemade Tomato Sauce*
 ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
 ¼ cup shallots, minced
 6 cloves garlic, sliced
 1 ounce dry red wine
 salt and pepper to taste



METHOD:

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium-high heat. Sauté shallots and garlic for 5-6 minutes until garlic is brown around the edges. Add mushrooms and sauté for 5-10 minutes reducing any liquid by half. Deglaze the pan with red wine and add Homemade tomato sauce. Bring to a simmer and cook for 15 -20 minutes. Serve over hot pasta.

*If homemade tomato sauce is not available, this recipe can be made with canned tomato sauce. I recommend Cento brand tomato sauce with basil.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Classic Bolognese Sauce

PREP TIME: 2 Hours

SERVES: 8-10

COMMENT: This classic Italian meat sauce from Bologna traditionally uses at least two different kinds of meats. It can be served over your favorite pasta or used in lasagne or other Italian dishes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 pound ground pork
- 1 pound ground beef
- ¼ cup olive oil
- ½ pound finely minced pickled pork
- 2 cups diced onions
- 1 cup diced carrots
- 1 cup diced celery
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 2 cups beef stock
- 2 (28-ounce) cans Cento diced plum tomatoes, not drained
- 6 tbsps Cento tomato paste
- 2 bay leaves
- salt and pepper to taste
- sugar as needed
- ½ cup parsley



METHOD:

In a heavy-bottomed pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add pickled pork and sauté 2-3 minutes to render fat. Add ground pork and ground beef and cook until meat is well browned and slightly caramelized on the bottom of the pot. Meat should be separated and crumbly. I prefer to cook the meat in a longer, slower fashion to bring out the best flavor. Add onions, celery, garlic and carrots, blending well into the meat mixture. Sauté 3-5 minutes or until wilted. Add stock, tomatoes and tomato paste, blend well, bring to a boil and reduce to simmer. Add bay leaves, cover and simmer 1 hour, stirring occasionally. Additional stock may be needed to retain sauce consistency; however, the sauce should be of a thick consistency. Sugar may be added to cut the acid if necessary. Season with salt and pepper, then add parsley. Cook 2-3 additional minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Raspberry Jalapeno Glaze

PREP TIME: 40 minutes

Makes: 4 cups

COMMENT:

Use as a finishing touch to your grilled or broiled kabobs to give them a sweet finish. Don't put in too early as the sugar can quickly caramelize or burn.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup fresh or frozen raspberry
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 cup fresh jalapenos, finely minced
- 1/4 cup soy sauce
- 4 cups sugar
- 1 cup raspberry/cranberry juice cocktail

METHOD:

In a 3-quart non-reactive, heavy-bottomed sauce pot, add all ingredients and cook over medium-high heat until the sugar has melted and the sauce has reduced to 4 cups and coats the back of a spoon, about 20 - 30 minutes. Serve with kabobs of your choice.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Blackberry Bar-B-Q Sauce

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

This interesting BBQ sauce is a natural accompaniment to pork in any form - tenderloin, chop or rib. Sauces with fruity or sweet ingredients compliment pork in a subtle, yet flavorful manner.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup blackberry preserves
- 1 1/2 cups ketchup
- 1/8 cup packed brown sugar
- 2 tbsp Steen's Cane syrup
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1/4 tsp mustard powder
- 2 tbsp red wine vinegar
- 1/2 cup fresh blackberries

METHOD:

In a mixing bowl, combine all ingredients. Mix well. Brush over grilled pork tenderloin, pork chops or ribs when they are almost done (128 degrees F for rare to 150 degrees F for well done).

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Salsa Pomodoro Basilico - (Tomato Basil Sauce)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 8 (2-ounce) Servings

COMMENT:

That's Italian! Salsa Pomodoro Basilico is one of Chef Andrea Apuzzo's favorite pasta sauces. He serves it in his restaurant, he makes it at home and it's included in his cookbook. It's become one of my favorite tomato sauce recipes too.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1/4 cup onion, chopped
- 1 tsp garlic, chopped
- 1/4 cup red wine
- 2 cups canned Italian plum tomatoes
- 2 cups juice from tomatoes
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp white pepper
- 2 sprigs fresh oregano, chopped
- 8 fresh basil leaves, chopped
- 4 sprigs Italian parsley, chopped
- 1 bay leaf

METHOD:

In a sauce pan over medium heat, heat olive oil until very hot. Add onions and garlic and sauté until vegetables are wilted. Add wine and bring to a rolling boil. Immediately add tomatoes, squeezing them between your fingers to break them up as you add them. Add tomato juice. Lower the heat and simmer the sauce. After about 30 minutes, add water (1 cup or less), if necessary, to give the sauce the right consistency. You want the sauce thin enough to be able to easily coat pasta or meat loaf, yet not so thin that it runs off. Add salt, pepper, oregano, basil, parsley and bay leaf. Simmer sauce another 15-20 minutes. Adjust seasonings as needed.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- [Appetizers](#)
- [Soups](#)
- [Salads](#)
- [Game](#)
- [Meats](#)
- [Seafood](#)
- [Vegetables](#)
- [Pasta](#)
- [Poultry](#)
- [Breads](#)
- [Stuffings & Dressings](#)
- [Desserts](#)
- [Beverages](#)
- [Breakfast & Brunch](#)
- [Roux](#)
- [Stocks & Sauces](#)
- [Seasoning Cast Iron](#)
- [Misc](#)

STOCKS & SAUCES

Chef John Folse's Pure Vanilla Extract

COMMENT:

When comparing the price of vanilla extracts in the grocery store, you will find them ranging from cheap to extremely expensive. The cheap ones are probably made from extract of Tonka beans, a member of the pea family, that has a high concentration of Coumarin. Coumarin has a strong vanilla-type aroma, but no flavor. However, pure vanilla extract is made from expensive vanilla beans retailing for as much as \$3 each. Additionally, they are aged in Bourbon, Brandy or Vodka raising the cost even more. But when done properly, it will last forever, aging like a fine wine.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 vanilla beans, split and chopped into 1-inch pieces
- 1 pint of Bourbon or Vodka

METHOD:

Place vanilla beans into 1 pint bottle of liquor. (I prefer Jack Daniels' Black Label). Place cap on bottle and tighten. Allow to steep 1 to 6 months, depending on the strength you wish to achieve. (The longer the better.) Shake the bottle occasionally to disperse the ingredients. The mixture keeps indefinitely, and you can continue to add alcohol to the bottle as you use the extract. When the extract has reached the ideal flavor for your cooking, you may strain the beans from the liquor using a coffee filter and return the extract to the bottle. There is no need to refrigerate.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Spiced Cranberry and Kumquat Sauce with Zinfandel

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 6 Cups

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 (12-ounce) bags fresh cranberries
- 12 kumquats, sliced and seeds removed
- 1 3/4 cups red Zinfandel
- 2 cups sugar
- 1 cup golden brown sugar, packed
- 6 whole cloves
- 6 whole allspice
- 3 cinnamon sticks
- 1 strip orange peel

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients except cranberries and kumquats in a medium saucepan. Bring to a rolling boil over medium-high heat, stirring until sugar dissolves. Reduce heat and simmer until mixture is reduced to 1 3/4 cups, about 10 minutes. Strain syrup into a large saucepan. Add cranberries and kumquats to syrup and cook over medium heat until cranberries burst, about 6 minutes. Cool and transfer sauce to a medium bowl. Cover and refrigerate until cold. (NOTE: This sauce can be made 1 week prior to serving, but must be kept refrigerated.)

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Ms. Murphy's Cranberry Syrup

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 3 Cups

COMMENT:

Ms. Murphy was a wonderful French Creole woman from Louisiana who cooked for Linda Lawrence when she was a child. Linda owns Creole Country Inn today and often reminisces about those two wonderful women, Ms. Murphy and Ms. Young, who introduced her to Creole cooking. She especially remembers how the cranberry sauce served with Christmas Eve dinner was blended with maple syrup to become the perfect topping for her Christmas Day waffles. I suggest serving this dish as a breakfast item throughout the holidays for all your overnight guests.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 (16-ounce) can whole cranberries
- 1 cup maple syrup

METHOD:

In a small saucepan, combine cranberries and syrup over medium heat. Bring mixture to a low boil and cook, stirring occasionally for approximately 5 minutes. You may store the cranberry syrup in a glass jar for later use or serve hot over cornmeal pecan waffles.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Roux
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Freezer Persimmon Jam

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 4 Cups

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 pounds soft persimmons
- 3 cups sugar
- 1 (3-ounce) pouch liquid pectin
- 1/4 cup lemon juice

METHOD:

If necessary, cut or pull off persimmon stems and discard. If persimmons are firm enough, peel with a knife. For soft fruit, cut in half and scoop out pulp. Discard any seeds and skin. Mash pulp, or coarsely chop using a knife or food processor (do not purée). You should have 1 1/2 cups of fruit. In a mixing bowl, mix fruit and sugar. Let stand for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. In a separate bowl, mix pectin and lemon juice. Add to fruit and stir gently for 3 minutes. (NOTE: Do not stir vigorously as air bubbles tend to get trapped, making the jam cloudy.) Fill 1/2-pint jars or freezer containers to 1/2-inch of rim. Cover and let stand 12-16 hours at room temperature. You can store unopened jam in covered jars in the refrigerator up to 6 months, or up to 1 month if opened. Freeze to store longer. Cover and chill thawed jam.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Persimmon Jelly

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 3 (1/2-pint) Jars

COMMENT:

It's unfortunate that many people think of persimmons as an astringent fruit, one not very pleasant to eat or cook. What a fallacy! The fruit is, in fact, sugary sweet and syrupy once it ripens and becomes soft in mid to late October.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 1/2-4 pounds ripe persimmons
- 2 cups water
- 3 tbsps lemon juice
- 1 package powdered fruit pectin
- 1/2 cup honey

METHOD:

Wash persimmons and remove blossom end. Place in a 6- to 8-quart stainless steel or enamel saucepan. Add water. Bring mixture to a rolling boil. Mash persimmons, reduce heat and simmer 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Press pulp through a strainer to remove pits and measure 3 cups pulp. Stir in lemon juice and pectin and bring mixture to a rolling boil. Stir in honey all at once and let mixture return to a full rolling boil that can't be stirred down. Boil for 1-2 minutes, stirring constantly. Do a jelly test and, when firm enough, ladle into hot, scalded 1/2-pint jars. Leave a 1/4-inch headspace and seal. Process for 5 minutes in a boiling water bath.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Red Rémoulade Sauce

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

MAKES: 2 Cups

COMMENT:

The recipe for the rémoulade sauce of the River Road is found in the appetizer section of my Evolution of Cajun and Creole Cuisine cookbook. I have taken this opportunity to give you a second version, the Creole style, thought to be the original Louisiana version.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup olive oil
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar
- ¾ cup Creole mustard
- ½ cup green onions, thinly sliced
- ¼ cup parsley, chopped
- ¼ cup celery, minced
- 1 tbsp garlic, minced
- 1 tbsp paprika
- salt to taste
- hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large ceramic mixing bowl, combine olive oil, vinegar and Creole mustard. Using a wire whisk, blend well until all ingredients are well incorporated. Add green onions, parsley, celery and garlic. Continue mixing until all seasonings are well blended. Add paprika for color and season to taste using salt and hot sauce. Place in a refrigerator, covered with clear wrap and allow to sit overnight. You may wish to serve a generous portion of this sauce over shrimp, lump crabmeat or simply as a salad dressing.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Hot Red Pepper Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 2 quarts

COMMENT:

There are hundreds of hot sauces available in Louisiana. However, if you wish to make a fresh, homemade version, this recipe is one of the best. It contains no vinegar and salt. Therefore, it may be used as an accompaniment to any dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 6 pounds sweet red cherry peppers
- 3 pounds hot red jalapeno peppers

METHOD:

NOTE: It is always best to wear rubber gloves when working with hot peppers.

Using a sharp paring knife, remove the stems from the peppers and quarter. Retain seeds. In a large saucepot place the peppers and seeds with enough water to cover by ¼-inch. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until peppers are tender, but still bright red. Do not brown peppers. Remove the tenderized peppers from the liquid and run through a food mill, or purée in a food processor.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Sweet Red Pepper Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 2 quarts

COMMENT:

There are hundreds of sweet pepper sauces available in Louisiana. However, if you wish to make a fresh, homemade version, this recipe is one of the best. It contains no vinegar and salt. Therefore, it may be used as an accompaniment to any dish.

INGREDIENTS:

9 pounds sweet red bell peppers

METHOD:

Using a sharp paring knife, quarter the bell peppers and retain seeds. In a large saucepot place the peppers and seeds with enough water to cover by ¼-inch. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook until peppers are tender, but still bright red. Do not brown peppers. Remove the tenderized peppers from the liquid and run through a food mill, or purée in a food processor.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Root Beer Barbecue Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 1½ Cups

COMMENT:

Barbecue glazes made with soft drinks are a long-standing tradition in the South. Root beer is most often used because of the cloves, sassafras and other aromatic spices found in the drink.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup Barq's root beer
- 1 cup ketchup
- ¼ cup fresh lemon juice
- ¼ cup orange juice
- 3 tbsps Worcestershire sauce
- 1 ½ tbsps dark brown sugar, packed
- 2 tbsps Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1 tsp liquid smoke
- ½ tsp lemon peel, grated
- ½ tsp ground ginger
- ½ tsp granulated garlic
- ½ tsp onion powder

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients in heavy, medium-sized saucepan. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat and simmer until sauce is reduced to 1½ cups volume, about 20 minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper and cool slightly. Transfer to a ceramic bowl, cover and refrigerate.

NOTE: This barbecue sauce can be made 2 weeks in advance. Keep refrigerated.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Southern Style Green Tomato Relish

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 Quart

COMMENT:

Green tomato relish is a staple in Southern cooking and is normally made toward the end of the tomato season as a method of using new tomatoes left on the vine after the reds have been consumed. Southern ladies often jarred green tomatoes and opened them up on a cold winter day for a taste of late summer.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 large green tomatoes, peeled, cored and diced
- 4 large Bermuda onions, finely diced
- 2 red bell peppers, halved, seeded and finely diced
- 2 yellow bell peppers, halved, seeded and finely diced
- 1 cup cider vinegar
- 2 cup granulated sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- ½ tsp ground allspice
- 1/8 tsp ground cloves
- ½ tsp celery seed
- ½ tsp mustard seed
- 1 jalapeño pepper, seeded and finely diced
- 1 ½ tbsps salt

METHOD:

Place tomatoes in a colander and sprinkle with approximately 1 tbsp salt, stirring to coat evenly. Allow tomatoes to sit and drain. You may wish to place a bowl under the tomatoes to catch the jus for later use. Place 1-quart of water in a heavy-bottomed saucepot and bring to a rolling boil. Add onions and bell peppers, cook 2 minutes then drain and cool. In a large mixing bowl, add the drained tomatoes, par-boiled vegetables and all remaining ingredients. Blend well and adjust seasonings if necessary. This relish may be served under a piece of fresh-grilled fish or chicken. It may also be served as an accompaniment to any sandwich or salad. If you wish to cook the relish for canning purposes, place the blended product into a saucepot and simmer 45 minutes to 1 hour, stirring occasionally. The relish may then be jarred according to canning directions. The cooked relish is always best after sitting for approximately 1 month.

NOTE: You may spice up this dish with addition of ½ tsp red pepper flakes.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Chef John Folse's Creole Tomato Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6 to 8

COMMENT:

Most people don't realize that tomatoes are a product of America. Many believe they originated in Italy and somehow found their way to Bayou Country. The Creole tomato is a product of St. Bernard and Plaquemine parishes and is known for its sugar-sweet juiciness. It was this tomato that was originally used in New Orleans to create our now famous Creole sauce.

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 Creole tomatoes, peeled and seeded or 24 Roma tomatoes
- 1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 10 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 12 large basil leaves, chopped
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper

METHOD:

In a stainless steel saucepot, heat oils over medium-high heat. Add garlic and, using a wooden spoon, sauté the garlic slices until pale yellow or very light brown around the edges, approximately 3 minutes. Add tomatoes and blend well into the garlic mixture. Bring to a low simmer and slowly add chicken stock to retain moisture and create the fresh sauce. Cook 5 to 7 minutes and add basil and cayenne pepper. The sauce is now ready to serve as a pasta topping or a base for fish and veal. Add additional stock as necessary to retain sauce-like consistency. When serving this over pasta, drain the pasta when done and toss with a small amount of olive oil. Blend 1 to 2 serving spoons of the fresh marinara into the pasta along with a generous sprinkle of Parmesan cheese. Once all is well-coated, place the pasta in the center of a serving platter and top with the simmering marinara.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Chef John Folse's Vinegar Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 3 Cups

COMMENT:

Vinegar sauces have their roots in North Carolina. The state is divided in half according to the type of sauce being served. Eastern North Carolina is known for its straight vinegar sauces made simply with salt and various peppers, while western North Carolina adds a touch of tomato and sugar to their vinegar sauces to smooth out the taste.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups cider vinegar
- 2/3 cup ketchup
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 tbsp Louisiana Gold hot sauce
- 1 tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsps butter
- 1 tsp red pepper flakes
- 1 tsp dry mustard
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Cook for 30 minutes, stirring constantly to blend well. NOTE: Make sure that you make this sauce at least a day in advance so that all ingredients and flavors have time to mellow and meld together.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Ginger-Plum Barbecue Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 1 Cup

INGREDIENTS:

- 12 oz. ripe plums (4 - 5 plums), pitted
- 1 tbsp fresh ginger, minced
- 1 stalk fresh lemongrass, trimmed and chopped
- 1 hot chile, seeded
- 2 scallions, trimmed and finely chopped
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 2 tbsps soy sauce
- 2 tbsps sweet soy sauce
- 2 tbsps honey
- 1 tbsp rice vinegar
- 2 tsps fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 cup water

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients in a heavy saucepan and bring to a rolling boil over medium heat. Reduce to medium-low and simmer, uncovered, until plums are very soft, about 5 minutes. Transfer mixture to a blender to process to a purée, then return to the pan. Taste for seasoning, adding more soy sauce, honey or lemon juice as necessary. The sauce should be sweet, sour and spicy. If too thick, thin with water. Transfer to a serving bowl and serve warm or at room temperature. The sauce will keep, refrigerated for up to 1 week.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Cajun Roux Peas

PREP TIME: 30-45 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Peas are a mainstay on the Southern table, but treated totally different here in Cajun Country. In the bayous, we further flavor the fresh peas with a mixture of fresh seasonings and smoked meat, then thicken the natural stock with a light roux. I suggest you try cooking them in this fashion for a new dining experience.

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds fresh peas, shelled
 ½ pound smoked sausage, diced
 ½ cup vegetable oil
 ½ cup diced onions
 ½ cup diced celery
 ½ cup diced red bell pepper
 ¼ cup minced garlic
 1 ½ tbsps flour
 3 cups chicken stock
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 salt and black pepper to taste
 Louisiana Hot sauce to taste

METHOD:

Rinse the shelled peas once or twice in cold water, removing any debris. Drain peas and set aside. In a cast-iron Dutch oven, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add smoked sausage and sauté 3 -5 minutes. Add onions, celery, bell pepper and garlic. Sauté 3-5 additional minutes, stirring occasionally. Sprinkle in the flour and blend well into the vegetable mixture. Add fresh peas, stock and season lightly using salt and pepper. Bring to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer and cook until peas are tender and slightly thickened gravy has formed. Depending on the age of the peas, additional stock may be necessary to retain volume during cooking. Once peas are tender, season to taste using salt, pepper and Louisiana Hot Sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Guy DiSalvo's Premium Marinara Sauce

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 1 Quart (8 ½-Cup Servings)

COMMENT:

Guy DiSalvo, simply put, is the best of the best! I can think of no Italian chef who can create a better, tastier pasta sauce with so little effort. Guy and his brother, Mario, came from the Old Country in search of a better life in America. They founded DiSalvo's Restaurant in Jeanette, Pennsylvania and later DiSalvo's Station in Latrobe. Guy and his wife, Rita, along with their son, Joey, continue to create magnificent Italian food in Pennsylvania while sharing it with the rest of the country. Often they have spent time with us here in Louisiana and honored us with a dinner and demonstration as a Visiting Chef at our Culinary Institute at Nicholls State University. His marinara is the only one served at Lafitte's Landing. John Folse

INGREDIENTS:

- 24 Roma tomatoes, peeled and seeded
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 10 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 12 large basil leaves, chopped
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper

METHOD:

In a stainless steel sauce pot, heat oils over medium-high heat. Using a wooden spoon, sauté the garlic slices until pale yellow or very light brown around the edges, approximately 3 minutes. Add tomatoes and blend well into garlic mixture. Bring to a low simmer and slowly add chicken stock to retain moisture and create the fresh sauce. Cook 5-7 minutes and add basil and cayenne pepper. The sauce is now ready to serve as a pasta topping or a base for fish and veal. Add additional stock as necessary to retain sauce-like consistency. When serving this sauce over pasta, drain the pasta when done and toss with a small amount of olive oil. Blend 1-2 serving spoons of the fresh marinara into the pasta along with a generous sprinkle of Parmesan cheese. Once all is well coated, place the pasta in the center of a serving platter and top with simmering marinara.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Louis' Sauce Basquaise

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 2 Quarts

COMMENT:

When I visited Louis and Lorraine Erreguible at their legendary restaurant, Louis' Basque Corner in Reno, Nevada, I discovered a sauce that I knew I had to share. The interesting thing about this simple sauce, is that it reminded me of the best of country flavors... including our own...but yet, like Creole Sauce, can be adapted in 100 different recipes. It's the truest form of Country Cooking.

INGREDIENTS:

½ cup vegetable oil
 2 cups diced onions
 1 cup diced bell pepper
 6 cloves garlic, thinly sliced
 ½ cup minced shallots
 2 pinches hot pepper flakes
 4 cups diced fresh, ripe tomatoes (peeled and seeded)
 ½ tbsps flour
 2 cups dry white wine
 salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In a large braising pan, heat oil over medium high heat. Add onions, bell pepper, garlic and shallots. Sauté 3 - 5 minutes or until vegetables are wilted. Add tomatoes and pepper flakes. Cook on medium high heat for 5 - 10 minutes, then sprinkle in flour to act as a roux. When well blended, add white wine and reduce on low heat or place in oven until sauce has thickened to a nice tomato puree consistency. Remove from oven and top with chicken, rabbit, cubed lamb or your favorite meat of choice. Cover and return to oven, stirring occasionally, and adding wine as necessary to keep moist. Bake 1 to 1 ½ hours or until meat is tender.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Steen's Basic Barbeque Sauce

PREP TIME: 10 Minutes

MAKES: 4 Pints

COMMENT:

This recipe is just one of many created by the Steen family at their syrup mill in Abbeville. What I like about this particular sauce is it's simplicity without sacrificing great and unique flavor.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 stick oleo
- 1 bottle catsup (small)
- 1 bottle cooking sherry wine (refill catsup bottle)
- 1 lemon-cut into quarters
- Hot sauce to taste
- 2 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire Sauce
- 1 tsp mustard
- 1/4 cup Steen's Syrup

METHOD:

Melt oleo in saucepan, add other ingredients in order given, and heat only until sauce simmers.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Texas-Style Honey Barbecue Rub

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 4

COMMENT:

In this recipe from the barbecue pits of west Texas, honey is the ingredient that sets this rub apart from other basic sweet glazes.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 boneless beef top sirloin steak, 4 oz. each
- 1/4 cup honey
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tsp medium grind black pepper
- 2 tsp ground mustard
- 2 tsp chili powder

METHOD:

Rub each steak with 1 tablespoon of honey. Combine remaining ingredients and rub onto steaks. Let stand 20 to 30 minutes. Barbecue or broil to desired degree of doneness.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Peach Barbecue Sauce

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 16

INGREDIENTS:

32 oz peaches, canned
 1 1/2 cup vinegar
 1 cup oil
 1/2 tsp garlic cloves, crushed
 2 tbsps Dijon mustard
 1 tsp cinnamon
 3 tbsps lemon juice
 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
 1/4 tsp ginger, ground
 1/2 tsp black pepper
 3/4 cup maple syrup
 1 cup brown sugar
 2 tbsps cornstarch

METHOD:

Puree peaches. Mix corstarch with a little water. Combine all ingredients in a large saucepan and heat to low boil, stirring occasionally. continue to simmer 30 minutes, stirring frequently. Sauce may be thin, so at the end of cooking time, if necessary, add sufficient water/cornstarch mixture to give sauce consistency of commercial barbecue sauce.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Calypso's Rum Glaze

PREP TIME: 2-2 1/2 Hours

SERVES: 9 Cups, unstrained

INGREDIENTS:

1/4 cup vegetable oil
 3 cups diced onions, small
 1/4 cup minced garlic
 2 tbsps minced ginger root
 1/2 cup dark rum
 1 cup pineapple juice
 1 cup balsamic vinegar
 1 cup soy sauce
 1/8 cup hot sauce
 2 cups beef stock
 8 cups light brown sugar, firmly packed
 cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

In an 8-quart stock pot, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add onions, garlic and ginger root. Sauté 5-7 minutes or until vegetables are wilted and turning a light golden brown. Add rum, pineapple juice, balsamic vinegar, soy sauce, hot sauce and beef stock and reduce volume by half, approximately 20 minutes. Add brown sugar and reduce heat to simmer. Reduce mixture to a syrup consistency. Season to taste using cayenne pepper. Strain mixture if desired.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Spicy Orange Mayonnaise

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

SERVES: 8 - 10

COMMENT:

This fabulous dressing is wonderful with fried fish or may be served cold with any seafood including crab claws. You may also wish to try it as a salad dressing on cold lobster or crawfish salads.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 ½ cups fresh, squeezed orange juice
- 1 ½ cups heavy-duty mayonnaise
- 1 tsp grated orange peel
- 1 tbsp red pepper flakes
- 1/4 cup chopped tarragon
- salt and pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a small sauce pot, place orange juice with all other ingredients except mayonnaise. Bring to a low boil and reduce the orange juice to 1/4 cup. Allow the mixture to cool to room temperature. Combine the spicy juice with the mayonnaise. Cover and chill overnight. This mayonnaise will keep in the refrigerator up to 3 days.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Spicy Scallion Garlic Butter

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

SERVES: 8 - 10

COMMENT:

This butter sauce is delicious served warm over King Crab legs, shrimp or lobster. You may also use it to flavor sautéed potatoes or grilled vegetables.

INGREDIENTS:

½ bunch scallions, thinly sliced
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 ½ pound unsalted butter
 1 tsp chopped, fresh rosemary
 juice of 1 lemon
 1/8 tsp cracked black pepper
 dash Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 salt to taste
 2 tbsps chopped basil

METHOD:

In a heavy bottom sauté pan, melt butter over low heat. Combine scallions, garlic and rosemary and sauté three to five minutes. Do not brown butter. Add lemon juice and remaining seasonings and simmer one additional minute. Butter may be served warm or allowed to cool and when solid, roll into a cigar shape and wrap in foil for later use.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Brown Meunière Sauce

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

YIELD: 1 cup

COMMENT:

This brown meunière sauce is the most popular sauce at Lafitte's Landing Restaurant. Its tart taste and rich flavor goes well with both meat and fish. However, many exciting variations may be made using meunière as the mother sauce.

INGREDIENTS:

4 ounces demi-glace
 2 ounces dry white wine
 1 ounce lemon juice
 ½ pound cold, unsalted butter
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a sauce pan over medium high heat, combine demi-glace, wine and lemon juice. Using a wire whisk, stir until all ingredients are well blended. Bring to a low boil and reduce until the liquids are about one half in volume. Slowly whisk in cold butter, a few pats at a time, swirling pan constantly while butter is incorporating. Pan must be swirled constantly as hot spots will develop and the butter will break down. Continue to add butter, swirling constantly, until all is incorporated. Season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper and keep warm. Since this is a basic butter sauce, it cannot be reheated as butter will melt and separate. If allowed to chill, it will return to the solid state.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Blender Hollandaise Sauce

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

YIELDS: 1 ½ Cups

COMMENT:

Although Hollandaise is one of the most often used sauces, most people find it quite difficult to prepare. This blender method not only makes the process simple, but also produces an extraordinary sauce.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 egg yolks
- ½ pound unsalted butter
- 2 tbsps red wine vinegar
- 1 tbsp dry white wine
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- dash of hot sauce
- salt and white pepper to taste

METHOD:

Fill a blender with hot tap water and allow to sit until needed. The hot water will heat the blender container to temperature prior to making the sauce. Pour out water. Into the blender place 3 egg yolks then add red wine vinegar, white wine, lemon juice, hot sauce, salt and pepper. Melt the butter in a small sauce pot, swirling constantly, until the butter reaches 150 degrees F. The butter should be approximately 140 degrees F. prior to blending. When ready to prepare the sauce, blend the egg yolk mixture on high for 2 minutes. When well-blended, pour the 140 degree F butter into the egg mixture in a slow, steady stream until all is incorporated and hollandaise sauce is formed. The sauce should be light and fluffy. Pour the sauce into a slightly-warmed ceramic pitcher and serve immediately. If the sauce cools, the butter will solidify. If the sauce is reheated, the butter will break.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Oysters Rockefeller Sauce

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

This, the most famous of all oyster dishes in Cajun country, was first developed at Antoine's Restaurant, by Jules Alciatore in 1899. Named Rockefeller because of its incredible rich flavor, the original recipe included no spinach.

INGREDIENTS:

1 dozen shucked oysters with liquid
 1/4 pound butter
 1/4 cup diced onions
 1/4 cup diced celery
 1/2 cup chopped green onions
 2 tbsps diced garlic
 1 cup cooked frozen spinach (thawed)
 1 tbsp flour
 1 pint heavy whipping cream
 1/2 ounce Pernod or Herbsaint
 1 tsp sugar
 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
 1 tsp Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a two quart sauce pan, melt butter over medium high heat. Sauté onions, celery, green onions and garlic, approximately three to five minutes or until seasonings are wilted. Add cooked spinach, and using a metal spoon, chop well into the vegetable mixture. Cook until spinach is hot and well incorporated into seasonings. Add flour and blend well into mixture, being sure to remove all lumps. Add whipping cream and oyster liquid, stirring constantly until sauce is thick and bubbly. Add Pernod, sugar, Worcestershire and Louisiana Gold. Continue stirring until all is well blended. Season to taste using salt and pepper. To ensure a sauce-like consistency, additional cream or water may be added. Continue to cook approximately 10 minutes, add oysters and cook 5 minutes. Pour the contents of the sauce pan into a blender and puree on high speed. Serve 2-ounces of the Oysters Rockefeller Sauce with your favorite trout, chicken or veal dish.

[print this page >>](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Beurre Cajun

PREP TIME: 15 minutes

YIELDS: 1 cup

INGREDIENTS:

1/4 cup crawfish tails with fat
 1/2 cup dry white wine
 1 tbsp lemon juice
 1 clove diced garlic
 1 tbsp sliced green onions
 1/4 cup finely sliced andouille
 dash of Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
 8 ounces chipped, unsalted butter
 salt and cayenne pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a sauté pan over medium high heat, combine crawfish tails, wine, lemon juice, garlic, green onions, andouille and Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce. Sauté approximately three to five minutes or until all liquids in pan are reduced by one half volume. Add chipped butter, a few pieces at a time, swirling pan, constantly. Do not stir with a metal spoon or wire whisk as hot spots will develop in the pan and butter will separate. Continue to add butter, a few pieces at a time, swirling pan, until all is incorporated. Remove from heat and season to taste using salt and cayenne pepper. This sauce is excellent when served over pan sautéed or charbroiled fish.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Grilled Corn Salsa

PREP TIME: 40 Minutes

MAKES: 4 cups

COMMENT:

This colorful salsa can be made with corn that has been either grilled or smoked. The red and green bell peppers should be roasted over the coals at the same time the corn is cooking. This salsa is perfect with grilled chicken or pork.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 ears grilled or smoked corn on the cob
- 2 to 3 large fresh green and/or red jalapeno peppers, finely chopped
- 1 large red bell pepper, roasted, peeled, seeded and diced*
- 1 large green bell pepper, roasted, peeled, seeded and diced*
- 1 medium red onion, diced*
- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1/4 cup fresh lime juice
- 2 large or 4 small garlic cloves, pressed
- 1 teaspoon Texas-style chili powder
- Salt (to taste)
- * Dice peppers and onions to make them the same size as corn kernels.

METHOD:

Slice corn kernels off cob. Mix corn with peppers and onion in a non-reactive bowl. In a separate non-reactive bowl, whisk together olive oil and lime juice, then whisk in garlic and chili powder. Pour dressing over corn-pepper mixture. Toss to mix well. Taste and add salt if desired. Let salsa sit at room temperature for 30 minutes before serving. Toss once more before serving. (Or refrigerate up to 2 days and let come to room temperature before serving).

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Honey Creole Mustard Glaze

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

MAKES: ½ Cup

COMMENT:

Sweet and spicy glazes are used most often for coating wild game or baked hams during the holiday season. I enjoy these unique flavors as dips for fried seafood and vegetables. Feel free to substitute your favorite jam or jelly in this recipe.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1/4 cup honey
- 1/4 cup orange marmalade
- 1 tbsp Zatarain's Creole mustard

METHOD:

In a stainless steel mixing bowl, whisk all of the ingredients until well blended. It is best to set the glaze aside and allow flavors to develop over a 3- or 4- hour period. Once the ham, duck or other game has been cooked to perfection, baste with the honey-mustard glaze at 5-minute intervals for approximately 15 minutes.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

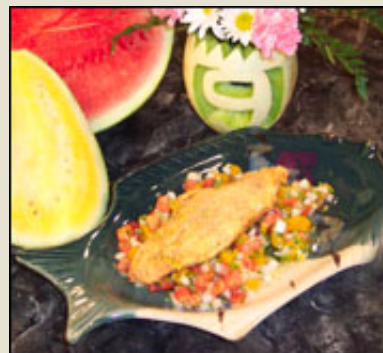
Watermelon and Sweet Vidalia Onion Salsa

PREP TIME: 45 Minutes

SERVES: 8

COMMENT:

Although sweet, spicy salsas are commonplace in Caribbean cooking, they have only been seen here on America's tables in the past few years. Salsa combinations are wonderful with grilled fish or chicken and are often used in place of a sauce. Try a tablespoon or two of this version in your next spinach salad.



INGREDIENTS:

2 cups chopped seeded watermelon
 1 cup sweet Vidalia onion, chopped
 ¼ cup orange marmalade
 ¼ cup fresh cilantro, chopped
 ¼ cup jalapeno peppers, finely chopped
 2 tbsps white vinegar
 1 garlic clove, minced
 ½ teaspoon salt
 1 cup chopped orange sections

METHOD:

In large bowl, stir together orange marmalade, cilantro, jalapeno peppers, vinegar, garlic and salt. Add watermelon, sweet Vidalia onion and orange. Gently toss together until coated. Chill at least 30 minutes before serving.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Beef, Veal or Game Stock

PREP TIME: 6 Hours

MAKES: 2 Quarts

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pounds marrow bones
- 3 pounds shin of beef
- 3 large onions, unpeeled and quartered
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 3 celery stalks, peeled and sliced
- 3 heads garlic, sliced in half to expose pods
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 springs parsley
- 15 black peppercorns
- 1 tsp whole thyme
- 1 ½ gallons water
- 3 cups dry red wine

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Have your butcher select and save three pounds of beef or veal marrow bones and three pounds of an inexpensive shin meat or stew meat of beef. Place bones and shin meat in roasting pan and bake until golden brown, approximately thirty minutes. Place browned bones, meat and all remaining ingredients in a three gallon stock pot. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook for six hours adding water if necessary to retain volume. During this cooking process, skim off impurities that rise to the surface of the pot. Remove pot from heat and strain stock through fine cheese cloth or strainer. Allow stock to rest for fifteen minutes and skim off all oil that rises to the top. Return stock to a low boil and reduce to two quarts.

GAME STOCK:

To create the basic game stock, proceed exactly as you would for the beef or veal stock. The difference, however, is that you must substitute three pounds of duck, rabbit, venison or other wild game bones into the stock pot in place of the veal or beef bones. Other than the shellfish stock, game stock is used more often in Cajun and Creole cuisine than any other sauce base.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Cane Syrup Vinaigrette

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 2 ½ Cups

COMMENT:

I love the flavor of cane syrup. So it's natural that I would create a vinaigrette dressing using this wonderful ingredient. Most people are confused as to the flavor of cane syrup and often compare it to molasses, however, nothing could be further from the truth. Molasses is a much stronger and darker syrup and is used in dishes such as gingerbread and spice cakes. Cane syrup is more of a breakfast syrup.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 egg yolk
- 1 tbsp minced onions
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1 tsp chopped basil
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- 1 tsp cracked black pepper
- 1 tsp Creole mustard
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 2 tbsps orange juice
- 1 tbsp cane syrup
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 1 cup olive oil
- salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

Place egg yolk in a large mixing bowl. Using a wire whisk, whip egg for one minute. Add onions, garlic, basil, thyme, black pepper, mustard, vinegar, orange juice and cane syrup. Continue to whip until all ingredients are blended. Pour oil in a slow steady stream until all is incorporated. Season to taste using salt and pepper.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Demi-glace

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

MAKES: 1 Quart

COMMENT:

Demi-glace is an essential sauce in classical cuisine. I have incorporated this sauce into most of the dishes created at Lafitte's Landing Restaurant.

INGREDIENTS:

2 quarts beef, veal or game stock
 ½ cup white roux
 1 ounce tomato sauce

METHOD:

Equally divide the stock into two heavy bottom sauce pans and bring to a low boil. Using a wire whisk, add ½ cup white roux into one of the sauce pans, stirring constantly as mixture thickens. Into the thickened mixture, blend tomato sauce. What you have just created is known in classical cooking as an espagnole sauce. If this sauce is not full-flavored, you may wish to add a mirepoix or bouquet garni. Continue simmering while skimming all impurities that rise to the surface. As the espagnole sauce reduces, replace the volume with the stock from the second pot until all has been incorporated. Strain through cheese cloth or fine strainer. You may wish to add an ounce of sherry or brandy to add flavor.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Fried Chicken Gravy

PREP TIME: 10 minutes

YIELDS: 1 1/2 cups

COMMENT:

Warm the milk to help prevent lumping.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 recipe Our Best Southern Fried Chicken
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 ½ cups milk or water
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper

METHOD:

Fry chicken according to "Our Best...Forget the Rest...Southern Fried Chicken" recipe. Pour off pan drippings, reserving ¼ cup drippings in skillet. Place skillet over medium heat. Add flour to drippings, stirring constantly, until browned. Add milk gradually; cook, stirring constantly, until thickened and bubbly (about 3 to 5 minutes). Stir in salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Duck Stock

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 pounds marrow bones
- 3 pounds duck
- 3 large onions, unpeeled and quartered
- 3 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 3 celery stalks, peeled and sliced
- 3 heads garlic, sliced in half to expose pods
- 2 bay leaves
- 4 sprigs parsley
- 15 black peppercorns
- 1 tsp whole thyme
- 1-1/2 gallons water
- 3 cups dry red wine

METHOD:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Have your butcher select and save three pounds of duck bones and three pounds of duck. Place bones and duck meat in roasting pan and bake until golden brown, approximately thirty minutes. Place browned bones, meat and all remaining ingredients in a three gallon stock pot. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook for six hours adding water if necessary to retain volume. During this cooking process, skim off all impurities that rise to the surface of the pot. Remove pot from heat and strain stock through fine cheese cloth or strainer. Allow stock to rest for fifteen minutes and skim off all oil that rises to the top. Return stock to a low boil and reduce to two quarts.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Sweet Bar-B-Q Sauce - (From John Willingham's World Champion Bar-B-Que cookbook)

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

YIELD: About 2 quarts

COMMENT:

I have sweetened up my basic sauce with a little honey and some butter-you can add or subtract the flavorings to suit your own taste.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups tomato sauce
- 1 1/2 cups cola, such as Coca-Cola or Pepsi or Royal Crown, or beer
- 1 1/2 cups cider vinegar
- 1 1/2 cups chili sauce
- 1/4 cup prepared mustard or Willingham's Old Phartz Mustard
- 1/2 cup bottled steak sauce
- Juice of 2 lemons
- 1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 2 tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 tbsp soy sauce
- 1 tbsp honey
- 1/2 tsp Tabasco sauce
- 1 1/2 cups packed dark brown sugar
- 2 tbsp freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp garlic salt
- 1 tbsp butter or margarine

METHOD:

In a large saucepan, combine the tomato sauce, cola, vinegar, chili sauce, mustard, steak sauce, lemon juice, Worcestershire sauce, oil, soy sauce, honey and Tabasco. Stir well. Bring to a simmer over medium heat.

In a small bowl or glass jar with a lid, combine the brown sugar, pepper, garlic salt and mustard. Stir or shake to blend.

Add the dry ingredients to the tomato mixture and stir well. Increase the heat to medium high, stir in the butter, and bring to a brisk simmer, stirring frequently. Cook for about 20 minutes or longer for thicker, more intensely flavored sauce. The longer the sauce cooks, the less is its final volume.

Cover the saucepan and reduce the heat to low. Cook for about 30 minutes until the flavors are well blended. Cool to tepid. Use immediately to cover and refrigerate for up to 1 week.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Louisiana Seafood Cocktail Sauce

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

MAKES: 2 Cups

COMMENT:

Cocktail sauce is one of the seafood sauces found primarily in the city of New Orleans. This sauce has many variations but most are tomato catsup based and spiced with a touch of horseradish.

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup tomato sauce 1 tbsp horseradish
 1/4 cup catsup 1/4 cup chopped bell pepper
 2 tbsps red wine vinegar 1/4 cup chopped celery
 3 tbsps Worcestershire sauce 1 tbsp diced garlic
 3 tbsps Worcestershire sauce salt to taste
 Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large ceramic bowl, combine tomato sauce, catsup, vinegar, Worcestershire and horseradish. Using a wire whip, blend until all ingredients are well incorporated. Add bell pepper, celery and garlic and season to taste using salt and Louisiana Gold. Continue to blend until all seasonings are evenly mixed throughout the sauce. Adjust seasonings to your taste should more sweetness or tartness be desired. Cover and refrigerate overnight for flavors to develop. This sauce is always served with boiled seafood.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Louisiana Tartar Sauce

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

MAKES: 2 Cups

COMMENT:

Tartar sauce is normally served with all fried seafood dishes in South Louisiana. You may wish to try this sauce as a dip for catfish beignets or as a topping for a seafood terrine.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 1/2 cups heavy duty mayonnaise
- 2 tbsps lemon juice
- 1/4 cup pimento olives, chopped
- 1/4 cup sweet pickles, chopped
- 1 tbsp sweet pickle juice
- 1 cup capers, chopped
- 1/4 cup parsley, chopped
- 1 tbsp green onions, sliced
- salt and black pepper to taste
- Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce to taste

METHOD:

In a large ceramic bowl, combine mayonnaise and lemon juice. Using a wire whisk, blend until well incorporated. Add olives, pickles, pickle juice, capers, parsley and green onions. Fold all seasoning ingredients into the mayonnaise until mixture is evenly blended. Season to taste using salt and Louisiana Gold. If you prefer a more tart taste, add extra lemon juice or white vinegar. If a sweeter taste is preferred, add more sweet pickle juice or a touch of sugar. Cover with clear wrap and refrigerate overnight for flavors to develop.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

South Louisiana Rémoulade

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

SERVES: 6

COMMENT:

Rémoulade sauce may be found in any restaurant in South Louisiana and in as many recipe versions. The rémoulades of New Orleans are normally Creole-mustard based and highly seasoned. This, however, is the River Road version.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1½ cups heavy duty mayonnaise
- ¼ cup finely diced celery
- ½ cup finely diced green onions
- 2 tbsps finely diced garlic
- ½ cup Creole mustard
- ¼ cup finely chopped parsley
- ½ cup catsup
- ½ tbsp lemon juice
- 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp Louisiana Gold Pepper Sauce
- Salt and cracked black pepper to taste

METHOD:

In a two-quart mixing bowl, combine all ingredients, whisking well to incorporate the seasonings. Once blended, cover and place in refrigerator, preferably overnight. A minimum of four hours will be required for flavor to be developed. When ready, remove from refrigerator and adjust seasonings to taste.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) |
 [Meet the Man](#) |
 [Tour the Properties](#) |
 [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) |
 [Search](#) |
 [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Creole Tomato Smash

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

Yield: About 3 quarts

COMMENT:

This is easy and quick to make, especially when there's a dozen other things to do during tomato harvest time. It is a good sauce in stews, meat loaf, Shrimp Creole, and various other dishes. If you want this sauce a bit spicier, leave the seeds in the chili peppers as you slice them.

INGREDIENTS:

8 quarts ripe, Creole tomatoes, quartered
 4 hot chili peppers, sliced
 3 cups onions, diced
 1/4 cup chopped basil
 3 cups green peppers, diced
 1 tablespoon chopped thyme
 3 cups celery, diced
 1 tablespoon chopped oregano
 6 cloves garlic, sliced
 salt and pepper to taste
 12 cloves garlic, whole

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients in a large stainless steel or enamel pot and cook for 30 to 45 minutes until tender. Let cool, then freeze.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Creole Tomato Ketchup

PREP TIME: 1/2 Hours

Yield: About 3 cups

COMMENT:

Although there are many flavored ketchups available on the supermarket shelf, why not try your hand at a homemade version. This simple sauce is the perfect base for the imaginative cook to create their own home style delicacy.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 pounds Creole tomatoes, cored and chopped
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 3/4 cup malt or apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1 tablespoon hot pepper sauce

METHOD:

Combine the chopped tomatoes, sugar, and vinegar in a large bowl and mash to a pulp with your hands or a potato masher. Place the tomato mixture and all of the remaining ingredients in a large, heavy, non-reactive saucepan. Cook the mixture slowly over low heat until the puree is thick and bubbly, about 1½ hours. Remove the pan from the heat and pass through a sieve into a clean bowl. Allow the ketchup to cool, then serve or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator until ready to use.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Spicy, Garlicky Barbeque Ketchup

PREP TIME: 1 Hour

Yield: 4 pints

COMMENT:

One thing about the summertime in Louisiana, it not only brings about huge amounts of fresh tomatoes coming from the garden, but at the same time the urge to fire up the old bar-b-que pit. This interesting recipe allows you to take the bounty from the garden and create a unique sauce that's perfect with steaks, chicken or fish on the grill.

INGREDIENTS:

- 10 pounds Creole Tomatoes, peeled and chopped
- 1 tablespoon dry mustard
- 3 cups diced onions
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1/4 cup minced garlic
- 1 1/2 teaspoons mace
- 1 tablespoon crushed red pepper flakes
- 1 teaspoon ginger
- 1 tablespoon celery seed
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 1 cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup Steen's Cane Syrup
- 1/3 cup lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon Louisiana Hot Sauce

METHOD:

Place jars and lids in simmering water (180 degrees) until ready to use. In a large sauce pot combine tomatoes, onions, garlic, red pepper and celery seed. Bring mixture to a rolling boil. Reduce to simmer. Cover and cook 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Put tomato mixture through a sieve or food mill and press out liquid and pulp, discard the seeds. Return tomato mixture to a large sauce pot and cook uncovered until reduced to approximately one-half volume. Add all remaining ingredients and continue to cook over low heat, stirring frequently, until mixture thickens to a ketchup consistency. When done, remove jars and lids from hot water and place on a towel. Carefully ladle hot ketchup into the jars, leaving approximately one-quarter inch head space. Place lid on jar and screw down band firmly. Place the jars in boiling water and process for approximately 20 minutes. When done remove, cool, label and store in a cool, dark place.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

All-Purpose Marinade - (From John Willingham's World Champion Bar-B-Que cookbook)

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

YIELD: 2 cups

COMMENT:

Use this to marinate meat, poultry and vegetables. Or use it to baste, back-base or as a dip. It's also tasty added to Bloody Marys, Virgin Marys and Bullshots. And it's great in salad dressings.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup cider vinegar
- 1/2 cup freshly squeezed orange juice, unstrained
- 1/2 cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 2 to 3 thin slices lemon peel
- 1 tbsp packed dark brown sugar
- 1 tbsp lemon pepper
- 1 tbsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp Tabasco sauce or other hot pepper sauce
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder

METHOD:

In a glass or ceramic bowl, combine all the ingredients. Use immediately or cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Strawberry Glaze

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

YEILDS: 1 1/2 Pints

COMMENT:

This glaze is especially popular during the height of strawberry season. This recipe always finds its way to my Easter and Mother's Day brunches. I love to make this in large batches and can it for use during the winter months.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 pints sugar
- 1 pint water
- 1 pint strawberries, cleaned and pared

METHOD:

In a 3-quart cast iron sauce pan, bring the sugar and water to a boil. Sugar and water will form a simple syrup. Mixture will thicken slightly. Add strawberries and simmer for 15-20 minutes, then strain.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

Spicy Tangipahoa Strawberry BBQ Glaze

Prep Time: 15 Minutes

Yield: 3 Cups

Comment:

The great thing about this type of dish is the many variations and flavors that you can achieve with a little creativity. You may substitute any fresh fruit such as peaches, plums or blackberries. You may wish to use this recipe on boneless chicken breast or on a large roasting capon for your next holiday dish!

Ingredients:

3 cups fresh strawberries, chopped
 2/3 cup strawberry preserves
 1/2 cup hot & spicy ketchup
 1 tbsp soy sauce
 2 tbsps fresh lemon juice
 1 tbsp strawberry wine
 1 large clove garlic, minced
 1 tsp fresh ginger, chopped
 1 tsp crushed red pepper flakes
 1/2 tsp fresh lemon zest, grated
 2 tbsps sliced green onions
 1 tbsp seeded and chopped jalapenos
 1/3 cup light brown sugar
 1 tsp balsamic vinegar
 salt to taste

Method:

In a food processor, blend strawberries, preserves, ketchup, soy sauce, lemon juice, wine, garlic, ginger, red pepper flakes, lemon zest, green onions, jalapenos, brown sugar and balsamic vinegar. Blend until smooth. Set glaze aside. Brush on poultry or pork 2-3 times as it grills.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Tuscan-Style Meaty Marinara

PREP TIME: 30 Minutes

MAKES: 1 Quart

COMMENT:

This simple marinara sauce is made from fresh, ripe Roma tomatoes. The addition of prosciutto ham gives the sauce a special kick.

INGREDIENTS:

- 24 Roma tomatoes, peeled and seeded
- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup vegetable oil
- 10 cloves garlic, sliced
- 1 cup diced prosciutto
- 1 cup chicken stock
- 12 large basil leaves, chopped
- ½ tsp cayenne pepper

METHOD:

In a stainless steel sauce pot, heat oils over medium-high heat. Using a wooden spoon, sauté the garlic slices until pale yellow or very light brown around the edges, approximately 3 minutes. Blend in prosciutto and saute 2 additional minutes. Add tomatoes and blend well into garlic mixture. Bring to a low simmer and slowly add chicken stock to retain moisture and create the fresh sauce. Cook 5-7 minutes and add basil and cayenne pepper. The sauce is now ready to serve as a pasta topping or a base for fish and veal. Add additional stock as necessary to retain sauce-like consistency. When serving this sauce over pasta, drain the pasta when done and toss with a small amount of olive oil. Blend 1-2 serving spoons of the fresh marinara into the pasta along with a generous sprinkle of Parmesan cheese. Once all is well coated, place the pasta in the center of a serving platter and top with simmering marinara.

[print this page >>](#)

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[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

Fish/Shellfish Stock

Prep Time: 1 Hour

Yields: 2 Quarts

Ingredients:

2 pounds fish bones
 OR 1 pound each crab, shrimp and crawfish shells
 2 onions, chopped
 2 carrots, sliced
 2 celery stalks, chopped
 6 garlic cloves
 4 sprigs parsley
 2 bay leaves
 1 tsp dried thyme
 6 whole black peppercorns
 1 lemon, sliced
 1 gallon cold water
 3 cups dry white wine

Method:

Ask your seafood supplier to reserve 2 pounds of white fish bones or 3 pounds of shellfish shells, depending upon stock desired. Combine all ingredients in a 2-gallon stockpot. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to simmer and cook 45 minutes. During cooking process, skim off all impurities that rise to surface. Add water if necessary to retain volume. Strain stock through cheesecloth or a fine sieve. Return stock to simmer and reduce to 2 quarts.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
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- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

White Rémoulade Sauce

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 6 Servings

Comment:

Many different versions of rémoulade sauce may be found in restaurants across South Louisiana. The rémoulades of New Orleans are normally Creole mustard-based and highly seasoned. However, this River Road version is made primarily with mayonnaise.

Ingredients:

1½ cups mayonnaise
 ¼ cup diced celery
 ½ cup sliced green onions
 2 tbsps minced garlic
 ½ cup Creole mustard
 ¼ cup chopped parsley
 ½ cup ketchup
 ½ tbsp lemon juice
 1 tbsp Worcestershire sauce
 1 tsp Louisiana hot sauce
 salt and cracked black pepper to taste

Method:

In a 2-quart mixing bowl, combine all ingredients and whisk well. Once blended, cover and place in refrigerator, preferably overnight. A minimum of 4 hours is required for flavor to develop. When ready, remove from refrigerator and adjust seasonings.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

STOCKS & SAUCES

GUY DISALVO'S PREMIER MARINARA SAUCE

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Yields: 1 Quart

Comment:

Guy DiSalvo, from Latrobe, Pa., is an exceptional Italian chef. His marinara is a great example of simplicity and seasoning done just right to create an amazingly tasty dish.

Ingredients:

24 Roma tomatoes, peeled and seeded
 ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
 ¼ cup vegetable oil
 10 cloves garlic, sliced
 1 cup chicken stock
 12 large basil leaves, chopped
 salt and black pepper to taste

Method:

In a stainless steel saucepot, heat oils over medium-high heat. Sauté garlic slices in oil until very lightly browned around edges. Add tomatoes and blend well. Bring to a low simmer, stirring in chicken stock to retain moisture as needed. Cook 5–7 minutes then stir in basil. Season with salt and pepper. Continue to cook 5–10 minutes, adding stock as needed. Serve as a pasta topping or a base for fish and veal. Shrimp, crab or crawfish may be folded into finished sauce to create a seafood Creole. NOTE: When serving this sauce over pasta, cook and drain pasta then toss with a small amount of olive oil. Blend 1–2 serving spoons of fresh marinara into pasta along with a generous sprinkle of Parmesan cheese. Once pasta is coated, place in center of a serving platter and top with more simmering marinara.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

Herb Butter for Grilled Steaks

PREP TIME: 15 Minutes

YIELDS: 4 Pats

COMMENT:

This herb or maitre d' butter is perfect to top any grilled steak.

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 tbsps salted butter, room temperature
- 2 tbsps chopped tarragon
- 1 tsp chopped thyme
- 2 tbsps minced garlic
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest
- salt and cracked pepper to taste

METHOD:

Cream all of the above ingredients, then mound in the center of a square piece of plastic wrap. Roll into a cylinder, sausage style, twisting each end. Chill until firm. Cut into 4 equal slices and place in the center of steaks immediately after removal from the grill.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

Creole Cream Cheese

PREP TIME: 4 Hours

COMMENT:

Creole Cream Cheese is a farmer style cheese similar in fashion to a combination of cottage cheese and sour cream. Although originally a product of France, many New Orleans dairies such as Goldseal and Bordens supplied the city with the product for many years. Today, Creole cream cheese may be purchased from Dorignac's on Veterans Hwy in New Orleans. The following recipe was given to me by Fred Little, manager of Dorignac's, and Mike Marchaud, cheese maker at the store for the past 18 years.

INGREDIENTS:

2 gallons skim milk
 ½ quart buttermilk
 ½ rennet tablet (available at cheese specialty stores)
 Half & Half optional

METHOD:

Combine skim milk, buttermilk, and the ½ rennet tablet in a stainless steel pot. Using a thermometer, bring the temperature of the milk to 80 degrees, stirring constantly and hold for five minutes. Remove from heat, cover tightly and allow to sit 3 hours. Drain off the whey (liquid remaining after the curds are formed) discarding this liquid. Pack the solids in 8-ounce portions topping with equal parts of half and half cream. Chill and serve with sugar or fruit. Creole cream cheese is excellent in ice creams and pastries.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

Quick Homemade Chili Powder

PREP TIME: 5 minutes

YIELD: Approximately 1 ½ cups

COMMENT:

Chili powders are now sold by a number of spice companies nationwide. Although the formulas for each company's chili powders are closely guarded secrets, researchers have determined that commercially packaged products may contain from one to more than two dozen kinds of powdered chiles, which usually make-up about 80% of the chili powder mix.

You can also make your own chili powder at home by combining powdered chiles with other spices, experimenting until you find the flavor and degree of heat you prefer. You can either purchase chiles that are already powdered or buy whole, dried chile pods to toast and grind yourself. Or you can start from scratch, growing your own chile peppers, then drying the ripe pods, toasting and grinding them into powder, and finally combining them with other spices for your own special blend. Many an award-winning chili got its flavor and kick from the cook's secret formula... which all started with a few select seeds sown in the pepper patch out back.

INGREDIENTS:

- 10 tablespoons Anaheim or guajillo chile powder
- 3 tablespoons ground cumin
- 3 tablespoons ground dried oregano
- 3 tablespoons garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons cayenne chile powder or other hot chile powder, such as chiltepin or Thai
- 2 tablespoons pasilla or other mild chile powder, such as ancho
- 2 tablespoons salt

METHOD:

Combine all ingredients and mix together well. Store in a tightly sealed glass jar, away from heat and light.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

Mild Seasoning Mix - (From John Willingham's World Champion Bar-B-Que cookbook)

PREP TIME: 30 minutes

YIELD: About 1/4 cup

COMMENT:

You might want to keep this on hand in larger quantities. Double or triple the recipe according to your needs. Use it as directed in recipes throughout the book and to season salad dressings, sauces, gravies, vegetables, chilis, stews and on and on.

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 tbsp salt
- 1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp lemon pepper
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp chili powder
- 1 tsp dark or light brown sugar
- 1/2 tsp garlic powder
- Pinch of cinnamon
- Pinch of Accent or other flavor enhancer
- 1 tsp dry mustard or Willingham's Old Phartz Mustard Powder

METHOD:

In a small bowl or glass jar with a lid, combine all the ingredients. Stir or shake to mix. Use immediately or store in a cool, dark place for several months.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Stuffings & Dressings
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

Louisiana Cooking Pears

PREP TIME: 1 hour

SERVES: 2-3 pints

COMMENT:

There are numerous pear varieties available for cooking. Here in bayou country we have the Keffer pear which is similar in texture to a raw potato and is harvested normally the last week of August and the first week of September. The pear is wonderful as a topping for pancakes, waffles, ice cream or even used for a flavoring in bar-b-que sauces or game dishes.

INGREDIENTS:

6 large cooking pears, peeled and cored
 2 cups sugar
 fruit fresh or lemon juice

METHOD:

Remember that pears like apples will oxidize quickly. When peeling and slicing make sure to keep the pears submerged in water with a table spoon or two of lemon juice or fruit fresh preserver that can be purchased in the grocery store. The evening prior to cooking, place sliced pears in a large bowl and top with sugar. Cover with clear wrap and refrigerate. The next day place the pears along with the juice created overnight in the bowl and any remaining sugar into a heavy bottomed sauce pot over medium high heat. Bring to a rolling boil, reduce to low and simmer until pears are fork tender but not falling apart. Approximately 1 hour. Jar according to manufactures directions or freeze in a suitable freezer container.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

Pecan Ginger Butter for Vegetables

Prep Time: 20 Minutes

Yields: ½ Cup

Comment: Put this flavored butter on your favorite vegetables for a great addition to any meal. This butter is especially good with green beans, but can also be used on broccoli, cauliflower, asparagus or any other vegetable.

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup pecans, finely chopped
- 1 tsp grated ginger
- 2 tbsps softened butter
- ¼ tsp salt
- 1 pound of your favorite vegetables

Method:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spread pecans out on a cookie sheet and toast for 3-5 minutes or until fragrant. Blanch vegetables until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes for green beans. To make butter, mix pecans, ginger, butter, and salt in a small bowl until blended well. Sauté vegetables in a small skillet until heated through. Add butter and stir until melted.

[print this page >>](#)

[Return Home](#) | [Meet the Man](#) | [Tour the Properties](#) | [Find a Recipe](#)
[Contact](#) | [Search](#) | [Site Map](#)

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FIND A RECIPE

Chef John Categories:

- Appetizers
- Soups
- Salads
- Game
- Meats
- Seafood
- Vegetables
- Pasta
- Poultry
- Breads
- Desserts
- Beverages
- Breakfast & Brunch
- Rouxs
- Stocks & Sauces
- Seasoning Cast Iron
- Misc

MISCELLANEOUS

Dyeing Eggs The Old Fashioned Way

Prep Time: 30 Minutes

Comment: Comment:

This Easter try a new technique for dyeing eggs. This unique method lets you experiment with natural ingredients. The kids will have a ball inventing new colors.

Use 4 cups of each ingredient per quart of water to create the desired color. These amounts will color approximately 6 eggs.

- Crimson:** fresh beets
- Copper:** yellow onion skins
- Green:** spinach, fresh or frozen
- Yellow:** marigolds
- Blue:** crushed blueberries

Directions:

In a large pot, place 6-8 eggs in a single layer. Add enough water to cover eggs by 1 inch. Add 2 tablespoons of white vinegar per quart of water. Add dye ingredients and bring to a boil. Turn heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes. Let eggs sit in the dye for approximately 10 minutes or until the desired color is achieved. Dry eggs on paper towels or in egg cartons. When the eggs are dried, rub the eggs with vegetable oil for a glossy shine.

Proper Egg Handling Procedures

To avoid bacterial contamination, wash your hands thoroughly before you handle the eggs and in between every step, including cooking, cooling and dyeing.

Discard any eggs that crack during dyeing or any eggs that have been out of refrigeration for more than 2 hours.

If you are hiding eggs, avoid areas where the egg might come in contact with dirt, pets, birds, reptiles, insects or lawn chemicals.

Refrigerate the hidden eggs after they have been found.



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