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BEST

Taste of Home

HOLIDAY RECIPES

2007

351 CHRISTMAS
FAVORITES

APPETIZERS
DESSERTS
ENTREES
SALADS &
SIDES
& MORE!

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Pumpkin Pie Nog

- 1 jar DICKINSON'S[®] Pumpkin Butter
- 1 1/3 c. Peach Nectar
- 1 tsp. Cinnamon
- 1 1/3 c. Vanilla Ice Cream
- Optional: Whipped Cream & Nutmeg

Combine Pumpkin Butter, nectar, cinnamon and ice cream in a blender; process until smooth. Pour into four glasses and garnish with optional whipped cream and nutmeg. Serve immediately. Makes 4 servings.

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Boysenberry Blueberry Tart

- 1 jar DICKINSON'S[®] Pure Seedless Boysenberry Preserves
- 1 jar DICKINSON'S[®] Lemon Curd
- 1 15-oz. pkg. Refrigerated Pie Crusts, softened as directed on package
- 4 c. Fresh Blueberries
- 1/4 c. Flour
- 8 oz. Whipped Topping
- Optional: Lemon Peel

Heat oven to 400°F. Combine berries with flour; fold in Preserves. Place one crust in a 9" tart pan with a removable bottom; pour mixture into crust. Bake for 40 minutes. Transfer to a wire rack and cool completely. In a small mixing bowl, beat whipped topping and Lemon Curd until well mixed and fluffy. Top tart with lemon topping (dollop, pipe or spread over the tart). Chill until served. Garnish with optional lemon peel. Makes 8 servings.

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Holiday Dessert Pizza

- 1 jar DICKINSON'S[®] Lemon Curd
- 1 jar CROSSE & BLACKWELL[®] Red Currant Jelly
- 1 package Refrigerated Sugar Cookie Dough
- 1 package (8 oz.) Cream Cheese, softened
- 1/2 teaspoon Almond Extract
- 1 cup Canned or Fresh, Sliced Peaches
- 2 cups Fresh Strawberries, quartered
- 1 cup Fresh or Frozen Blueberries

Preheat oven to 350°F. Press cookie dough onto a 14" pizza pan. Bake for 8 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool. Mix cream cheese with Lemon Curd until smooth; blend in extract. Spread cheese mixture on cooled crust. Arrange fruit on cheese mixture. Soften Jelly by stirring vigorously until smooth. Brush fruit with softened Jelly. Chill several hours and serve. Makes 10 servings.

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BEST HOLIDAY RECIPES

Welcome to Taste of Home, the world's #1 source of family-favorite recipes using everyday ingredients, proven kitchen tips and heartwarming stories all shared by a nationwide community of home cooks like you.



Our family of food publications—magazines, recipe collections and cookbooks—is written and designed to capture the very essence of home cooking.

As you read through *Best Holiday Recipes 2007*, you'll discover scrumptious appetizers, main dishes, desserts and much more—all guaranteed to delight your family and friends!

It's no wonder that millions of cooks make *Taste of Home* their #1 cooking resource. We're glad to welcome you among them!

Thanks for joining us!



Catherine Cassidy
Editor in Chief

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BEST HOLIDAY RECIPES

To celebrate Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Eve deliciously, this value-packed cookbook is all you need! We've included 351 of the best, most-requested recipes that will ensure the holidays this year will be your most satisfying and memorable.

The appetizers, entrees, side dishes, desserts and more in *Best Holiday Recipes 2007* are tried-and-true family favorites previously published in *Taste of Home*—the world's #1 cooking magazine. They've been shared by hundreds of wonderful cooks who've served these specialties to appreciative loved ones for generations.

Cook with confidence when using this lovely, photo-filled volume because our Test Kitchen crew prepared every dish to be sure it works in your kitchen and tastes great. Stock your recipe files with lots of terrific new finds since 100 of these recipes are on handy clip-out cards.

All of us at Taste of Home wish you and yours a joyful holiday season!

Bonus: Watch for the  symbol by recipes for a link to helpful how-to videos on-line.

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BLUEBERRY CREAM MUFFINS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

shari zimmerman, orfordville, wisconsin
I combined two recipes to create these delicious berry muffins. The creamy filling makes them a real delight for breakfast or a snack.

- 4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 6 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 2 eggs**
- 2 cups milk**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted**
- 2 cups fresh or frozen blueberries**

FILLING:

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 1 egg**
- 1/3 cup sugar**

Dash salt

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. In another bowl, beat the eggs, milk and butter; stir into dry ingredients just until moistened. Fold in the blueberries. Spoon 2 rounded tablespoonfuls into greased muffin cups.
- 2** In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, egg, sugar and salt; place 1 tablespoon in the center of each muffin cup (do not spread). Top with remaining batter.
- 3** Bake at 375° for 18-20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in muffin comes out

clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

Yield: 2 dozen.

Editor's Note: If using frozen blueberries, do not thaw before adding to batter.

BACON BROCCOLI QUICHE

(PICTURED BELOW)

karren fairbanks, salt lake city, utah

Even folks who claim not to like quiche rave about this one! I developed the recipe by combining the best of five others that I'd tried. Now it's a hearty family favorite that always gets star billing at my traditional Christmas morning brunch.

- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise**
- 1 tablespoon dried minced onion**
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 3 eggs**
- 1-1/2 cups milk**
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped broccoli, thawed and patted dry**
- 12 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- 8 medium fresh mushrooms, chopped**
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese**
- 1 sheet refrigerated pie pastry**



- 1 In a large bowl, combine the first five ingredients. Whisk in eggs, one at a time. Stir in the milk, broccoli, bacon, mushrooms and cheese.
- 2 Line a 9-in. deep-dish pie plate with pastry. Trim pastry to 1/2 in. beyond edge of plate; flute edges. Pour broccoli mixture into crust. Bake at 350° for 55-60 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 10-15 minutes before cutting.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

Editor's Note: Reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise is not recommended for this recipe.

CARAMEL CINNAMON ROLLS

(PICTURED AT RIGHT)

marjorie miller, haven, kansas

My husband and our four sons are delighted when I bake these sweetly satisfying cinnamon rolls with a terrific caramel glaze.

- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
- 2 cups warm milk (110° to 115°)
- 1 cup butter, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 cup mashed potatoes (prepared without milk or butter)
- 2 eggs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1-1/2 cups whole wheat flour
- 7-1/4 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons ground cinnamon

CARAMEL GLAZE:

- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream
 - 1/3 cup sugar
 - 1/3 cup packed brown sugar
 - 3 tablespoons butter
 - 1 cup miniature marshmallows
 - 2 cups confectioners' sugar
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add the milk, butter, sugar, potatoes, eggs, salt and whole wheat flour;



beat until smooth. Stir in enough all-purpose flour to form a soft dough.

- 2 Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 45 minutes.
- 3 Punch dough down. Turn onto a floured surface; divide into thirds. Roll each portion into a 12-in. x 8-in. rectangle; spread with melted butter. Combine brown sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle over dough to within 1/2 in. of edges.
- 4 Roll up jelly-roll style, starting with a long side; pinch seams to seal. Cut each into 12 slices; place cut side down in three greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pans. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 45 minutes.
- 5 Bake at 350° for 27-30 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack.
- 6 Meanwhile, for glaze, combine the cream, sugars and butter in a large saucepan. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Remove from heat; stir in marshmallows until melted. Beat in confectioners' sugar and vanilla. Drizzle over rolls.

Yield: 3 dozen.

BACON SWISS SQUARES

(PICTURED BELOW)

agarita vaughan, fairbury, illinois

Not only does this scrumptious breakfast pizza come together easily, but it's a cinch to double the ingredients when I'm cooking for an extra-large event. Biscuit mix makes it convenient, and the combination of eggs, bacon and Swiss cheese keeps guests coming back for more.

- 2 cups biscuit/baking mix**
 - 1/2 cup cold water**
 - 8 ounces sliced Swiss cheese**
 - 1 pound sliced bacon, cooked and crumbled**
 - 4 eggs, lightly beaten**
 - 1/4 cup milk**
 - 1/2 teaspoon onion powder**
- 1** In a large bowl, combine the biscuit mix and water; stir 20 strokes. Turn onto a floured surface; knead 10 times. Roll into a 14-in. x 10-in. rectangle.
 - 2** Place on the bottom and 1/2 in. up sides of a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Arrange cheese over dough. Sprinkle with bacon. In a large bowl, whisk eggs, milk and onion powder; pour over bacon.
 - 3** Bake at 425° for 15-18 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cut into squares; serve immediately.

Yield: 12 servings.



GLAZED APPLES AND SAUSAGE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

jennie wible, hamilton square, new jersey

I dress up hearty pork sausage links with sliced tart apples, chopped onion and brown sugar to make this morning mainstay. I fix the full-flavored side dish when hosting brunch at home.

- 2 pounds uncooked pork sausage links**
- 2 large tart apples, peeled and sliced**
- 1 large onion, chopped**
- 1/3 cup water**
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar**

- 1** Cook the sausage according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, combine the apples, onion, water and brown sugar. Cook over medium heat for 5-8 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the sausage; heat through.

Yield: 8 servings.

BUFFET SCRAMBLED EGGS

elsie beachy, plain city, ohio

These are my favorite scrambled eggs. The white sauce, flavored with chicken bouillon, keeps the eggs creamy and moist. It's a tasty twist on the typical scrambled eggs.

- 4 tablespoons butter, divided**
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup milk**
- 2 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules**
- 8 eggs, lightly beaten**

Minced fresh parsley, optional

- 1** In a small saucepan, melt 2 tablespoons butter. Stir in flour until smooth. Gradually add milk and bouillon. Bring to a boil; cook

and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Set aside.

- In a large skillet, melt remaining butter. Add eggs; cook over medium heat until eggs begin to set, stirring occasionally. Stir in white sauce. Cook until eggs are completely set. Garnish with parsley if desired.

Yield: 4 servings.

FRENCH TOAST SANDWICHES

(PICTURED BELOW)

deborah fagan, lancaster, pennsylvania

I serve these every Christmas while we sit around the table and open our stocking gifts. This recipe is a tasty tradition for our family.

- 12 slices Canadian bacon**
- 6 slices Monterey Jack cheese**
- 12 slices French bread (1/2 inch thick)**
- 3/4 cup eggnog**
- 3 tablespoons butter**
- 6 tablespoons strawberry preserves**

- Place two slices of Canadian bacon and one slice of cheese on each of six slices of bread. Top with remaining bread. Place eggnog in a shallow dish. Dip sandwiches in eggnog.
- In a large skillet or griddle, melt 2-3 tablespoons butter. Toast sandwiches until bread is lightly browned on both sides, adding butter if necessary. Serve with strawberry preserves.

Yield: 6 servings.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested with commercially prepared eggnog.



HAM AND BROCCOLI STRATA

(PICTURED ABOVE)

robin friedly, louisville, kentucky

Entertaining is easy with this homespun strata that features broccoli, ham and cheese. You assemble it the night before you need it, so there's no last-minute fuss.

- 2 packages (10 ounces each) frozen chopped broccoli, thawed and drained**
- 3/4 pound thinly sliced deli ham, cut into 1/2-inch strips**
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese**
- 1 loaf (8 ounces) French bread, cut into 1-inch slices**
- 6 eggs, lightly beaten**
- 2 cups milk**
- 3 tablespoons dried minced onion**
- 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard**
- 1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce**
- 1/2 teaspoon paprika**

- In a large bowl, combine the broccoli, ham and cheese; spread half into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Arrange bread slices on top. Cover with remaining broccoli mixture. In a large bowl, combine the eggs, milk, onion, mustard and hot pepper sauce. Pour over broccoli mixture. Sprinkle with paprika. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Yield: 12 servings.



ORANGE BREAKFAST RING

(PICTURED ABOVE)

wendy fitzgerald, eau claire, michigan

This beautiful breakfast ring is perfect for a special occasion. Whether formed into a festive wreath or shaped into two rectangles, it's so yummy that no one will ever suspect the sweet treat starts with convenient crescent rolls.

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened

1/2 cup sugar

1 tablespoon grated orange peel

2 tubes (8 ounces each) refrigerated crescent rolls

1/3 cup chopped almonds, toasted

1/2 cup confectioners' sugar

1 tablespoon orange juice

Sliced almonds

- 1 In a small mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, sugar and orange peel until blended; set aside.
- 2 Unroll both tubes of dough; press perforations and seams together to form two rectangles. Overlap rectangles at one end and press the seam to seal. Spread cream cheese mixture over dough to within 1/2 in. of edges. Sprinkle with the chopped almonds.
- 3 Roll up jelly-roll style, starting with a long side; pinch seam to seal. Place seam side down on a greased baking sheet; pinch ends together to form a ring. With scissors,

cut from outside edge two-thirds of the way toward center of ring at 1-in. intervals. Separate strips slightly; twist to allow filling to show. Bake at 350° for 15-18 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 10 minutes before carefully removing from pan to a wire rack.

- 4 Combine confectioners' sugar and orange juice; drizzle over the warm coffee cake. Garnish with sliced almonds.

Yield: 1 coffee cake, 16 servings.

STRAWBERRY BANANA CREPES

(PICTURED AT RIGHT)

shelly soule, las vegas, nevada

My family often has company over for breakfast or brunch, and these light fruit-topped crepes are our favorite. The sweet sensations are as fast to make as they are fabulous. You can cook the crepes the night before, refrigerate them with waxed paper in between, then fill and top them in the morning.

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon sugar

1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1-1/2 cups milk

2 eggs

1 to 2 tablespoons butter

FILLING:

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened

1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed

1/2 cup confectioners' sugar

TOPPING:

2 cups sliced fresh strawberries

2 medium firm bananas, sliced

1/4 cup sugar, optional

- 1 In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, cinnamon, milk and eggs. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.
- 2 In an 8-in. nonstick skillet, melt 1 teaspoon butter. Stir batter; pour about 2 tablespoons into the center of skillet. Lift and tilt pan to



To watch a video from the Taste of Home Test Kitchen on how to prepare crepes, go to www.tasteofhome.com/videtips.



evenly coat bottom. Cook until top appears dry; turn and cook 15-20 seconds longer. Remove to a wire rack.

- 3 Repeat with remaining batter, adding butter to a skillet as needed. When cool, stack crepes with waxed paper or paper towels in between.
- 4 In a large mixing bowl, beat the filling ingredients until smooth. Spread 2 rounded tablespoons on each crepe; roll up. In a large bowl, combine topping ingredients; spoon over crepes.

Yield: 18 crepes.

BRUNCH POCKETS

jean kimm, coeur d'alene, idaho

These hefty handfuls promise everyone a good hot breakfast with little hassle. Kids especially love the toasty grab-and-go pockets stuffed with pineapple, ham, turkey and cheese.

- 1 package (15 ounces) refrigerated pie crust
 - 2 pineapple slices, cut in half
 - 4 thin slices deli ham
 - 4 thin slices deli turkey
 - 4 slices Swiss cheese
 - 1 egg, lightly beaten
- 1 Cut each pastry sheet into four wedges. Pat pineapple slices dry with paper towels. Top four pastry wedges with one slice each of ham, turkey, cheese and pineapple, folding meat and cheese to fit if necessary. Top each with a pastry wedge; seal and crimp edges with a fork. Cut slits in pastry.

- 2 Place on an ungreased baking sheet. Brush lightly with egg. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

Yield: 4 servings.

BROCCOLI SAUSAGE BREAKFAST BAKE

(PICTURED BELOW)

kara cash, dumont, texas

I'm very involved in 4-H and raise hogs to show at our county fair. I like to share tasty recipes that help promote the pork industry.

- 1/2 pound bulk pork sausage
- 1 cup chopped fresh broccoli
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
- 3 eggs
- 1-1/4 cups milk
- 1/2 cup biscuit/baking mix

- 1 In a skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain and set aside. Add 1 in. of water and broccoli to a saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Cover and simmer for 5-8 minutes or until crisp-tender; drain.
- 2 In a greased 9-in. pie plate, layer the sausage, cheese and broccoli. In a bowl, combine the eggs, milk and biscuit mix. Pour over broccoli. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

Yield: 6-8 servings.



ARTICHOKE EGG CASSEROLE

(PICTURED BELOW)

marilyn moores, indianapolis, indiana

This is a great recipe for a brunch as well as breakfast. I serve it with fresh stir-fried asparagus, a fruit salad and croissants.

- 4 jars (6-1/2 ounces each) marinated artichoke hearts**
 - 1/2 cup chopped green onions**
 - 2 to 3 garlic cloves, minced**
 - 1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
 - 8 eggs**
 - 1 jar (4-1/2 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained**
 - 3 cups (12 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese**
 - 1 cup butter-flavored cracker crumbs (about 25 crackers)**
- 1** Drain artichokes, reserving 1/2 cup marinade. Set aside. Cut artichokes into slices. In a skillet, saute green onions and garlic in oil until tender. Remove from the heat.
 - 2** In a large bowl, beat eggs well. Stir in the artichokes, mushrooms, cheese, cracker crumbs, onion mixture and the reserved marinade.
 - 3** Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

Yield: 9 servings.



CHRISTMAS DOUGHNUTS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

michelle vander byl, portland, ontario

These tender treats have long been a holiday tradition in my French Canadian family. I love the hint of lemon flavor.

- 6 eggs**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- 1 teaspoon lemon extract**
- 7-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 6 teaspoons baking powder**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 1 cup milk**

Oil for deep-fat frying

Confectioners' sugar, optional

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs, sugar and oil until blended. Beat in extract. Combine the flour, baking powder, salt and nutmeg; stir into egg mixture alternately with milk. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 2** Divide dough in half. Roll out one portion to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 1-1/2-in. round cookie cutter. Repeat with remaining dough.
- 3** In an electric skillet or deep-fryer, heat oil to 375°. Fry doughnuts for about 4 minutes

or until golden brown, turning once with a slotted spoon. Drain on paper towels. Dust with confectioners' sugar if desired.

Yield: about 8 dozen.

SPINACH-SAUSAGE EGG BAKE

(PICTURED BELOW)

barbara nowakowski
north tonawanda, new york

I always cook up a storm during the holidays. Spinach and red peppers give festive Christmas color to this satisfying bake that boasts Italian sausage, lots of cheese and a short prep time.

- 1 pound bulk Italian sausage**
- 1/2 cup chopped onion**
- 1 jar (7 ounces) roasted red peppers, drained and chopped, divided**
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 1 teaspoon dried basil**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 8 eggs**
- 2 cups milk**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded provolone cheese**



- 1** In a large skillet, cook sausage and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Transfer to a greased 3-qt. baking dish. Sprinkle with half of the red peppers; top with spinach.
- 2** In a large bowl, combine the flour, Parmesan cheese, basil and salt. Whisk eggs and milk; stir into flour mixture until blended. Pour over spinach.
- 3** Bake, uncovered, at 425° for 15-20 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Top with provolone cheese and remaining red peppers. Bake 3-5 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Yield: 6 servings.

BREAKFAST PIE

pam botine, goldsboro, north carolina

This crustless pie is wonderful to serve to overnight guests, because you assemble it the night before.

- 8 bacon strips, diced**
 - 1/4 cup crushed cornflakes**
 - 5 eggs, lightly beaten**
 - 1/2 cup milk**
 - 1/2 cup 4% cottage cheese**
 - 1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
 - 1 green onion, sliced**
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt**
 - 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
 - 2-1/2 cups frozen cubed hash brown potatoes**
- 1** In a large skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove to paper towels. Drain, reserving 2 teaspoons drippings. Stir reserved drippings into cornflakes; set aside.
 - 2** In a large bowl, combine the eggs, milk, cottage cheese, cheddar cheese, onion, salt and pepper until blended. Stir in hash browns. Pour into a greased 9-in. pie plate. Sprinkle with bacon and cornflake mixture. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
 - 3** Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 45-50 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 5-10 minutes before cutting.

Yield: 6 servings.



HEARTY CHICKEN STRATA

(PICTURED ABOVE)

sara yoder, mount hope, ohio

My great-grandparents made this traditional Amish recipe on Sundays when they had company, and it's still one of my family's favorite dishes.

- 10 cups bread cubes (1/2-inch cubes)**
 - 2 cups diced cooked chicken**
 - 1 cup diced potatoes**
 - 1 cup diced celery**
 - 1/2 cup diced carrots**
 - 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley**
 - 4 cups milk**
 - 2 cups chicken broth**
 - 5 eggs, beaten**
 - 1/4 cup butter, melted and cooled**
 - 1 teaspoon salt**
 - 1/2 teaspoon pepper**
 - 1 to 2 jars (12 ounces each) chicken gravy, warmed, optional**
- 1** Arrange bread cubes in a single layer on several ungreased large baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 20-30 minutes or until golden brown and crisp.
 - 2** Transfer to a large bowl. Add the chicken, potatoes, celery, carrots and parsley. In another large bowl, combine the milk,

broth, eggs, butter, salt and pepper. Pour over bread mixture; toss to coat.

- 3** Pour into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 45 minutes; stir. Bake 45 minutes longer or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Serve with gravy if desired.

Yield: 12-14 servings.

SIX-VEGGIE BAKE

kate hiltz, fairbanks, alaska

I altered the original recipe for this strata-like dish and replaced the sausage with fresh vegetables. I can easily assemble it the night before a busy day. Then all I have to do is bake it and make a fruit salad. It's so fresh-tasting and hearty, you won't miss the meat.

- 1 loaf (1 pound) Italian bread, cut into 1/2-inch cubes**
 - 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained**
 - 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry**
 - 1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms**
 - 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
 - 1/2 cup chopped green pepper**
 - 1/2 cup chopped zucchini**
 - 2 green onions, chopped**
 - 1 teaspoon dried basil**
 - 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano**
 - 1 cup fat-free milk**
 - 1 cup egg substitute**
 - 1 teaspoon salt-free seasoning blend**
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- 1** In a large bowl, combine the first 10 ingredients. Transfer to a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray.
 - 2** In a small bowl, combine the milk, egg substitute, seasoning blend and pepper; pour over the vegetable mixture. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or overnight.
 - 3** Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Cover and bake at 425° for 15 minutes. Uncover; bake 15 minutes longer or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

Yield: 16 servings.

HASH BROWN CHEESE OMELET

(PICTURED BELOW)

Jennifer Reisinger, Sheboygan, Wisconsin
I make a family-pleasing meal out of this fluffy omelet filled with potatoes, onion and green pepper. Serve it with toast and fruit. It's also good with sliced tomatoes.

- 1 medium onion, chopped**
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper**
- 1-3/4 cups frozen cubed hash brown potatoes, thawed**
- 2 cups egg substitute**
- 1/4 cup water**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- 3 slices reduced-fat process American cheese**

- 1** In a large skillet coated with nonstick cooking spray, saute onion and green pepper. Add potatoes; cook and stir over medium heat for 5 minutes or until heated through.
- 2** In a bowl, beat egg substitute, water and pepper; pour over vegetables. As eggs set, lift edges, letting uncooked portion flow underneath. Just before eggs are completely set, place cheese slices over half of the omelet. Fold the omelet in half and transfer to a warm serving platter.

Yield: 4 servings.



GERMAN PANCAKE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

Renae Moncur, Burley, Idaho

Piping hot and puffy from the oven, this golden pancake made a pretty presentation for a skier's theme breakfast I hosted. Served with my homemade buttermilk syrup, it's an eye-opening treat. That easy syrup tastes great on waffles and French toast, too.

- 6 eggs**
- 1 cup milk**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted**

BUTTERMILK SYRUP:

- 1-1/2 cups sugar**
- 3/4 cup buttermilk**
- 1/2 cup butter**
- 2 tablespoons corn syrup**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**

Confectioners' sugar

- 1** In a blender, combine the eggs, milk, flour and salt; cover and process until smooth.
- 2** Pour the butter into an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish; add the batter. Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 20 minutes.
- 3** Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine the first five syrup ingredients; bring to a boil. Boil for 7 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla. Dust pancake with confectioners' sugar; serve immediately with the syrup.

Yield: 8 servings (about 2 cups syrup).

BANANA OAT PANCAKES

(PICTURED BELOW)

Janie Obermier, St. Joseph, Missouri
I concocted these fluffy pancakes using a muffin recipe. We love them topped with strawberry jam for breakfast, supper or even just snacking. They're delicious drizzled with maple syrup, too.

- 1-1/3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 3/4 cup old-fashioned oats**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1 egg**
- 1-1/3 cups milk**
- 1 cup mashed ripe banana**
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil**

Maple syrup

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the flour, oats, sugar, baking powder and cinnamon. Combine the egg, milk, banana and oil; stir into dry ingredients just until moistened.
- 2** Pour batter by 1/4 cupfuls onto a greased hot griddle. Turn when bubbles form on top; cook until second side is golden brown. Serve with syrup.

Yield: 6 pancakes.



FLAVORFUL FRITTATA

(PICTURED ABOVE)

Annette Self, Junction City, Ohio
This hearty skillet with Italian flair is tasty for brunch or even dinner.

- 1 small onion, chopped**
- 1 jar (4-1/2 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained**
- 1 cup cooked bulk pork sausage**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- 12 eggs**
- 1/4 cup half-and-half cream**
- 1 teaspoon dried basil**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- 2 cups meatless spaghetti sauce, warmed**

- 1** In a large nonstick skillet, saute the onion, mushrooms and sausage in oil until onion is tender. Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, beat eggs, cream, basil and salt; pour over sausage mixture.
- 2** As eggs set, lift edges, allowing uncooked portion to flow underneath. When eggs are nearly set, sprinkle with cheese. Cook until the cheese is melted. Cut into wedges; serve with spaghetti sauce.

Yield: 8 servings.

Editors Note: 1 cup cubed fully cooked ham can be substituted for the pork sausage.

GINGER DOUGHNUT TWISTS

tiffany anderson-taylor, gulfport, florida

Fresh doughnuts for breakfast don't get easier than this. I make the glaze the night before and keep it in my refrigerator.

- 2 eggs
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/4 cup molasses
- 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 4 teaspoons ground ginger
- 2-1/2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Oil for deep-fat frying

LEMON GLAZE:

- 2 cups confectioners' sugar
 - 3 tablespoons milk
 - 1 tablespoon lemon juice
 - 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1 In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs until light and lemon-colored. Beat in the brown sugar, sour cream, oil and molasses. Combine the flour, ginger, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and nutmeg; beat into egg mixture just until moistened.
 - 2 Turn onto a floured surface; knead 10 times. Divide dough into 18 pieces. Roll each piece into a 12-in. rope. Fold in half and twist several times. Pinch ends to seal.
 - 3 In an electric skillet or deep-fat fryer, heat oil to 375°. Fry twists, a few at a time, for 1 minute on each side or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.
 - 4 In a shallow bowl, whisk glaze ingredients until blended. Dip warm twists in glaze to coat. Let stand until set.

Yield: 1-1/2 dozen.

CHIVE-HAM BRUNCH BAKE

(PICTURED AT RIGHT)

edie despain,logan, utah

Canned ham and biscuit mix get this brunch dish ready quickly. I sometimes use leftover cooked

ham from a holiday dinner. To lighten up the casserole, try using fat-free milk and a reduced-fat biscuit/baking mix.

- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 can (5 ounces) chunk ham, drained
- 1 medium tomato, chopped
- 2 cups biscuit/baking mix
- 1/2 cup water
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Swiss or cheddar cheese
- 2 eggs
- 1/4 cup milk
- 1/4 teaspoon dill weed
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 3 tablespoons minced chives

- 1 In a small skillet, saute onion in butter until tender. Stir in ham and tomato; set aside.
- 2 In a small bowl, combine biscuit mix and water; mix well. Press onto the bottom and 1/2 in. up the sides of a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Spread ham mixture over crust; sprinkle with cheese. In a bowl, beat the eggs, milk, dill, salt and pepper; pour over cheese. Sprinkle with chives.
- 3 Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 5 minutes before cutting.

Yield: 8 servings.





HOT FRUIT SALAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

mrs. debbie kimbrough
lexington, mississippi

This warm spiced fruit is a wonderfully soothing winter side dish. It's a real treat.

- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**
- 2 cans (15-1/4 ounces each) sliced peaches, drained**
- 2 cans (15-1/4 ounces each) sliced pears, undrained**
- 1 jar (23 ounces) chunky applesauce**
- 1/2 cup dried apricots, chopped**
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries**

- 1** In a 3-qt. slow cooker, combine the sugar, butter, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Cover and cook on high for 2 hours or until heated through.

Yield: 10 servings.

PLUM SAUSAGE BITES

heidi fisher, victoria, british columbia

Packed with perky flavor and a thick sauce that clings to sliced sausages, these links are a must at brunches and potlucks.

- 2 to 2-1/2 pounds uncooked pork sausage links, cut into 1-inch pieces**
- 1 cup plum, apple or grape jelly**

- 2 tablespoons soy sauce**
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard**

- 1** In a large skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain and set sausage aside. In the same skillet, stir in the jelly, soy sauce and mustard.
- 2** Simmer, uncovered, for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Return sausage to the pan and heat through. Refrigerate any leftovers.

Yield: 18-22 servings.

EGG BRUNCH BAKE

(PICTURED BELOW)

iva combs, medford, oregon

Just a few ingredients make this an impressive and satisfying egg dish. It's always a hit.

- 2 tablespoons butter, melted**
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- 2 cups cubed fully cooked ham**
- 12 eggs**
- 1 can (5 ounces) evaporated milk**
- 2 teaspoons prepared mustard**

Salt and pepper to taste

- 1** Drizzle butter into a greased shallow 3-qt. baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese and ham. In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs, milk, mustard, salt and pepper. Pour over ham and cheese.
- 2** Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 5-10 minutes before serving.

Yield: 6-8 servings.





BACON QUICHE TARTS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

kendra schertz, nappanee, indiana

Flavored with vegetables, cheese and bacon, these memorable morsels are bound to be requested at your house. The tarts are a special addition to brunch, but they're surprisingly easy to make.

- 2 packages (3 ounces each) cream cheese, softened**
 - 5 teaspoons milk**
 - 2 eggs**
 - 1/2 cup shredded Colby cheese**
 - 2 tablespoons chopped green pepper**
 - 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion**
 - 1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls**
 - 5 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- 1** In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and milk until smooth. Add the eggs, cheese, green pepper and onion; mix well.
 - 2** Separate dough into eight triangles; press onto the bottom and up the sides of greased muffin cups. Sprinkle half of the bacon into cups. Pour egg mixture over bacon; top with remaining bacon. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 18-22 minutes or until a knife comes out clean. Serve warm.

Yield: 8 servings.

PEACHES 'N' CREAM FRENCH TOAST

(PICTURED BELOW)

tiffany mitchell, susanville, california

Looking for a way to make French toast into something extra special? This scrumptious breakfast dish is topped with peach butter and is bursting with flavor. Whip it up the night before and grill in minutes on Christmas morning.

- 3 eggs**
- 3 tablespoons plus 1/3 cup peach preserves, divided**
- 3/4 cup half-and-half cream**
- 8 slices French bread, (1/2 inch thick)**
- 6 tablespoons butter, softened, divided**

Confectioners' sugar

Sliced almonds, toasted

- 2 medium ripe peaches, sliced**
- 2 to 3 tablespoons butter, optional**

- 1** In a small bowl, beat the eggs and 3 tablespoons preserves. Stir in cream. Arrange bread in a single layer in a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. dish. Pour egg mixture over bread; cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 2** For peach butter, in a small mixing bowl, beat 4 tablespoons butter and remaining preserves until fluffy; set aside.
- 3** In a large skillet or griddle, melt 2-3 tablespoons butter if desired. Toast sandwiches until bread is lightly browned on both sides, adding butter if necessary. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar and almonds. Serve with peach butter and sliced peaches.

Yield: 4 servings.



CHEESY O'BRIEN EGG SCRAMBLE

(PICTURED BELOW)

margaret edmondson, red oak, iowa

This breakfast bake is a snap to prepare. It's perfect for a brunch buffet or when out-of-town guests stay the night. Full of bacon, cheese, hash browns and eggs, the all-in-one dish is a hearty crowd-pleaser.

- 1 package (28 ounces) frozen O'Brien hash brown potatoes**
 - 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt**
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
 - 1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cheddar cheese soup, undiluted**
 - 1 pound sliced bacon, cooked and crumbled**
 - 12 eggs, lightly beaten**
 - 2 tablespoons butter**
 - 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- 1** In a large skillet, prepare hash browns according to package directions; sprinkle with garlic salt and pepper. Transfer to a greased 2-1/2-qt. baking dish. Top with soup. Set aside 1/2 cup of bacon; sprinkle remaining bacon over soup.
 - 2** In a bowl, whisk the eggs. In another large skillet, heat butter until hot. Add eggs; cook and stir over medium heat until eggs are nearly set. Spoon over bacon. Sprinkle with cheese and reserved bacon. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until cheese is melted.

Yield: 12 servings.



HOMEMADE SAGE SAUSAGE PATTIES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

diane hixon, niceville, florida

Oregano, garlic and sage add zippy flavor to these quick-to-fix ground pork patties. I've had this Pennsylvania Dutch recipe for years, and it always brings compliments.

- 3/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese**
- 1/4 cup buttermilk**
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion**
- 2 teaspoons rubbed sage**
- 3/4 teaspoon salt**
- 3/4 teaspoon pepper**
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder**
- 1/8 teaspoon dried oregano**
- 1 pound ground pork**

- 1** In a bowl, combine the first eight ingredients. Crumble pork over mixture and mix well. Shape into eight 1/2-in. patties. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
- 2** In a nonstick skillet over medium heat, fry patties for 6-8 minutes on each side or until meat is no longer pink.

Yield: 8 servings.

DATE WAFFLES

jean gaines, bullhead city, arizona

These moist waffles have a yummy cream cheese topping.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar**

- 1/4 cup finely chopped pecans**
- 1 tablespoon baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup finely chopped dates**
- 1-3/4 cups milk**
- 2 eggs, separated**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted**

TOPPING:

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
 - 1/4 cup half-and-half cream**
 - 3 tablespoons sugar**
 - 2 tablespoons orange juice**
 - 1 tablespoon grated orange peel**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, sugar, pecans, baking powder and salt. Add dates. In a small bowl, combine the milk, egg yolks and butter; stir into dry ingredients.
 - 2** In a small mixing bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form; fold into batter. Bake in a preheated waffle iron according to manufacturer's directions until golden brown.
 - 3** In another small mixing bowl, beat the topping ingredients until blended. Serve with waffles.

Yield: 8-10 waffles (about 6-3/4 inches).

TACO QUICHE

mary farley, wasilla, alaska

Chock-full of ground beef, cheddar cheese, onion and green pepper, this swift south-of-the-border bake is guaranteed to liven up any meal.

- 1 pound ground beef**
 - 1/4 cup chopped onion**
 - 1/4 cup chopped green pepper**
 - 1 envelope taco seasoning**
 - 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
 - 1/2 cup biscuit/baking mix**
 - 2 eggs, lightly beaten**
 - 1 cup milk**
- 1** In a large skillet, cook the beef, onion, green pepper and taco seasoning over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Spread into a 9-in. greased pie plate. Sprinkle with cheese. In a large bowl,

combine the biscuit mix, eggs and milk. Pour over the cheese. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

Yield: 4-6 servings.

APPLE HAM PUFFS

(PICTURED BELOW)

suzanne sebast, lake wylie, south carolina
The recipe for these individual apple-topped puffs is on a well-worn index card. It's a must for a special brunch.

- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 8 eggs**
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 2 cups cubed fully cooked ham**
- 4 medium tart apples, peeled and thinly sliced**
- 1/4 cup butter**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, combine flour and salt. Beat in the eggs until smooth. Divide ham among six greased 10-oz. custard cups. Top with egg mixture.
- 2** Bake at 450° for 15 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, saute the apples in butter. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon; cook until sugar is dissolved. Spoon into the center of each puff.

Yield: 6 servings.



WAKE-UP CASSEROLE

iris frank, eureka, illinois

You'll find everything you want for breakfast—potatoes, eggs, cheese and ham—in this satisfying casserole. It can be made the night before and kept in the refrigerator. I frequently make it for church potlucks and for company. Everybody loves it.

- 8 frozen hash brown patties**
- 4 cups (16 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- 1 pound cubed fully cooked ham (2 cups)**
- 7 eggs**
- 1 cup milk**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground mustard**

- 1** Place hash brown patties in a single layer in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with cheese and ham. In a large bowl, beat eggs, milk, salt and mustard. Pour over ham.
- 2** Cover and bake at 350° for 1 hour. Uncover; bake 15 minutes longer or until edges are golden brown and a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

Yield: 8 servings.

RAISED YEAST WAFFLES

helen knapp, fairbanks, alaska

These waffles bake up crispy on the outside and light and tender on the inside. Since they aren't too filling, they leave room for sampling the rest of the brunch buffet—or for munching on more waffles!

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
 - 1 teaspoon sugar**
 - 1/2 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
 - 2 cups warm milk (110° to 115°)**
 - 2 eggs**
 - 1/2 cup butter, melted**
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour**
 - 1 teaspoon salt**
 - 1/8 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast and sugar in warm water; let stand for 5 minutes. Beat in the milk, eggs and butter. Combine the flour, salt and baking soda; stir into yeast mixture just until combined.

Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 45 minutes.

- 2** Bake in a preheated waffle iron according to manufacturer's directions until golden brown.

Yield: 10 waffles.

HERBED SAUSAGE GRAVY OVER CHEESE BISCUITS

lynn crosby, homerville, ohio

The gang at my house loves anything with biscuits, and this oregano-flavored sausage gravy is the best we've ever tasted! It's a real favorite with my husband and kids.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 3 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 cup milk**
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano**
- 8 ounces part-skim mozzarella cheese, cut into 8 cubes**

GRAVY:

- 1/2 pound bulk pork sausage**
- 3/4 cup milk**
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano**
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup cold water**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and salt. Stir in milk and oil just until moistened. Turn onto a lightly floured surface. Roll to 1/2-in. thickness; cut with a floured 2-1/2-in. biscuit cutter. Place a pinch of oregano in the center of each biscuit; top with a cheese cube.
- 2** Moisten edge of dough with water and pull up over cheese, forming a pouch; pinch tightly to seal. Place on a lightly greased baking sheet. Bake at 450° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown.
- 3** Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook the sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in milk and oregano. Combine the flour and water until smooth; add to sausage mixture. Bring to boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. For each serving, spoon about 1/3 cup gravy over two biscuits.

Yield: 4 servings.

BACON 'N' EGG PIZZA

Pizza for breakfast? Kids especially will enjoy eating the bacon, cheese, hash browns and eggs layered on an easy-to-cut pizza-like crust. This attractive entree is sure to be a hit with grown-ups, too.

**GEORGIANN FRANKLIN
CANFIELD, OHIO**



CREAMY STRAWBERRY CREPES

As special as Christmas morning itself, these delicate crepes add a merry touch of elegance and holiday color to brunch.

**KATHY KOCHISS
HUNTINGTON
CONNECTICUT**



EGGNOG PANCAKES WITH CRANBERRY SAUCE

These eggnog pancakes with tangy cranberry sauce are economical, quick and delicious. We love the subtle eggnog flavor and tempting cranberry topping.

**IOLA EGLE
BELLA VISTA, ARKANSAS**



CREAMY ORANGE DRINK

This frothy orange drink is a real treat as a snack, for a holiday breakfast or at a special brunch. I love that combination of orange and cream.

**JULIE CURFMAN
CHEHALIS, WASHINGTON**



CREAMY ORANGE DRINK

- 6 cups orange juice, divided**
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 package (3.4 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix
1 envelope whipped topping mix
- 1** In a small mixing bowl, combine 3 cups orange juice, vanilla, and the pudding and whipped topping mixes; beat until smooth. Stir in the remaining orange juice.
Yield: about 6 cups.

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CREAMY STRAWBERRY CREPES

- 4 eggs**
1 cup milk
1 cup cold water
2 tablespoons butter, melted
1/4 teaspoon salt
2 cups all-purpose flour
Additional butter
- FILLING:**
1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1-1/4 cups confectioners' sugar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1 teaspoon grated lemon peel
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 cups fresh strawberries, sliced, divided
1 cup heavy whipping cream, whipped
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs, milk, water, butter and salt. Add flour;
Yield: 15 crepes.

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EGGNOG PANCAKES WITH CRANBERRY SAUCE

- 2 cups pancake mix**
1 egg
1-1/2 cups eggnog
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
Pinch ground nutmeg
1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry or jellied cranberry sauce
- 1** Place pancake mix in a bowl. In another bowl, whisk egg, eggnog, vanilla and nutmeg; stir into pancake mix just until moistened.
2 Pour batter by 1/3 cupfuls onto a lightly greased hot griddle; turn when bubbles form on top of pancakes. Cook until second side is golden brown. Serve with cranberry sauce.
Yield: 6 servings (12 pancakes).

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BACON 'N' EGG PIZZA

- 1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls**
12 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
1 cup frozen shredded hash brown potatoes
3/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese
4 eggs
2 tablespoons milk
1/2 cup grated Parmesan or Romano cheese
- 1** Unroll crescent dough into one long rectangle. Press onto the bottom and 1/2 in. up the sides of a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Seal seams and perforations. Sprinkle with bacon, potatoes and cheddar cheese.
2 In a large bowl, beat eggs and milk. Pour over cheddar cheese. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 25-30 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.
Yield: 8 servings.

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PEAR-PECAN SAUSAGE QUICHE

This quiche would be a delightful addition to brunch, especially during the holiday season. It's savory from the sausage yet sweet from the sliced pear.

**PATRICIA HARMON
BADEN, PENNSYLVANIA**



CHERRY KRINGLE

The soft dough in this recipe is so easy to work with. It bakes into a golden, tender pastry that surrounds a luscious cherry center. The loaves freeze well.

**MARY CHRISTIANSON
CARMEL, INDIANA**



HOLIDAY BURRITOS

In the Southwest, a breakfast burrito wraps up potatoes, eggs and cheese with a unique "Feliz Navidad" ("Merry Christmas") flair! There are many variations, but this is our favorite.

**ANTOINETTE METZGAR
RIO RANCHO
NEW MEXICO**



FETA BREAKFAST BAKE

Guests at our family's bed-and-breakfast love this easy-prep brunch item. You can try several variations of the egg dish with your favorite types of cheese. Add a sprig of oregano as a pretty garnish.

**CHERYL RUDE
WINFIELD, KANSAS**



HOLIDAY BURRITOS

- 1/4 cup chopped onion**
1/2 cup butter
2 pounds red potatoes, cut into 1/2 inch cubes
12 eggs, lightly beaten
1 teaspoon garlic salt
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
2 to 3 cans (4 ounces each) chopped green chilies, drained
12 flour tortillas (8 inches), warmed
2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1** In a large skillet, saute onion in butter until tender. Add the potatoes or cover and cook for 15-20 minutes or until tender. In a large bowl, combine the eggs, garlic salt, salt and pepper; pour over potatoes. Cook and stir over medium heat until the eggs are completely set. Stir in chilies.
- 2** Fill each tortilla with about 3/4 cup of the egg mixture and 2 heaping tablespoons of the cheese; roll up tightly. Serve immediately.
- Yield:** 12 burritos.

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PEAR-PECAN SAUSAGE QUITCHE

- 1/2 pound bulk hot Italian sausage**
1/3 cup chopped sweet onion
1 medium pear, sliced
1 pastry shell (9 inches), baked
1/3 cup chopped pecans
4 eggs
1-1/2 cups half-and-half cream
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
8 pecan halves
- 1** In a large skillet, cook sausage and onion over medium heat for 4-5 minutes or until meat is no longer pink; drain. Arrange pear slices in crust; top with sausage. Sprinkle with pecans. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, cream, salt, thyme and nutmeg. Stir in cheese. Pour over sausage.
- 2** Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean and crust is golden brown. Garnish with pecan halves. Let stand for 5 minutes before slicing.
- Yield:** 8 servings.

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FETA BREAKFAST BAKE

- 4 cups seasoned salad croutons**
1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) crumbled feta cheese
8 eggs
4 cups milk
1 tablespoon minced fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried basil
1 tablespoon minced fresh oregano or 1 teaspoon dried oregano
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1-1/2 cups cubed fully cooked ham
- 1** In a large bowl, combine croutons and feta cheese; transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, milk, basil, oregano and pepper. Slowly pour over crouton mixture. Sprinkle with ham.
- 2** Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 60-65 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Let stand for 10 minutes before cutting.
- Yield:** 12-14 servings.

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CHERRY KRINGLE

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
1 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)
4 cups bread flour
2 tablespoons sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup cold butter
1/2 cup shortening
2 eggs, lightly beaten
4 cups cherry pie filling
- ICING:**
2 cups confectioners' sugar
2 to 3 tablespoons milk
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm milk. In another bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt; cut in butter and shortening until crumbly. Add to yeast mixture. Add eggs; beat to form a very soft dough
- 2** Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface; divide into fourths. Roll each portion into a 14-in. x 11-in. rectangle; spread cherry pie filling down the center third of each rectangle. Starting at a long side, fold a third of the dough over filling; fold other third over top; pinch to seal. Pinch ends and tuck under. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets.
- 3** Bake at 350° for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely. Combine icing ingredients; drizzle over kringles.
- Yield:** 4 loaves.

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APPETIZERS & BEVERAGES



To kick off a meal or “wow” party guests, try these fabulous finger foods. They’re sure to make any gathering unforgettable.



Barbecue Meatballs (p. 26)

Inset Photo: Holiday Cheese Ball (p. 33)



BACON CHEESE WREATH

(PICTURED ABOVE)

lisa carter, warren, indiana

My grandmother makes this smoky bacon and Parmesan spread for parties and holiday get-togethers. For a pretty Yuletide presentation, accent the cream cheese wreath with parsley and pimientos.

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened**
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise**
- 1/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions, optional**
- 10 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- Parsley sprigs and diced pimientos, optional**
- Assorted crackers**

- 1** In a small mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, mayonnaise, Parmesan cheese and onions if desired. Stir in bacon. Cover and refrigerate for 1-2 hours.
- 2** Invert a small bowl in the center of a serving platter. Drop cream cheese mixture by rounded tablespoonfuls around edge of bowl. Remove bowl. Smooth cream cheese mixture, forming a wreath. Garnish with parsley and pimientos if desired. Serve with crackers.

Yield: about 3 cups.

BARBECUE MEATBALLS

(PICTURED BELOW)

dane harvill, mosca, colorado

I came across this recipe while living abroad many years ago. These meatballs are as finger-licking good as barbecued ribs but easier to eat.

- 2 eggs**
- 1/2 cup evaporated milk**
- 1 cup dry bread crumbs**
- 1 small onion, chopped**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- 2 pounds ground beef**

SAUCE:

- 1-1/2 cups water**
- 2/3 cup packed brown sugar**
- 1/4 cup chili sauce**
- 3 tablespoons cider vinegar**
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce**
- 2 tablespoons ketchup**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground ginger**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- Dash Worcestershire sauce**





- 1 In a large bowl, combine the first six ingredients. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. With wet hands, shape into 1-in. balls. In a large skillet, brown meatballs in small batches over medium heat, turning often. Remove with a slotted spoon and keep warm; drain.
- 2 In same pan, combine sauce ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat; add the meatballs. Simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes or until sauce is absorbed.

Yield: 6-1/2 dozen.

BRIE WITH ARTICHOKEs

(PICTURED ABOVE)

lucy banks, jackson, mississippi

If you're looking for something special for your holiday hors d'oeuvres table, this tangy out-of-the-ordinary appetizer will fill the bill. It is so popular with my friends that I try to keep Brie cheese and artichoke hearts on hand at all times.

- 1 round (4-1/2 ounces) Brie or Camembert cheese**
- 1/3 cup chopped water-packed artichoke hearts**

2 teaspoons minced fresh basil

1 teaspoon olive oil

1 garlic clove, minced

Salt and cayenne pepper to taste

Assorted crackers

- 1 Slice Brie in half horizontally. Place the bottom half in a small round baking dish or pie plate. Combine the artichokes, basil, oil, garlic, salt and cayenne; spread over Brie.
- 2 Replace top. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 10-15 minutes or until heated through. Serve with crackers.

Yield: 4 servings.

TOMATO PIZZA BREAD

kimberly mcfarland

broken arrow, oklahoma

Refrigerated pizza crust dough gets a tasty treatment from pleasant seasonings and easy cheese and tomato toppings. This basic recipe can be modified to suit individual tastes. My husband loves to add sliced ripe olives just before baking. We think it's best when served fresh out of the oven.

1 tube (10 ounces) refrigerated pizza crust

2 garlic cloves, minced

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

1 cup (4 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided

1 plum tomato, halved lengthwise and thinly sliced

1/2 teaspoon Italian seasoning, optional

- 1 On a greased baking sheet, roll pizza crust into a 12-in. x 8-in. rectangle. Bake at 425° for 6-8 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Sprinkle with garlic, oregano and half of the cheese.
- 2 Arrange tomato slices in a single layer over cheese. Top with remaining cheese and Italian seasoning if desired. Bake 6-8 minutes longer or until cheese is melted and crust is lightly browned.

Yield: 8 servings.

COCONUT SHRIMP

(PICTURED BELOW)

marie hatrup, the dalles, oregon

Jumbo shrimp is big on flavor with a tropical twist. Coconut offers subtle sweetness, and the fruity salsa is delightful as a dip.

18 uncooked jumbo shrimp (about 1 pound)

1/3 cup cornstarch

3/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper

3 egg whites

2 cups flaked coconut

Oil for deep-fat frying

APRICOT-PINEAPPLE SALSA:

1 cup diced pineapple

1/2 cup finely chopped red onion

1/2 cup apricot preserves

1/2 cup minced fresh cilantro

2 tablespoons lime juice

1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped

Salt and pepper to taste

- 1 Peel and devein shrimp, leaving tails intact. Make a slit down inner curve of each shrimp, starting with the tail; press lightly to flatten. In a shallow dish, combine the cornstarch, salt and cayenne; set aside. In a mixing bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form. Place the coconut in another shallow dish. Coat shrimp with cornstarch



mixture; dip into egg whites, then coat with coconut.

- 2 In an electric skillet or deep-fat fryer, heat oil to 375°. Fry shrimp, a few at a time, for 1 to 1-1/2 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.
- 3 In a bowl, combine salsa ingredients. Serve with shrimp.

Yield: 6 servings.

Editor's Note: When cutting or seeding hot peppers, use rubber or plastic gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face.

CHRISTMAS COCOA

(PICTURED ABOVE)

lori daniels, beverly, west virginia

A sprinkling of crushed candy cane lends a festive touch to this creamy hot cocoa...or place a chocolate mint candy cane in each mug as a stirrer. Serve this heartwarming beverage with Christmas cookies to welcome friends in from the cold after skating, sledding or caroling.

4 cups milk

2/3 cup instant chocolate drink mix

5 chocolate mint candy canes, crushed

1-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream

1/4 cup confectioners' sugar

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

- 1 In a large saucepan, combine the milk and drink mix. Cook and stir over medium heat until heated through. Remove from the heat. Set aside 1 tablespoon crushed candy canes for garnish. Stir remaining candy canes into cocoa; keep warm.
- 2 In a small mixing bowl, beat cream until it begins to thicken. Add confectioners' sugar and vanilla; beat until stiff peaks form. Ladle cocoa into mugs. Top with whipped cream; sprinkle with reserved crushed candy canes.

Yield: 4 servings.

CREAMY GUACAMOLE SPREAD

(PICTURED BELOW)

lynn thomas, lakewood, new york

All my brothers and sisters like to bring appetizers to our Christmas gatherings. This creamy spread came from my brother. It can be attractively displayed on lettuce with tomato wedges.

- 2 large ripe avocados, peeled and cubed**
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise**
- 1/4 cup chopped onion**
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice**
- 2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce**



- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce**

Assorted crackers or fresh vegetables

- 1 In a blender, combine the first seven ingredients. Cover and process until blended. Serve with crackers or vegetables.

Yield: 2 cups.

FUDGY FRUIT DIP

(PICTURED ABOVE)

wilma knobloch, rock rapids, iowa

This rich, chocolaty dip is especially nice at holiday parties served with fresh strawberries. It's nice to offer a lighter snack alongside heavier, richer options.

- 1/3 cup fat-free sugar-free hot fudge topping**
 - 1/3 cup fat-free vanilla yogurt**
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons orange juice concentrate**
- Fresh strawberries**

- 1 In a bowl, combine fudge topping, yogurt and orange juice concentrate. Cover and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes. Serve with strawberries.

Yield: about 1/2 cup.



SPICED CITRUS CIDER

(PICTURED ABOVE)

harriet stichter, milford, indiana

This delicious citrus and spice cider is a wonderful way to warm up on a cold day and is even special enough for a holiday party.

- 5 cups water**
- 4 medium lemons, sliced**
- 4 medium oranges, sliced**
- 2 cinnamon sticks (3 inches)**
- 2 teaspoons whole allspice**
- 3 quarts apple cider**
- 1 cup sugar**

- 1** In a large saucepan, bring the water, lemons, oranges and spices to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 1 hour.
- 2** Strain and discard fruit and spices. Transfer citrus mixture to a large soup kettle. Stir in the cider and sugar; heat through.

Yield: 20 servings (1 gallon).

BLUE CHEESE CROSTINI

(PICTURED BELOW)

kate hiltz, grand rapids, michigan

My sister-in-law gave me this great recipe, which includes two of my favorite ingredients—blue cheese and pears. Yum! Instead of a loaf of French bread, I usually buy a baguette and cut it at an angle to give the slices a nice look.

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened**
- 3 tablespoons butter, softened**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) crumbled blue cheese**
- 1/4 cup finely chopped walnuts, toasted**
- 15 slices French bread (1/2 inch thick), lightly toasted**
- 1 medium ripe pear**

- 1** In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and butter until smooth. Stir in the blue cheese and walnuts. Spread evenly over toasted bread.
- 2** Place on a baking sheet. Broil 3-4 in. from the heat for 3-4 minutes or until cheese is bubbly. Core pear and cut into 30 thin slices. Place two pear slices on each crostini. Serve warm.

Yield: 15 appetizers.





HAM AND SWISS DIP

(PICTURED ABOVE)

laurie laclair, north richland hills, texas

I have been making this scrumptious dip for over 25 years, and I can't think of a time where there haven't been multiple requests for the recipe. It's perfect for holiday celebrations, sports parties and also brunch buffets.

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 2/3 cup mayonnaise**
- 1-1/2 cups diced fully cooked ham**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese**
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped green pepper**
- 1 tablespoon spicy brown mustard**
- 3/4 cup rye cracker crumbs**
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted**

Rye crackers

- 1** In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and mayonnaise until smooth. Stir in the ham, cheese, green pepper and mustard. Spread into an ungreased 9-in. pie plate.
- 2** Toss the cracker crumbs and butter; sprinkle over the cream cheese mixture. Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 12-15 minutes or until heated through. Serve with crackers.

Yield: about 3 cups.

Editor's Note: Reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise is not recommended for this recipe.

SNOW PEA HOLIDAY WREATH

(PICTURED BELOW)

carol schneck, lodi, california

Santa himself might stop to sample this pretty-as-a-picture finger food! Crunchy green pea pods and juicy red tomatoes add a natural fresh, festive note to my buffet table.

- 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon seasoned salt**
- 1/2 pound fresh snow peas, strings removed**
- 2 cups grape tomatoes**

- 1** In a small mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, garlic powder and seasoned salt. Place mixture in a pastry bag or heavy-duty plastic bag with a small star tip.
- 2** Pipe about 1/4 teaspoon of mixture onto the wide end of each pea pod. Arrange pods on a serving platter with cheese mixture toward the outside of the platter; fill center with tomatoes.

Yield: 20 servings.



FANCY BERRY BEVERAGE

(PICTURED BELOW)

christine wilson, sellersville, pennsylvania

We offer this fruity beverage to guests to add a festive touch to holiday gatherings. It pours up frothy, then separates into a dark pink base with a light foamy top. A slightly tart drink, it's wonderful with home-baked cookies.

- 8 cups cranberry juice, chilled**
- 1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened**
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen sweetened sliced strawberries, thawed and pureed**

1-1/4 cups sugar

- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped**
- 4 cups ginger ale, chilled**

Fresh strawberries, optional

- 1** In a large bowl or container, combine the first five ingredients; stir until smooth and the sugar is dissolved. Fold in whipped cream. Slowly add ginger ale; stir gently to mix. Pour into glasses. Garnish with berries if desired. Serve immediately.

Yield: 5 quarts.



CRAB-EGG CRACKER SPREAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

peggy west, georgetown, delaware

This chunky spread always disappears in a twinkling at holiday gatherings. With plenty of crabmeat, hard-cooked eggs and a touch of hot sauce, its hearty kick goes great with crackers, chips or veggies. It was one of my father's very favorite appetizers.

- 1/3 cup mayonnaise**
- 1/3 cup chili sauce**
- 1 tablespoon prepared horseradish**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- 1/2 teaspoon prepared mustard**
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 2 cans (6 ounces each) crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed or 1-1/2 cups flaked fresh or 1-1/2 cups frozen crabmeat**
- 2 hard-cooked eggs, finely chopped**

Assorted crackers

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Stir in the crab and eggs. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Serve with crackers.

Yield: 2-1/2 cups.

HOLIDAY CHEESE BALL

(PICTURED BELOW)

andrea bolden, unionville, tennessee

With its colorful flecks of green onion and pimiento, this cheese ball is great as a Christmas or New Year's appetizer. It can be made with fat-free cheeses without sacrificing the zesty Italian taste.

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
 - 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
 - 1/2 cup chopped green onions**
 - 1 jar (2 ounces) diced pimientos, drained**
 - 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning**
 - 1/2 teaspoon dried parsley flakes**
 - 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper**
 - 1 cup finely chopped walnuts**
- Toasted French bread slices, assorted crackers and/or fresh vegetables**

- 1** In a small mixing bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Shape into a ball and roll in walnuts. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 2** Serve with toasted French bread slices, crackers and/or vegetables.

Yield: 1 cheese ball.



CHICKEN POPPERS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

charlene crump, montgomery, alabama

Wrapped in bacon, these cute chicken bites can be served with your favorite dipping sauce. I made up this recipe using a few food items that were on hand. It was an immediate hit!

- 3 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts**
- 1 cup ground fully cooked ham**
- 25 to 30 cheddar cheese cubes (1/2-inch cubes)**
- 1 pound sliced bacon**
- 2 to 3 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 cup chicken broth**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper**

- 1** Flatten chicken to 1/4-in. thickness; cut into 1-1/2-in. strips. Spread each with 1 teaspoon ham. Place a cheese cube on the end of each strip; roll up. Cut each slice of bacon in half widthwise. Wrap each around chicken roll-up; secure each with a toothpick.
- 2** In a large skillet, cook roll-ups in oil until bacon is crispy, about 10 minutes. Add the broth, salt and pepper; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10-15 minutes or until chicken juices run clear. Serve warm.

Yield: 25-30 appetizers.



TANGY TEXAS SALSA

(PICTURED ABOVE)

lois kildahl, mcallen, texas

I'm a "transplant" from Wisconsin. Even after some 20 years, I still can't get enough of our wonderful local citrus. The combination of tangy fruit, spicy jalapeno and distinctive cilantro is perfect with chips. We also serve it over meat, poultry or fish.

- 1 medium grapefruit**
 - 1 large navel orange**
 - 1 each medium green, sweet red and yellow pepper, chopped**
 - 1 medium tomato, seeded and chopped**
 - 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped**
 - 3 tablespoons chopped red onion**
 - 1 tablespoon minced fresh oregano**
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons sugar**
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1** To section grapefruit and orange, cut a thin slice off the bottom and top of each. Place each fruit cut side down on a cutting board. With a sharp knife, remove peel and white pith. Slice between the membrane of each section and the fruit until the knife reaches the center; remove sections. Place sections in a large bowl; stir in remaining ingredients. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours.

Yield: about 5 cups.

Editor's Note: When cutting or seeding hot peppers, use rubber or plastic gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face.

HOLIDAY SANDWICH WREATH

(PICTURED BELOW)

ginger gentry, sutherlin, virginia

This jolly sandwich wreath always disappears in a twinkling at parties! Best of all, I can put it together in no time using deli ham and chicken salads—or sometimes I make my own. Try decking it with "holly" fashioned from parsley and grape tomatoes.

- 1/4 cup butter, softened**
- 20 slices snack rye bread**
- 20 slices snack pumpernickel bread**

HAM SALAD:

- 1/2 pound deli ham salad**
- 1/4 cup finely chopped celery**
- 1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce**

CHICKEN SALAD:

- 1/2 pound deli chicken salad**
- 1/4 cup diced peeled apple**
- 1 tablespoon sour cream**

Christmas bow, optional

- 1** Spread butter over one side of each slice of bread. In a bowl, combine the ham salad ingredients. In another bowl, combine the chicken salad, apple and sour cream.
- 2** Spread ham salad on half of the rye bread slices; top with remaining rye. Spread the chicken salad on half of the pumpernickel bread slices; top with remaining pumpernickel. Arrange sandwiches in a circle on a serving plate. Decorate with a bow if desired.

Yield: 20 sandwiches.





FA-LA-LA PROSCIUTTO PUFFS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

nella parker, hersey, michigan

Your guests will come back for seconds and even thirds of these light and tasty puffs. They're so delicious that they practically melt in your mouth.

- 1 cup water**
- 6 tablespoons butter**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 5 eggs**
- 3/4 cup finely chopped prosciutto or deli ham**
- 1/4 cup minced chives**

- 1** In a large saucepan, bring the water, butter and pepper to a boil. Add flour all at once and stir until a smooth ball forms. Remove from the heat; let stand for 5 minutes.
- 2** Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Continue beating until the mixture is smooth and shiny. Stir in the prosciutto and chives.
- 3** Drop by heaping teaspoonfuls onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 425° for 18-22 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks. Serve warm.

Yield: 4-1/2 dozen.

CRANBERRY CHUTNEY

(PICTURED BELOW)

karyn gordon, rockledge, florida

You can serve this chunky chutney over cream cheese or Brie with crackers, or as a condiment with roast pork or poultry. Either way, its slightly tart flavor and deep red hue lend a festive flair to the table.

- 4 cups (1 pound) fresh or frozen cranberries**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 cup water**
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground ginger**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cloves**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice**
- 1 cup chopped tart apple**
- 1/2 cup golden raisins**
- 1/2 cup diced celery**

- 1** In a large saucepan, combine the first eight ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the apple, raisins and celery. Simmer, uncovered, until thickened, about 15 minutes. Cool. Chill until serving.

Yield: 3 cups.



CALICO CHEESE DIP

(PICTURED BELOW)

ellen keck, granger, indiana

As soon as my husband tasted this tantalizing dip at a party, he suggested I get the recipe...not knowing I'd already asked the hostess for it! Attractive and zesty, it's one of my most popular appetizers.

- 4 cups (16 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese**
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies**
- 1 can (2-1/4 ounces) sliced ripe olives, drained**
- 4 green onions, sliced**
- 3 medium tomatoes, seeded and diced**
- 1/2 cup minced fresh parsley**
- 1 envelope Italian salad dressing mix**

Tortilla chips

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat together the cheese, chilies, olives, onions, tomatoes and parsley until blended.
- 2** Prepare salad dressing mix according to package directions; pour over cheese mixture and mix well. Serve immediately with tortilla chips.

Yield: 6 cups.



CAPPUCCINO PUNCH

(PICTURED ABOVE)

rose reich, nampa, idaho

When I tried this punch at a friend's wedding shower, I had to have the recipe. Guests will eagerly gather around the punch bowl when you ladle out this frothy mocha ice cream drink.

- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/4 cup instant coffee granules**
- 1 cup boiling water**
- 8 cups milk**
- 1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened**
- 1 quart chocolate ice cream, softened**

- 1** In a small bowl, combine the sugar and coffee; stir in boiling water until dissolved. Cover and refrigerate until chilled.
- 2** Just before serving, pour coffee mixture into a 1-gallon punch bowl. Stir in milk. Add scoops of ice cream; stir until melted.

Yield: about 1 gallon.

NOEL SALMON CHEESECAKE

(PICTURED BELOW)

nella parker, hersey, michigan

This rich dip tastes as good as it looks. It's really a special snack and easy to make.

- 1/2 cup pumpernickel bread crumbs**
- 4 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened**
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten**
- 8 ounces smoked cooked salmon**
- 1/3 cup chopped green onions**

Assorted crackers

- 1** Grease the bottom and sides of a 9-in. springform pan. Sprinkle bread crumbs into pan, coating bottom and sides; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. Beat in cream and pepper until blended. Add eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Fold in salmon and onions.
- 2** Place pan on a double thickness of heavy-duty foil (about 16 in. square). Securely wrap foil around pan. Place pan in a large baking pan; add 1 in. of hot water to the larger pan.



- 3** Bake at 325° for 45-55 minutes or until center is just set. Remove springform pan from water bath. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer (cheesecake may crack while cooling).
- 4** Refrigerate overnight. Remove sides of pan. Serve with crackers.

Yield: 16 servings.

PINEAPPLE STRAWBERRY PUNCH

(PICTURED ABOVE)

heather dollins, poplar bluff, missouri

We enjoyed this delicious drink at my wedding reception. Since then, it has been a must at Christmas gatherings and other special occasions.

- 2 packages (10 ounces each) frozen sweetened sliced strawberries, thawed**
- 1 can (46 ounces) pineapple juice, chilled**
- 4 cups lemon-lime soda, chilled**

- 1** In a food processor or blender, puree the strawberries. Pour into a large punch bowl. Stir in the pineapple juice and soda. Serve immediately.

Yield: 12 servings (3 quarts).



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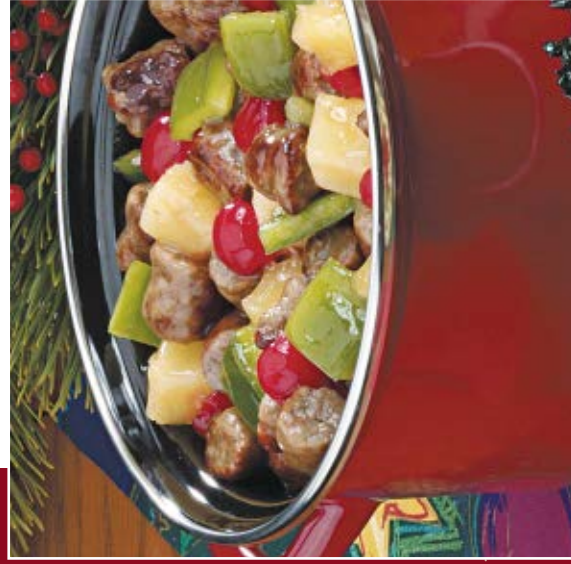
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SWEET 'N' SOUR SAUSAGE

A sweet sauce and merry Christmas colors make this fruit-and-sausage combo a trusted holiday crowd-pleaser. Hearty enough to serve for brunch, it always disappears in a real hurry!

**MARY PONINSKI
WHITTINGTON, ILLINOIS**

HOT CRANBERRY CITRUS DRINK

This lovely rosy drink, with its appealing fresh fruit flavor, is not too sweet or too tart. I sometimes serve this hot beverage at Christmas or at brunch gatherings as an alternative to coffee, tea or cold juice.

**SHARI DONALDSON
CUMMINGS, KANSAS**

CHEDDAR HAM CUPS

When a college classmate and I threw a party for our professor, a friend contributed these savory appetizers. Everyone in the class requested the recipe before the party was done. Try the cups with chicken instead of ham if you'd like.

**BRANDI LADNER
GULFPORT, MISSISSIPPI**

TANGY MOZZARELLA BITES

I adapted this recipe from one I found years ago, substituting ingredients most people have on hand. I like to serve it with crackers or small bread slices.

**JULIE WASEM
AURORA, NEBRASKA**

TANGY MOZZARELLA BITES

- 1/4 cup olive oil**
1 to 2 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
1 garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon dried basil
1 teaspoon coarsely ground pepper
16 ounces cubed part-skim mozzarella cheese
- 1** In a large bowl, combine the oil, vinegar, garlic, basil and pepper. Add cheese; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
Yield: about 3 cups.

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HOT CRANBERRY CITRUS DRINK

- 1 package (12 ounces) fresh or frozen cranberries**
10 cups water
2 cups orange juice
1 cup sugar
1 cup pineapple juice
2 tablespoons lemon juice
3 cinnamon sticks (3 inches)
- 1** In a large saucepan, bring cranberries and water to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 5-7 minutes or until berries pop. Stir in the remaining ingredients; return to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 25-30 minutes.
2 Strain through cheesecloth; discard pulp and cinnamon sticks. Serve warm.
Yield: 3 quarts.

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CHEDDAR HAM CUPS

- 2 cups (8 ounces) finely shredded cheddar cheese**
2 packages (2-1/2 ounces each) thinly sliced deli ham, chopped
3/4 cup mayonnaise
1/3 cup real bacon bits
2 to 3 teaspoons Dijon mustard
1 tube (10.2 ounces) large refrigerated flaky biscuits
- 1** In a large bowl, combine the cheese, ham, mayonnaise, bacon and mustard. Split biscuits into thirds. Press onto the bottom and up the sides of ungreased miniature muffin cups. Fill each with about 1 tablespoon of cheese mixture.
2 Bake at 450° for 9-11 minutes or until golden brown and the cheese is melted. Let stand for 2 minutes before removing from the pans. Serve warm.
Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

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SWEET 'N' SOUR SAUSAGE

- 2 cans (8 ounces each) pineapple chunks**
2 tablespoons cornstarch
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup maple syrup
1/3 cup water
1/3 cup cider vinegar
1 large green pepper, cut into 1-inch pieces
2 packages (8 ounces each) brown-and-serve sausage links
1/2 cup maraschino cherries, halved
- 1** Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Set the pineapple and juice aside. In a large saucepan, combine the cornstarch, salt, maple syrup, water, vinegar and reserved pineapple juice until smooth. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Add the green pepper; cook 2 minutes longer.
2 Meanwhile, in a skillet, brown sausage over medium heat; drain. Cut each link into thirds. Add the sausage, cherries and reserved pineapple to the saucepan; heat through.
Yield: 4-6 servings.

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CHRISTMAS MEATBALLS



Cranberry sauce and brown sugar create a tangy glaze for moist meatballs that are good as an appetizer or as a main dish over rice. We love them so much, I prepare them year-round.

**JOYCE BENTLEY
REDLANDS, CALIFORNIA**

SAUSAGE WONTON STARS



These fancy-looking appetizers are ideal when entertaining large groups. The cute, crunchy cups are stuffed with a cheesy pork sausage filling that kids of all ages enjoy. We keep a few in the freezer so we can easily reheat them for late-night snacking.

**MARY THOMAS
NORTH LEWISBURG, OHIO**

TIERED CHEESE SLICES



I can't tell you how many times I've made this recipe or been asked to share it! Guests always think I fussed, but the simple ingredients go together in minutes using pre-sliced cheese. For busy hostesses, it's a do-ahead delight.

**DIANE BENJAMINSON
COLEVILLE,
SASKATCHEWAN**

CRANBERRY SLUSH PUNCH



Its pretty color and tangy-sweet taste make this festive drink a hit at Christmastime. We also served it at my sister's wedding, where guests told us it was some of the best punch they'd ever tasted. It is an old family recipe.

**MARTHA ARTYOMENKO
LIBBY, MONTANA**

CRANBERRY SLUSH PUNCH

- 3 cans (8 ounces each) jellied cranberry sauce
- 2 cans (12 ounces each) lemonade concentrate
- 1 can (12 ounces) frozen cranberry-apple juice concentrate
- 4 cups water
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1/2 teaspoon ground allspice
- 12 cups lemon-lime soda, chilled

- 1 In a bowl, combine the cranberry sauce, concentrates, water, cinnamon and allspice. Cover and freeze for 8 hours or overnight.
- 2 Remove from the freezer 45 minutes before serving. For each serving, combine 1/2 cup slush mixture with 1/2 cup lemon-lime soda.

Yield: 24 servings (1 cup each).

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SAUSAGE WONTON STARS

- 1 package (12 ounces) wonton wrappers
- 1 pound bulk pork sausage
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Colby cheese
- 1/2 medium green pepper, chopped
- 1/2 medium sweet red pepper, chopped
- 2 bunches green onions, sliced
- 1/2 cup ranch salad dressing

- 1 Lightly press wonton wrappers onto the bottom and up the sides of greased miniature muffin cups. Bake at 350° for 5 minutes or until edges are browned.
- 2 In a large skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in the cheese, peppers, onions and salad dressing. Spoon a rounded tablespoonful into each wonton cup. Bake for 6-7 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: about 4 dozen.

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TIRED CHEESE SLICES

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup dried cranberries
- 2 packages (8 ounces each) deli-style cheddar cheese slices (about 3 inches square)

Assorted crackers

- 1 In a mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, hot pepper sauce and salt. Stir in the pecans and cranberries.
- 2 On a 12-in. square of aluminum foil, place two slices of cheese side by side; spread with 2-3 tablespoons cream cheese mixture. Repeat layers six times. Top with two cheese slices. (Save remaining cheese slices for another use.)
- 3 Fold foil around cheese and seal tightly. Refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight. Cut in half lengthwise and then widthwise into 1/4-in. slices. Serve with crackers.

Yield: about 4 dozen.

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CHRISTMAS MEATBALLS

- 2 eggs
- 1 envelope onion soup mix
- 1/2 cup seasoned bread crumbs
- 1/4 cup chopped dried cranberries
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1-1/2 pounds lean ground beef

SAUCE:

- 1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 3/4 cup ketchup
- 1/2 cup beef broth
- 3 tablespoons brown sugar
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 2 teaspoons cider vinegar

- 1 In a bowl, combine eggs, soup mix, bread crumbs, cranberries and parsley. Crumble beef over mixture and mix well. Shape into 1-in. balls; place 12 to 14 balls on a microwave-safe plate. Cover with waxed paper; microwave on high for 2-3 minutes or until no longer pink. Remove to paper towels to drain. Repeat with remaining meatballs.
- 2 In a 2-qt. microwave-safe dish, combine sauce ingredients. Cover and microwave on high for 2-3 minutes or until heated through, rotating once. Gently stir in meatballs. Cover and cook on high for 1-2 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: about 3 dozen.

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MUSHROOM PUFFS

You can make these attractive appetizers in a jiffy with refrigerated crescent roll dough. The tasty little spirals disappear fast at a holiday party!

MARILIN ROSBOROUGH
ALTOONA, PENNSYLVANIA

**MOCHA EGGNOG**

This chocolaty twist on traditional eggnog will spread good cheer at your Christmas or New Year's celebration. My family makes a batch each year to sip while opening presents.

BETH ANN HILL
DAYTON, OHIO

**SNOW PUNCH**

The bright flavor of this tempting sipper is welcome at any kind of gathering. It's frothy like newly fallen snow.

ELOISE NEELEY
NORTON, OHIO

**PUMPKIN PIE DIP**

I came up with this rich, creamy dip when I had a small amount of canned pumpkin left in the fridge after my holiday baking. It is also great served with sliced pears and apples, or as a spread on zucchini bread or any other nut bread.

LAURIE LACLAIR
NORTH RICHLAND HILLS,
TEXAS



SNOW PUNCH

- 1** cup lemon juice
- 5** medium ripe bananas
- 1** cup sugar
- 2** cups half-and-half cream
- 1** liter lemon-lime soda, chilled
- 1** pint lemon or pineapple sherbet
- 1/4** cup flaked coconut, optional

- 1** In a blender, cover and process the lemon juice, bananas and sugar until smooth. Add cream; blend until smooth. Cover and refrigerate.
- 2** Just before serving, pour banana mixture into a punch bowl. Stir in soda. Top with lemon sherbet and coconut if desired.

Yield: 2-1/2 quarts.

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MUSHROOM PUFFS

- 4** ounces cream cheese, cubed
- 1** can (4 ounces) mushroom stems and pieces, drained
- 1** tablespoon chopped onion
- 1/8** teaspoon hot pepper sauce
- 1** tube (8 ounces) crescent roll dough

- 1** In a blender, combine the cream cheese, mushrooms, onion and hot pepper sauce; cover and process until blended. Unroll crescent dough; separate into four rectangles. Press perforations to seal. Spread mushroom mixture over the dough.
- 2** Roll up jelly-roll style, starting with a long side. Cut each roll into five slices; place on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 425° for 8-10 minutes or until puffed and golden brown.

Yield: 20 appetizers.

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PUMPKIN PIE DIP

- 1** package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
 - 2** cups confectioners' sugar
 - 1** cup canned pumpkin
 - 1/2** cup sour cream
 - 1** teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1** teaspoon pumpkin pie spice
 - 1/2** teaspoon ground ginger
- Gingersnap cookies

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and confectioners' sugar until smooth. Beat in the pumpkin, sour cream, cinnamon, pumpkin pie spice and ginger until blended. Serve with gingersnaps.

Yield: 4 cups.

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MOCHA EGGNOG

- 5** cups chocolate milk
- 4** cups eggnog
- 1** cup heavy whipping cream, divided
- 2** tablespoons instant coffee granules
- 2-1/2** teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1** teaspoon rum extract

- 1** In a large saucepan, combine the milk, eggnog, 1/2 cup cream and coffee granules; heat through. Remove from the heat; stir in extracts.
- 2** In a small mixing bowl, beat remaining cream until stiff peaks form. Dollop over eggnog.

Yield: 2-1/2 quarts.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested with commercially prepared eggnog.

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BOUNTIFUL BREAD BASKET



Remember the heavenly aroma of fresh bread baking in Mom or Grandma's oven during the holidays? Keep the delicious tradition alive with these wonderful recipes for a variety of tempting breads.



Raspberry Cream Cheese Coffee Cake (p. 46)

Inset Photo: Traditional Whole Wheat Bread (p. 61)



RASPBERRY CREAM CHEESE COFFEE CAKE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

susan litwiller, medford, oregon

Since this recipe calls for raspberry jam and not fresh raspberries, you can make this coffee cake any time of year and bring a touch of spring to your table.

- 2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 3/4 cup sugar
- 3/4 cup cold butter
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 cup sour cream
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1-1/2 teaspoons almond extract

FILLING:

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup raspberry jam
- 1/2 cup slivered almonds

- 1 In a large mixing bowl, combine flour and sugar. Cut in butter until mixture is crumbly. Remove 1 cup and set aside. To remaining crumbs, add baking powder, baking soda, salt, sour cream, egg and almond extract;

mix well. Spread in the bottom and 2 in. up the sides of a greased 9-in. springform pan.

- 2 For filling, combine the cream cheese, sugar and egg in a small mixing bowl; beat well. Spoon over batter. Top with raspberry jam. Sprinkle with almonds and reserved crumb mixture.
- 3 Bake at 350° for 55-60 minutes. Cool on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen. Remove sides of the pan. Cool completely. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 12 servings.

GARLIC ONION FOCACCIA

(PICTURED BELOW)

cindy cameron, omaha, nebraska

I use my bread machine to prepare the dough for this savory Italian flat bread. It's a great addition to any meal. At times, I make it for myself as a main-dish "pizza."

- 1 cup water (70° to 80°)
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3 cups bread flour
- 1-1/2 teaspoons active dry yeast



- 2 large onions, thinly sliced**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 3 tablespoons butter**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese**

- 1** In a bread machine pan, place the first six ingredients in order suggested by the manufacturer. Select dough setting (check dough after 5 minutes of mixing; add 1 to 2 tablespoons of water or flour if needed).
- 2** When cycle is completed, turn dough onto floured surface. Roll into 12-in. circle. Transfer to a 14-in. pizza pan coated with nonstick cooking spray. Cover; let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 3** In a large skillet, cook onions and garlic in butter over medium heat for 15-20 minutes or until onions are golden brown, stirring frequently.
- 4** With the end of a wooden spoon handle, make indentations in dough at 1-in. intervals. Top with onion mixture; sprinkle with cheese. Bake at 400° for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to a wire rack. Cut into wedges and serve warm.

Yield: 12 servings.

TURKEY DINNER MUFFINS

margaret berardi, bridgeport, connecticut
I love experimenting in the kitchen. That's how I created these muffins that use up leftovers from a turkey dinner. Team them with a bowl of soup and some fresh fruit for a satisfying lunch.

- 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 3 tablespoons sugar**
- 3 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning**
- 1 egg**
- 3/4 cup turkey gravy**
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil**
- 3/4 cup diced cooked turkey**
- 2 tablespoons jellied cranberry sauce**

- 1** In a bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and poultry seasoning. In another bowl, combine egg, gravy and oil; mix well. Stir into dry ingredients just until



combined. Fold in the turkey.

- 2** Fill greased muffin cups two-thirds full. Top each with 1/2 teaspoon cranberry sauce. Bake at 400° for 15-18 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. Serve warm.

Yield: 10 muffins.

COUNTRY HERB CROISSANTS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

tina lust, nevada, ohio

Convenient refrigerated crescent roll dough gets paired with a few simple ingredients to make rolls worthy of a holiday dinner.

- 1 tube (8 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls**
- 1 tablespoon sour cream**
- 1 tablespoon dried minced onion**
- 1/2 teaspoon dried parsley flakes**
- 1/2 teaspoon rubbed sage**
- 1/4 teaspoon celery salt**

- 1** Unroll crescent roll dough and separate into triangles. In a small bowl, combine the sour cream, onion, parsley, sage and celery salt; spread over dough.
- 2** Roll up from the wide end; place pointed side down 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Curve ends down to form crescent shape. Bake at 375° for 11-13 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

Yield: 8 rolls.

LEMON-TWIST LOAVES

(PICTURED BELOW)

audrey thibodeau, mesa, arizona

These lovely loaves taste as good as they look. They're really worth the extra effort and make nice holiday gifts.

- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast**
- 2 cups warm water (110° to 115°), divided**
- 3 cups sugar, divided**
- 1 cup butter, melted and cooled, divided**
- 3/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1 egg**
- 1 egg yolk**
- 7 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup sliced almonds, chopped**
- 3 tablespoons grated lemon peel**

GLAZE:

- 3 cups confectioners' sugar**
 - 3 tablespoons grated lemon peel**
 - 1 teaspoon lemon extract**
 - 3 to 4 tablespoons milk**
 - 1 cup sliced almonds, toasted**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in 1/2 cup warm water. Add 1 cup sugar, 1/2 cup butter, salt, egg, egg yolk and remaining water. Beat until blended. Add 4 cups flour. Beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.
 - 2** Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes.



Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours.

- 3** Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into thirds. Roll each piece into a 16-in. x 10-in. rectangle. Spread remaining melted butter over dough. Combine the chopped almonds, lemon peel and remaining sugar; sprinkle over butter. Roll up jelly-roll style, starting with a long side; pinch seams and ends to seal. Place seam side down on greased baking sheets. With a knife, cut loaves in half lengthwise to within 1 in. of one end. Holding the uncut end, loosely twist strips together. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1-1/2 hours.
- 4** Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes until bread sounds hollow when tapped. Remove from pans to wire racks. Combine confectioners' sugar, lemon peel, extract and enough milk to achieve spreading consistency; spread over warm bread. Sprinkle with toasted almonds.

Yield: 3 loaves (12 slices each).

SWEET POTATO BISCUITS

nancy daugherty, cortland, ohio

The recipe for these mild-tasting biscuits was my grandmother's. They're a family favorite that we always serve at Thanksgiving.

- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 tablespoon baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1/3 cup shortening**
- 1 can (15-3/4 ounces) sweet potatoes**
- 3/4 cup milk**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the flour, baking powder and salt. Cut in shortening until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. In another bowl, mash the sweet potatoes and milk. Add to the crumb mixture just until combined.
- 2** Turn onto a floured surface; knead 8-10 times. Roll to 1/2-in. thickness; cut with a 2-1/2-in. biscuit cutter. Place on ungreased baking sheets.
- 3** Bake at 425° for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks. Serve warm.

Yield: 1-1/2 dozen.



HARVEST FRUIT BREAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

sandy vias, san leandro, california
My sister is raising two little girls but always makes time to bake homemade bread. They like this loaf best. It's studded with fruit and nuts.

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons water
(70° to 80°)

1 egg

3 tablespoons butter, softened

1/4 cup packed brown sugar

1-1/2 teaspoons salt

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

Dash allspice

3-3/4 cups plus 1 tablespoon bread flour

2 teaspoons active dry yeast

**1 cup dried fruit (dried cherries,
cranberries and/or raisins)**

1/3 cup chopped pecans

1 In bread machine pan, place the first nine ingredients in order suggested by the manufacturer. Select basic bread setting. Choose crust color and loaf size if available.

2 Bake according to bread machine directions (check dough after 5 minutes of mixing; add 1 to 2 tablespoons water or flour if needed). Just before final kneading (your machine may audibly signal this), add fruit and pecans.

Yield: 1 loaf.

Editor's Note: If your bread machine has a time-delay feature, we recommend you do not use it for this recipe.

CHILI CHEDDAR BISCUITS

(PICTURED BELOW)

kim marie van rheenen, mendota, illinois
Chili powder lends a little kick to these flaky, buttery biscuits. I like to serve them with steaming bowls of chili or hearty beef soup.

1-1/3 cups all-purpose flour

3 teaspoons baking powder

3 teaspoons dried parsley flakes

1 teaspoon chili powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup cold butter, cubed

1/2 cup milk

1 egg, lightly beaten

**1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded cheddar
cheese**

1 In a large bowl, combine dry ingredients. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Stir in milk and egg just until moistened. Add cheese.

2 Turn onto a lightly floured surface. Roll to 1/2-in. thickness; cut with a 2-1/2-in. biscuit cutter. Place 1 in. apart on an ungreased baking sheet. Bake at 450° for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

Yield: 15 biscuits.





APRICOT MINI LOAVES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

kelly koutahi, moore, oklahoma

These lightly spiced loaves are full of apricot-nut flavor with a honey and clove glaze. My then 3-year-old daughter, Miranda, first helped me whip up these loaves with ingredients we had on hand, and they were surprisingly good.

- 1 egg, lightly beaten**
- 6 tablespoons milk**
- 5 tablespoons butter, melted**
- 4-1/2 teaspoons honey**
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1 cup pancake mix**
- 1/4 cup finely chopped walnuts**
- 1/4 cup finely chopped dried apricots**
- 2 tablespoons raisins**

GLAZE:

- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
 - 1 teaspoon honey**
 - 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves**
 - 2 to 3 teaspoons milk**
- 1** In a bowl, combine the egg, milk, butter, honey and vanilla; stir in the pancake mix just until moistened. Fold in the walnuts, apricots and raisins.
 - 2** Pour into two greased 4-1/2-in. x 2-1/2-in. x 1-1/2-in. loaf pans. Bake at 350° for 22-28 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 5

minutes before removing from pans to wire racks. In a small bowl, combine the glaze ingredients. Drizzle over warm loaves. Cool.

Yield: 2 loaves.

CORNMEAL PARKER HOUSE ROLLS

(PICTURED BELOW)

lisa darnall lapaseotes, bridgeport, nebraska
My mom deserves the credit for making this recipe a family tradition. These sweet, tender rolls have been on every holiday table at her house for as long as I can remember.

- 1/2 cup butter, cubed**
 - 1/2 cup sugar**
 - 1/3 cup cornmeal**
 - 1 teaspoon salt**
 - 2 cups milk**
 - 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
 - 1/2 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
 - 2 eggs**
 - 4-1/2 to 5-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- Melted butter**

- 1** In a small saucepan, melt butter. Stir in the sugar, cornmeal and salt. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Reduce heat; cook and stir for 5-10 minutes or until thickened. Cool to 110°-115°.
- 2** In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in water. Add eggs and cornmeal mixture. Beat in enough flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth



and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

- 3** Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; roll out to 1/2-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 2-1/2-in. biscuit cutter. Brush with melted butter; fold in half. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 4** Bake at 375° for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Brush with butter. Remove from pans to cool on wire racks.

Yield: 2-3 dozen.

ROSEMARY GARLIC BRAID

(PICTURED AT RIGHT)

cori oakley, traverse city, michigan

This moist, savory bread pairs nicely with a variety of main dishes. It's great with soup and makes a wonderful grilled ham and cheese sandwich. I came up with the recipe a few years ago when I wanted to use up the fresh rosemary in my herb garden.

- 5 whole garlic bulbs**
 - 2 teaspoons olive oil**
 - 1/4 cup minced fresh rosemary or 4 teaspoons dried rosemary, crushed**
 - 1 tablespoon chicken broth**
 - 9 to 9-1/2 cups bread flour**
 - 1/2 cup sugar**
 - 3 packages (1/4 ounce each) quick-rise yeast**
 - 3 teaspoons salt**
 - 1-1/2 cups milk**
 - 1 cup water**
 - 3/4 cup butter, divided**
 - 1 egg**
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons garlic salt**
- 1** Remove papery outer skin from garlic (do not peel or separate cloves). Cut top off garlic heads, leaving root end intact. Place cut side up in a small baking dish. Brush with oil; sprinkle with rosemary.
 - 2** Cover and bake at 425° for 30-35 minutes or until softened. Cool for 10 minutes; squeeze softened garlic into a bowl. Add broth; lightly mash.



- 3** In a large mixing bowl, combine 3 cups flour, sugar, yeast and salt. In a saucepan, heat the milk, water and 1/2 cup butter to 120°-130°. Add to dry ingredients; beat just until moistened. Beat in egg and garlic paste until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough (dough will be sticky). Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes.
- 4** Turn dough onto a lightly floured surface; divide into thirds. Divide each portion into three pieces; shape each into an 18-in. rope. Place three ropes on a greased baking sheet and braid; pinch ends to seal and tuck under. Repeat with remaining dough. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 5** Bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Melt remaining butter; add garlic salt. Brush over bread. Bake 10-15 minutes longer or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool.

Yield: 3 loaves.

HONEY WHOLE WHEAT PAN ROLLS

(PICTURED BELOW)

nancye thompson, paducah, kentucky

With their pleasant wheat flavor and a honey of a glaze, these rolls impress my guests. Every time I take them to potluck dinners, I come home with an empty pan.

4 to 5 cups bread flour

1/4 cup sugar

2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast

1 teaspoon salt

1 cup milk

1 cup butter, cubed

1/2 cup water

2 eggs

2 cups whole wheat flour

HONEY BUTTER:

1 cup butter, softened

7 tablespoons honey

HONEY GLAZE:

2 tablespoons honey

1 tablespoon butter, melted

- 1 In a large mixing bowl, combine 2 cups bread flour, sugar, yeast and salt. In a small saucepan, heat the milk, butter and water to 120°-130°. Add to dry ingredients; beat just until moistened. Beat in eggs. Stir in whole wheat flour and enough remaining bread flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 10 minutes. Cover and let rest 15 minutes.



- 2 Divide dough into thirds. Roll each portion into a 20-in. rope. Cut each into 20 pieces; shape each into a ball. Grease three 9-in. round baking pans; arrange 20 balls in each pan. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 3 Let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1-1/4 hours. Bake at 350° for 18-22 minutes or until golden brown. Meanwhile, in a small mixing bowl, cream butter. Add honey; beat until light and fluffy. Remove rolls from pans to wire racks. Combine glaze ingredients; brush over warm rolls. Serve with honey butter.

Yield: 5 dozen (1-1/4 cups honey butter).

MOLASSES HERB CASSEROLE BREAD

sandra pichon, slidell, louisiana

This savory bread is so delicious. It makes great sandwiches and toast. Try it with soup, too.

3-1/3 to 3-2/3 cups all-purpose flour

1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast

1 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

1-1/4 cups milk

1/4 cup molasses

2 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon dried minced onion

1 egg

- 1 In a large mixing bowl, combine 2 cups flour, yeast, salt and oregano. In a saucepan, heat milk, molasses, butter and onion to 120°-130°. Add to dry ingredients; beat until combined. Beat in egg until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a firm dough. Beat on high speed for 3 minutes.
- 2 Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 5-7 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.
- 3 Punch dough down. Place in a greased 2-qt. round baking dish. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 40 minutes. Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until browned. Remove from pan to wire rack to cool.

Yield: 1 loaf.



BACON SWISS BREAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

shirley mills, tulsa, oklahoma

I'm a busy mom, so I'm always looking for fast and easy recipes. These savory slices of jazzed-up French bread are great with a salad. My daughter and her friends liked to snack on them instead of pizza.

- 1 loaf (1 pound) French bread (20 inches)**
- 2/3 cup butter, softened**
- 1/3 cup chopped green onions**
- 4 teaspoons prepared mustard**
- 5 slices process Swiss cheese**
- 5 bacon strips**

- 1** Cut bread into 1-in.-thick slices, leaving slices attached at bottom. In a bowl, combine butter, onions and mustard; spread on both sides of each slice of bread. Cut each cheese slice diagonally into four triangles; place between the slices of bread. Cut bacon in half widthwise and then lengthwise; drape a piece over each slice.
- 2** Place the loaf on a double thickness of heavy-duty foil. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until bacon is crisp.

Yield: 10 servings.

BANANA SPLIT BREAD

(PICTURED BELOW)

shelly ryneerson, dousman, wisconsin

Good old banana bread is delightfully dressed up in this version, studded with chocolate chips and pecans. I served yummy slices at the holiday brunch I plan annually for my relatives.

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 egg**
- 1 cup mashed ripe bananas (about 2 large)**
- 3 tablespoons milk**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg. In a small bowl, combine bananas and milk. Combine flour, baking powder and baking soda; add to creamed mixture alternately with banana mixture. Fold in chocolate chips and pecans.
- 2** Pour into a greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan. Bake at 350° for 60-70 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.

Yield: 1 loaf.





GIFT OF THE MAGI BREAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

sandra bonow, lewiston, minnesota

I make this extra-special banana bread only once a year to celebrate Christmas. It's loaded with scrumptious ingredients such as coconut, mandarin oranges, dates, cherries, chocolate chips and almonds.

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup mashed ripe bananas (about 2 medium)**
- 1 can (11 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained**
- 1 cup flaked coconut**
- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- 2/3 cup sliced almonds, divided**
- 1/2 cup chopped maraschino cherries**
- 1/2 cup chopped dates**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; add to the creamed mixture alternately with bananas. Stir in the oranges, coconut, chocolate chips, 1/2 cup almonds, cherries and dates.
- 2** Pour into two greased 8-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. loaf pans. Sprinkle with remaining almonds. Bake at 350° for 50-55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

Yield: 2 loaves.

TWISTER CHEDDAR ROLLS

(PICTURED BELOW)

jane birch, edison, new jersey

As flaky as homemade puff pastry, these buttery rolls bring compliments every time I serve them. Because they start with convenient refrigerated crescents, the mouth-watering treats couldn't be quicker or easier for busy holiday cooks!

2 tubes (8 ounces each) refrigerated crescent rolls

1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese



- 1/4 cup chopped green onions**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon water**
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds**
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic salt or garlic powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon dried parsley flakes**

- 1** Separate crescent roll dough into eight rectangles; press seams to seal. Combine cheese and onions; spoon about 3 rounded tablespoonfuls lengthwise down the center of each rectangle to within 1/4 in. of each end. Fold dough in half lengthwise; firmly press edges to seal. Twist each strip four to five times. Bring ends together to form a ring; pinch to seal. Place on a greased baking sheet.
- 2** In a small bowl, beat egg and water. Brush over dough. Combine the sesame seeds, garlic salt and parsley; sprinkle over rings.
- 3** Bake at 375° for 14-16 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks. Serve warm.

Yield: 8 rolls.

CRANBERRY CHRISTMAS CANES

(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

rita fenley, chesapeake, virginia

These fruit- and nut-filled rolls perfectly suit the season since they're formed into candy canes. They're fun to make and serve.

- 4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- 1 cup cold butter, cubed**
- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- 1 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)**
- 2 eggs, beaten**

FILLING:

- 1-1/2 cups finely chopped fresh or frozen cranberries**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup raisins**
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans**
- 1/3 cup honey**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons grated orange peel**



GLAZE:

- 1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 2 tablespoons milk**
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, salt and lemon peel; cut in butter until crumbly. In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk and eggs. Stir into flour mixture until blended. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 2** In a saucepan, combine filling ingredients. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Cook and stir 5 minutes longer; cool.
- 3** Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide in half. Roll one portion into an 18-in. x 15-in. rectangle. Spread filling to within 1/2 in. of edges. Fold one short side to center over filling; repeat with other side, making a 15-in. x 6-in. rectangle. Pinch seam to seal. Cut into 15 slices. Twist each slice and form a cane shape.
- 4** Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Repeat with remaining dough and filling. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 45 minutes.
- 5** Bake at 400° for 12-14 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks. Meanwhile, combine the glaze ingredients; drizzle over warm rolls.

Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

PUMPKIN GINGER SCONES

(PICTURED BELOW)

brenda jackson, garden city, kansas

I made these lovely scones one day when looking for a way to use up leftover pumpkin, and I was not disappointed. I often use my food processor to stir up the dough just until it comes together. It so simple to prepare this way.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 7 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon sugar, divided**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger**
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- 5 tablespoons cold butter, divided**
- 1 egg, lightly beaten**
- 1/4 cup canned pumpkin**
- 1/4 cup sour cream**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the flour, 7 tablespoons sugar, baking powder, cinnamon, salt, ginger and baking soda. Cut in 4 tablespoons butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Combine the egg, pumpkin and sour cream; stir into dry ingredients just until moistened.
- 2** Turn onto a floured surface; knead 10 times. Pat into an 8-in. circle. Cut into eight wedges. Separate wedges and place on a greased baking sheet. Melt the remaining

butter; brush over dough. Sprinkle with remaining sugar.

- 3** Bake at 425° for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

Yield: 8 scones.

PLUM COFFEE LOAF

janet snider, kalamazoo, michigan

I've baked this moist bread for so long that I don't recall where I got the recipe. A simple-to-make plum filling and hot roll mix make it easy to whip up on Christmas morning.

- 1 package (16 ounces) hot roll mix**
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted**
- 1 can (30 ounces) purple plums, drained, halved and pitted**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves**

GLAZE:

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons milk**
- 1/3 cup slivered almonds**

- 1** Prepare and knead hot roll mix according to package directions. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 2** Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; roll into a 15-in. x 10-in. rectangle. Brush with butter. Place plums, cut side down, lengthwise down the center third of rectangle. Combine the sugar, cinnamon and cloves; sprinkle over plums.
- 3** Fold both long sides of dough over filling; pinch seam to seal and tuck ends under. Place a greased baking sheet on work surface next to loaf. Carefully slide loaf onto baking sheet. With a sharp knife, make slashes 1 in. apart across top of loaf. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 4** Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan to a wire rack to cool. For glaze, combine the confectioners' sugar, extract and enough milk to achieve desired consistency. Drizzle over warm loaf. Sprinkle with almonds.

Yield: 1 loaf.





ONION SANDWICH ROLLS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

josie-lynn belmont, woodbine, georgia

These tempting rolls have a mild onion flavor from handy dry soup mix. They're great with Italian meals, as sandwich rolls or as hamburger buns. Plus, they freeze well, so you can prepare them ahead and take them out when needed.

- 1 envelope onion soup mix**
- 1/2 cup boiling water**
- 1 tablespoon butter**
- 3-1/2 to 4 cups all-purpose flour, divided**
- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) quick-rise yeast**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- 1 cup warm water (120° to 130°)**

- 1** In a bowl, combine soup mix, boiling water and butter; cool to 120°-130°. In a mixing bowl, combine 1 cup flour, yeast and sugar. Add warm water; beat until smooth. Stir in 1 cup flour. Beat in onion soup mixture and enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.
- 2** Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6 minutes. Cover and let stand for 10 minutes. Divide dough into 12 portions and shape each into a ball. Place on greased baking sheets; flatten slightly.
- 3** Place two large shallow pans on the work surface; fill half full with boiling water. Place baking pans with rolls over water-filled pans. Cover; let rise for 15 minutes. Bake at 375° for 16-19 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to a wire rack.

Yield: 1 dozen.

CARAWAY RYE ROLLS

(PICTURED BELOW)

dot christiansen, bettendorf, iowa

The caraway and rye flavors really come through in these tender yeast rolls. A crispy golden crust and muffin shape make them an attractive addition to any get-together.

- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast**
- 1/2 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- 2 cups warm small-curd cottage cheese (110° to 115°)**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 2 eggs, beaten**
- 2 tablespoons caraway seeds**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 cup rye flour**
- 3 to 4 cups all-purpose flour**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add the cottage cheese, sugar, eggs, caraway seeds, salt, baking soda, rye flour and 1 cup all-purpose flour; mix well. Gradually stir in enough remaining all-purpose flour to form a sticky batter (do not knead). Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.
- 2** Stir dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into 24 pieces. Place in well-greased muffin cups. Cover; let rise until doubled, about 35 minutes. Bake at 350° for 18-20 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 1 minute before removing from pans to wire racks.

Yield: 2 dozen.





CARDAMOM WREATH

(PICTURED ABOVE)

judy wilson, vermont, illinois

This lovely ring has a sweet, spicy flavor, and the pretty shape makes it a special treat to serve at Christmas dinner with cardamom butter. I've been cooking since I was very young, and yeast breads are my favorite things to bake.

- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast**
- 1/3 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 4 eggs**
- 1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk**
- 1/4 cup sour cream**
- 1 tablespoon grated orange peel**
- 2-1/4 teaspoons ground cardamom**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 7 to 7-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 tablespoon milk**
- Toasted sliced almonds**
- Coarse or granulated sugar**
- CARDAMOM BUTTER:**
 - 2 cups butter, softened**
 - 1/4 cup confectioners' sugar**
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons grated orange peel**

- 1 to 1-1/2 teaspoons ground cardamom**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg**

- 1** In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in 3 eggs, evaporated milk, yeast mixture, sour cream, orange peel, cardamom and salt; mix well. Beat in 6 cups flour until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.
- 2** Punch dough down; turn onto a floured surface. Divide into six portions. Cover; let rest for 10 minutes. Shape each portion into a 24-in. rope. Place three ropes on a greased baking sheet and braid. Form into a ring; pinch ends tightly together. Repeat with remaining dough. Cover and let rise until almost doubled, about 45 minutes.
- 3** Beat milk and remaining egg; brush over wreaths. Sprinkle with almonds and sugar. Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool.
- 4** Meanwhile, in a large mixing bowl, beat cardamom butter ingredients until blended. Serve with bread.

Yield: 2 loaves (2 cups butter).

PEPPER JACK BATTER BREAD

becky asher, salem, oregon

This flavorful loaf is flecked with green chilies and hearty enough to turn a steaming bowl of soup into a meal.

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- 1/2 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)**
- 1/3 cup butter, melted**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 2 eggs**
- 2-1/4 to 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons cornmeal, divided**
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies, drained**
- 4 ounces pepper Jack cheese, shredded**

- 1 In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add the milk, butter, salt, eggs and 1 cup flour. Beat on low speed for 30 seconds. Beat on medium for 2 minutes. Stir in 1/2 cup cornmeal and remaining flour. Stir in chilies and cheese. Do not knead. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 45 minutes.
- 2 Stir dough down. Sprinkle 1 tablespoon cornmeal into a greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan. Spoon batter into pan. Sprinkle with remaining cornmeal. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 3 Bake at 375° for 45-50 minutes or until bread sounds hollow when tapped. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 1 loaf.

POINSETTIA COFFEE CAKE

(PICTURED BELOW RIGHT)

rowena wilson, jetmore, kansas

I often take this coffee cake to Christmas open houses or church functions. People ooh and aah over the fun poinsettia shape, but that doesn't stop them from cutting big pieces.

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- 3/4 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)**
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten**
- 1/3 cup sugar**
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 5 to 5-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 3/4 cup chopped dates**
- 1/2 cup chopped nuts**

FROSTING:

- 1 tablespoon butter, softened**
 - 1 cup confectioners' sugar**
 - 3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract**
 - 3 to 4 teaspoons water**
- Yellow and red colored sugar**

- 1 In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk, eggs, sugar, lemon peel, salt and 2-1/2 cups flour; beat until smooth. Stir in dates and nuts. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.

- 2 Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1-1/2 hours.
- 3 Punch dough down. Turn onto a floured surface; divide into eight equal pieces. Shape one piece into eight smaller balls; mound in the center of a large greased baking sheet. Form remaining pieces into teardrop shapes by tapering one side of each ball. Place around smaller balls with wide end of petals touching the flower center. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 4 Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Cool slightly. Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, beat the butter, confectioners' sugar, vanilla and enough water to achieve desired frosting consistency. Spread over warm coffee cake. Sprinkle center with yellow sugar and petals with red sugar.

Yield: 16-18 servings.



HERBED CHEESE RING

(PICTURED BELOW)

evelyn bear, kingston, idaho

This savory cheese loaf is great sliced in thin wedges to go with soup, salads or casseroles. I've served it to large crowds and received many compliments. One year, I gave it to our neighbor for Christmas.

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
- 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
- 1 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)**
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- 2 tablespoons honey**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup whole wheat flour**
- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon each dried oregano, basil and rosemary, crushed**

FILLING:

- 1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- 1/2 teaspoon dried parsley flakes**
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika**

TOPPING:

- 1 egg, beaten**
- 2 teaspoons sesame seeds**
- 4 teaspoons grated Parmesan cheese**



- 1** In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add milk, oil, honey, egg, salt, whole wheat flour, 1 cup all-purpose flour and herbs; beat until blended. Stir in enough remaining all-purpose flour to form a soft dough. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 2** Punch dough down and turn onto a floured surface; divide in half. Roll one portion into a 15-in. x 10-in. rectangle. Combine filling ingredients; sprinkle half over dough. Roll up jelly-roll style, starting with a long side; pinch seams to seal.
- 3** Place seam side down on a greased baking sheet; pinch ends together to form a ring. With a sharp knife, cut 1/2-in. slashes at 2-in. intervals. Repeat with remaining dough and filling. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 4** Brush each ring with egg; sprinkle with sesame seeds and Parmesan. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks.

Yield: 2 loaves.

ANISEED YEAST ROLLS

(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

amy short, lesage, west virginia

These hard-crustured, golden-brown gems have a mild anise flavor and a soft pillowy texture with a sprinkling of aniseed on top.

- 5-1/4 to 5-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
 - 3/4 cup packed brown sugar**
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons salt**
 - 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast**
 - 4 teaspoons aniseed, divided**
 - 3/4 cup water**
 - 1/2 cup butter, cubed**
 - 6 eggs**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, combine 2 cups flour, brown sugar, salt, yeast and 3 teaspoons aniseed. In a saucepan, heat water and butter to 120°-130°. Add to dry ingredients; beat just until moistened. Add 5 eggs and beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough.
 - 2** Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes.



Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until nearly doubled, about 1 hour.

- 3** Punch down dough. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into 22 pieces. Shape each into a ball. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Cover and let rise until nearly doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 4** Beat remaining egg; brush over dough. Sprinkle with remaining aniseed. Bake at 350° for 20-22 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

Yield: 22 rolls.

TRADITIONAL WHOLE WHEAT BREAD

(PICTURED AT RIGHT)

carol forcum, marion, illinois

With all the sweet breads that are served during the holidays, it's nice to make this nutritious wheat bread. I use it for sandwiches and also enjoy it toasted and buttered.

- 3 cups whole wheat flour**
- 1/2 cup toasted wheat germ**
- 1/4 cup mashed potato flakes**
- 1/4 cup nonfat dry milk powder**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast**
- 2 teaspoons salt**

- 2 cups water**
- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil**
- 3 eggs**
- 3 to 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. In a small saucepan, heat water and oil to 120°-130°. Add to dry ingredients; beat until blended. Beat in eggs until smooth. Stir in enough all-purpose flour to form a soft dough.
- 2** Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 8-10 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.
- 3** Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide in half. Shape into loaves. Place in two greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pans. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 45 minutes.
- 4** Bake at 375° for 35-40 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to cool on wire racks.

Yield: 2 loaves.



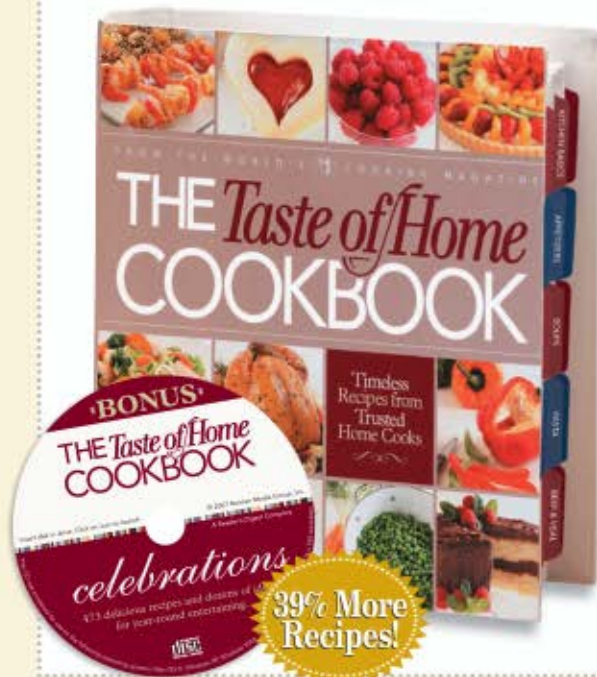
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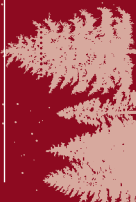
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CHERRY ALMOND PULL-APART BREAD



I recommend this pull-apart bread as a sweet treat for Christmas or Easter morning, or whenever you have overnight guests. When my son and son-in-law visit, they devour it almost before it hits the table. It's so yummy, gooey and good.

GEORGINA EDWARDS
KELOWNA,
BRITISH COLUMBIA

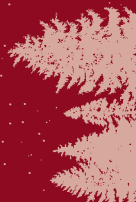


ELEPHANT EARS



Who can resist these scrumptious homemade sweet rolls? I love the cinnamon-sugar and pecans.

SUSAN TAUL
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

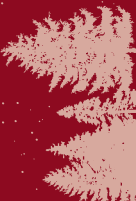


APPLE CRANBERRY BREAD



Cranberries lend a burst of tart flavor and bright color to this quick bread. Dotted with crunchy nuts, slices of the moist loaf are good for breakfast with a cup of coffee or as a snack any time of the day.

PHYLLIS EISMANN SCHMALZ
KANSAS CITY, KANSAS

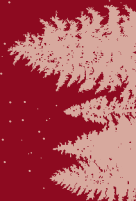


GOLDEN RAISIN WHEAT BREAD



I freeze extra loaves when I bake this golden moist bread. When relatives and I get together at Christmastime, I'm the one who's asked to bring the bread.

NILAH SCHENCK
BELOIT, WISCONSIN



GOLDEN RAISIN WHEAT BREAD

- 3/4 cup golden raisins**
- 1/2 cup boiling water**
- 3 cups whole wheat flour**
- 2 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast**
- 1 tablespoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 carton (16 ounces) plain yogurt**
- 1 cup water**
- 1/3 cup honey**
- 5 tablespoons butter**
- 4-1/2 to 5 cups all-purpose flour**

1 In a small bowl, combine raisins and water; let stand for 10 minutes. Drain well; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine whole wheat flour, yeast, salt and baking soda. In

a saucapan, heat yogurt, water, honey and butter to 120°-130°. Add to dry ingredients. Add raisins and enough all-purpose flour to form a soft dough.

- 2** Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic; about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.
- 3** Punch dough down; divide into thirds. Shape into loaves. Place in three greased 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pans. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 30 minutes.
- 4** Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to cool on wire racks.

Yield: 3 loaves.

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ELEPHANT EARS

- 1/2 cup warm milk (110° to 115°)**
 - 1/4 cup warm water (110° to 115°)**
 - 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
 - 2 cups all-purpose flour**
 - 4-1/2 teaspoons sugar**
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt**
 - 1/2 cup cold butter**
 - 1 egg yolk, beaten**
- FILLING/TOPPING:**
- 6 tablespoons butter, melted, divided**
 - 2 cups sugar**
 - 3-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
 - 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans**

1 In a bowl, combine milk, water and yeast; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, combine flour, sugar and salt. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse

crumbs. Add egg to yeast mixture; beat into dry ingredients until blended. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours.

- 2** Punch dough down; turn onto a lightly floured surface. Knead 8-10 times. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes. Roll into an 18-in. x 10-in. rectangle. Brush with 2 tablespoons butter. Combine sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle 1 cup over dough. Beginning with a long side, roll up jelly-roll style; pinch edges to seal. Cut into 1-in. slices.
- 3** For each elephant ear, sprinkle a small amount of the remaining cinnamon-sugar on a piece of waxed paper. Place a slice of dough on cinnamon-sugar; roll into a 5-in. circle.
- 4** Place sugared side down on an ungreased baking sheet. Brush with some of the remaining butter; sprinkle with pecans and cinnamon-sugar. Bake at 375° for 9-11 minutes.

Yield: 1-1/2 dozen.

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APPLE CRANBERRY BREAD

- 2 eggs**
- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 2 tablespoons canola oil**
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 2 cups chopped peeled tart apples**
- 1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries**
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts**

- 1** In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs, sugar and oil. Combine the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, baking soda and salt; add to egg mixture just until combined (batter will be very thick). Stir in the apples, cranberries and walnuts.
- 2** Transfer to an 8-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. loaf pan coated with nonstick cooking spray. Bake at 350° for 60-65 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.

Yield: 1 loaf (16 slices).

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CHERRY ALMOND PULL-APART BREAD

- 6 tablespoons butter, melted, divided**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 3 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- 20 frozen bread dough dinner rolls**
- 1/2 cup sliced almonds, toasted**
- 1/2 cup candied cherries, halved**
- 1/3 cup corn syrup**

1 Place 3 tablespoons butter in a small bowl. In another bowl, combine the sugar and cinnamon. Dip 10 frozen dough rolls in butter, then a roll in cinnamon-sugar. Place in a greased 10-in. fluted tube pan. Sprinkle with half of the almonds and cherries.

- 2** Repeat with remaining rolls, almonds and cherries. Combine corn syrup and remaining butter; pour over cherries. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 3** Remove from the refrigerator. Cover and let rise until almost doubled, about 2 hours. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Immediately invert onto a serving plate. Serve warm.

Yield: 20 servings.

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BRAIDED SESAME WREATH

"Knead" a gift better than store-bought?

This is the all-time favorite bread of everyone I know—and I bake all kinds. I garnish my buttery wreaths with festive fabric bows.

DEBBIE SADLO
LANDOVER, MARYLAND

EGGNOG FRUIT BREAD

Presents from the pantry are a tradition in my family, and this moist, fruity quick bread is a favorite. I wrap loaves in cellophane and decorate the package with stickers and curly ribbons.

MARGO STICH
ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA

FROSTED PUMPKIN MUFFINS

I jazz up pound cake mix with some canned pumpkin and pumpkin pie spice to create these sweet muffins. They're so good, even picky eaters cannot seem to get enough. They're also delicious without frosting or the nuts.

SAMANTHA CALLAHAN
MUNCIE, INDIANA

STOLLEN LOAVES

These loaves have a less traditional look than typical stollen, but sure have all the holiday goodness.

TOM GUENTHER
OSHKOSH, WISCONSIN

STOLLEN LOAVES

- 3 packages (1/4 ounce each) active dry yeast**
1/2 cup warm water (110° to 115°)
1 cup butter, softened
1 cup sugar
2 cups warm milk (110° to 115°)
2 eggs
7 to 8 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups mixed candied fruit
1 cup raisins
1 cup golden raisins
1/2 cup sliced almonds
Confectioners' sugar

1 In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar; gradually beat in milk. Stir in yeast mixture. Beat in eggs, 4 cups flour and salt

until smooth. Add enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Stir in candied fruit, raisins and almonds.

2 Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes (dough will be sticky). Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until nearly doubled, about 1 hour.

3 Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into fourths. Shape each portion into a loaf. Place in four greased 8-in. x 4-in. x 2-in. loaf pans. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 1 hour.

4 Bake at 350° for 35-45 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool. Dust with confectioners' sugar.

Yield: 4 loaves.

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EGGNOG FRUIT BREAD

- 3 eggs**
1 cup vegetable oil
1-1/2 cups sugar
3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
3/4 teaspoon rum extract
1-1/2 cups eggnog
3 cups all-purpose flour, divided
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 cup candied fruit
1/2 cup chopped walnuts

1 In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs and oil. Beat in the sugar, extracts and eggnog. Combine 2-1/2 cups flour, baking powder, salt and nutmeg; gradually add to egg mixture. Toss the fruit with remaining flour; stir into batter. Fold in walnuts.

2 Pour into two greased 8-in. x 2-in. loaf pans. Bake at 350° for 60-65 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

Yield: 2 loaves.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested with commercially prepared eggnog.

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FROSTED PUMPKIN MUFFINS

- 1 package (16 ounces) pound cake mix**
2 eggs
1 cup canned pumpkin
1/3 cup water
2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 can (16 ounces) cream cheese frosting
1/2 cup finely chopped pecans, optional

1 In a large mixing bowl, combine the cake mix, eggs, pumpkin, water, pumpkin pie spice and baking soda. Beat on medium speed 3 minutes.

2 Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full. Bake at 350° for 18-22 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

3 Frost muffins. Sprinkle with pecans if desired. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 1-1/2 dozen.

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BRAIDED SESAME WREATH

- 1 package (1/4 ounce) active dry yeast**
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons warm milk (110° to 115°)
1/4 cup butter, melted
1/4 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon salt
4 to 4-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
TOPPING:
1 egg, beaten
1 teaspoon sesame seeds

1 In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm milk. Add the butter, sugar, egg, salt and 2 cups flour; beat until smooth. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface; knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in a greased bowl, turning once to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour.

2 Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; divide into thirds. Shape each portion into a 22-in. braid; pinch ends together to form a ring. Cover and let rise until doubled, about 45 minutes. Brush with egg and sprinkle with the sesame seeds. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pan to a wire rack to cool.

Yield: 1 loaf.

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TANGERINE TOSSED SALAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

helen musenbrock, o'fallon, missouri

I learned to cook from my mother when I was a young girl. I like the combination of sweet tangerines and crunchy caramelized almonds in this recipe.

- 1/2 cup sliced almonds**
- 3 tablespoons sugar, divided**
- 2 medium tangerines or navel oranges**
- 6 cups torn lettuce**
- 3 green onions, chopped**
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper**

- 1** In a skillet, cook and stir the almonds and 2 tablespoons sugar over medium-low heat for 25-30 minutes or until sugar is melted and the almonds are toasted. Remove from the heat. Peel and section the tangerines, reserving 1 tablespoon juice.
- 2** In a large bowl, combine the lettuce, onions, tangerines and almonds. In a small bowl, whisk the vinegar, oil, salt, pepper, reserved juice and remaining sugar. Drizzle over the salad and toss to coat.

Yield: 6 servings.

CHILI WITH BARLEY

(PICTURED BELOW)

shirley mcclanahan, falmouth, kentucky

This is one of those quick but delicious, one-dish dinner recipes you can never have too many of. It's a perfect, stick-to-the-ribs meal on those cold winter days when you need to be warmed from the inside out. My family loves it, and even our minister raved about it at a potluck supper.

- 1 pound ground beef**
- 1 medium onion, chopped**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 4 cups water**
- 1 cup quick-cooking barley**
- 1 can (15-1/2 ounces) chili beans, undrained**
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained**
- 1 can (6 ounces) tomato paste**
- 1 envelope chili seasoning**

- 1** In a large saucepan, cook the beef, onion and garlic over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain. Add water; bring to a boil. Stir in the barley. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes or until barley is tender. Stir in the beans, tomatoes, tomato paste and chili seasoning; heat through.

Yield: 6-8 servings.





TACO BEAN SOUP

(PICTURED ABOVE)

sharon thompson, hunter, kansas

This hearty three-bean soup is very easy to fix. You can add a can of green chilies if you like it hotter. I increase the amount of tomatoes and beans for large church get-togethers.

- 1 pound bulk pork sausage**
- 1 pound ground beef**
- 1 envelope taco seasoning**
- 4 cups water**
- 2 cans (16 ounces each) kidney beans, rinsed and drained**
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) pinto beans, rinsed and drained**
- 2 cans (15 ounces each) garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained**
- 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces each) stewed tomatoes**
- 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces each) Mexican diced tomatoes, undrained**
- 1 jar (16 ounces) chunky salsa**

Sour cream, shredded cheddar cheese and sliced ripe olives, optional

- 1** In a soup kettle, cook sausage and beef over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Add taco seasoning and mix well. Stir in the water, beans, tomatoes and salsa. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes or until heated through, stirring occasionally. Garnish with sour cream, cheese and olives if desired.

Yield: 12-14 servings.

CHRISTMAS FRUIT SALAD

(PICTURED BELOW)

ina vickers, dumas, arkansas

My mother-in-law served this delightful salad the very first Thanksgiving I spent with my husband's family. Now I serve it during the holidays and on special occasions. It's a mainstay at the potlucks we have at work.

- 3 egg yolks, beaten**
- 3 tablespoons water**
- 3 tablespoons white vinegar**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped**
- 3 cups miniature marshmallows**
- 2 cups halved green grapes**
- 1 can (20 ounces) pineapple tidbits, drained**
- 1 can (11 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained**
- 1 jar (10 ounces) red maraschino cherries, drained and sliced**
- 1 cup chopped pecans**
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice**

- 1** In a large saucepan, combine the egg yolks, water, vinegar and salt. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until the mixture thickens and reaches 160°. Remove from the heat and cool; fold in whipped cream.
- 2** In a large bowl, combine the remaining ingredients. Add dressing; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate for 24 hours.

Yield: 12-14 servings.



CREAMY CHICKEN RICE SOUP

(PICTURED BELOW)

janice mitchell, aurora, colorado

I came up with this thick, flavorful soup while making some adjustments to a favorite stovetop chicken casserole. It goes together in short order using precooked chicken chunks and a couple of pulses in a mini-processor to chop the veggies. We like this soup for lunch with rolls and fresh fruit. Using some of the broth to saute the vegetables keeps the fat content down.

- 1/2 cup chopped onion**
 - 1 medium carrot, chopped**
 - 1 celery rib, chopped**
 - 1/2 teaspoon minced garlic**
 - 1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
 - 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces each) chicken broth**
 - 1/3 cup uncooked long grain rice**
 - 3/4 teaspoon dried basil**
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
 - 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
 - 1 can (5 ounces) evaporated milk**
 - 1 package (9 ounces) frozen diced cooked chicken, thawed**
- 1** In a large saucepan, saute the onion, carrot, celery and garlic in oil until tender. Stir in the broth, rice, basil and pepper. Bring to a



boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15 minutes or until rice is tender.

- 2** In a small bowl, combine the flour and milk until smooth; stir into soup. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in chicken; heat through.

Yield: 5 servings.

CORN BREAD SALAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

martha spears, lenoir, north carolina

My family loves this cool, crisp medley. It's a unique treatment for extra corn bread. You can fix this refreshing salad ahead of time and vary the vegetables to suit your tastes.

- 1 cup coarsely crumbled corn bread**
- 1 can (8-3/4 ounces) whole kernel corn, drained**
- 1/2 cup each chopped onion, cucumber, broccoli, green pepper, sweet red pepper and seeded tomato**
- 1/2 cup peppercorn ranch salad dressing**
- Salt and pepper to taste**
- Lettuce leaves, optional**

- 1** In a bowl, combine corn bread, vegetables, salad dressing, salt and pepper. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours. Serve on a lettuce-lined plate if desired.

Yield: 6 servings.

FRUIT 'N' NUT TOSSED SALAD

(PICTURED BELOW)

denise bitner, reedsville, pennsylvania

With juicy strawberries, tangy mandarin oranges and crunchy pecans, this refreshing salad has plenty of appeal. The oil-and-vinegar dressing lends a lovely sheen to the tossed ingredients, making this salad an attractive addition to a festive menu.

- 1/4 cup olive oil**
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons sugar**
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar**
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley**

1/4 teaspoon salt

Dash hot pepper sauce

SALAD:

- 1/3 cup sugar**
- 1 cup pecan halves**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 4 cups torn fresh spinach**
- 4 cups torn romaine**
- 1 can (15 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained**
- 2 celery ribs, chopped**
- 1 cup sliced fresh strawberries**
- 4 green onions, chopped**



- 1** For dressing, in a small bowl, whisk the oil, sugar, vinegar, parsley, salt and hot pepper sauce until blended. Cover and refrigerate.
- 2** In a large heavy skillet, melt sugar over medium-low heat without stirring until golden brown, about 30 minutes. Add pecans and butter; stir constantly until butter is melted and pecans are coated. Remove from the heat. Pour onto a foil-lined baking sheet; cool completely. Break pecans apart if necessary.
- 3** In a salad bowl, combine spinach, romaine, oranges, celery, strawberries and onions. Just before serving, drizzle with dressing; toss to coat. Top with sugared pecans.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

FRENCH ONION SOUP

lise thomson, magrath, alberta

I stir up steaming bowlfuls of this all-time favorite frequently. Not only is this version a bit lighter than traditional French onion soup, but it has a slightly sweet flavor that makes it unique.

- 6 cups thinly sliced onions**
- 1 tablespoon sugar**
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil**
- 6 cups beef broth**
- 8 slices French bread (3/4 inch thick), toasted**
- 1/2 cup shredded Parmesan or Swiss cheese**

- 1** In a Dutch oven, cook the onions, sugar and pepper in oil over medium-low heat for 20 minutes or until onions are caramelized, stirring frequently. Add the broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 30 minutes.
- 2** Ladle soup into ovenproof bowls. Top each with a slice of French bread; sprinkle with cheese. Broil 4-6 in. from heat until cheese is melted. Serve immediately.

Yield: 8 servings.



MICROWAVE CORN CHOWDER

(PICTURED ABOVE)

isabel kublik, saskatoon, saskatchewan

I used to cook for a tearoom, and this rich, sunny-colored chowder was a customer favorite. It's a cinch to make in the microwave because there's no scorching.

- 2 cups water**
 - 2 cups diced peeled potatoes**
 - 1/2 cup sliced fresh carrots**
 - 1/2 cup sliced celery**
 - 1/4 cup chopped onion**
 - 1 teaspoon salt**
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
 - 1/4 cup butter, cubed**
 - 1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
 - 2 cups milk**
 - 3 cups (12 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
 - 2 cans (14-3/4 ounces each) cream-style corn**
- 1** Place the potatoes, carrots, celery, onion, salt and pepper in a large saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 15-20 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender; set aside (do not drain).
 - 2** Meanwhile, in a 3-qt. dish, microwave butter on high for 40-60 seconds or until

melted. Stir in flour until smooth. Gradually stir in milk. Cook, uncovered, on high for 4-5 minutes or until thickened, stirring every 2 minutes. Add the cheese. Heat for 30-60 seconds or until the cheese is melted. Stir in corn and vegetable mixture. Cook on high for 1-1/2 to 3 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 10 servings (2-1/2 quarts).

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in a 1,100-watt microwave.

OVERNIGHT FLORET SALAD

(PICTURED BELOW)

elizabeth wenzl, eugene, oregon

Bacon and sunflower kernels lend extra crunch to this colorful combination of onions, cauliflower and broccoli. With its slightly sweet dressing, this salad's a great way to get kids to eat their veggies.

- 1 small head cauliflower, broken into small florets (6 cups)**
- 1 bunch broccoli, broken into small florets (4 cups)**
- 1 bunch green onions, thinly sliced**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise**
- 1/3 cup cider vinegar**
- 1/2 cup sunflower kernels**
- 6 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**





- 1** In a large bowl, combine the cauliflower, broccoli, onions, sugar, mayonnaise and vinegar. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Just before serving, stir in the sunflower kernels and bacon.

Yield: 10 servings.

CONFETTI BEAN SALAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

doreen storz, bloomsburg, pennsylvania
I shared this recipe with a friend a while back. Now we kid about who will make it when we're attending the same event! No matter who brings the salad, it's always a hit at get-togethers.

- 1 can (16 ounces) kidney beans, rinsed and drained**
- 1 can (15 ounces) garbanzo beans or chickpeas, rinsed and drained**
- 1 can (15 ounces) black beans, rinsed and drained**
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen corn, thawed**
- 1/2 cup minced fresh cilantro**
- 1/2 cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper**
- 1/4 cup chopped onion**
- 1 small jalapeno pepper, seeded and finely chopped, optional**

- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1/2 cup balsamic vinegar**
- 1/4 cup olive oil**
- 1 teaspoon chili powder**
- 1/2 teaspoon sugar**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine first 10 ingredients. In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the vinegar, oil, chili powder and sugar; shake well. Pour over bean mixture; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate overnight. Serve with a slotted spoon.

Yield: 12 servings.

Editor's Note: When cutting or seeding hot peppers, use rubber or plastic gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face.

WINTER WARM-UP SOUP

miriam appelbaum, manalapan, new jersey
We love soup all year-round, so we came up with this recipe for times when we cannot get a lot of fresh vegetables. I often substitute cream-style corn and cook the pasta in the broth instead of cooking it separately.

- 1 medium onion, chopped**
- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced**
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil**
- 1 can (49-1/2 ounces) chicken broth**
- 4 medium carrots, chopped**
- 1 large potato, peeled and cubed**
- 1 teaspoon dried basil**
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano**
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup uncooked bow tie pasta**
- 1 can (15-1/4 ounces) whole kernel corn or 1-1/2 cups frozen corn**
- 4 plum tomatoes, thinly sliced and quartered**

- 1** In a Dutch oven, saute the onion and mushrooms in oil until tender. Add the broth, carrots, potato and seasonings. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15 minutes.
- 2** Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Add the pasta, corn and tomatoes to soup; cook 5 minutes longer or until heated through and the vegetables are tender.

Yield: 10 servings (2-1/2 quarts).

LOADED BAKED POTATO SALAD

(PICTURED BELOW)

jackie deckard, solsberry, indiana

I revamped my mother's potato salad recipe to taste more like baked potatoes with all the fixin's, which I love. It's now the most requested dish at family gatherings. When taking it to an event, simply mix up the creamy dressing and combine it with the warm side dish onsite.

- 5 pounds small unpeeled red potatoes, cubed**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- 8 hard-cooked eggs, chopped**
- 1 pound sliced bacon, cooked and crumbled**
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- 1 sweet onion, chopped**
- 3 dill pickles, chopped**
- 1-1/2 cups (12 ounces) sour cream**
- 1 cup mayonnaise**
- 2 to 3 teaspoons prepared mustard**



- 1** Place potatoes in a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Bake, uncovered, at 425° for 40-45 minutes or until tender. Cool in pan on a wire rack.
- 2** In a large bowl, combine the potatoes, eggs, bacon, cheese, onion and pickles. In a small bowl, combine the sour cream, mayonnaise and mustard; pour over the potato mixture and toss to coat. Serve immediately.

Yield: 20 servings.

PASTA BEAN SOUP

(PICTURED ABOVE)

edward reis, phoenix, arizona

This hearty Italian-style recipe proved very popular when I made it for about 90 people who attended our church's "Souper Sunday" one January. I fired up a couple of turkey deep fryers and simmered big batches of it outside!

- 6 large onions, chopped**
- 2/3 cup olive oil**
- 18 garlic cloves, minced**
- 12 cans (16 ounces each) kidney beans, rinsed and drained**
- 4 cans (28 ounces each) Italian crushed tomatoes**

- 3 cartons (32 ounces each) chicken broth**
- 1/4 to 1/3 cup dried oregano**
- 4 tablespoons salt**
- 1 to 2 teaspoons pepper**
- 3 packages (1 pound each) spaghetti, cut into fourths**

Grated Parmesan cheese, optional

- 1** In several soup kettles or Dutch ovens, saute onions in oil until tender. Add garlic; cook and stir about 2 minutes longer. Stir in the beans, tomatoes, broth, oregano, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for at least 30 minutes.
- 2** Cook spaghetti according to package directions; drain. Just before serving soup, stir in the spaghetti. Serve with Parmesan cheese if desired.

Yield: 45-55 servings.

YELLOW SPLIT PEA SOUP

lynn jurss, thousand oaks, california

A great new twist on traditional pea soup, this tastes wonderful and has a sunny yellow color.

- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped**
- 1 large celery rib with leaves, chopped**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- 1 tablespoon butter**
- 6 cups chicken broth**
- 1 pound dried yellow split peas**
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cumin**
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
- 1/4 cup pistachios**

- 1** In a large saucepan, saute onion and celery in oil and butter until tender. Add broth; bring to a boil. Add peas; return to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 1 hour or until peas are tender.
- 2** Stir in lemon juice, cumin and pepper; simmer for 5 minutes. In small batches, puree soup in a blender; return to the pan. Heat for 4-5 minutes. Garnish with parsley and pistachios.

Yield: 6 servings.

STRAWBERRY-TURKEY SPINACH SALAD

(PICTURED BELOW)

taste of home test kitchen

This light, refreshing salad is the perfect antidote to heavy holiday meals. It's also a showstopper, visually and nutritionally, with strawberries and yellow pepper strips tossed with fresh baby spinach. The recipe is also a good use for turkey leftovers. Serve with warm whole wheat rolls or flax or bran muffins.

- 6 cups fresh baby spinach**
- 2 cups julienned cooked turkey breast**
- 2 cups sliced fresh strawberries**
- 1/2 large sweet yellow pepper, julienned**
- 4 green onions, sliced**
- 1/4 cup red wine vinegar**
- 3 tablespoons olive oil**
- 2 tablespoons water**
- 4 teaspoons honey**
- 1/2 teaspoon dried minced onion**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper**

- 1** In a large salad bowl, toss the spinach, turkey, strawberries, yellow pepper and onions. In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the remaining ingredients; shake well. Drizzle over salad and toss to coat.

Yield: 4 servings.





HERBED TOSSED SALAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

margery bryan, moses lake, washington

Ten minutes are all you need to toss together this green salad. The homemade dressing features garlic, oregano and basil, and comes together in a pinch.

- 1 cup vegetable oil**
- 1/3 cup tarragon vinegar**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh oregano or 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 3/4 to 1 teaspoon minced fresh basil or 1/4 teaspoon dried basil**
- 1/2 teaspoon minced fresh parsley**

Mixed salad greens

Sliced cucumber and sweet red pepper

- 1** In a jar with tight-fitting lid, combine the first seven ingredients; shake well. In a large salad bowl, combine the greens, cucumber and red pepper. Drizzle with dressing; toss to coat.

Yield: about 1-1/3 cups dressing.

HAM 'N' SWISS SOUP

(PICTURED BELOW)

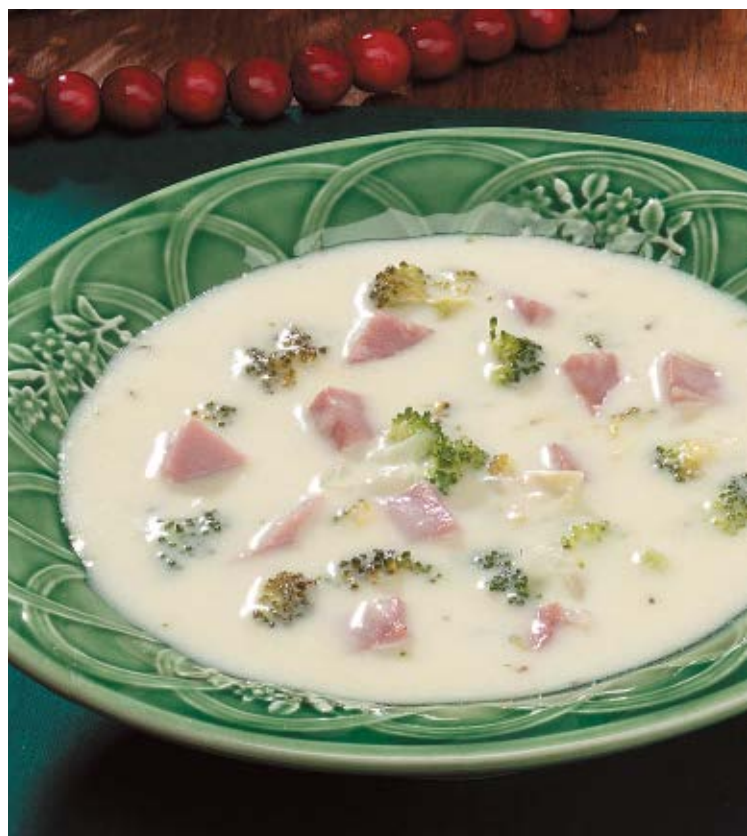
taste of home test kitchen

This simple soup, sized just for two, is easy but tastes like you really fussed. It's creamy and chock-full of yummy ingredients.

- 4-1/2 teaspoons butter**
- 4-1/2 teaspoons all-purpose flour**
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) reduced-sodium chicken broth**
- 1 cup chopped broccoli**
- 2 tablespoons chopped onion**
- 1 cup cubed fully cooked ham**
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1/8 teaspoon dried thyme**
- 3/4 cup shredded Swiss cheese**

- 1** In a saucepan, melt butter; whisk in flour until smooth. Gradually add broth. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.
- 2** Add the broccoli and onion; cook and stir until crisp-tender. Add the ham, cream and thyme; heat through. Stir in the cheese until melted.

Yield: 2 servings.





SESAME SPINACH SALAD

(PICTURED ABOVE)

sue collins, shawnee, kansas

Toasted sesame seeds are a nice contrast to the hearty ingredients and thick, creamy dressing in this spinach salad. I make this dish at least once a month.

- 2 packages (10 ounces each) fresh spinach, torn**
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved**
- 2 ripe avocados, peeled and sliced**
- 1 package (5 ounces) frozen cooked salad shrimp, thawed**
- 3/4 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced**
- 3 hard-cooked eggs, chopped**
- 1/2 cup sesame seeds, toasted**
- 1/4 cup shredded Parmesan cheese**

CREAMY DRESSING:

- 2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream**
- 1 cup mayonnaise**
- 1/4 cup finely chopped onion**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- 2 tablespoons white vinegar**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder**

- 1** In a large bowl, toss the spinach, tomatoes, avocados, shrimp, mushrooms, eggs and sesame seeds. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. In a small bowl, combine dressing ingredients. Pour over the salad and toss to coat.

Yield: 20 servings.

MUSHROOM VEGGIE CHOWDER

(PICTURED BELOW)

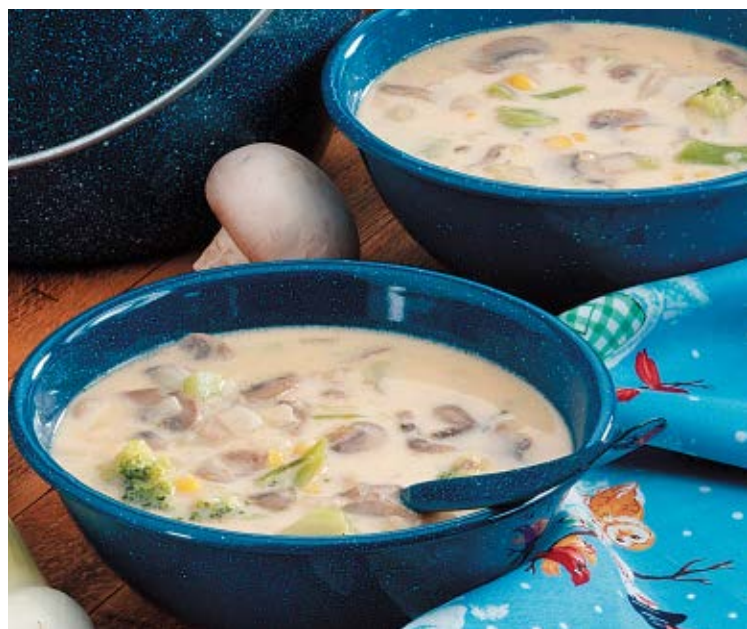
edward reis, phoenix, arizona

This rich, buttery broth is loaded with mushrooms, broccoli and corn. I made it for a dinner at our church, and it sure didn't last long!

- 4 pounds fresh mushrooms, sliced**
- 4 large onions, chopped**
- 1-1/2 cups butter, cubed**
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 3 to 4 tablespoons salt**
- 2 to 2-1/2 teaspoons pepper**
- 3 quarts milk**
- 4 cartons (32 ounces each) chicken broth**
- 2 packages (24 ounces each) frozen broccoli cuts, thawed**
- 3 packages (8 ounces each) frozen corn, thawed**
- 8 cups (32 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**

- 1** In three or four soup kettles, saute the mushrooms and onions in butter until tender. Combine the flour, salt and pepper; stir into mushroom mixture until blended. Gradually stir in milk. Cook and stir until mixture comes to a boil; cook 2 minutes longer until thickened and bubbly.
- 2** Stir in the broth, broccoli and corn; heat through. Just before serving, stir in cheese until melted.

Yield: 50 servings (12-1/2 quarts).



HOT TORTELLINI SALAD

catherine allan, twin falls, idaho

Once you've cooked the tortellini, the rest of this salad is a breeze to finish in the microwave. Sour cream provides the mild coating over this memorable medley of pasta, ham and broccoli.

- 1 package (9 ounces) refrigerated cheese tortellini**
- 2 cups fresh broccoli florets**
- 4 to 5 green onions, sliced**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 6 ounces fully cooked ham, julienned**
- 1/2 cup sour cream**
- 1 teaspoon dried basil**

- 1** Cook tortellini according to the package directions. Meanwhile, in a 2-qt. microwave-safe bowl, combine the broccoli, onions and butter. cover and microwave on high for 2-1/2 minutes; stir. Cook 2-1/2 minutes longer or until broccoli is tender.
- 2** Drain tortellini. Stir tortellini, ham, sour cream and basil into broccoli mixture. Cover and microwave on high for 1-2 minutes or until heated through. Let stand for 2 minutes before serving.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested with an 850-watt microwave.

FARMHOUSE CHICKEN SOUP

janice mitchell, aurora, colorado

Over the years, I've changed this recipe bit by bit until my family said it was perfect. I hope your family enjoys it as much as we do!

- 1 broiler/fryer chicken (3 to 3-1/2 pounds)**
- 2 quarts water**
- 1 large onion, chopped**
- 1/2 cup chopped celery**
- 1 cup diced carrots**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon each pepper and poultry seasoning**
- 1/4 teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes**

SPAETZLE:

- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**

1/8 teaspoon each baking powder and ground nutmeg

2 eggs, well beaten

1/2 cup milk

1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley

- 1** Place the chicken and water in a Dutch oven or soup kettle. Bring to a boil; reduce heat. Add the onion, celery, carrots, garlic, salt, pepper, poultry seasoning and red pepper flakes. Cover and simmer for 1 hour or until chicken is tender.
- 2** Remove chicken from broth; cool. Skim fat from broth. Remove meat from bones; discard bones and skin. Cut meat into bite-size pieces; return to broth. Cover; simmer.
- 3** For spaetzle, combine the flour, salt, baking powder and nutmeg in a small bowl. Stir in the eggs, milk and parsley; blend well. With a rubber spatula, push batter through a large-hole grater or colander into the simmering soup. Simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes or until spaetzle float to the top.

Yield: 10-12 servings (about 3 quarts).

ROSY POTATO SOUP

holly youngers, cunningham, kansas

Chives, parsley and paprika delicately season this distinctive soup.

- 1 large onion, chopped**
- 3/4 cup chopped celery**
- 3 tablespoons butter**
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 to 3/4 teaspoon salt**
- 3 cups milk**
- 3 medium potatoes, peeled, cooked and sliced (2-1/2 cups)**
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh parsley**
- 1 tablespoon paprika**

- 1** In a large saucepan, saute onion and celery in butter until tender. Stir in flour and salt until blended. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened and bubbly. Reduce heat. Add potatoes, parsley and paprika; heat through.

Yield: 5 servings.

SALAD WITH CRAN-RASPBERRY DRESSING

I was given this recipe at a bridal shower our rural farming community held for me. It's become my all-time favorite salad. The color and tang the berries add to the lovely mix make it perfect for company or just my husband and me.

TANNIS WILLIAMS
GOWANSTOWN, ONTARIO

**VEGETABLE CRAB SOUP**

As a school principal, wife and mom, I cook to wind down at the end of a busy day. This recipe, rich with cheese and crab, is a quick and different way to dress up canned soup.

AMY LINGREN
DES PERES, MISSOURI

**WHITE BEAN 'N' HAM SOUP**

This soup is economical, quick and yummy! While canned beans make this hearty main dish a fast fix, you can save money by soaking and cooking dry beans instead.

BISSY CROSBY
COLUMBIA, MISSOURI

**RANCH-STYLE POTATO SALAD**

Even though I live in town, I have a feeling that this potato salad would be welcome fare at any ranch. It's a tasty, refreshing change from your typical potato salad.

CAROL JACOBSON
COVINA, CALIFORNIA



WHITE BEAN 'N' HAM SOUP

- 2 cans (15-1/2 ounces each) great northern beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 medium carrots, diced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2-1/4 cups water
- 1-1/2 cups cubed fully cooked ham
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon white pepper
- 1 bay leaf

1 Mash one can of beans; set aside. In a large saucepan, saute the carrots and onion in butter. Stir in the water, ham, seasonings and whole and mashed beans; cook over medium heat until heated through. Discard bay leaf.

Yield: 6 servings.

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SALAD WITH CRAN-RASPBERRY DRESSING

- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen sweetened raspberries, thawed and drained
 - 1/4 cup sugar
 - 2 teaspoons cornstarch
 - 1/4 teaspoon celery seed
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
 - 1/2 cup cranberry juice
 - 1/4 cup red wine vinegar
- SALAD:**
- 1 package (6 ounces) fresh baby spinach
 - 1 can (11 ounces) mandarin oranges, drained
 - 1/3 cup dried cranberries
 - 3 green onions, sliced
 - 1/4 cup sunflower kernels

- 1/4 cup chopped pecans
- 1/4 cup slivered almonds

1 Place raspberries in a blender; cover and process until pureed. Strain and discard seeds; set puree aside.

2 In a large saucepan, combine the sugar, cornstarch, celery seed, cinnamon and cloves. Stir in the cranberry juice, vinegar and reserved raspberry puree. Bring to a boil over medium heat; cook and stir for 1 minute or until thickened. Remove from the heat; cool. Cover and refrigerate.

3 In a large salad bowl, combine the spinach, oranges, cranberries, onions, sunflower kernels, pecans and almonds. Drizzle with dressing; gently toss to coat. Refrigerate any leftover dressing.

Yield: 12 servings.

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RANCH-STYLE POTATO SALAD

- 1 pound bulk Italian sausage
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 large sweet red pepper, chopped
- 8 medium potatoes, cooked, peeled and cubed
- 6 hard-cooked eggs, chopped
- 2 cups ranch salad dressing
- 3 tablespoons minced watercress, optional

1 In a large skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Add onion and red pepper; saute until tender. Stir in potatoes and eggs; heat through. Add dressing and watercress if desired.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

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VEGETABLE CRAB SOUP

- 1 can (19 ounces) chunky New England clam chowder
- 1 can (11 ounces) condensed cheddar cheese soup, undiluted
- 2-1/2 to 3 cups half-and-half cream, divided
- 1/4 cup white wine
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 package (16 ounces) frozen stir-fry vegetable blend
- 2 cans (6 ounces each) crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed
- 1 medium tomato, seeded and chopped

- 2/3 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon pepper

1 In a large saucepan, combine the chowder, soup, 2-1/2 cups cream, wine and Worcestershire sauce. Bring to a boil. Stir in vegetables; return to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 6-8 minutes or until vegetables are crisp-tender.

2 Stir in the crab, tomato, cheese, parsley and pepper. Cook and stir until heated through, adding remaining cream if desired.

Yield: 8 servings.

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CHEESY FLORET SOUP

I received the recipe for this comforting soup from my mom, and my family requests it often. It's especially good with crusty French bread.

JANICE RUSSELL
KINGFISHER, OKLAHOMA

**WINTER FRUIT SALAD**

For a flavorful and attractive side dish, try this refreshing salad. I fix it ahead to give the flavors a chance to blend, which also eliminates last-minute fuss. Family members and guests always tell me how much they enjoy it.

RUBY WILLIAMS
BOGALUSA, LOUISIANA

**FANCY GREEN SALAD**

Here's a festive, flavorful quick-toss salad that adds color to any table. A lady brought this to a church gathering. It was so pretty and wonderful, I just had to have the recipe.

DIANA SMITH
WESSON, MISSISSIPPI

**SPINACH MINESTRONE**

Sprinkle grated Parmesan on bowls of this flavorful soup that's chock-full of spinach, beans and pasta. Breadsticks are an easy accompaniment.

GLADYS DE BOER
CASTLEFORD, IDAHO



FANCY GREEN SALAD

- 1 package (10 ounces) mixed salad greens
 - 1/2 cup dried cranberries
 - 1/2 cup crumbled blue cheese
 - 1/3 cup sunflower kernels, toasted
- RASPBERRY VINAIGRETTE:**
- 5 tablespoons olive oil
 - 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons raspberry vinegar
 - 3 to 4 teaspoons sugar
 - 2 teaspoons chopped green onion
 - 1/4 teaspoon poppy seeds
 - 1/8 teaspoon salt
 - 1/8 teaspoon pepper

1 In a large salad bowl, combine the greens, cranberries, blue cheese and sunflower kernels. In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine the vinaigrette ingredients; shake well. Drizzle over salad; toss to coat.

Yield: 8 servings.

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CHEESY FLORET SOUP

- 3 cups fresh broccoli florets
- 3 cups fresh cauliflowerets
- 3 celery ribs, sliced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cups water
- 1/2 teaspoon celery salt
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2-1/3 cups milk
- 1 pound process cheese (Velveeta), cubed

1 In a large saucepan, combine the first six ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 12-15 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

2 Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, melt butter; stir in the flour until smooth. Gradually stir in milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Reduce heat; add cheese. Cook and stir until cheese is melted. Drain vegetables; add cheese sauce and heat through.

Yield: 4-6 servings.

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SPINACH MINESTRONE

- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 4 cups reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 can (16 ounces) kidney beans, rinsed and drained
- 1 can (14-1/2 ounces) no-salt-added diced tomatoes, undrained
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 1/2 cup uncooked elbow macaroni
- 1/4 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped spinach, thawed

1 In a large saucepan coated with nonstick cooking spray, saute onion and garlic until tender. Add the broth, beans, tomatoes, carrots, macaroni and oregano. Cook until vegetables and macaroni are tender, about 20 minutes.

2 Stir in spinach; bring to a boil. Remove from the heat; let stand for 5-10 minutes.

Yield: 8 servings (2 quarts).

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WINTER FRUIT SALAD

- 6 large red apples, sliced
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 4 bunches watercress, stems removed
- 2 pounds seedless red grapes, separated into small bunches
- 2 small red onions, halved and thinly sliced

1 In a small bowl, toss apples and lemon juice. Arrange watercress on a large serving platter. Top with the grapes, onions and apples.

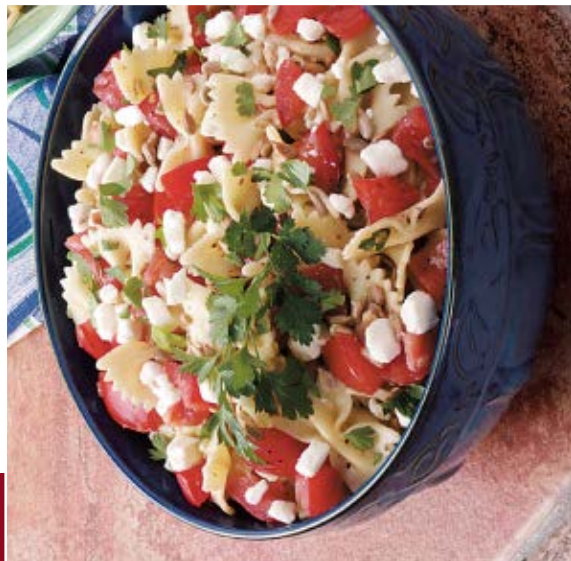
2 In a jar with a tight-fitting lid, combine lemon juice, oil, honey, salt and pepper; shake well. Drizzle 1/2 cup over salad; toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate salad and remaining salad dressing until serving. Serve remaining dressing on the side. Garnish with lemon and mint if desired.

Yield: 12 servings (about 1 cup dressing).

HONEY LEMON DRESSING:

- 1/2 cup lemon juice
 - 1/4 cup vegetable oil
 - 2 to 3 tablespoons honey
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- Lemon slices and fresh mint, optional**

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CHERRY WILD RICE SALAD

While touring Door County, I sampled this salad and had to have the recipe. The mix of rice, vegetables and orchard-fresh fruit is a tasty way to remember Wisconsin's premier cherry-growing area.

YVONNE GORGES
NEW LONDON
WISCONSIN

TRIPLE CRANBERRY SALAD MOLD

What's a holiday meal without at least one jolly gelatin salad chock-full of fruit and nuts? My mother made this one for every holiday, and now my husband says he can't imagine Christmas without it!

KRISTI JO CHILES
PORTSMOUTH
RHODE ISLAND

CURRIED SQUASH SOUP

Cayenne pepper gives a little kick to bowls of this pretty golden soup, a first course that everyone seems to love. It can be made several days ahead to fit a busy schedule, then heated up whenever needed.

EVELYN SOUTHWELL
ETTERS, PENNSYLVANIA

TOMATO TURKEY SOUP

This lighter soup is full of colorful vegetables and is the perfect use for leftover holiday turkey.

JUDY LLOYD
ALTA VISTA, KANSAS

TOMATO TURKEY SOUP

- 6 cups chicken or turkey broth
- 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces each) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1/3 cup quick-cooking barley
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley flakes
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 2 cups cubed cooked turkey
- 1-1/2 cups sliced carrots
- 1-1/2 cups sliced celery
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen chopped okra

1 In a large saucepan, combine the first nine ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 50 minutes. Add turkey and vegetables. Cover and simmer 50 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender.

Yield: 14 servings.

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TRIPLE CRANBERRY SALAD MOLD

- 2 packages (3 ounces each) cranberry gelatin
- 3 cups boiling water
- 1 cup cranberry juice
- 2 packages (3 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- 1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 1 cup chopped walnuts
- 1 cup chopped celery
- 1 cup chopped fresh or frozen cranberries

1 In a large bowl, dissolve the gelatin in boiling water; stir in cranberry juice. Refrigerate until slightly thickened. In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Add the whipped topping until blended. Fold into the gelatin mixture. Fold in walnuts, celery and cranberries.

2 Pour into a 3-qt. ring mold coated with nonstick cooking spray. Refrigerate until set. Unmold onto a serving plate.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

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CURRIED SQUASH SOUP

- 1 butternut squash (about 1-3/4 pounds)
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon curry powder
- 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 5 cups chicken broth
- 1 bay leaf

1 Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 40-50 minutes or until tender. When cool enough to handle, scoop out pulp; set aside.

2 In a large saucepan, saute onion and garlic in oil until tender. Add the flour, salt, curry powder and cayenne until blended. Stir in broth. Add bay leaf. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 20 minutes. Discard bay leaf. Cool to room temperature.

3 In a blender, combine half of the broth mixture and squash; cover and process until smooth. Repeat with remaining broth mixture and squash. Return to the saucepan; heat through. Combine the topping ingredients; place a dollop on each serving.

Yield: 6 servings.

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CHERRY WILD RICE SALAD

- 2 cups fresh snow peas, halved
 - 2 cups cooked wild rice
 - 1 cup cooked long grain rice
 - 1 can (8 ounces) sliced water chestnuts, drained
 - 1 cup dried cherries
 - 1/2 cup thinly sliced celery
 - 1/4 cup chopped green onions
- DRESSING:**
- 6 tablespoons sugar
 - 6 tablespoons vegetable oil
 - 3 tablespoons cider vinegar
 - 4-1/2 teaspoons soy sauce
 - 1 to 2 garlic cloves, peeled
 - 3/4 teaspoon minced fresh gingerroot
 - 3/4 cup cashew halves, toasted

1 In a large bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. For dressing, in a blender, combine the sugar, oil, vinegar, soy sauce, garlic and ginger; cover and process until blended. Pour over rice mixture and toss to coat. Cover and refrigerate until serving. Just before serving, stir in the cashews.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

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ENTERTAINING ENTREES



From cozy candlelight dinners to bountiful buffets, these mouth-watering entrees will make all your holiday celebrations extra special.



Pork Tenderloin with Raspberry Sauce (p. 97)

Inset Photo: Chicken Potpies (p. 88)



MEATY SPINACH MANICOTTI

(PICTURED ABOVE)

pat schroeder, elkhorn, wisconsin

This hearty stuffed pasta dish feeds a crowd. Be prepared to share the recipe.

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) manicotti shells**
- 1/4 cup butter, cubed**
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- 2-1/2 cups milk**
- 3/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 1 pound bulk Italian sausage**
- 4 cups cubed cooked chicken or turkey**
- 2 packages (10 ounces each) frozen chopped spinach, thawed, squeezed dry**
- 2 eggs, beaten**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- 2 jars (26 ounces each) spaghetti sauce**
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley**

- 1** Cook manicotti according to package directions. Meanwhile, melt butter in a saucepan. Stir in the flour until smooth. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in Parmesan cheese until melted; set aside. Drain manicotti; set aside.



To watch a video from the Taste of Home Test Kitchen on how to stuff manicotti, go to www.tasteofhome.com/videotips.

- 2** In a large skillet, cook sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Add chicken, spinach, eggs, mozzarella cheese and 3/4 cup white sauce. Stuff into manicotti shells.
- 3** Spread 1/2 cup spaghetti sauce in each of two ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dishes. Top with manicotti. Pour remaining spaghetti sauce over the top.
- 4** Reheat the remaining white sauce, stirring constantly. Pour over spaghetti sauce. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 45-50 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley.

Yield: 14-16 servings.

HANUKKAH BRISKET

(PICTURED BELOW)

paula levine, lake worth, florida

I serve this flavorful baked beef brisket along with potato pancakes during our celebration of Hanukkah. The recipe has been passed down in my family and is very easy to prepare.

- 1 fresh beef brisket (3 to 4 pounds)**
- 1 can (28 ounces) stewed tomatoes**
- 1 envelope onion soup mix**

- 1** Place beef in a greased roasting pan. Combine tomatoes and soup mix; pour over beef. Cover and bake at 350° for 2-1/2 to 3 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 160° and meat is tender.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

Editor's Note: This is a fresh beef brisket, not corned beef. The meat comes from the first cut of the brisket.





TURKEY BUNDLES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

lydia garrod, tacoma, washington

These golden bundles taste extra special and are a great way to use up leftover turkey. They're very easy to assemble.

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened**
- 2 tablespoons milk**
- 1/2 teaspoon dill weed**
- 1/4 teaspoon celery salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- 2 cups cubed cooked turkey**
- 1/4 cup chopped water chestnuts**
- 2 tablespoons chopped green onion**
- 2 tubes (one 8 ounces, one 4 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls**
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted**
- 2 tablespoons seasoned bread crumbs**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, milk, dill, celery salt and pepper until smooth. Stir in the turkey, water chestnuts and onion.
- 2** Separate crescent dough into six rectangles; seal perforations. Spoon 1/3 cup turkey mixture onto the center of each rectangle; bring edges into center and pinch to seal.
- 3** Place on a baking sheet. Brush with butter; sprinkle with bread crumbs. Bake at 375° for 15-20 minutes or until golden brown.

Yield: 6 servings.

FLOUNDER FLORENTINE

(PICTURED BELOW)

debbie verbeck, florence, new jersey

I discovered this recipe several years ago when I was looking for a way to dress up fish fillets. Even though we're not big fans of fish, we enjoy this dish. It's healthy, tasty and economical.

- 2 packages (10 ounces each) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and drained**
- 1 pound flounder fillets**
- 3 tablespoons chopped onion**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 1-1/2 cups fat-free milk**
- 1 tablespoon grated Parmesan cheese**
- 1/4 teaspoon paprika**

- 1** Sprinkle spinach in a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. Top with fillets.
- 2** In a large saucepan, saute onion in butter until tender. Stir in flour, salt, pepper and nutmeg until blended. Gradually add milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.
- 3** Pour over fillets; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and paprika. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20 minutes or until fish flakes easily with a fork.

Yield: 4 servings.



CREOLE-STUFFED TURKEY

(PICTURED BELOW AND ON FRONT COVER)

sandy szwarc, albuquerque, new mexico
My Creole-Stuffed Turkey originated when my sister from Texas and her family—who love Southern cooking—were here one Thanksgiving. Everyone kept coming back for another serving...and we ended up stuffed, too.

- 4 cups cubed corn bread**
- 2 cups cubed crustless day-old whole wheat bread**
- 1 cup chopped fully cooked ham**
- 3/4 cup smoked kielbasa or Polish sausage**
- 1/2 cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- 1/2 cup chopped green pepper**
- 1/4 cup chopped celery**
- 3 tablespoons finely diced onion**
- 2-1/2 teaspoons Creole seasoning**
- 1/2 cup egg substitute**
- 1 to 1-1/2 cups chicken broth**
- 1 turkey (8 to 10 pounds)**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the first 10 ingredients; add enough broth to moisten.



Just before baking, loosely stuff the turkey. Skewer turkey openings; tie drumsticks together. Place breast side up on a rack in a roasting pan.

- 2** Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 3-1/2 to 4 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 180° for the turkey and 165° for the stuffing, basting occasionally with pan drippings. (Cover loosely with foil if turkey browns too quickly.) Cover turkey and let stand for 20 minutes before removing stuffing and carving turkey.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

Editor's Note: The following spices may be substituted for each teaspoon of Creole seasoning: 1/4 teaspoon each salt, garlic powder and paprika; and a pinch each of dried thyme, ground cumin and cayenne pepper. Stuffing may be baked in a greased 2-qt. covered baking dish at 325° for 70 minutes (uncover during the last 10 minutes). Stuffing yields about 6 cups.



To watch a video from the Taste of Home Test Kitchen on how to thaw and stuff a whole turkey, go to www.tasteofhome.com/videtips.

CHICKEN POTPIES

(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

sonja blow, groveland, california
My mother made these tasty potpies for Sunday supper for many years. They are easy to prepare and are perfect for a ladies' luncheon or a family meal.

- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas and carrots**
- 1/2 cup chopped onion**
- 1 can (4 ounces) mushroom pieces, drained**
- 1/4 cup butter, cubed**
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon rubbed sage**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- 2 cups hot water**
- 3/4 cup milk**
- 3 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules**
- 3 cups cubed cooked chicken or turkey**



1 jar (2 ounces) diced pimientos, drained

1/4 cup minced fresh parsley

Pastry for double-crust pie

- 1 Cook the frozen vegetables according to package directions. Drain; set aside. In a large saucepan, saute onion and mushrooms in butter until tender. Stir in the flour, salt, sage and pepper until blended. Combine the water, milk and bouillon. Slowly add to saucepan, stirring constantly.
- 2 Bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened and bubbly. Stir in the chicken, pimientos, parsley and reserved peas and carrots. Spoon into six individual baking dishes.
- 3 Roll and cut pastry into circles 1 in. smaller than top of casseroles; place one circle on each. Bake at 425° for 12-15 minutes or until the crust is lightly browned.

Yield: 6 servings.

SPAGHETTI CASSEROLE

(PICTURED AT RIGHT)

kathy bence, edmonds, washington
I always get asked for a copy of this family-pleasing recipe. The hearty meatless main dish—a combination of spaghetti and lasagna ingredients—is packed with cheese and well seasoned with a creamy tomato sauce.

6 ounces uncooked spaghetti

1 tablespoon butter

1/3 cup shredded Parmesan cheese

1 jar (26 ounces) meatless spaghetti sauce

2 cups chopped green pepper

1 can (14-1/2 ounces) diced tomatoes, drained

1 carton (8 ounces) part-skim ricotta cheese

1 can (8 ounces) mushroom stems and pieces, drained

1 small onion, chopped

3 garlic cloves, minced

12 fresh basil leaves, thinly sliced

1/2 teaspoon dried oregano

3 cups (12 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided

- 1 Cook spaghetti according to the package directions; drain. Add butter and Parmesan cheese; toss to coat. In a large bowl, combine the spaghetti sauce, green pepper and tomatoes.
- 2 In a blender, process ricotta cheese until pureed. Add to the spaghetti sauce mixture. Stir in the mushrooms, onion, garlic, basil, oregano and 1-1/2 cups mozzarella cheese. Add the spaghetti; toss to coat.
- 3 Transfer to a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. Sprinkle with remaining mozzarella. Cover; bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 9 servings.



FLAVORFUL CHICKEN ROLL-UPS

(PICTURED BELOW)

margaret potten, glendale, new york

These chicken roll-ups taste as though they came from a fancy French restaurant, but they're so simple to make in your own kitchen.

- 6 boneless skinless chicken breast halves**
- 1 package (10 ounces) sliced mozzarella cheese**
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour**
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- 2/3 cup seasoned bread crumbs**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted**
- 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano**

- 1** Flatten chicken to 1/3-in. thickness. Place one cheese slice on each piece of chicken; roll up tightly. Secure with a toothpick.
- 2** Place flour, beaten eggs and bread crumbs in separate shallow bowls. Coat chicken with flour. Dip in beaten eggs, then coat with bread crumbs.
- 3** Place seam side down in an ungreased 2-1/2-qt. baking dish. Combine the butter and oregano; drizzle over the chicken. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 40-50 minutes or until chicken juices run clear. Discard toothpicks before serving.

Yield: 6 servings.



CREAMY TURKEY CASSEROLE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

mary jo o'brien, hastings, minnesota

This satisfying supper idea puts Thanksgiving leftovers to terrific use. I sometimes make turkey just so I have the extras to make this casserole.

- 1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of celery soup, undiluted**
- 1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted**
- 1 can (10-3/4 ounces) condensed cream of onion soup, undiluted**
- 5 ounces process cheese (Velveeta), cubed**
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise**
- 4 cups cubed cooked turkey**
- 1 package (16 ounces) frozen broccoli cuts, thawed**
- 1-1/2 cups cooked white rice**
- 1-1/2 cups cooked wild rice**
- 1 can (8 ounces) sliced water chestnuts, drained**
- 1 jar (4 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained**
- 1-1/2 to 2 cups salad croutons**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the soups, cheese and mayonnaise. Stir in the turkey, broccoli, rice, water chestnuts and mushrooms.
- 2** Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 30 minutes; stir. Sprinkle with croutons. Bake 8-12 minutes longer or until bubbly.

Yield: 10-12 servings.

Editor's Note: Reduced-fat or fat-free mayonnaise is not recommended for this recipe.

BERRY PRETTY PORK ROAST

(PICTURED BELOW)

Paula Marchesi, Lenhartsville, Pennsylvania
Berries add such wonderful flavor to recipes. This moist roast is perfect for special dinners. Slices are particularly tasty when served with the cooking juices.

- 1 boneless whole pork loin roast (about 2-1/2 pounds)**
 - 1/2 cup chopped dried plums**
 - 1/3 cup each fresh or frozen blueberries, raspberries and sliced strawberries**
 - 2 garlic cloves, cut into slivers**
 - 1/4 cup butter, melted**
 - 1/2 teaspoon dried oregano**
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt**
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
 - 1/2 cup red wine**
 - 1 tablespoon brown sugar**
 - 1 tablespoon seedless raspberry jam**
- 1** Make a lengthwise slit down the center of the roast to within 1/2 in. of bottom. Open roast so it lies flat; cover with plastic wrap. Flatten to 3/4-in. thickness. Remove plastic; combine the fruit; place on one side of roast. Close roast; tie several times with kitchen string and secure ends with toothpicks.
 - 2** Cut slits in roast; insert garlic slivers. Place in an ungreased shallow baking pan. Drizzle



with butter; sprinkle with oregano, salt and pepper.

- 3** In a small bowl, combine the wine, brown sugar and jam. Drizzle over roast. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 75-80 minutes or until a meat thermometer reaches 160°. Let stand for 10 minutes before slicing.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

FESTIVE BEEF TENDERLOIN

(PICTURED ABOVE)

Leann Meeds, Klamath Falls, Oregon

Dressing up a tenderloin steak is quick and easy when you add the cracker crumb/herb topping.

- 4 beef tenderloin steaks (about 1-1/2 inches thick)**
 - 1/4 cup crushed saltines**
 - 1/4 cup mayonnaise**
 - 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
 - 2 teaspoons prepared horseradish**
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- 1** Broil steaks 3-4 in. from the heat for 8 minutes on each side. Meanwhile, combine the cracker crumbs, mayonnaise, parsley, horseradish and pepper. Spread over steaks.
 - 2** Broil 2-6 minutes longer or until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium, 160°; well-done, 170°).

Yield: 4 servings.



NEW YEAR'S SURF 'N' TURF

(PICTURED ABOVE)

taste of home test kitchen

A mild mushroom sauce pulls together this pleasing pairing of tender steaks and firm shrimp.

- 2 cups sliced fresh mushrooms**
 - 2 tablespoons finely chopped green onion**
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons minced garlic, divided**
 - 5 tablespoons olive oil, divided**
 - 5 tablespoons butter, divided**
 - 1/2 cup dry red wine**
 - 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
 - 2 tablespoons minced fresh basil**
 - 1/2 teaspoon browning sauce, optional**
 - 8 beef tenderloin steaks (1 to 1-1/2 inches thick and 8 ounces each)**
 - 24 uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined**
- 1** In a large skillet, saute the mushrooms, onion and 1 teaspoon garlic in 2 tablespoons oil and 2 tablespoons butter until tender. Add wine; cook and stir for 1 minute. Stir in the parsley, basil and browning sauce if desired. Remove from the skillet; keep warm.
 - 2** In the same skillet, cook steaks in 2 tablespoons oil and 2 tablespoons butter over medium heat for 5-8 minutes on each side or until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium,

160°; well-done, 170°). Return mushroom mixture to the pan; heat through.

- 3** Meanwhile, in another skillet, combine the remaining butter and oil. Add the shrimp and remaining garlic; cook and stir until shrimp turn pink. Serve with the steaks.

Yield: 8 servings.

HOLIDAY HAM SLICES

(PICTURED BELOW)

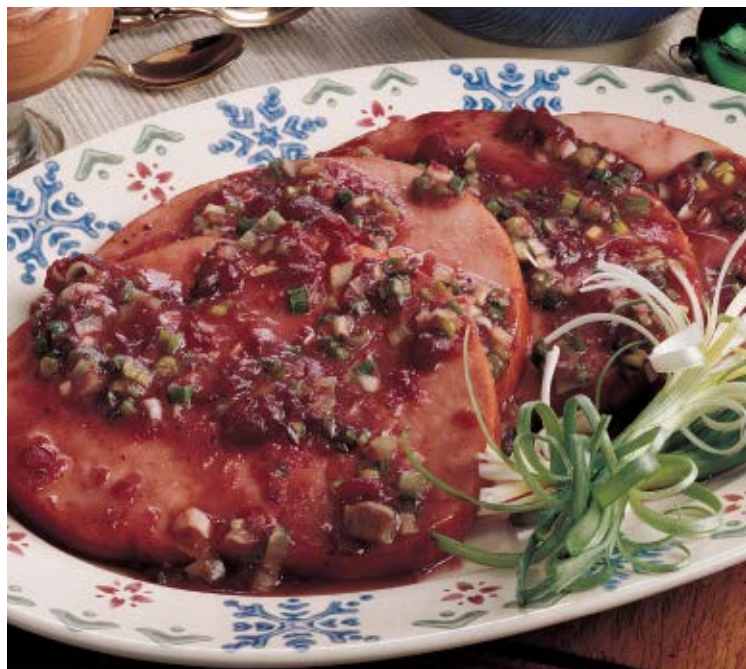
marilou robinson, portland, oregon

My family loves this dressy treatment for ham, so I keep extra cranberry sauce on hand at holiday time to make it.

- 3/4 cup whole-berry cranberry sauce**
- 4 to 6 green onions, finely chopped**
- 3 tablespoons water**
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard**
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted**
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger**
- 4 slices (6 to 8 ounces each) fully cooked ham**

- 1** In a large skillet, combine the first seven ingredients. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly. Add ham; cook for 3-4 minutes or until heated through. Serve sauce with ham.

Yield: 4-6 servings.





PRETTY HAM PRIMAVERA

(PICTURED ABOVE)

joan laurenzo, johnstown, ohio

My leftover ham gets a face-lift in this tasty pasta dish I mix up in a wink. The mild cream sauce gets fresh flavor from sautéed mushrooms and a boost of color from frozen peas.

- 1/2 pound sliced fresh mushrooms**
- 1/3 cup chopped onion**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning**
- 2 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- 2 cups milk**
- 1 package (7 ounces) thin spaghetti, cooked and drained**
- 2 cups cubed fully cooked ham**
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas, thawed**

Grated Parmesan cheese, optional

- 1** In a large skillet, sauté the mushrooms and onion in oil until tender. Stir in the flour, Italian seasoning, bouillon, salt and pepper until smooth.
- 2** Gradually add the milk, stirring constantly. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in the spaghetti, ham and peas; heat through. Sprinkle with the Parmesan cheese if desired.

Yield: 4 servings.

GARLIC-LIME PORK CHOPS

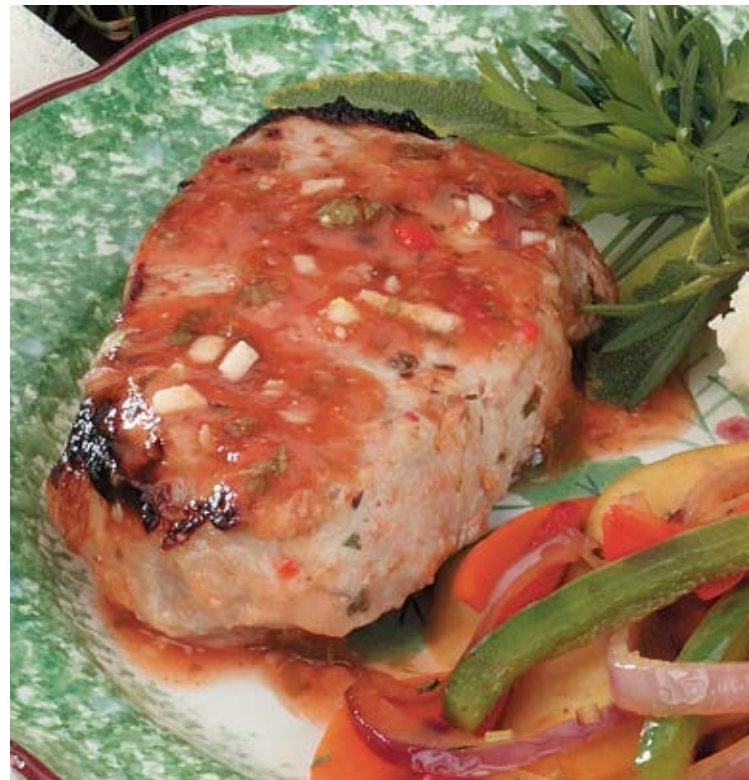
(PICTURED BELOW)

paula marchesi, lenhartsville, pennsylvania
Cilantro, lime and hot pepper sauce lend south-of-the-border pizzazz to boneless pork chops in this recipe. Pretty enough for company, these chops are tender, juicy and delicious.

- 1/3 cup fat-free Italian salad dressing**
- 1/3 cup salsa**
- 4-1/2 teaspoons lime juice**
- 4-1/2 teaspoons minced fresh cilantro**
- 4 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1-1/4 teaspoons grated lime peel**
- 1/4 teaspoon hot pepper sauce**
- 6 boneless pork loin chops (5 ounces each)**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Pour 1/2 cup into a large resealable plastic bag; add the pork chops. Seal bag and turn to coat; refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight. Cover and refrigerate remaining marinade.
- 2** Drain and discard marinade. Broil 4 in. from the heat for 7 minutes on each side or until juices run clear. Baste with the reserved marinade.

Yield: 6 servings.





CORN-STUFFED CROWN ROAST

(PICTURED ABOVE)

dorothy swanson, st. louis, missouri

My mother always made this elegant entree for company dinners and special family celebrations.

- 1 pork crown roast (about 7 pounds and 12 ribs)**
 - 1/2 teaspoon pepper, divided**
 - 1 cup chopped celery**
 - 1 cup chopped onion**
 - 1 cup butter**
 - 6 cups crushed corn bread stuffing**
 - 2 cups frozen corn, thawed**
 - 2 jars (4-1/2 ounces each) sliced mushrooms, undrained**
 - 1 teaspoon salt**
 - 1 teaspoon poultry seasoning**
- 1** Place roast on a rack in a large roasting pan. Sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Cover rib ends with small pieces of foil. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 2 hours.
 - 2** In a Dutch oven, saute celery and onion in butter until tender. Stir in stuffing, corn, mushrooms, salt, poultry seasoning and remaining pepper. Loosely spoon 1-3 cups into center of roast. Place remaining stuffing in a greased 2-qt. baking dish.
 - 3** Bake roast 30-60 minutes or until a meat thermometer reads 160° and juices run

clear. Cover and bake extra stuffing for 30-40 minutes. Transfer roast to serving platter. Let stand for 10 minutes. Remove foil; cut between ribs to serve.

Yield: 12 servings.

CREOLE FLOUNDER WITH SEAFOOD SAUCE

(PICTURED BELOW)

melinda sue daenen, pineville, louisiana

This is one of my family's favorite Creole dishes. The recipe can be made with flounder or sole fillets, but I sometimes use locally caught kingfish bass instead.

- 1 cup diced onion**
- 1 cup chopped green pepper**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1/2 cup minced fresh parsley**
- 1/2 cup butter, cubed**
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- 2 cups half-and-half cream**
- 8 ounces Mexican process cheese (Velveeta), cubed**
- 2 tablespoons lemon or lime juice**
- 2 cans (6 ounces each) crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed**
- 1/4 cup Creole mustard or other spicy mustard**
- 2 pounds flounder fillets**



1-1/2 teaspoons Creole seasoning**2 pounds cooked shrimp, peeled and deveined**

- 1 In a large skillet, saute the onion, green pepper, garlic and parsley in butter until tender. Stir in flour until blended. Gradually add the cream. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Reduce heat; Stir in cheese and lemon juice; cook and stir until cheese is melted. Add crab. Cover and keep warm.
- 2 Spread mustard on both sides of fillets. Sprinkle with Creole seasoning. Place on a greased broiler pan. Broil 4-6 in. from the heat for 3-5 minutes on each side or until fish flakes easily with a fork. Top each fillet with four to five shrimp; serve over crab sauce.

Yield: 4-5 servings.

Editor's Note: The following spices may be substituted for 1 teaspoon Creole seasoning: 1/4 teaspoon each salt, garlic powder and paprika; and a pinch each of dried thyme, ground cumin and cayenne pepper.

DUCK WITH CHERRY SAUCE

sandy jenkins, elkhorn, wisconsin

My mom prepared this golden tender roast duck often for Sunday dinner when I was growing up. It was one of my dad's favorite meals. The cheery cherry sauce stirs up easily and makes this main dish doubly delightful.

- 1 domestic duckling (4 to 5 pounds)**
- 1 jar (12 ounces) cherry preserves**
- 1 to 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar**

Bing cherries, star fruit and kale, optional

- 1 Prick skin of duckling well and place breast side up on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Tie drumsticks together. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 2 to 2-1/2 hours or until juices run clear and a meat thermometer reads 180°. (Drain the fat from the pan as it accumulates.) Cover and let stand 20 minutes before carving.
- 2 Meanwhile, for sauce, combine preserves and vinegar in a small saucepan. Cook and stir over medium heat until heated through. Serve with duck. Garnish platter with fruit and kale if desired.

Yield: 4-5 servings.**STUFFED FLANK STEAK****(PICTURED ABOVE)**

bernice mcfadden, dayton, ohio

Tasty, tender and tucked full of vegetables, this steak warms us up often on cold winter nights.

- 1 beef flank steak (about 1-1/4 pounds)**
- 1/2 cup soy sauce**
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- 2 tablespoons molasses**
- 2 teaspoons ground mustard**
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- 1-1/2 cups cooked long grain rice**
- 1 medium carrot, shredded**
- 1/2 cup sliced water chestnuts**
- 1/4 cup sliced green onions**

- 1 Starting along one long side, cut a horizontal slit through the steak to within 1/2 in. of the opposite side. Place in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Combine the soy sauce, oil, molasses, mustard, ginger and garlic; set aside 1/4 cup. Pour remaining marinade over meat. Let stand for 30 minutes.
- 2 Meanwhile, combine the rice, carrot, water chestnuts, onions and reserved marinade. Stuff into steak. Cover and bake at 350° for 45 minutes.
- 3 Uncover; baste with pan drippings. Bake 15-20 minutes longer or until meat is tender. Brush again with pan drippings if desired.

Yield: 4 servings.

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RICE-STUFFED CORNISH HENS

My mom prepares this impressive-looking entree for the holidays and for other "company's coming" occasions. The savory rice stuffing goes wonderfully with the moist golden hens and sweet apricot glaze. She is often asked for the recipe.

BECKY BRUNETTE
MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA

**ANGEL HAIR SHRIMP BAKE**

Shrimp and pasta blend beautifully with the herbs, salsa and three kinds of cheese in this hearty, layered casserole. The shrimp make this dish special enough for guests, but your family is sure to enjoy it, too.

SUSAN DAVIDSON
ELM GROVE, WISCONSIN

**HOLLY SANDWICH WREATH**

Guests who have sweet expectations are in for a savory surprise when they sample warm slices of this golden wreath. Made with no-fuss pizza crust, the sandwich ring is packed with turkey, cheese, red pepper and green onions.

TASTE OF HOME
TEST KITCHEN

**PORK TENDERLOIN WITH RASPBERRY SAUCE**

Here's an easy, elegant dinner that's perfect for special occasions. The colorful fruit sauce adds just the right amount of sweetness to moist and tender pork tenderloin.

NORMA PIMENTAL
ACUSHNET
MASSACHUSETTS



HOLLY SANDWICH WREATH

- 2 tubes (10 ounces each) refrigerated pizza crust
 - 1/4 cup prepared Italian salad dressing
 - 1 pound thinly sliced deli turkey
 - 1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded Monterey Jack cheese
 - 1/2 cup chopped sweet red pepper
 - 1/2 cup sliced green onions
 - 2 egg yolks, divided
- Red and green liquid food coloring**
- 1 Unroll pizza dough. Place dough side by side on a baking sheet with two short sides touching; pinch to seal. Cut a 2-in. strip from one short side; with salad dressing within 1/2 in. of edge. Top with turkey, cheese, red pepper and onions.
 - 2 Roll up jelly-roll style, starting with a

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RICE-STUFFED CORNISH HENS

- 5-1/2 cups water, divided
 - 2 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons salt
 - 3/4 cup uncooked wild rice
 - 1-1/2 cups uncooked long grain rice
 - 1 pound bulk pork sausage
 - 1-1/2 cups chopped celery
 - 3/4 cup chopped onion
 - 6 Cornish game hens (20 ounces each)
 - 1 jar (12 ounces) apricot preserves
- 1 In a large saucepan, bring 5 cups water, bouillon and salt to a boil. Add wild rice. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Add long grain rice; cover and simmer 25-30 minutes longer or until rice is tender and water is absorbed.
 - 2 Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook the sausage, celery and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink and vegetables are tender; drain. Stir in rice mixture. Spoon about 3/4 cup stuffing into each hen.
 - 3 Place remaining stuffing in a greased 2-qt. baking dish; cover and set aside. Place hens breast side up on a rack in shallow baking pan; tie drumsticks together. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 40 minutes.
 - 4 In a small saucepan, bring preserves and remaining water to a boil. Pour over hens. Bake 25-35 minutes longer or until a meat thermometer reads 180° for hens and 165° for stuffing, basting occasionally. Place baking dish of stuffing in the oven for the last 35-40 minutes of hens' baking time.

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PORK TENDERLOIN WITH RASPBERRY SAUCE

- 1 pork tenderloin (1 pound)
 - 1/8 teaspoon cayenne pepper, optional
 - 2 teaspoons butter
 - 1/4 cup seedless raspberry preserves
 - 2 teaspoons red wine vinegar
 - 1 tablespoon ketchup
 - 1/2 teaspoon soy sauce
 - 1/8 to 1/4 teaspoon prepared horseradish
 - 1 garlic clove, minced
 - Fresh raspberries, optional
- 1 Cut tenderloin into eight pieces; flatten each piece to 1-in. thickness. Sprinkle cayenne on both sides if desired. In a large skillet, cook pork over medium heat for 3-4 minutes on each side or until juices run clear.
 - 2 Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine the preserves, vinegar, ketchup, soy sauce, horseradish and garlic. Simmer, uncovered, for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve with tenderloin; garnish with raspberries if desired.

Yield: 4 servings.

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ANGEL HAIR SHRIMP BAKE

- 1 package (9 ounces) refrigerated angel hair pasta
 - 1-1/2 pounds uncooked medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
 - 3/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
 - 1/2 cup shredded Swiss cheese
 - 1 jar (16 ounces) chunky salsa
 - 1/2 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
 - 3/4 cup minced fresh parsley
 - 1 teaspoon dried basil
 - 1 teaspoon dried oregano
 - 2 eggs
 - 1 cup half-and-half cream
 - 1 cup (8 ounces) plain yogurt
- 1 In a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish, layer half of the pasta, shrimp, feta cheese, Swiss cheese and salsa. Repeat layers. Sprinkle with the Monterey Jack cheese, parsley, basil and oregano.
 - 2 In a small bowl, whisk the eggs, cream and yogurt; pour over casserole. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until shrimp turn pink and pasta is tender. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving.

Yield: 12 servings.

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Yield: 10 servings.

Yield: 6 servings.

TWO-BREAD STUFFED TURKEY

I reach for bacon and canned corn to make this subtly sweet stuffing that combines corn bread and white bread. The moist mixture is terrific with turkey but just as good served solo.

FANCHEON RESLER
BLUFFTON, INDIANA

BEEF SIRLOIN TIP ROAST

This meaty main course, served with a mouth-watering mushroom gravy, is a snap to assemble and pop in the oven. It is my husband's favorite.

BURGESS MARSHBANKS
BUJES CREEK
NORTH CAROLINA

PESTO PEPPER TORTELLINI

This is a shortcut version of a rich, creamy pasta dish I sampled years ago. I've served this tortellini as both a special side dish and a meatless entree.

MICKIE TAFT
MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

SCALLOPED POTATOES WITH HAM

I fix this saucy skillet dish often, especially when I'm running late, because it takes so little time to prepare. The recipe won first prize in our local paper some years back.

EMMA MAGIELDA
AMSTERDAM, NEW YORK

SCALLOPED POTATOES WITH HAM

- 4 medium potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced
 - 2 tablespoons butter
 - 1/3 cup water
 - 1/2 cup milk
 - 2 to 3 tablespoons dry onion soup mix
 - 3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
 - 1 cup cubed process cheese (Velveeta)
 - 1 cup cubed fully cooked ham
- 1** In a large skillet, cook potatoes in butter until potatoes are evenly coated. Add water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 14-15 minutes or until potatoes are tender.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the milk, soup mix and parsley; stir in cheese. Pour over potatoes. Add ham; cook and stir gently over medium heat until cheese is melted and sauce is smooth.

Yield: 4 servings.

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PESTO PEPPER TORTELLINI

- 1 package (19 ounces) frozen cheese tortellini
 - 1/2 cup julienned sweet red pepper
 - 3 garlic cloves, minced
 - 1/2 cup butter
 - 2 cups heavy whipping cream
 - 1/4 cup ground walnuts
 - 2 tablespoons minced fresh basil or 2 teaspoons dried basil
 - 1 tablespoon chopped green onion or chives
- 1** Prepare tortellini according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a skillet, saute red pepper and garlic in butter until pepper is crisp-tender. Stir in cream; cook for 8-10 minutes or until slightly thickened. Add the walnuts, basil and onion; heat through. Drain tortellini; add to sauce and toss to coat.

Yield: 4 servings.

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BEEF SIRLOIN TIP ROAST

- 1 boneless beef sirloin tip roast (about 3 pounds)
 - 1-1/4 cups water, divided
 - 1 can (8 ounces) mushroom stems and pieces, drained
 - 1 envelope onion soup mix
 - 3 tablespoons cornstarch
- 1** Place a large piece of heavy-duty foil (21-in. x 17-in.) in a shallow roasting pan. Place roast on foil. Pour 1 cup water and mushrooms over roast. Sprinkle with soup mix. Wrap foil around roast; seal tightly. Bake at 350° for 2-1/2 to 3 hours or until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium, 160°; well-done, 170°).
- 2** Remove roast to a serving platter and keep warm. Pour drippings and mushrooms into a saucepan. Combine cornstarch and remaining water until smooth; gradually stir into drippings. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Serve with sliced beef.

Yield: 10-12 servings.

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TWO-BREAD STUFFED TURKEY

- 6 bacon strips, diced
 - 2 cups chopped celery
 - 1 cup sliced green onions
 - 6 cups cubed corn bread
 - 6 cups cubed white bread
 - 1 can (15-1/4 ounces) whole kernel corn, undrained
 - 1-1/4 cups chicken broth
 - 3/4 cup egg substitute
 - 1/4 cup butter, melted
 - 2 teaspoons rubbed sage
 - 1 teaspoon dried thyme
 - 1/2 teaspoon salt
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper
 - 1 turkey (10 to 12 pounds)
 - 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1** In a large skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove
- bacon to paper towels to drain. In the drippings, saute celery and onions until tender.
- 2** Transfer to a large bowl. Stir in the corn bread, bread, corn, broth, egg substitute, butter, seasonings and bacon. Just before baking, loosely stuff turkey. Skewer openings; tie drumsticks together.
- 3** Place on a rack in a roasting pan. Brush with oil. Bake at 325° for 3-3/4 to 4 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 180° for turkey and 165° for stuffing, basting occasionally with pan drippings. (Cover loosely with foil if turkey browns too quickly.)

Yield: 8-10 servings (10 cups stuffing).
Editor's Note: Stuffing may be prepared as directed and baked separately in a greased shallow 3-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 325° for 60 minutes. Uncover; bake 10 minutes longer or until golden brown.

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HONEY-MUSTARD TURKEY BREAST

Honey mustard adds subtle flavor to this moist roasted turkey breast. Don't have honey mustard? Use 1/4 cup each honey and brown mustard.

**TASTE OF HOME
TEST KITCHEN**

MOM'S OVEN-BARBECUED RIBS

My mom made these tender ribs for special Sunday suppers when we were growing up.

A few common ingredients are all you need to make the zesty sauce that coats them. My family's eyes light up when I bring these ribs to the table.

**YVONNE WHITE
WILLIAMSON, NEW YORK**

PEPPERED RIB ROAST

A co-worker shared this restaurant recipe with me when I lived in Minneapolis in the 1970s. The marinade tenderizes the meat, and the drippings make a savory sauce to accompany the moist beef slices.

**MARY WELCH
STURGEON BAY, WISCONSIN**

STUFFED BONE-IN HAM

Scored with a simple but delicious stuffing, this glazed ham makes such an elegant statement when you set it on your holiday table! It's become a Yuletide tradition at our house.

**REBECCA WATTS
LANEVILLE, TEXAS**

STUFFED BONE-IN HAM

- 1 medium onion, finely chopped
 - 1/2 cup finely chopped celery
 - 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley
 - 1/2 cup butter, cubed
 - 1/4 cup egg substitute
 - 3/4 cup milk
 - 1 teaspoon rubbed sage
 - 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt
 - 6 cups soft bread cubes (1/4-inch cubes)
 - 1 fully cooked bone-in ham (about 12 pounds)
- GLAZE:**
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
 - 1/4 cup orange juice
 - 1/4 cup dark corn syrup

- 1 In a large skillet, saute the onion, celery and parsley in butter until vegetables are tender. In a large bowl, combine the egg substitute, milk, sage, thyme and salt. Add bread cubes and vegetable mixture; toss to combine.
- 2 From the cut end of the ham, cut five parallel wedges, about 1-1/2-in. apart, 1/2-in. wide and 1-1/2-in. deep. Repeat in the opposite direction, making diamond shapes.
- 3 Spoon stuffing into slits. Place ham on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Cover loosely with a foil tent. Bake at 325° for 2-1/4 hours.
- 4 In a small saucepan, combine the glaze ingredients. Cook and stir over medium heat until sugar is dissolved. Remove foil from ham; drizzle glaze over top. Bake 30-45 minutes longer or until a meat thermometer reads 140°. Let stand for 10 minutes before slicing.

Yield: 15-18 servings.

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MOM'S OVEN-BARBECUED RIBS

- 3 to 4 pounds country-style pork ribs
- 1-1/2 cups water
- 1 cup ketchup
- 1/3 cup Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/8 teaspoon hot pepper sauce

- 1 Place ribs in a greased roasting pan. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 45 minutes. Meanwhile, in a saucepan, combine the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil; cook for 1 minute. Drain ribs. Spoon sauce over ribs. Cover and bake for 1-1/2 hours. Uncover; bake 30 minutes longer, basting once.
- Yield:** 4-6 servings.

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PEPPERED RIB ROAST

- 1/4 cup coarsely ground pepper
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cardamom
- 1 boneless beef rib eye roast (5 to 6 pounds)
- 1 cup soy sauce
- 3/4 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1-1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
- 1/4 cup cold water

- 1 powder; add the roast. Seal bag and turn to coat; refrigerate overnight.
- 2 Drain and discard marinade. Place roast on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Cover and bake at 350° for 2 to 2-3/4 hours or until meat reaches desired doneness (for medium-rare, a meat thermometer should read 145°; medium, 160°; well-done, 170°). Let stand for 20 minutes before carving.
- 3 Meanwhile, for gravy, pour the pan drippings and loosened brown bits into a saucepan; skim fat. Combine cornstarch and cold water until smooth; gradually stir into the drippings. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Serve with the roast.

Yield: 16-18 servings.

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HONEY-MUSTARD TURKEY BREAST

- 1 bone-in turkey breast (6 to 7 pounds)
- 1/2 cup honey mustard
- 3/4 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon onion powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper

- 1 Place the turkey breast in a shallow roasting pan. In a small bowl, combine the remaining ingredients. Spoon over turkey.
 - 2 Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 1-3/4 to 2-1/2 hours or until a meat thermometer reads 170°, basting every 30 minutes.
- Yield:** 10-12 servings.

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ANTIPASTO POTATO BAKE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

kelley butler-ludington
east haven, connecticut

This hearty potato side dish has a surprising Mediterranean flavor. It's a casserole with lots of color from red peppers and black olives.

- 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces each) sliced potatoes, drained**
- 2 cans (14 ounces each) water-packed artichoke hearts, rinsed and drained**
- 2 jars (7 ounces each) roasted sweet red peppers, drained**
- 1 can (3.8 ounces) sliced ripe olives, drained**
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons minced garlic**
- 1/3 cup olive oil**
- 1/2 cup seasoned bread crumbs**
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted**
- 1** In a bowl, combine potatoes, artichokes, peppers, olives, Parmesan cheese and garlic. Drizzle with oil; toss gently to coat.
- 2** Transfer to a greased 3-qt. baking dish. Toss bread crumbs and butter; sprinkle over top. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 20-25 minutes or until lightly browned.

Yield: 10 servings.

ARTICHOKE SPINACH CASSEROLE

(PICTURED BELOW)

judy johnson, missoula, montana

Although he isn't a fan of spinach, my husband loves this dish. The combination of ingredients may sound unusual, but the flavors meld well. It's an excellent side vegetable for a formal dinner.

- 1 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced**
- 1/3 cup chicken broth**
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 cup evaporated milk**
- 4 packages (10 ounces each) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry**
- 2 cans (14-1/2 ounces each) diced tomatoes, drained**
- 2 cans (14 ounces each) water-packed artichoke hearts, rinsed, drained and thinly sliced**
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- 1/2 cup mayonnaise**
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice**
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- Paprika, optional**





- 1** In a large skillet, cook mushrooms and broth over medium heat until tender, about 3 minutes. Remove mushrooms with a slotted spoon and set aside.
- 2** Whisk flour and milk until smooth; add to skillet. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in spinach, tomatoes and mushrooms.
- 3** Place half of the artichokes in an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Top with half of the spinach mixture. Repeat layers. Combine sour cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice, garlic powder, salt and pepper; dollop over the casserole. Sprinkle with paprika if desired.
- 4** Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until bubbly.

Yield: 12-14 servings.

CAULIFLOWER WITH BUTTERED CRUMBS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

taste of home test kitchen

Try this recipe as a home-style way to add flavor and interest to steamed cauliflower. Serve the simple side dish with a variety of entrees.

- 1 large head cauliflower, broken into florets**
- 1/3 cup butter**
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- 1/4 cup dry bread crumbs**
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**

- 1** Place 1 in. of water in a large saucepan; add cauliflower. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10-12 minutes or until crisp-tender.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a small heavy saucepan, cook butter over medium heat for 5 minutes or until golden brown, stirring frequently. Remove from the heat; stir in lemon juice. In a small bowl, combine the bread crumbs, Parmesan cheese, parsley, salt and pepper; stir in 3 tablespoons browned butter.
- 3** Drain cauliflower and place in a serving dish. Drizzle with the remaining browned butter; sprinkle with bread crumb mixture.

Yield: 6 servings.

GLAZED WHOLE BEETS

sylvia lepczyk, pittsburgh, pennsylvania

This recipe came from my mother and was always a favorite holiday side dish when I was growing up. The glaze is such a wonderfully quick and easy way to dress up canned beets.

- 3 cans (15 ounces each) whole beets**
- 5 teaspoons sugar**
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar**

- 1** Drain beets, reserving 2/3 cup juice. In a large skillet, combine sugar, flour and salt. Stir in vinegar and reserved beet juice until smooth.
- 2** Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Add beets; reduce heat. Cook, uncovered, for 4-5 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 6 servings.

STUFFED ACORN SQUASH

(PICTURED BELOW)

taste of home test kitchen

Here is a unique way to present leftover stuffing. Serve this squash as a hearty side dish or as a meatless entree. This recipe pairs two of the season's best foods: squash and stuffing.

- 3 small acorn squash**
- 1 egg, lightly beaten**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- 1 teaspoon chicken bouillon granules**
- 2 tablespoons boiling water**
- 2 cups cooked stuffing**
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese, optional**
- 1 teaspoon paprika**

- 1** Cut squash in half; discard seeds. Place cut side down in a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan; add 1/2 in. of hot water. Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 30 minutes or until tender.
- 2** When cool enough to handle, scoop out pulp, leaving a 1/4-in. shell (pulp will measure about 3 cups). Drain water from pan; place squash cut side up in pan and set aside.
- 3** In a large bowl, combine the pulp, egg, salt and pepper. Dissolve the bouillon in boiling



water; add to squash mixture. Add stuffing; spoon into the squash shells. Top with Parmesan cheese if desired. Sprinkle with paprika. Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 6 servings.

SCALLOPED CRANBERRIES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

ellan streett, clear spring, maryland

This warm cranberry casserole is a nice substitute for traditional cranberry relish. It's been a staple on my holiday table ever since my aunt gave me the recipe many years ago.

- 4 cups fresh or frozen cranberries (about 1 pound)**
- 1-1/4 cups sugar**
- 1-1/4 cups water**
- 4-1/2 cups cubed bread (about 5 slices)**
- 1/2 cup raisins**
- 1/3 cup butter, melted**
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel**

- 1** In a large saucepan, combine cranberries, sugar and water. Cook over medium heat for 12-15 minutes or until the berries pop. Remove from the heat; stir in the remaining ingredients.
- 2** Transfer to a greased 1-1/2-qt. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 6 servings.

ONION KUGEL

(PICTURED BELOW)

taste of home test kitchen

This traditional dish resembles a delicious souffle. Sliced eggplant, diced green pepper or shredded cabbage can be used in place of onions. It goes great with any main dish.

- 6 eggs, separated**
 - 2 cups finely chopped onions**
 - 1/3 cup matzo meal**
 - 1/3 cup vegetable oil**
 - 3/4 teaspoon salt**
 - 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat the egg yolks on high speed for 2 minutes or until thick and lemon-colored. Add the onions, matzo meal, oil, salt and pepper; mix well. In another mixing bowl, beat egg whites on high until stiff peaks form; fold into onion mixture.
 - 2** Pour into an ungreased 2-qt. round baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Serve immediately.

Yield: 8 servings.



WINTER VEGETABLE MEDLEY

(PICTURED ABOVE)

nancy brown, dahinda, illinois

The richly flavored and colorful vegetables in this dish really suit the holiday season. This simple side is a real treat.

- 1/2 pound fresh brussels sprouts, halved**
 - 1/2 pound parsnips, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes**
 - 1/2 pound fresh baby carrots**
 - 1 medium sweet potato, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes**
 - 2 medium red potatoes, cut into 1/2-inch cubes**
 - 2 medium white potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/2-inch cubes**
 - 1/2 cup butter, melted**
 - 1-1/2 teaspoons rubbed sage**
 - 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1** Place the vegetables in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. In a small bowl, combine the butter, sage and garlic; drizzle over vegetables. Cover and bake at 375° for 40-50 minutes or until tender.

Yield: 8 servings.



FRUITED STUFFING BALLS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

lucille terry, frankfort, kentucky

This delightful dressing, shaped into individual servings, is a perfect addition to a traditional Thanksgiving dinner. We love the extra flavor it gets from apricots, raisins and crunchy pecans.

- 2 cups diced celery**
- 1/2 cup chopped onion**
- 1/3 cup butter, melted**
- 4 cups seasoned stuffing cubes**
- 1 cup dried apricots, finely chopped**
- 3/4 to 1 cup chicken broth**
- 1/2 cup raisins**
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- 1/4 cup chopped pecans**
- 1 teaspoon rubbed sage**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper**

1 In a large skillet, saute celery and onion in butter until tender. Remove from the heat. Add remaining ingredients; mix well. Shape into 12 balls.

2 Place in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown.

Yield: 12 servings.

ASPARAGUS PEA MEDLEY

(PICTURED BELOW)

m. joalyce graham, starke, florida

Hurried hostesses will appreciate the make-ahead convenience of this casserole. A rich and creamy sauce beautifully coats asparagus and peas.

- 2 packages (10-1/2 ounces each) frozen cut asparagus**
- 1 package (10 ounces) frozen peas, thawed**
- 1 jar (8 ounces) sliced mushrooms, drained**
- 1 jar (2 ounces) diced pimientos, drained**
- 5 tablespoons butter, divided**
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 3/4 cup milk**
- 1 jar (5 ounces) sharp American cheese spread**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper**
- 1/3 cup dry bread crumbs**

1 Cook asparagus according to the package directions, omitting the salt. Drain, reserving 3/4 cup cooking liquid. Place asparagus in a greased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Top with peas, mushrooms and pimientos; set aside.





- 2** In a small saucepan, melt 3 tablespoons butter. Stir in flour until smooth; gradually add milk and reserved cooking liquid. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Reduce heat; add the cheese spread, salt and pepper; stir until blended. Pour over vegetables. Melt the remaining butter; toss with bread crumbs. Sprinkle over cheese sauce.
- 3** Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight. Or bake, uncovered, at 350° for 35-40 min. or until bubbly. If refrigerated before baking, remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes beforehand.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

BROWN RICE VEGETABLE CASSEROLE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

gloria de beradinis
greentown, pennsylvania

One taste of this crowd-pleasing casserole brings compliments and requests for my recipe. It's been in my file for as long as I can remember. The blend of tender vegetables and rice is perfect for holiday meals and dish-to-pass affairs.

- 3 cups chicken broth**
- 1-1/2 cups uncooked brown rice**
- 2 cups chopped onions, divided**
- 3 tablespoons soy sauce**
- 2 tablespoons butter, melted**

- 1/2 teaspoon dried thyme**
- 4 cups fresh cauliflowerets**
- 4 cups fresh broccoli florets**
- 2 medium sweet red peppers, julienned**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 3 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 cup salted cashew halves**
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese, optional**

- 1** In a greased 3-qt. baking dish, combine the broth, rice, 1 cup onion, soy sauce, butter and thyme. Cover and bake at 350° for 65-70 minutes or until rice is tender.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a large skillet, saute the cauliflower, broccoli, peppers, garlic and remaining onion in oil until crisp-tender; spoon over rice mixture.
- 3** Cover and bake for 10 minutes. Uncover and sprinkle with cashews and cheese if desired. Bake 5-7 minutes longer or until cheese is melted.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

APPLE 'N' PEPPER SAUTE

emily guidry, breaux bridge, louisiana

This colorful side dish blends apple slices, red onion rings and sweet pepper strips in a light soy sauce and herb glaze.

- 3 medium sweet peppers, julienned**
- 1 small red onion, sliced and separated into rings**
- 1 medium apple, sliced**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 tablespoon reduced-sodium soy sauce**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1/4 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed**
- 1/4 teaspoon dried basil**

- 1** In a large nonstick skillet, saute the peppers, onion and apple in oil until crisp-tender. Stir in soy sauce, garlic, rosemary and basil. Cook and stir until heated through.

Yield: 6 servings.

CREAMED ONIONS

(PICTURED BELOW)

denise bitner, reedsville, pennsylvania

This is my absolute favorite dish that my mom makes. The onions have a mild and sweet flavor, and there's plenty of the creamy sauce. With only six ingredients, this simple recipe is easy to assemble yet very impressive.

- 6 large onions, sliced**
- 1 cup butter**
- 2 teaspoons all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon white pepper**
- 2 cups milk**

- 1** In a large skillet or Dutch oven, saute onions in butter until tender and golden brown, about 25 minutes. Remove with a slotted spoon. Add flour, salt and pepper to skillet; stir until smooth. Gradually stir in milk until blended.
- 2** Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Reduce heat to medium. Return onions to the pan; heat through.

Yield: 8-10 servings.



OYSTER SAUSAGE STUFFING

(PICTURED ABOVE)

page alexander, baldwin city, kansas

I've had this wonderful recipe for more than 30 years and always use it during the holidays. But it's so rich and buttery that I often serve it with pork roast or stuffed pork chops during the year. It never fails to bring raves.

- 1 envelope onion soup mix**
- 2 cups boiling water**
- 1/2 cup butter, cubed**
- 10 cups cubed day-old bread, toasted**
- 1 can (8 ounces) whole oysters, drained**
- 1/2 pound bulk pork sausage, cooked and drained**
- 1/2 cup minced fresh parsley**
- 3/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning**

- 1** Place soup mix in a bowl; add boiling water and let stand for 5 minutes. In a Dutch oven, melt butter. Stir in bread cubes and onion soup mixture. Cover and cook over low heat for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Gently stir in the oysters, sausage, parsley and poultry seasoning.
- 2** Transfer to a greased 2-1/2-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 375° for 40-50 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 9 cups (enough to stuff an 8- to 10-pound turkey).

LEMON-GLAZED CARROTS AND RUTABAGA

(PICTURED BELOW)

esther wachter, yakima, washington

If you like carrots and rutabagas, this colorful side dish is a real winner!

- 5 medium carrots**
- 1 medium rutabaga**
- 1/2 cup chicken broth**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar**
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- 1/4 teaspoon dill weed**

Dash salt

- 1** Cut carrots and rutabaga into 3-in. x 1/4-in. strips. Place in a saucepan; add broth. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 13-15 minutes or until tender. Do not drain.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine the remaining ingredients; cook and stir for 3 minutes. Add to the vegetables and cook, uncovered, 3-4 minutes longer or until vegetables are glazed, stirring gently.

Yield: 6 servings.



BACON-ONION GREEN BEANS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

karen darrell, bethalto, illinois

I put together this recipe one year to add color to my holiday dinner. I knew everyone liked green beans, so I dressed them up with bacon and sesame seeds. Vinegar adds a nice tang.

- 1-1/2 pounds fresh green beans, trimmed**
- 6 bacon strips, diced**
- 1 medium onion, chopped**
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**
- 1 tablespoon sesame seeds, toasted**

- 1** Place beans in a saucepan and cover with water; bring to a boil. Cook, uncovered, for 8-10 minutes or until crisp-tender.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a large skillet, cook bacon over medium heat until crisp. Remove to paper towels; drain, reserving 1 tablespoon drippings. Saute onion in the drippings until tender. Stir in vinegar, salt and pepper.
- 3** Drain beans; place in a large serving bowl. Stir in the onion mixture and the bacon. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

STUFFED ARTICHOKEs

mary ann marino

west pittsburg, pennsylvania

Christmas Eve at our house isn't the same until I set out a platter of these succulent stuffed artichokes.

- 4 medium artichokes**
- 8 teaspoons lemon juice**
- 1 medium lemon, sliced**
- 4 whole peppercorns**
- 1 bay leaf**
- 1 teaspoon salt, divided**
- 4 cups cubed Italian bread (1/2-inch cubes)**
- 1/2 cup minced fresh parsley**
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese**
- 2 tablespoons plus 4 teaspoons olive oil, divided**
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper**

- 1** Using a sharp knife, level the bottom of each artichoke and cut 3/4 in. from the top. Using kitchen scissors, snip off the tips of the outer leaves; brush cut edges with lemon juice.
- 2** Stand artichokes in a Dutch oven; add 2 in. of water. Add the lemon slices, peppercorns, bay leaf and 1/2 teaspoon salt; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 25-30 minutes or until tender and leaves near the center pull out easily. Invert artichokes to drain. Carefully scrape out the fuzzy center portion of artichokes with a spoon and discard.
- 3** In a large bowl, combine the bread cubes, parsley, Parmesan cheese, 2 tablespoons oil, lemon peel, garlic, pepper and remaining salt. Gently spread artichoke leaves apart; fill with stuffing. Place in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish; drizzle with the remaining oil. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until heated through and stuffing is lightly browned.

Yield: 4 servings.



To watch a video from the Taste of Home Test Kitchen on how to prepare artichokes, go to www.tasteofhome.com/videotips.

GARLIC-HERB MASHED POTATOES

suzi bonnett, bellevue, nebraska

Our family loves these creamy and comforting potatoes. Garlic and other herbs make them so mouth-watering.

- 6 medium potatoes**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- 6 tablespoons butter, divided**
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes**
- 1 teaspoon dried tarragon**
- 3/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper**

- 1** Peel potatoes if desired and cut into cubes. Place in a large saucepan; cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes or until tender.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a small skillet, saute garlic in 2 tablespoons butter for 1 minute or until tender. Add the remaining butter; heat until melted.
- 3** Drain potatoes and place in a large mixing bowl. Add garlic mixture, cream, parsley, tarragon, salt and pepper; mash until smooth.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

GARLIC-BUTTERED PASTA

stephanie moon, nampa, idaho

Just a few ingredients in this versatile recipe give pasta dynamic flavor and lots of appeal.

- 2 cups uncooked small pasta shells, alphabet pasta or ring macaroni**
- 3 to 4 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1/2 cup butter**
- 1/4 cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh parsley**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper**

- 1** Cook pasta according to the package directions. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, saute garlic in butter. Remove from the heat. Drain pasta; add to garlic butter. Stir in the Parmesan cheese, parsley, salt and pepper; toss to coat.

Yield: 4 servings.

ROASTED ASPARAGUS

Even those who claim they don't care for asparagus will gobble up this version. Roasting provides extra-rich flavor.

VIKKI REBHOLZ
WEST CHESTER, OHIO

**HARVEST STUFFING**

Chock-full of veggies and studded with colorful dried fruits, this unique stuffing boasts the very best of autumn's harvest. It's delicious served with poultry or pork.

RUTH HASTINGS
LOUISVILLE, ILLINOIS

**NOODLE KUGEL**

I'm what you'd call a "ballabusta" in the Jewish culture—a woman who is a good homemaker. I make this traditional dish along with other Jewish specialties for an annual Hanukkah/Christmas party with our friends.

LAUREN KARGEN
WILLIAMSVILLE
NEW YORK

**APRICOT-ORANGE GLAZED CARROTS**

Looking for an easy way to dress up cooked carrots, I hit on this delicious recipe. The fruity glaze complements the natural sweetness of the carrots.

JOAN HUGGINS
WAYNESBORO
MISSISSIPPI



NOODLE KUGEL

- 1** package (1 pound) egg noodles
 1/2 cup butter, melted
 8 eggs
 2 cups sugar
 2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream
 2 cups (16 ounces) small-curd cottage cheese
- TOPPING:**
 3/4 cup cinnamon graham cracker crumbs (4 whole crackers)
 3 tablespoons butter, melted
- 1** Cook noodles according to package directions; drain. Toss with butter; set aside. In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs, sugar, sour cream and cottage cheese until well blended. Stir in noodles.
- 2** Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Combine the cracker crumbs and butter; sprinkle over top.
- 3** Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 50-55 minutes or until a thermometer reads 160°. Let stand for 10 minutes before cutting. Serve warm or cold.
- Yield:** 12-15 servings.

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APRICOT-ORANGE GLAZED CARROTS

- 8** medium carrots, sliced
 1/2 cup dried apricots, sliced
 1/2 cup orange juice
 1 tablespoon butter
 1-1/2 teaspoons brown sugar
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon grated orange peel
 1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1** Place 1 in. of water in a large saucepan; add carrots. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 9-11 minutes or until crisp-tender. Drain and set aside.
- 2** In the same pan, combine the remaining ingredients; cook and stir until lightly thickened. Return carrots to the pan; stir until glazed and heated through.
- Yield:** 6 servings.

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HARVEST STUFFING

- 1-1/2** cups water, divided
1 cup each chopped carrots, celery and onion
10 dried plums, halved
10 dried apricots, halved
1 teaspoon salt-free herb seasoning blend
1/2 teaspoon salt
8 slices cinnamon-raisin bread, cubed
1/4 cup unsweetened apple juice
- 1** In a large saucepan, combine 1 cup water, carrots, celery, onion, plums, apricots, seasoning blend and salt. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 15-20 minutes or until fruit and vegetables are tender.
- 2** Meanwhile, place bread cubes in a single layer on baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly toasted. Transfer vegetable mixture to a large bowl. Stir in the bread cubes, apple juice and remaining water; toss gently to combine.
- 3** Transfer to a greased 1-1/2-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Uncover; bake 10-15 minutes longer or until heated through.
- Yield:** 6 servings.

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ROASTED ASPARAGUS

- 4** pounds fresh asparagus, trimmed
 1/4 cup olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 cup sesame seeds, toasted
- 1** Arrange asparagus in a single layer in two foil-lined 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pans. Drizzle with oil. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.
- 2** Bake, uncovered, at 400° for 12-15 minutes or until crisp-tender, turning once. Sprinkle with sesame seeds.
- Yield:** 10-12 servings.

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TWICE-BAKED POTATOES



One of the things I like about twice-baked potatoes is that they are very versatile. They can be served as a complement to an entree, or they can be the main course with a salad. Either way, they are tasty.

DEBBIE JONES
CALIFORNIA, MARYLAND

LEMON-DILLED BRUSSELS SPROUTS



Brussels sprouts get dressed up for the holidays when I make this flavorful dish. Lemon and dill season the buttery sauce, and chopped walnuts add just the right crunch.

MARLYN DUFF
NEW BERLIN, WISCONSIN

ROASTED ROOT VEGETABLES



Pleasantly seasoned with rosemary and garlic, this appealing side dish showcases good-for-you turnips, carrots and potatoes. It's a nice, homey addition to our family's holiday meal.

KERRY SULLIVAN
MAITLAND, FLORIDA

SCALLOPED CORN



This comforting casserole features sunny corn kernels tucked into a creamy custard. My mom got this recipe, and many other excellent ones, from her mother.

SANDY JENKINS
ELKHORN, WISCONSIN

SCALLOPED CORN

- 4 cups fresh or frozen corn
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 1 cup crushed saltines (about 30 crackers), divided
- 3 tablespoons butter, divided
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped onion

Salt and pepper to taste

- 1 In a large bowl, combine the corn, eggs, milk, 3/4 cup cracker crumbs, butter, sugar, onion, salt and pepper.
- 2 Transfer to a greased 1-1/2-qt. baking dish. Sprinkle with remaining cracker crumbs. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 1 hour or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean.

Yield: 6 servings.

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ROASTED ROOT VEGETABLES

- 5 medium red potatoes, cubed
- 4 medium carrots, cut into 1/2-inch slices
- 2 small turnips, peeled and cubed
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 to 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary or 1 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper

- 1 Place the potatoes, carrots, turnips and garlic in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Drizzle with oil; sprinkle with rosemary, salt and pepper. Stir to coat.
- 2 Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 35 minutes. Increase temperature to 450°; bake 10-15 minutes longer or until vegetables are tender.

Yield: 10-12 servings.

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LEMON-DILLED BRUSSELS SPROUTS

- 1-1/2 pounds fresh brussels sprouts
- 1/3 cup butter
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon dill weed
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped walnuts

Yield: 4-6 servings.

- 1 In a large saucepan, bring 1 in. of water and brussels sprouts to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 8-10 minutes or until tender.
- 2 Meanwhile, in another large saucepan, melt butter. Stir in the lemon juice, dill, salt and pepper; cook and stir for 1 minute. Drain sprouts; add to butter mixture and toss to coat. Sprinkle with walnuts.

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TWICE-BAKED POTATOES

- 6 large baking potatoes
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 to 1 cup milk or heavy whipping cream
- 3 tablespoons crumbled cooked bacon
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped onion
- 1 tablespoon snipped chives
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Dash pepper
- 1-1/2 cups (6 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese, divided
- Paprika

- 1 Bake potatoes at 400° for 60 minutes or until soft. Cut a lengthwise slice from the top of the potatoes. Scoop out the pulp and place in a small mixing bowl. Mash potatoes and butter. Beat in milk or cream, bacon, onion, chives, salt, pepper and 1 cup cheese.
- 2 Refill potato shells. Top with remaining cheese and sprinkle with paprika. Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes or until heated through.

Yield: 6 servings.

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ORANGE-NUT SWEET POTATOES

When my siblings and I were young, my mom created this recipe in hopes that we would eat more vegetables. It worked! The citrus sauce went so well with the tender sweet potatoes that the dish quickly became a family favorite.

KATHLEEN WRIGHT
RICHMOND, KENTUCKY

MUSHROOM WILD RICE BAKE

The wild rice adds a wonderful flavor to this casserole I like to serve on special occasions.

JANN MARIE FOSTER
MINNEAPOLIS
MINNESOTA

ROSEMARY AU GRATIN POTATOES

Rosemary, garlic and Parmesan cheese season the tender potato slices in this delectable side dish. It's sure to satisfy family and guests alike.

JEAN MINNER
NEW CASTLE
PENNSYLVANIA

CREAMED FRESH SPINACH

This flavorful no-frills side dish is a great way to incorporate the nutritious leafy greens into a meal. My mom always included creamed spinach or carrots on our holiday menu.

ROSEMARIE FORCUM
WHITE STONE, VIRGINIA

CREAMED FRESH SPINACH

- 6 packages (6 ounces each) baby spinach**
1/4 cup butter, cubed
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup heavy whipping cream
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons finely chopped onion
Salt and white pepper to taste
- 1** Wash and trim spinach, leaving the water that clings to the leaves. Place in a Dutch oven. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and steam just until wilted, about 4 minutes. Drain and chop; set aside.
- 2** Melt butter in a large saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in the flour until smooth. Gradually add cream and milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in the onion, salt and pepper. Fold in spinach; heat through.
- Yield:** 8 servings.

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ROSEMARY AU GRATIN POTATOES

- 1/4 cup butter, cubed**
1/4 cup all-purpose flour
2 cups half-and-half cream
1 tablespoon minced fresh rosemary or 1 teaspoon dried rosemary, crushed
1 garlic clove, minced
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
3 pounds potatoes, peeled and cut into 1/8-inch slices
2/3 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1** In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Stir in flour until smooth. Gradually add the cream. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Remove from the heat. Stir in rosemary, garlic, salt, pepper and potatoes.
- 2** Transfer to a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Cover and bake at 350° for 45 minutes. Uncover; bake 10-15 minutes longer or until potatoes are tender.
- Yield:** 8-10 servings.

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MUSHROOM WILD RICE BAKE

- 1 cup uncooked wild rice**
2 cups boiling water
1 pound sliced fresh mushrooms
1 medium onion, chopped
2 tablespoons butter
3/4 cup uncooked long grain rice
1/2 cup sliced almonds
3 cups chicken broth
1-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
1 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
3 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese
- 1** Place wild rice in a bowl and cover with boiling water; soak for 1 hour. Drain and set aside.
- 2** In a large skillet, saute mushrooms and onion in butter until tender. In a large bowl, combine the mushroom mixture, wild rice, long grain rice, almonds, broth, cream, salt and pepper.
- 3** Transfer to a greased 2-1/2-qt. baking dish. Cover and bake at 350° for 75 minutes. Uncover; sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake 10 minutes longer or until rice is tender.
- Yield:** 8-10 servings.

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ORANGE-NUT SWEET POTATOES

- 2 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed**
2/3 cup sugar
4-1/2 teaspoons cornstarch
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup orange juice
2 tablespoons butter
1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel
1/4 cup chopped walnuts
- 1** Place the sweet potatoes in a large saucepan; cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 6-8 minutes or until tender.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine the sugar, cornstarch and salt. Gradually stir in orange juice. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Add butter and orange peel; stir until butter is melted.
- 3** Drain sweet potatoes; place in a serving dish. Add orange juice mixture and gently stir to coat. Sprinkle with walnuts.
- Yield:** 6 servings.

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PISTACHIO CHEESECAKE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

karen ankerson, manistee, michigan

This appealing dessert, with its pretty pistachio filling, almond crust and chocolate drizzle, is creamy and smooth. I created it one Christmas Eve and my family raved about it. I've never seen cheesecake disappear so quickly!

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 cup ground almonds**
- 1/2 cup cold butter**
- 6 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened**
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
- 2 packages (3.4 ounces each) instant pistachio pudding mix**
- 5 eggs**

Chocolate syrup

Whipped cream and chopped pistachios, optional

- 1** In a small bowl, combine flour and almonds; cut in butter until crumbly. Press onto the bottom and 1-1/4 in. up the sides of a greased 10-in. springform pan. Bake at 400° for 10 minutes.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese, milk and pudding mixes until smooth. Add eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Pour over crust. Place pan on a baking sheet. Reduce heat to 350°. Bake for 55-60 minutes or until the center

is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight.

- 3** Remove sides of pan. Slice cheesecake; drizzle slices with chocolate syrup. Garnish with whipped cream and pistachios if desired.

Yield: 12 -14 servings.

RED 'N' GREEN GELATIN

(PICTURED BELOW)

ruth yaple mckee, orlando, florida

Brighten up your Christmas buffet table with this cheery gelatin dessert. You can change the colors of the gelatin to fit other holidays, too. For the Fourth of July, I use red and blue gelatin with blueberry pie filling.

- 1 package (3 ounces) lime gelatin**
- 2 cups boiling water, divided**
- 1 can (8 ounces) crushed pineapple, undrained**
- 2 cups large marshmallows**
- 1 package (3 ounces) cherry gelatin**
- 1 cup cherry pie filling**

- 1** In a small bowl, dissolve lime gelatin in 1 cup boiling water. Let stand for 2 minutes. Stir in pineapple. Pour into an 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. dish; top with marshmallows. Cover and refrigerate until set.
- 2** In a small bowl, dissolve cherry gelatin in remaining boiling water. Let stand for 2 minutes. Stir in pie filling; pour over the marshmallows. Cover; refrigerate until set.

Yield: 8 servings.





CREME BRULEE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

joylyn trickel, san antonio, texas

My favorite dessert is creme brulee, so I quickly learned how to successfully make this on my own. Recently, I was at a party where the guests finished off their own desserts “broiling” the sugar on their portions with a small torch. What a great idea!

4 cups heavy whipping cream

9 egg yolks

3/4 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Brown sugar

- 1 In a heavy large saucepan, heat cream to 180° over medium heat, stirring frequently. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, whisk the egg yolks, sugar and vanilla. When the cream reaches 180°, slowly stir into the egg yolk mixture.
- 2 Pour into eight 6-oz. custard cups; place cups in a baking pan. Add 1 in. of boiling water to pan. Bake, uncovered, at 325° for 45-50 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Remove custard cups from water bath.
- 3 Before serving, sprinkle each cup with 1 to 1-1/2 teaspoons brown sugar. Place on a baking sheet. Broil 6 in. from the heat for 3-5 minutes or until sugar is caramelized. Serve immediately. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 8 servings.

CHOCOLATE WALNUT TART

(PICTURED BELOW)

sue shank, harrisonburg, virginia

You'll have no hassle, no fuss and no leftovers with this dessert. It looks impressive, but it's actually so simple. It can be prepared in a 9- or 11-inch pan and tastes wonderful served warm with ice cream or whipped topping.

1 sheet refrigerated pie pastry

1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips

1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts

3 eggs, lightly beaten

3/4 cup dark corn syrup

1/2 cup packed brown sugar

1/4 cup butter, melted

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Whipped cream, optional

- 1 On a lightly floured surface, roll out pastry to fit an 11-in. fluted tart pan with removable bottom. Transfer pastry to pan; trim edges. Sprinkle with chocolate chips and walnuts. In a small bowl, whisk the eggs, corn syrup, brown sugar, butter and vanilla. Pour over chips and nuts.
- 2 Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Serve with whipped cream if desired.

Yield: 8-10 servings.



CREAM PUFF CHRISTMAS TREE

(PICTURED BELOW)

sandra gifford, bridgeton, new jersey

I've been cooking up a Cream Puff Christmas Tree regularly for more than 50 years now, and it always receives the same enthusiastic reaction from friends and family.

1-1/4 cups water

2/3 cup butter

1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour

1/4 teaspoon salt

5 eggs

FILLING:

2-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream

1/3 cup confectioners' sugar

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon rum extract, optional

ICING:

3 cups confectioners' sugar

1/4 to 1/3 cup half-and-half cream

Green liquid or paste food coloring, optional

Red candied cherries, optional

Additional confectioners' sugar, optional



- 1** In a large saucepan, bring water and butter to a boil over medium heat. Add flour and salt; stir until a smooth ball forms. Remove from the heat; let stand for 5 minutes. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Continue beating until the mixture is smooth and shiny.
- 2** Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. (You will need about 62 puffs to make the tree.) Use a moistened finger to smooth any peaks.
- 3** Bake at 400° for 30-35 minutes or until golden brown. Transfer to wire racks to cool.
- 4** For filling, in a large mixing bowl, beat cream until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in sugar and rum extract if desired until stiff peaks form.
- 5** Insert round tip #7 into a pastry or resealable plastic bag; fill with the whipped cream. With a sharp knife, cut a small slit in the side of each puff. Insert pastry tip into slits; fill each puff with whipped cream. Refrigerate for up to 2 hours.
- 6** For icing, combine confectioners' sugar and enough of the cream to achieve the desired consistency. Stir in food coloring if desired.
- 7** To assemble tree: Separate puffs according to size and shape, choosing the flattest ones for the bottom layer and the smallest ones for the top. Spread the bottom of 18 puffs with icing. Place on serving platter, forming a 9-in.-diameter solid circle.
- 8** For the second layer, spread icing on the bottoms of 18 puffs, then position above the space of the base layer of puffs.
- 9** Continue building tree in this manner using about 14 puffs in third layer, about seven puffs in fourth layer, about four puffs in fifth layer and one puff on top.
- 10** To decorate: Insert round tip #7 into a pastry or resealable plastic bag and fill with remaining icing. Drizzle over tree. Trim with cherries if desired.
- 11** The completed tree may be loosely covered with plastic wrap and refrigerated for up to 2 hours. Just before serving, dust with confectioners' sugar if desired.

Yield: 30 servings.



LINZERTORTE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

jeanne siebert, salt lake city, utah

My Austrian grandmother made this nutty jam-filled dessert only at Christmastime. So did my mother, and now I'm proud to carry on the tasty tradition. It's a great way to end a holiday meal.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 2 cups ground hazelnuts**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**
- Dash ground cloves**
- 1 cup cold butter, cubed**
- 2 eggs, lightly beaten**
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- 1-1/3 cups seedless raspberry jam**
- Confectioners' sugar, optional**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add eggs and lemon peel; stir until mixture forms a ball. Divide into fourths. Cover; refrigerate for 3-4 hours or until chilled.
- 2** Remove two portions of dough from refrigerator; press each into an ungreased 9-in. fluted tart pan with removable bottom. Spread 2/3 cup jam over each.
- 3** Between two sheets of lightly floured waxed paper, roll one portion of remaining dough into a 10-in. x 6-in. rectangle. Cut six 1-in.-wide strips; arrange in a lattice design over jam. Repeat with remaining dough (return dough to the refrigerator if needed).

- 4** Bake at 350° for 40-45 minutes or until bubbly and crust is browned. Cool completely. Dust with confectioners' sugar if desired.

Yield: 2 tortes (8 servings each).

PEPPERMINT MOUSSE

(PICTURED BELOW)

julie moyer, union grove, wisconsin

This fluffy, minty treat is the perfect end to a big holiday meal.

- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin**
- 2 tablespoons cold water**
- 1 cup milk**
- 4 ounces chocolate-covered peppermint patties**
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream, whipped**
- Fresh mint and additional peppermint patties, optional**

- 1** In a large saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over water; let stand for 1 minute. Add milk and peppermint patties; stir over low heat for 5 minutes or until candies and gelatin are dissolved. Add vanilla and salt.
- 2** Pour into a large mixing bowl; place in the freezer for 15-20 minutes, stirring frequently until mixture is cooled and thickened. Beat for 1 minute or until fluffy. Fold in whipped cream. Spoon into serving dishes. Garnish with mint and peppermint patties if desired.

Yield: 4-6 servings.





GINGERBREAD TORTE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

ginger hendricksen
wisconsin rapids, wisconsin

This old-fashioned gingerbread cake is excellent! Lemon peel is nice in the creamy frosting.

- 3/4 cup butter, softened**
- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 cup molasses**
- 3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 3 teaspoons ground ginger**
- 2 teaspoons baking soda**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- 3/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup milk**

CREAM CHEESE FROSTING:

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
 - 1/4 cup butter, softened**
 - 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel**
 - 3-3/4 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 1** Grease three 9-in. round baking pans. Line with waxed paper; grease and flour the paper. In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in molasses. Combine the flour, ginger, baking soda, cinnamon and salt; add to the creamed mixture alternately with milk. Spoon into prepared pans.
 - 2** Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes

out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

- 3** In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and butter. Add lemon peel. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar until blended. Place one cake on a serving platter. Spread with about 2/3 cup frosting; repeat layers twice. Refrigerate until serving.

Yield: 10-12 servings.

CHERRY CREAM PARFAITS

(PICTURED BELOW)

jeannette mack, rushville, new york

These parfaits are lovely and special desserts that look fussy but are really easy to fix. I've also made them using other pie fillings.

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 3 tablespoons sugar**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

Dash salt

- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- 1 can (21 ounces) cherry pie filling, divided**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, whip cream until soft peaks form. Gradually add the sugar, vanilla and salt; beat until stiff peaks form. Fold in sour cream.
- 2** Set aside six cherries from pie filling. Spoon half of the remaining pie filling into parfait glasses; top with half of the cream mixture. Repeat layers. Top with reserved cherries.

Yield: 6 servings.





PUMPKIN CHEESECAKE PIE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

sharon crockett, la palma, california

If you're looking for a classic autumn dessert, try this pumpkiny cheesecake pie. It's a winner at potlucks and on the Thanksgiving table. For a special look, sprinkle cinnamon through a doily.

1-1/2 cups crushed gingersnap cookies

1 tablespoon sugar

1/4 cup butter, melted

FILLING:

2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened

3/4 cup sugar

1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground ginger

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

1/8 teaspoon salt

2 eggs, lightly beaten

TOPPING:

1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream

1/4 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Ground cinnamon, optional

1 In a small bowl, combine the gingersnap crumbs and sugar. Stir in butter. Press onto the bottom and up the sides of a greased 9-in. deep-dish pie plate. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned.

2 In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Gradually beat in sugar. Add the pumpkin, cinnamon, ginger, nutmeg

and salt. Beat in eggs just until combined. Pour into crust. Bake for 35-40 minutes or until center is almost set.

3 In a small bowl, combine the sour cream, sugar and vanilla. Spread over pie. Bake 8-12 minutes longer or until set. Cool on a wire rack. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours. Sprinkle with cinnamon if desired.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

SPICED ORANGES

(PICTURED BELOW)

sue ross, casa grande, arizona

This refreshing fruit cup makes a delightfully different dessert. The orange sections, spiced with cloves and cinnamon, can be prepared ahead of time and kept in the fridge until serving.

1/4 cup dry red wine or grape juice

3 tablespoons water

2 tablespoons honey

1 lemon slice

1 small cinnamon stick (1 inch)

1 whole clove

2 medium oranges, peeled and sectioned

Fresh mint, optional

1 In a large saucepan, combine the first six ingredients. Cook over medium heat until slightly thickened, about 15 minutes. Add oranges; simmer for 1 minute. Pour into a bowl; refrigerate. Discard lemon, cinnamon and clove before serving. Garnish with mint if desired.

Yield: 2 servings.



CHOCOLATE NAPOLEONS

(PICTURED BELOW)

roberta strohmaier, lebanon, new jersey

People will think you fussed over these impressive desserts. I use frozen puff pastry for the flaky shells and dress up pudding mix for the yummy chocolate filling.

- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry, thawed**
- 2 cups cold milk**
- 2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream**
- 2 packages (3.9 ounces each) instant chocolate pudding mix**

TOPPING:

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- 2 tablespoons milk**
- 2 squares (1 ounce each) semisweet chocolate, melted and cooled**

- 1** On a lightly floured surface, roll pastry into a 12-in. square. Cut into twelve 4-in. x 3-in. rectangles. Place on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 9-12 minutes or until puffed and golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 2** In a small bowl, whisk milk and sour cream until smooth. Add pudding mix; whisk for 2 minutes or until blended. Refrigerate for 5 minutes.
- 3** To assemble, split each pastry in half. Spoon pudding mixture over bottom halves and replace tops. Combine confectioners' sugar and milk until smooth; drizzle over top. Drizzle with melted chocolate. Serve immediately.

Yield: 12 servings.



APRICOT EMPANADAS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

jaune hadl, lexington, kentucky

These cute handheld desserts are flaky and tender outside with a flavorful fruit filling inside. They take a little time to make, but you'll know they're worth it when the compliments start flowing.

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 2 packages (3 ounces each) cream cheese, softened**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel**
- 6 tablespoons apricot jam**

Cinnamon-sugar

- 1** In a small mixing bowl, cream butter and cream cheese until light and fluffy. Gradually beat in the flour and lemon peel. Shape dough into a ball. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 2** Remove dough from the refrigerator 1 hour before rolling. On a lightly floured surface, roll the dough into a 17-1/2-in. x 12-1/2-in. rectangle; cut into 2-1/2-in. squares. Spoon 1/2 teaspoon jam onto each square. Brush edges with water; fold pastry over filling, forming a triangle. Seal edges well with a fork.
- 3** Place on greased baking sheets. Sprinkle with cinnamon-sugar. Bake at 375° for 15-18 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 35 empanadas.

RASPBERRY SHERBET WREATH

(PICTURED BELOW)

susan brown, northglenn, colorado

I've served this wreath for all sorts of holiday get-togethers. It's both appealing and easy to assemble. Even the chocolate leaves are a breeze.

- 1/2 cup vanilla or white chocolate chips**
- 1/4 teaspoon shortening**
- 10 to 12 small lemon leaves**
- 3 pints raspberry sherbet or sorbet**
- 1/2 cup fresh raspberries**

- 1** In a microwave or heavy saucepan, melt chips and shortening; stir until smooth. With a small new paintbrush, brush white chocolate in a thin layer on the underside of each leaf. Refrigerate until set, about 10 minutes. Apply a second layer of white chocolate; chill for at least 15 minutes or overnight. Gently peel leaf from chocolate.
- 2** For wreath, chill a 14-in. to 16-in. round serving platter in the freezer for at least 15 minutes. Working quickly, scoop 1-1/2-in. balls of sherbet and arrange in a ring on the platter. Make another ring of sherbet scoops inside the first ring. Arrange a third ring on top of the other rings. If sherbet begins to melt, return platter to the freezer for 5 minutes. Garnish with white chocolate leaves and raspberries.

Yield: 10-12 servings.



EGGNOG CRANBERRY PIE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

ruth white, bedford, ohio

Here's an elegant pie that says "holiday" in every bite. The tart cranberries contrast nicely with the rich, gelatin-thickened eggnog. It's a repeat dessert at our house.

- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch**
- 6 tablespoons cold water, divided**
- 2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries**
- 1 pastry shell (9 inches), baked**
- 1 tablespoon unflavored gelatin**
- 1-3/4 cups eggnog**
- 2 tablespoons rum or 1 teaspoon rum extract**
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream, whipped**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground nutmeg**

- 1** In a large saucepan, combine the sugar, cornstarch and 2 tablespoons water until smooth; stir in cranberries. Cook over medium heat for 5 minutes or until thickened, stirring occasionally. Cool for 15 minutes. Pour into pastry shell; set aside.
- 2** In a small saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over remaining water; let stand for 5 minutes. Cook and stir over low heat, stirring until gelatin is completely dissolved. Gradually stir in the eggnog and rum. Refrigerate for 5 minutes or until slightly thickened, stirring occasionally. Fold in whipped cream; pour over cranberry layer. Refrigerate for 2 hours or until set. Sprinkle with nutmeg.

Yield: 6-8 servings.



DELECTABLE RASPBERRY CREAM CAKE

(PICTURED ABOVE AND ON FRONT COVER)

taste of home test kitchen

A fluffy cream filling, fresh raspberries and a rich chocolate glaze turn a yellow cake mix into a spectacular holiday treat.

- 1 package (18-1/4 ounces) yellow cake mix**

FILLING:

- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 2/3 cup milk**
- 6 tablespoons butter, softened**
- 1/3 cup shortening**
- 2/3 cup sugar**
- 3/4 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2 cups fresh raspberries, divided**

GLAZE:

- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- 3 tablespoons half-and-half cream**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 2 tablespoons light corn syrup**

White chocolate garnish and pearl dragees, optional

- 1** Prepare and bake cake according to the package directions, using two 9-in. round baking pans. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
- 2** For filling, in a small saucepan, combine flour and milk until smooth. Bring to a boil;

cook and stir for 1-2 minutes or until thickened. Cool to room temperature. In a small mixing bowl, cream butter, shortening, sugar and vanilla; beat in milk mixture until sugar is dissolved, about 5 minutes.

- 3** Place one cake layer on a serving plate. Spread with 1 cup filling. Place remaining filling in a pastry bag with star tip #195; pipe filling around outside edge of cake. Sprinkle 1-3/4 cups raspberries over filling. Top with second cake layer. Chill.
- 4** For glaze, combine chocolate chips, cream, butter and corn syrup in a small saucepan. Cook over low heat until chocolate is melted, stirring occasionally. Remove from the heat; stir until smooth. Spread enough glaze over the top of cake to cover. Chill for 10 minutes. Repeat with remaining glaze, allowing glaze to drape over sides. Chill for 1 hour.
- 5** Arrange remaining raspberries on top; add white chocolate garnish and pearl dragees if desired. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 10-12 servings.

CHRISTMAS BREAD PUDDING

(PICTURED BELOW)

jennifer dignin, westerville, ohio

I served this bread pudding at the first Christmas dinner I made for my in-laws. Everyone loved it!

- 8 cups day-old bread cubes, crust removed**
- 2 medium tart apples, peeled and chopped**



- 1/2 cup dried cranberries or raisins**
- 6 egg yolks**
- 3 eggs**
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1/2 cup milk**
- 1 cup sugar**

CREAM SAUCE:

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 3 tablespoons sugar**
- 1 to 2 teaspoons vanilla or rum extract**

Dash ground cinnamon and nutmeg

- 1** In a bowl, combine the bread cubes, apples and cranberries. Transfer to a greased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking dish. In a bowl, combine the egg yolks, eggs, cream, milk and sugar. Pour over bread mixture.
- 2** Place dish in a larger baking dish. Fill larger dish with boiling water halfway up the sides. Bake at 350° for 50-55 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Remove from water bath. Cool for 15 minutes.
- 3** For cream sauce, in a saucepan, combine cream and sugar. Cook and stir until sugar is dissolved. Remove from the heat. Stir in the vanilla, cinnamon and nutmeg. Serve warm with pudding.

Yield: 6-8 servings.

GERMAN CHOCOLATE PIE

(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

debbie clay, farmington, new mexico

Thanksgiving dinner at our house includes an average of 25 guests and a dozen different pies. This one has all the luscious flavor of German chocolate cake. A friend who tried it told me he wanted it to be his birthday pie from now on.

- 1 package (4 ounces) German sweet chocolate**
- 1 tablespoon butter**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1/3 cup sugar**
- 3 tablespoons cornstarch**
- 1-1/2 cups milk**
- 2 egg yolks, lightly beaten**
- 1 pastry shell (9 inches), baked**

TOPPING:

- 2/3 cup evaporated milk**



- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/4 cup butter, cubed**
- 1 egg, lightly beaten**
- 1-1/3 cups flaked coconut, toasted**
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans, toasted**

- 1** In a microwave-safe bowl, melt chocolate and butter; stir until smooth. Stir in vanilla; set aside.
- 2** In a small saucepan, combine sugar, cornstarch and milk until smooth. Cook and stir over medium-high heat until thickened and bubbly. Reduce heat; cook and stir 2 minutes longer. Remove from the heat. Stir a small amount of hot filling into egg yolks; return all to the pan, stirring constantly. Bring to a gentle boil; cook and stir 2 minutes longer. Remove from the heat. Gently stir in chocolate mixture. Spoon into pastry shell.
- 3** In a small saucepan, combine evaporated milk, sugar and butter. Cook and stir until butter is melted and mixture just comes to a boil. Remove from the heat. Stir a small amount of hot liquid into egg; return all to the pan, stirring constantly. Bring to a gentle boil; cook and stir 2 minutes longer.
- 4** Remove from the heat. Stir in coconut and pecans. Pour over filling. Cool on a wire rack. Cover and chill for at least 3 hours. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 8 servings.

CHERRY CHEESECAKE DESSERT

(PICTURED BELOW)

christine eilerts, tulsa, oklahoma

My mother often made this lovely fruit-topped cheesecake. Now our grown sons consider it my "signature dessert." Sometimes, I bake and freeze the cheesecake ahead. On the day I serve it, I thaw it, then add the fruit.

1-1/4 cups graham cracker crumbs

2 tablespoons sugar

1/3 cup butter, melted

FILLING:

2 packages (one 8 ounces, one 3 ounces) cream cheese, softened

1/2 cup sugar

2 eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 can (21 ounces) cherry pie filling

- 1 In small bowl, combine cracker crumbs and sugar; stir in butter. Press into a greased 8-in. square baking dish; set aside.
- 2 In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Beat in eggs and vanilla just until blended; pour over crust.
- 3 Bake at 350° for 15-20 minutes or until almost set. Cool for 1 hour on a wire rack. Refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight. Spoon pie filling over top.

Yield: 9 servings.



IRISH CREME CHOCOLATE TRIFLE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

margaret wilson, hemet, california

I created this yummy trifle when I was given a bottle of Irish Cream liqueur as a gift and had leftover peppermint candy. I've served it with both liqueur and coffee creamer and candy canes, too. It's always rich and decadent.

1 package (18-1/4 ounces) devil's food cake mix

1 cup refrigerated Irish creme nondairy creamer

3-1/2 cups cold milk

2 packages (3.9 ounces each) instant chocolate pudding mix

3 cups whipped topping

12 spearmint candies, crushed

- 1 Prepare and bake cake according to package directions, using a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Cool on a wire rack 1 hour.
- 2 With a meat fork or wooden skewer, poke holes in cake about 2 in. apart. Slowly pour creamer over cake; refrigerate for 1 hour.
- 3 In a large bowl, whisk milk and pudding mixes for 2 minutes. Let stand for 2 minutes or until soft-set.
- 4 Cut cake into 1-1/2-in. cubes; place a third of the cubes in a 3-qt. glass bowl. Top with a third of the pudding, whipped topping and candies; repeat layers twice. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 14-16 servings.

CANDY ORANGE SLICE FRUITCAKE

(PICTURED BELOW)

anna minegar, zolfo springs, florida

My version of Yule fruitcake has a citrusy twist. When you share it, be prepared to pass around the recipe.

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 2 cups applesauce**
- 4 eggs**
- 1/2 cup buttermilk**
- 1 pound candy orange slices**
- 2 cups chopped pecans**
- 2 cups flaked coconut**
- 1-1/2 cups candied cherries**
- 1 package (8 ounces) chopped dates**
- 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour, divided**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the applesauce, eggs and buttermilk. In a large bowl, combine the orange slices, pecans, coconut, cherries, dates and 1 cup of flour; toss to coat. Combine the baking soda, salt and remaining flour; add to the buttermilk mixture. Fold in orange slice mixture.
- 2** Pour into a greased and floured 10-in. tube pan. Bake at 300° for 1-3/4 to 2 hours or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack to cool completely.

Yield: 10-12 servings.



BLACK FOREST CHEESECAKE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

christine ooyen, winnebago, illinois

I'm asked to take this popular cheesecake to every gathering. I created the recipe about 10 years ago and my family has been asking for it ever since. In fact, when I was ill at Thanksgiving one year, my sister even made it for my family to enjoy.

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 1/3 cup sugar**
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- 1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed**
- 1 chocolate crumb crust (8 inches)**
- 1/4 cup baking cocoa**
- 1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar**
- 1 can (21 ounces) cherry pie filling**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Beat in the sour cream and vanilla. Fold in whipped topping. Spread half of the mixture evenly into crust. Fold cocoa and confectioners' sugar into remaining whipped topping mixture; carefully spread over cream cheese layer. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours.
- 2** Cut into slices; top each slice with cherry pie filling. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 6-8 servings.



RASPBERRY CHEESECAKE CUPS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

brad moritz, limerick, pennsylvania

I'm frequently told these festive individual desserts are too pretty to eat! Phyllo dough is easy to work with—don't be afraid to try it for these special treats. With the bright red raspberries, these creamy cheese cups make a fine finale for Christmas dinner.

8 sheets phyllo dough (14 inches x 9 inches)

1/4 cup butter, melted

1 egg

1 teaspoon lemon juice

1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, cubed

1/2 cup 4% cottage cheese

3 tablespoons sugar

RASPBERRY SAUCE:

3 packages (10 ounces each) frozen sweetened raspberries, thawed

1/4 cup sugar

1 tablespoon lemon juice

Fresh raspberries and mint

- 1 Unroll the phyllo dough sheets. While assembling, keep remaining dough covered with plastic wrap and a damp cloth. Brush one phyllo sheet with butter. Top with another sheet; brush with butter. Repeat with remaining phyllo and butter. Cut stack lengthwise into three pieces; cut widthwise into fourths. Lightly press each stack into a greased muffin cup.

- 2 In a blender, place the egg, lemon juice, vanilla, cheeses and sugar; cover and process until smooth. Spoon about 2 tablespoons into each phyllo cup. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until lightly browned. Carefully remove from pan to wire racks to cool. Cover and refrigerate.
- 3 For sauce, drain raspberries, reserving the juice in a small saucepan; set berries aside. Bring juice to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 15-20 minutes or until reduced to 3/4 cup. In a blender, puree reserved raspberries; press through a sieve to remove seeds. In a bowl, combine pureed raspberries, raspberry juice, sugar and lemon juice. Cover and refrigerate until chilled.
- 4 To serve, spoon raspberry sauce onto dessert plates; top each with a cheesecake cup. Garnish with fresh berries and mint.

Yield: 12 servings.

MINIATURE ALMOND TARTS

(PICTURED BELOW)

karen van den berge, holland, michigan

My family requests these adorable little tarts each Christmas. I always enjoy making them since the almond paste in the filling reflects our Dutch heritage, plus they're popular at gatherings.

1 cup butter, softened

2 packages (3 ounces each) cream cheese, softened



2 cups all-purpose flour

FILLING:

6 ounces almond paste, crumbled

2 eggs, beaten

1/2 cup sugar

FROSTING:

1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar

3 tablespoons butter, softened

4 to 5 teaspoons milk

Maraschino cherry halves (about 48)

- 1 In a mixing bowl, cream the butter and cream cheese. Add flour; mix well. Refrigerate for 1 hour.
- 2 Shape into 1-in. balls. Place in ungreased miniature muffin cups; press into the bottom and up the sides to form a shell.
- 3 For filling, combine almond paste, eggs and sugar in a mixing bowl. Beat on low speed until blended. Fill each shell with about 1-1/2 teaspoons filling.
- 4 Bake at 325° for 25-30 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Cool for 10 minutes before removing to wire racks to cool completely.
- 5 For frosting, combine the confectioners' sugar, butter and enough milk to achieve desired consistency. Pipe or spread over tarts. Top each with a cherry half.

Yield: about 4 dozen.

CARAMEL PECAN CHEESECAKE

(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

deidre sizer, kettering, ohio

I created this creamy cheesecake using two favorites—caramel and pecans. It's a stunning cake and rivals any I've tasted.

2 cups crushed shortbread cookies

3 tablespoons butter, melted

1/4 cup plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour, divided

1 jar (12-1/4 ounces) caramel ice cream topping

1 cup chopped pecans

5 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened

1-3/4 cups sugar

1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

4 eggs



2 egg yolks

1/3 cup heavy whipping cream

SOUR CREAM TOPPING:

2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream

1/3 cup sugar

- 1 In a bowl, combine cookie crumbs and butter. Press onto the bottom and 1 in. up the sides of a greased 10-in. springform pan. Place pan on a baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until set. Cool on a wire rack.
- 2 Meanwhile, in a small bowl, stir 1/4 cup flour into the caramel topping. Set aside 1/3 cup caramel mixture and 2 tablespoons pecans for garnish. Drizzle remaining caramel mixture over crust; sprinkle with remaining pecans.
- 3 In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, sugar, vanilla and remaining flour until smooth. Beat in eggs and yolks just until combined. Stir in cream. Pour over crust. Bake at 325° for 65-70 minutes or until center is almost set.
- 4 In a small bowl, combine sour cream and sugar; carefully spread over warm filling. Bake 10-12 minutes longer or until topping is set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer.
- 5 Chill for 8 hours or overnight. Remove sides of pan. Just before serving, drizzle with reserved caramel mixture and sprinkle with reserved pecans. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 12 servings.

LEMONY SWEET POTATO PIE

(PICTURED BELOW)

peggy west, georgetown, delaware

For a finger-licking finale to any holiday meal, I turn to this light and luscious sweet potato pie laced with just a hint of lemon. Funny how folks always seem able to find room for this delectable dessert!

2 cups mashed sweet potatoes

3 eggs

1 can (5 ounces) evaporated milk

1/4 cup water

1/4 cup butter, melted

1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

1/2 teaspoon lemon extract

1 cup sugar

1 unbaked pastry shell (9 inches)

Whipped cream

- 1 Press mashed sweet potatoes through a sieve or food mill. In a large bowl, whisk the eggs, milk, water, butter and extracts. Stir in the sugar and sweet potatoes. Pour into crust.
- 2 Bake at 375° for 30 minutes. Bake 20-30 minutes longer or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cover edges with foil during the last 15 minutes to prevent overbrowning if necessary. Cool on a wire rack. Serve pie with whipped cream. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 6-8 servings.



APPLE PIE IN A GOBLET

(PICTURED ABOVE)

renee zimmer, gig harbor, washington

This dish is not only easy but very elegant. I got the recipe from a church cooking class and now fix it often, with rave reviews. You can serve it in bowls, but I always get more oohs and aahs when I put it in lovely goblets.

3 large tart apples, peeled and coarsely chopped

1/4 cup sugar

1/4 cup water

3/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg

12 shortbread cookies, crushed

2 cups vanilla ice cream

Whipped cream

- 1 In a large saucepan, combine the apples, sugar, water, cinnamon and nutmeg. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes or until apples are tender. Uncover; cook 9-11 minutes longer or until most of the liquid has evaporated. Remove from the heat.
- 2 In each of four goblets or parfait glasses, layer 1 tablespoon cookie crumbs, 1/2 cup ice cream and a fourth of the apple mixture. Top with remaining cookie crumbs and whipped cream. Serve immediately.

Yield: 4 servings.

FRENCH VANILLA CREAM PUFFS

(PICTURED BELOW)

lean haines, lawrenceville, georgia

French vanilla filling dotted with mini chocolate chips is sandwiched in puffy pastry for this elegantly sweet dessert. You could substitute white chocolate or chocolate pudding for the vanilla if you like.

- 1 cup water**
- 1/2 cup butter**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 4 eggs**

FILLING:

- 1-1/2 cups cold milk**
- 1 package (3.4 ounces) instant French vanilla pudding mix**
- 1 cup whipped topping**
- 1 package (12 ounces) miniature semisweet chocolate chips**

Confectioners' sugar

- 1** In a saucepan, bring water and butter to a boil. Add flour and salt all at once; stir until a smooth ball forms. Remove from the heat; let stand for 5 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat until mixture is smooth and shiny.
- 2** Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Remove puffs to wire racks. Immediately cut a slit in each for steam to escape. Cool. Split puffs and remove soft dough.



- 3** For filling, in a mixing bowl, beat milk and pudding mix on low speed for 2 minutes. Refrigerate for 5 minutes. Fold in whipped topping and chips. Fill cream puffs just before serving; replace tops. Dust with confectioners' sugar.

Yield: about 2-1/2 dozen.

FLUFFY MINT DESSERT

(PICTURED ABOVE)

carol mixer, lincoln park, michigan

The cool, minty flavor of this fluffy dessert is perfect for Christmas or the hot summer months. Since it has to be made ahead of time, it's a great time-saver on potluck day. I received the recipe from a neighbor a couple years ago.

- 1 package (1 pound) cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies (40 cookies), crushed**
 - 1/2 cup butter, melted**
 - 2 cartons (12 ounces each) frozen whipped topping, thawed**
 - 2 cups pastel miniature marshmallows**
 - 1-1/3 cups small pastel mints (5-1/2 ounces)**
- 1** Reserve 1/4 cup of crushed cookies for garnish; set aside. Combine the remaining cookies with butter; press into an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish.
 - 2** Fold together the whipped topping, marshmallows and mints; pour over crust. Garnish with reserved cookies. Cover and refrigerate for 1-2 days before serving.

Yield: 18-20 servings.



CHOCOLATE MINT LAYER CAKE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

jean portwine, recluse, wyoming

With its rich chocolate icing and minty whipped cream filling, this cake is a fitting finale for any special meal. My three kids always requested this cake for their birthdays.

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 1-3/4 cups sugar**
- 3 eggs**
- 4 squares (1 ounce each) unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 3/4 cup milk**
- 1/2 cup water**
- 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**

FILLING:

- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 3 tablespoons confectioners' sugar**
- 1/8 teaspoon peppermint extract**
- 3 to 4 drops green food coloring, optional**

ICING:

- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
 - 1/4 cup butter**
 - 1/3 cup evaporated milk**
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
 - 1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 1** Line two greased 9-in. round baking pans with waxed paper. Grease and flour the paper; set aside. In a large mixing bowl,

cream the butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in chocolate and vanilla. Combine the milk and water. Combine flour, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with milk mixture.

- 2** Pour into prepared pans. Bake at 350° for 24-28 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.
- 3** For filling, in a small mixing bowl, beat the cream until it begins to thicken. Add confectioners' sugar and extract; beat until stiff peaks form. Beat in food coloring if desired. Place one cake layer on a serving plate; spread with filling. Top with second cake.
- 4** For icing, in a microwave-safe bowl, melt chips and butter; stir until smooth. Cool slightly. Beat in evaporated milk and vanilla. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar. Frost and decorate cake. Chill 2 hours before slicing.

Yield: 12 servings.

PLUM ICE CREAM

jo baker, litchfield, illinois

Here's a pretty ice cream that's such a sweet, refreshing end to a holiday meal, it melts any resistance to dessert!

- 2 cans (30 ounces each) whole plums**
- 6 cups milk**
- 4 cups heavy whipping cream**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1/3 cup lemon juice**

Red food coloring, optional

- 1** Drain plums, reserving 1 cup syrup. Peel plums and remove pits. Place in a food processor; cover and process plums until smooth.
- 2** In a large bowl, combine the milk, cream, sugar, lemon juice, plums, reserved syrup and food coloring if desired. Stir until sugar is dissolved.
- 3** Fill cylinder of ice cream freezer two-thirds full; freeze according to manufacturer's directions. Refrigerate remaining mixture until ready to freeze. Allow to ripen in ice cream freezer or firm up in refrigerator freezer for 2-4 hours before serving.

Yield: 4 quarts.

CRANBERRY VELVET FREEZE

Everyone in my family loves this dessert. I normally serve it at Thanksgiving and Christmas when we're all together.

PAT SEVILLE
HAGERSTOWN, MARYLAND

**COCONUT ANGEL SQUARES**

I have so many speedy dessert recipes, but this one is truly special. A friend shared it with me, and it immediately became the one I prefer because it tastes like a coconut cream pie with only a fraction of the work.

BETTY CLAYCOMB
ALVERTON, PENNSYLVANIA

**RASPBERRY ICEBOX DESSERT**

After tasting this dessert at a church social, I just had to track down the recipe. I was thrilled to learn how easy it is to make. With its smooth pudding layer and colorful berry topping, it's a hit with everyone who tries it.

MAGDALENE DYCK
BURNS LAKE
BRITISH COLUMBIA

**BANANA CREAM BROWNIE DESSERT**

I always keep the ingredients for this extremely delicious dessert on hand because I make it quite often for potlucks and family gatherings. I'm always asked for the recipe. After one bite, you'll understand why.

JULIE NOWAKOWSKI
LASALLE, ILLINOIS



BANANA CREAM BROWNIE DESSERT

- 1 package fudge brownie mix (13-inch x 9-inch pan size)
 - 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips, divided
 - 3/4 cup dry roasted peanuts, chopped, divided
 - 3 medium firm bananas
 - 1-2/3 cups cold milk
 - 2 packages (5.1 ounces each) instant vanilla pudding mix
 - 1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 1 Prepare brownie batter according to package directions for fudge-like brownies. Stir in 1/2 cup chocolate chips and 1/4 cup peanuts. Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 28-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.
- 2 Slice bananas; arrange in a single layer over brownies. Chop the remaining chocolate chips. Sprinkle 1/4 cup chopped chips and 1/4 cup peanuts over bananas.
- 3 In a large mixing bowl, beat the milk and pudding mixes on low speed for 2 minutes. Fold in whipped topping. Spread over the top. Sprinkle with remaining chips and pecans. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 12-15 servings.

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COCONUT ANGEL SQUARES

- 1 prepared angel food cake (8 inches), cut into 1/2-inch cubes
- 1-1/2 cups cold milk
- 2 packages (3.4 ounces each) instant coconut cream pudding mix
- 1 quart vanilla ice cream, softened
- 1 carton (8 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 1/4 cup flaked coconut, toasted

- 1 Place cake cubes in a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. dish. In a mixing bowl, beat milk and pudding mixes on low speed for 2 minutes. Add ice cream; beat on low just until combined.
- 2 Spoon over cake cubes. Spread with whipped topping; sprinkle with coconut. Cover and chill for at least 1 hour. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 12-15 servings.

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RASPBERRY ICEBOX DESSERT

- 2 packages (3 ounces each) raspberry gelatin
 - 2 cups boiling water
 - 3 cups fresh or frozen raspberries
 - 2 cups graham cracker crumbs (about 32 squares)
 - 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
 - 1/2 cup butter, melted
 - 1-1/2 cups cold milk
 - 1 package (3.4 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix
 - 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 In a large bowl, combine the gelatin and water; stir until gelatin is dissolved. Fold in the raspberries. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until syrupy. In a small bowl, combine the cracker crumbs, brown sugar and butter. Press into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. dish.
- 2 In a large mixing bowl, beat the milk and pudding mix on low speed for 2 minutes.
- 3 In another mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Gradually add pudding. Spread over crust. Spoon gelatin mixture over the top. Chill until set. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 12-15 servings.

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CRANBERRY VELVET FREEZE

- 2 cans (16 ounces each) whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 2 cans (one 20 ounces, one 8 ounces) crushed pineapple, drained
- 1 package (10-1/2 ounces) miniature marshmallows
- 1 cup green maraschino cherries, quartered
- 1 cup red maraschino cherries, quartered
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice
- 3 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped

- 1 In a large bowl, combine the cranberry sauce, pineapple, marshmallows, cherries and lemon juice. Fold in whipped cream.
- 2 Spoon into an ungreased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. dish. Cover and freeze overnight. Remove from the freezer 10 minutes before serving.

Yield: 12-16 servings.

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PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE DESSERT

For me, the ideal dessert combines the flavors of chocolate and peanut butter. So when I came up with this rich treat, it quickly became my all-time favorite. It's a cinch to whip together because it doesn't require any baking.

**DEBBIE PRICE
LARUE, OHIO**

MAPLE PECAN PIE

Our Vermont maple syrup can't be beat, and I like to use it in a variety of recipes. This maple-flavored pie is easy to make and one of my favorites.

**MILDRED WESCOM
BELVIDERE, VERMONT**

ORANGE CHANTILLY CREAM

Mom first tried this recipe from a French cookbook many years ago. She decorated the top of each light, fluffy dessert cup with a slice of fresh orange from our trees! Everyone loved it.

**KERRY SULLIVAN
MAITLAND, FLORIDA**

CRANBERRY-CARROT LAYER CAKE

This moist cake smothered with rich cream cheese frosting makes any dinner festive. Every autumn, I go to a cranberry festival in Wisconsin and load up on fresh cranberries to freeze for year-round cooking.

**NELLIE RUNNE
ROCKFORD, ILLINOIS**

CRANBERRY-CARROT LAYER CAKE

- 4 eggs
 1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar
 1-1/4 cups vegetable oil
 1 teaspoon grated orange peel
 2 cups all-purpose flour
 1 teaspoon baking soda
 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 3/4 teaspoon baking powder
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves
 2 cups shredded carrots
 1 cup dried cranberries
- CREAM CHEESE FROSTING:**
 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
 3/4 cup butter, softened
 4 cups confectioners' sugar
 1 tablespoon milk
 1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
 1/2 teaspoon grated orange peel
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, combine the eggs, brown sugar, oil and orange peel; mix well. Combine the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, baking powder, salt and cloves; beat into egg mixture. Stir in carrots and cranberries.
- 2** Pour into two greased and floured 9-in. round baking pans. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
- 3** For frosting, in a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and butter until fluffy. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar, milk, ginger and orange peel. Split each cake into two horizontal layers. Spread frosting between layers and over top and sides.
- Yield:** 12-14 servings.

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MAPLE PECAN PIE

- 3 eggs
 1/2 cup sugar
 1 cup maple syrup
 3 tablespoons butter, melted
 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
 1/4 teaspoon salt
 1 cup pecan halves
 1 unbaked pastry shell (9 inches)
- 1** In a bowl, whisk eggs and sugar until smooth. Add maple syrup, butter, vanilla, salt and pecans. Pour into pastry shell.
- 2** Bake at 375° for 40-45 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack for 1 hour. Store pie in the refrigerator.
- Yield:** 8 servings.

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ORANGE CHANTILLY CREAM

- 12 medium navel oranges
 4-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream
 1 cup confectioners' sugar
 2-1/4 teaspoons orange extract
 1/3 cup orange juice
- 1** Cut a thin slice off the top of each orange. With a grapefruit spoon, scoop out pulp. Invert oranges on to paper towels to drain. Remove and discard membrane from orange pulp; set aside.
- 2** In a large mixing bowl, beat cream until it begins to thicken. Add confectioners' sugar and extract; beat until stiff peaks form. Beat in orange juice. Fold in reserved orange pulp. Spoon into orange shells. Cover and refrigerate until serving.
- Yield:** 12 servings.

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PEANUT BUTTER CHOCOLATE DESSERT

- 20 chocolate cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies, divided
 2 tablespoons butter, softened
 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
 1/2 cup peanut butter
 1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar, divided
 1 carton (16 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed, divided
 15 miniature peanut butter cups, chopped
 1 cup cold milk
 1 package (3.9 ounces) instant chocolate fudge pudding mix
- 1** Crush 16 cookies; toss with the butter. Press onto the bottom of ungreased 9-in. square dish.
- 2** In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, peanut butter and 1 cup confectioners' sugar until smooth. Fold in half of the whipped topping. Spread over crust. Sprinkle with peanut butter cups.
- 3** In another mixing bowl, beat the milk, pudding mix and remaining confectioners' sugar on low speed for 2 minutes. Fold in remaining whipped topping. Spread over peanut butter cups. Crush remaining cookies; sprinkle over the top. Cover and chill for at least 3 hours.
- Yield:** 12-16 servings.

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FROSTY PEPPERMINT DESSERT

This creamy freeze with candies and a chocolate crust delivers make-ahead convenience for the holidays. I'll often whip up two and keep them in the freezer for family gatherings.

CAROLYN SATTERFIELD
EMPORIA, KANSAS

EASY TIRAMISU

If you're looking for a simple sensation to wrap up your meal, give this a try. This no-bake treat can be made the night before to save last-minute fuss.

NANCY BROWN
DAHINDA, ILLINOIS

COCONUT CRANBERRY ALASKA

This impressive treat is my favorite company dessert—it's perfect for a holiday gathering! The recipe is easy to prepare in advance and makes such a beautiful presentation. I always receive raves when I serve it and predict that you will, too.

JOAN HALLEFORD
NORTH RICHLAND HILLS
TEXAS

CRANBERRY-PEAR APPLE CRISP

With its crunchy golden topping and flavorful blend of tart cranberries and sweet apples and pears, this dessert makes a refreshing finish to heavy winter meals.

LOIS GELZER
OAK BLUFFS
MASSACHUSETTS

CRANBERRY-PEAR APPLE CRISP

- 8 medium pears, peeled and sliced
 - 4 medium tart apples, peeled and sliced
 - 2 cups fresh or frozen cranberries, thawed
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
- TOPPING:**
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
 - 3/4 cup all-purpose flour
 - 3/4 cup quick-cooking oats
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon
 - 1/2 cup butter

- 1 In a large bowl, toss the fruit, sugar and flour. Pour into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. For topping, in a bowl, combine the brown sugar, flour, oats and cinnamon. Cut in butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Sprinkle over fruit mixture.
- 2 Bake at 350° for 60-65 minutes or until fruit is tender and topping is golden brown.

Yield: 12-14 servings.

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EASY TIRAMISU

- 1 package (10-3/4 ounces) frozen pound cake, thawed
- 3/4 cup strong brewed coffee
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 cup chocolate syrup
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream, whipped
- 2 Heath candy bars (1.4 ounces each), crushed

- 1 Cut cake into nine slices. Arrange in an ungreased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. dish, cutting to fit if needed. Drizzle with coffee.
- 2 In a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add chocolate syrup. Fold in whipped cream. Spread over cake. Sprinkle with crushed candy bars. Refrigerate until serving.

Yield: 8 servings.

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COCONUT CRANBERRY ALASKA

- 1 package (9 ounces) white or yellow cake mix
 - 2 envelopes unflavored gelatin
 - 1/2 cup sugar, divided
 - 1-1/2 cups cranberry juice
 - 1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry cranberry sauce
 - 3 cups whipping cream, divided
 - 1/4 cup chopped pecans
 - 1-1/2 cups flaked coconut, toasted
- 1 Prepare cake mix and bake in an 8- or 9-in. round baking pan according to package directions. Cool on a wire rack.
 - 2 In a large bowl, combine gelatin and 1/4 cup sugar. Bring cranberry juice to a boil; stir into gelatin mixture

- 3 until dissolved. Stir in cranberry sauce. Refrigerate until partially set.
- 4 Use nonstick cooking spray to grease a 2-qt. bowl with an 8- or 9-in.-diameter top. In a small mixing bowl, beat 1 cup of cream until soft peaks form. Fold whipped cream and pecans into gelatin mixture. Pour into prepared bowl. Refrigerate until set.
- 5 Place cake over gelatin mixture; trim if necessary. Invert dessert onto a serving plate. In a mixing bowl, beat remaining cream until it begins to thicken. Add remaining sugar; beat until stiff peaks form. Spread over gelatin mixture and cake. Sprinkle with coconut.

Yield: 12-16 servings.

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FROSTY PEPPERMINT DESSERT

- 1-1/2 cups chocolate wafers
- 1/4 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup butter, melted
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 cup crushed peppermint candies
- 3 drops red food coloring, optional
- 2 cups heavy whipping cream, whipped
- 10 to 14 peppermint candies

- 1 In a small bowl, combine the wafer crumbs, sugar and butter. Press onto the bottom and 2 in. up the sides of a greased 8-in. springform pan. Refrigerate the crust.
- 2 In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Gradually add milk, beating until smooth. Beat in crushed candies and food coloring if desired. Fold in whipped cream. Spoon into crust. Cover and freeze for 8 hours or overnight.
- 3 Remove from the freezer 10 minutes before serving. Garnish with whole candies.

Yield: 10-14 servings.

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CHILLED CRANBERRY CHEESECAKE

Whenever I'm invited to an outing involving food, so is my cheesecake. Light in texture, it has deliciously rich flavor. With its cranberry-pink color, it looks too pretty to cut...but don't let that stop you.

AN TONUCCI
SAULT STE. MARIE
ONTARIO

CHRISTMAS PETIT FOURS

The dainty petits fours are attractive and fun to make. If time is short, just frost and sprinkle with red and green sprinkles.

LINDA AULT
NEWBERRY, INDIANA

CHRISTMAS TRIFLE

A flavorful blend of cake, pudding, eggnog and fruit will make folks think you really spent a lot of time putting together this fancy but fuss-free dessert.

ESTHER MCCOY
DILLONVALE, OHIO

CHOCOLATE VELVET DESSERT

This creamy concoction is the result of several attempts to duplicate a dessert I enjoyed on vacation. It looks so beautiful on a buffet table that many folks are tempted to forgo the main course in favor of this chocolaty treat.

MOLLY SEIDEL
EDGEWOOD, NEW MEXICO

CHOCOLATE VEIVET DESSERT

- 1-1/2 cups chocolate wafer crumbs
 - 2 tablespoons sugar
 - 1/4 cup butter, melted
 - 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
 - 6 egg yolks
 - 1-3/4 cups heavy whipping cream
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- CHOCOLATE BUTTERCREAM FROSTING:**
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
 - 3 cups confectioners' sugar
 - 3 tablespoons baking cocoa
 - 3 to 4 tablespoons milk

1 In a small bowl, combine wafer crumbs and sugar; stir in butter. Press onto the bottom and 1-1/2 in. up the sides of a greased 9-in. springform pan. Bake at 350° for 10 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

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2 In a microwave or heavy saucepan, melt chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Cool. In a mixing bowl, combine egg yolks, cream and vanilla; beat well. Gradually stir a third of the cream mixture into melted chocolate until blended. Gradually stir in remaining cream mixture. Pour into crust.

3 Place pan on a baking sheet. Bake at 350° for 45-50 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Carefully run a knife around edge of pan to loosen; cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight.

4 For frosting, in a mixing bowl, cream butter. Combine confectioners' sugar and cocoa; add to butter with enough milk to achieve frosting consistency. Pipe into center of dessert. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 12-16 servings.

CHRISTMAS PETIT FOURS

- 2 eggs
- 2 egg yolks
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 cup milk
- 5 tablespoons butter, melted

GLAZE:

- 4 cups sugar
 - 2 cups water
 - 1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar
 - 3 cups confectioners' sugar
 - 1 tube each red and green decorating frosting
- Holiday sprinkles**

1 In a large mixing bowl, beat eggs and egg yolks until slightly thickened. Gradually add sugar, beating until thick and lemon-colored. Combine flour and baking powder. Add to egg mixture gradually with milk and butter; mix well. (Batter will be thick.)

2 Spread evenly into a greased and floured 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before inverting onto a wire rack to cool completely. Cut a thin slice off each side of cake. Cut cake into 1-1/4-in. squares. Freeze cakes.

3 In a large saucepan, combine the sugar, water and cream of tartar. Bring to a boil, without stirring, until a candy thermometer reads 226°. Cool to 100°; beat in confectioners' sugar until smooth. Keeping glaze warm, dip cake squares into glaze with a two-tine fork, allowing excess to drip off. Place on wire racks over waxed paper. Add hot water, 1 teaspoon at a time, if glaze becomes too thick. Let dry completely. Decorate with frosting and sprinkles.

Yield: 70 petit fours.

taste of home best holiday recipes 2007

CHRISTMAS TRIFLE

- 1 can (8 ounces) crushed pineapple
- 3 medium firm bananas, sliced
- 1 jar (10 ounces) red maraschino cherries
- 1 jar (6 ounces) green maraschino cherries
- 3-1/2 cups eggnog, chilled
- 2 packages (3.4 ounces each) instant vanilla pudding mix
- 1 prepared angel food cake (8 inches), cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 carton (16 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed
- 1/4 cup chopped walnuts

1 Drain pineapple, reserving juice. Dip bananas in juice; drain and discard juice. Set aside pineapple, bananas, three red cherries and three green cherries. In a bowl, whisk the eggnog and pudding mixes for 2 minutes or until slightly thickened.

2 Place half of the pudding in a 4-qt. serving or trifle bowl; layer with half of the bananas, pineapple, cherries, cake cubes and whipped topping. Repeat layers. Garnish with walnuts and reserved cherries.

Yield: 16-20 servings.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested with commercially prepared eggnog.

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CHILLED CRANBERRY CHEESECAKE

- 1-1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs (about 24 squares)
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons grated orange peel, divided
- 1/3 cup butter, melted
- 1 envelope unflavored gelatin
- 1/4 cup orange juice
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry cranberry sauce
- 1-1/2 cups heavy whipping cream

1 In a bowl, combine the cracker crumbs, sugar and 1 teaspoon orange peel; stir in butter. Press onto the bottom of a greased 9-in.

springform pan. Bake at 350° for 10 minutes. Cool completely.

2 In a small saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over orange juice and let stand for 1 minute. Cook over low heat, stirring until gelatin is completely dissolved; cool slightly.

3 Meanwhile, in a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and remaining orange peel until blended. Beat in cranberry sauce until smooth. Beat in cooled gelatin mixture; mix well.

4 In a mixing bowl, beat cream until stiff peaks form. Fold into cream cheese mixture. Pour over crust. Refrigerate for 3-4 hours before serving. Carefully run a knife around the edge of pan to loosen. Remove sides of pan. Refrigerate leftovers.

Yield: 12 servings.

taste of home best holiday recipes 2007





PEPPERMINT BISCOTTI

(PICTURED ABOVE)

Drizzled with melted chocolate and sprinkled with crushed peppermint candy, this flavorful biscotti is a favorite. It's one of the many sweets I make for Christmas.

- 3/4 cup butter, softened**
- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 3 eggs**
- 2 teaspoons peppermint extract**
- 3-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup crushed peppermint candy**

FROSTING:

- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
 - 2 tablespoons shortening**
 - 1/2 cup crushed peppermint candy**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extract. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; stir in peppermint candy. Gradually add to creamed mixture, beating until blended (dough will be stiff).
 - 2** Divide dough in half. On an ungreased baking sheet, shape each portion into a

12-in. x 2-1/2-in. rectangle. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until golden brown. Carefully remove to wire racks; cool for 15 minutes. Transfer to a cutting board; cut diagonally with a sharp knife into 1/2-in. slices. Place cut side down on ungreased baking sheets. Bake for 12-15 minutes or until firm. Remove to wire racks to cool.

- 3** In a microwave-safe bowl, melt chocolate chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Drizzle over biscotti; sprinkle with candy. Place on waxed paper until set. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: about 3-1/2 dozen.

RASPBERRY COCONUT BARS

(PICTURED BELOW)

barb bovberg, fort collins, colorado

I've been whipping up these delicious bars for years, with recent help from my daughter. I bake them every Christmas and have received many compliments and recipe requests. The chocolate and vanilla drizzle makes such a pretty lacy effect.

- 1-2/3 cups graham cracker crumbs**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted**
- 2-2/3 cups flaked coconut**
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
- 1 cup seedless raspberry preserves**



- 1/3 cup chopped walnuts, toasted**
- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1/4 cup vanilla or white chips**

- 1** In a small bowl, combine graham cracker crumbs and butter. Press into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Sprinkle with coconut; drizzle with milk. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool completely on a wire rack.
- 2** Spread preserves over the crust. Sprinkle with walnuts. In a microwave-safe bowl, melt chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Drizzle over walnuts. Repeat with vanilla chips. Cut into bars. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until chocolate is set.

Yield: 3 dozen.

IRISH MINT BROWNIES

(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

lori risdal, sioux city, iowa

I wanted something special to take to a church potluck, so I invented these layered treats. They are great for Christmas and St. Patrick's Day as well. The brownies are topped with a mint-flavored mousse and bittersweet chocolate icing.

- 1 cup butter, cubed**
- 4 squares (1 ounce each) bittersweet chocolate, chopped**
- 4 eggs**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup (6 ounces) double dark chocolate chips or semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts**

FILLING:

- 4 squares (1 ounce each) white baking chocolate, chopped**
- 1/4 cup refrigerated Irish creme nondairy creamer**
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 15 mint Andes candies, chopped**

ICING:

- 12 squares (1 ounce each) bittersweet chocolate, chopped**
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 2 tablespoons butter**

Additional mint Andes candies, halved, optional



- 1** In a saucepan over low heat, melt butter and bittersweet chocolate; cool slightly. In a bowl, beat eggs, sugar and vanilla. Stir in chocolate mixture. Gradually add flour until blended. Stir in chips and walnuts. Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean (do not overbake). Cool on a wire rack.
- 2** In a small saucepan, combine white chocolate and creamer. Cook and stir over low heat until smooth; remove from the heat. Refrigerate for 30-40 minutes or until chilled. In a mixing bowl, beat cream until soft peaks form; fold into white chocolate mixture. Beat on medium speed until stiff peaks form, about 4 minutes. Fold in chopped candies. Spread over brownies. Cover and refrigerate.
- 3** In a small saucepan, combine bittersweet chocolate and cream. Cook and stir over low heat until chocolate is melted and smooth; remove from heat. Stir in butter until melted. Cool to room temperature. Carefully spread over filling. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until icing is set. Cut into bars. Garnish with additional candies if desired. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

MINT COOKIE CANDIES

(PICTURED BELOW)

taste of home test kitchen

These yummy mint chocolate bites are so delightful, you'll find it difficult to stop at one. With a combination of sweetness and crunch from the chocolate cookies, they make pretty holiday gifts with candy canes or other candies on top.

- 12 ounces white candy coating, coarsely chopped**
 - 6 teaspoons shortening, divided**
 - 1/4 teaspoon green food coloring**
 - 4 mint cream-filled chocolate sandwich cookies, crushed**
 - 2 packages (4.67 ounces each) mint Andes candies**
- 1** In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the candy coating and 4 teaspoons shortening; stir until smooth. Stir in food coloring. Pour evenly into miniature muffin cup liners. Sprinkle with cookie crumbs.
 - 2** In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the mint candies and remaining shortening; stir until smooth. Pour over cookie crumbs. Let stand until set.

Yield: 4 dozen.



RASPBERRY MERINGUES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

iola egle, mcook, nebraska

As rosy pink as Santa's cheeks, these merry meringue cookies are drizzled with dark chocolate and are almost too pretty to eat. Pecans add a nice crunch to these chewy treats. They lend a "berry" festive touch to my Christmas cookie tray.

- 3 egg whites**
- 3 tablespoons plus 1 teaspoon raspberry gelatin powder**
- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 1 teaspoon white vinegar**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**
- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans**

TOPPING:

- 1/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1 teaspoon shortening**

- 1** Place egg whites in a small mixing bowl; let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Beat eggs whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add gelatin, beating until combined. Gradually add sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time, beating until stiff peaks form. Beat in vinegar and salt. Fold in chocolate chips and nuts.
- 2** Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto parchment-lined baking sheets. Bake at 250° for 20-25 minutes or until firm to the touch. Turn oven off; leave cookies in the oven with door ajar for about 1-1/2 hours or until cool.
- 3** In a microwave, melt chocolate chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Drizzle over cookies.

Yield: 7-1/2 dozen.

ENGLISH TOFFEE

(PICTURED BELOW)

don mcvey, wilsonville, oregon

Each Christmas I make several pounds of candy and cookies for friends, neighbors and business associates. This tasty toffee is covered in chocolate and sprinkled with nuts...and it won't stick to your teeth!

- 1 tablespoon plus 2 cups butter, softened, divided**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 tablespoon light corn syrup**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup milk chocolate chips**
- 1 cup chopped pecans**

1 Grease a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan with 1 tablespoon butter; set aside. In a heavy 3-qt. saucepan, melt the remaining butter. Add the sugar, corn syrup and salt; cook and stir over medium heat until a candy thermometer reads 295° (hard-crack stage). Quickly pour into prepared pan. Let stand at room temperature until cool, about 1 hour.

2 In a microwave, melt chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Spread over toffee. Sprinkle with pecans. Let stand for 1 hour. Break into bite-size pieces. Store in an airtight container at room temperature.

Yield: about 2 pounds.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by



bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

BUTTER PECAN FUDGE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

pam smith, alta loma, california

Toasted pecans add a nutty crunch to this creamy, buttery fudge. I have given this candy with its wonderful caramel flavor as Christmas gifts and people always rave about it!

- 1/2 cup butter**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- 1/2 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 1 cup pecan halves, toasted and coarsely chopped**

1 In a large heavy saucepan, combine butter, sugars, cream and salt. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Boil for 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla. Stir in confectioners' sugar until smooth. Fold in pecans.

2 Spread into a buttered 8-in. square dish. Cool to room temperature. Cut into 1-in. squares. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Yield: 1-1/4 pounds.





CHOCOLATE-DIPPED COOKIES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

taste of home test kitchen

This tender, flavorful cookie is made even better by being dipped in chocolate. The contrasting drizzle is a fancy finishing touch.

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/3 cup baking cocoa**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 cup chopped almonds**
- 1/2 cup miniature semisweet chocolate chips**
- 12 ounces white candy coating disks, melted**
- 12 ounces dark chocolate candy coating disks, melted**
- 2 ounces milk chocolate candy coating disks, melted**



To watch a video from the Taste of Home Test Kitchen on how to pack cookies for gift-giving, go to www.tasteofhome.com/videotips.

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking soda and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture. Stir in the almonds and chocolate chips. Cover and refrigerate 2 hours. Divide dough in half. Shape into two 8-in. rolls; wrap each in plastic wrap. Refrigerate 3 hours or until firm.
- 2** Unwrap and cut into 1/4-in. slices. Place 2 in. apart on greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until set. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 3** Dip half of the cookies in white coating; place on waxed paper. Dip remaining cookies in dark chocolate coating; place on waxed paper. Place milk chocolate coating in a resealable plastic bag; cut a small hole in one corner of the bag. Pipe designs on cookies. Let stand for 30 minutes or until set.

Yield: 4-1/2 dozen.

HINT-OF-BERRY BONBONS

(PICTURED BELOW)

brenda hoffman, stanton, michigan

You'll have a hard time eating just one of these heavenly sweets. Inside the rich milk chocolate coating is a fudgy center with a hint of strawberry.



- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 1 cup milk chocolate chips, melted and cooled**
- 3/4 cup crushed vanilla wafers (about 40 wafers)**
- 1/4 cup strawberry preserves**
- 15 ounces milk chocolate candy coating, chopped**
- 2 squares (1 ounce each) white baking chocolate**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese until fluffy. Beat in melted chocolate chips. Stir in wafer crumbs and preserves. Cover and refrigerate for 2 hours or until easy to handle.
- 2** Divide mixture in half. Return one portion to refrigerator. Shape remaining mixture into 1-in. balls. Place on a waxed paper-lined pan; refrigerate. Repeat with remaining mixture.
- 3** In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the candy coating. Dip balls in coating; place on waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Refrigerate until set.
- 4** In a microwave-safe bowl, melt white chocolate; stir until smooth. Transfer to a heavy-duty resealable plastic bag; cut a small hole in a corner of bag. Drizzle white chocolate over candies. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 4-1/2 dozen.

MERINGUE COCONUT BROWNIES

(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

diane bridge, clymer, pennsylvania

Looking for an ooey-goey brownie that's delicious and different? This sweet recipe combines a shortbread-like crust and a brown sugar meringue with chocolate, coconut and nuts. These never last long!

- 3/4 cup butter, softened**
- 1-1/2 cups packed brown sugar, divided**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 3 eggs, separated**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**



- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1 cup flaked coconut**
- 3/4 cup chopped walnuts**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, combine the butter, 1/2 cup brown sugar and sugar. Add egg yolks and vanilla. Beat on medium speed for 2 minutes.
- 2** Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture and mix well (batter will be thick). Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Sprinkle with chocolate chips, coconut and walnuts.
- 3** In another large mixing bowl, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually beat in remaining brown sugar, 1 tablespoon at a time. Beat until stiff peaks form. Spread over the top.
- 4** Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Cut into bars. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 3 to 3-1/2 dozen.

LIME CHRISTMAS TEA COOKIES

(PICTURED BELOW)

mary ann today, east lyme, connecticut

Luscious with lime juice and flecked with pistachio nuts, these tangy frosted fir trees are almost too pretty to eat! They're a delightful addition to Yuletide cookie trays.

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/4 cup lime juice**
- 2 teaspoons grated lime peel**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 10 to 12 drops green food coloring**
- 3/4 cup finely chopped pistachios**

FROSTING:

- 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
 - 1 cup confectioners' sugar**
 - 1 teaspoon lime juice**
- Green colored sugar**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the lime juice, lime peel and vanilla. Gradually add flour. Beat in food coloring. Stir in the pistachios. Cover and refrigerate for 4 hours or until easy to handle.



- 2** On a lightly floured surface, roll out dough to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with a floured 2-1/2-in. tree-shaped cookie cutter. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until set. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
- 3** In a small mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and lime juice until smooth. Decorate cookies with frosting as desired and sprinkle with colored sugar. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 4 dozen.

RUGALACH

(PICTURED ABOVE)

becky phillips, chippewa falls, wisconsin

The crisp texture of these crescent-shaped cookies makes them a terrific treat to serve alongside a steaming mug of hot chocolate or coffee.

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**

1/2 teaspoon salt

FILLING:

- 1 cup sugar**
- 2 tablespoons ground cinnamon**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted, divided**
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and cream cheese. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture. Divide dough into fourths. Wrap each portion in plastic wrap; refrigerate for 1 hour or until easy to handle.
- 2** Roll out each portion between two sheets of waxed paper into a 12-in. circle. Remove top sheet of waxed paper. Combine the sugar and cinnamon. Brush each circle with 1 tablespoon melted butter. Sprinkle each with 3 tablespoons cinnamon-sugar and 2 tablespoons pecans. Cut each into 12 wedges.
- 3** Roll up wedges from the wide end; place pointed side down 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Curve ends to form a crescent. Bake at 350° for 24-26 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks. Brush warm cookies with remaining butter; sprinkle with remaining cinnamon-sugar.

Yield: 4 dozen.

PEANUT LOVER'S BROWNIES

(PICTURED AT RIGHT)

april phillips, lafayette, indiana

Peanut butter lovers won't be able to eat just one of these delectable dessert squares. These chocolaty brownies are sandwiched between a graham cracker crust and peanut butter mousse.

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 cup graham cracker crumbs**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup salted peanuts, chopped**

BROWNIE LAYER:

- 3/4 cup butter, cubed**
- 4 squares (1 ounce each) unsweetened chocolate, chopped**
- 4 eggs**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**

PEANUT CREAM TOPPING:

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter**
- 1 carton (12 ounces) frozen whipped topping, thawed**
- 12 miniature peanut butter cups, coarsely chopped**

- 1** Line a 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan with foil; grease the foil. In a small mixing bowl, combine the butter, flour, cracker crumbs and sugar; press into prepared pan. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until set. Cool on a wire rack. Sprinkle peanuts over crust.
- 2** In a microwave, melt butter and chocolate; stir until smooth. In a mixing bowl, combine eggs, sugar, vanilla and chocolate mixture. Gradually add flour. Spread over crust. Bake for 30-40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.
- 3** For topping, warm peanut butter for 30 seconds in a microwave. Gradually fold in whipped topping; spread over brownies. Refrigerate for 1 hour. Sprinkle with chopped peanut butter cups. Using foil, lift brownies out of pan; remove foil. Cut into bars. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 2 dozen.





LICORICE CARAMEL CANDY

(PICTURED ABOVE)

paula fischer, rapid city, south dakota

These delicious treats are a fun cross between caramels and licorice. I always get compliments on them—especially from those who enjoy black licorice.

1-1/2 teaspoons butter

2 cups sugar

3 cups heavy whipping cream, divided

1-1/3 cups light corn syrup

2 teaspoons anise extract

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon red paste food coloring

- 1 Line an 8-in. square pan with foil. Grease the foil with 1-1/2 teaspoons butter; set aside.
- 2 In a heavy Dutch oven, combine the sugar, 1-1/2 cups cream and corn syrup. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Cook and stir until a candy thermometer reads 234° (soft-ball stage). Gradually add remaining cream; return to a boil, stirring constantly, until a candy thermometer reads 248° (firm-ball stage).
- 3 Remove from the heat; stir in extract and food coloring (keep face away from mixture as odor is very strong). Pour into prepared pan (do not scrape pan). Cool completely before cutting. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 1 pound (about 4 dozen).

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by

bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

HOLIDAY PECAN LOGS

(PICTURED BELOW)

maxine ruhl, fort scott, kansas

For over 50 years, I've turned to this beloved recipe to make candy to give away at Christmas. Of the many types I've tried, these pecan logs continue to be the most popular.

2 teaspoons plus 1/2 cup butter, softened, divided

3-3/4 cups confectioners' sugar

1/2 cup nonfat dry milk powder

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup light corn syrup

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 package (14 ounces) caramels

1 tablespoon milk or half-and-half cream

2 cups chopped pecans

- 1 Butter an 8-in. square pan with 2 teaspoons butter; set aside. Combine confectioners' sugar and milk powder; set aside. In a heavy saucepan, combine remaining butter, sugar and corn syrup; cook and stir until sugar is dissolved and mixture comes to a boil. Stir in confectioners' sugar mixture, about a third at a time, until blended.
- 2 Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla. Continue stirring until the mixture mounds



slightly when dropped from a spoon. Spread into prepared pan. Cool.

- 3** Cut candy into four strips; cut each strip in half. Shape each into a log; wrap in waxed paper and twist ends. Freeze or refrigerate until firm.
- 4** Meanwhile, in a microwave, melt caramels with milk, stirring often. Roll logs in caramel mixture, then in pecans. Wrap in waxed paper. Store at room temperature in airtight containers. Cut into slices with a serrated knife.

Yield: about 3-1/4 pounds.

SWEDISH BUTTER COOKIES

jo chlopowicz, tucson, arizona

Among our large family's Christmas Eve traditions is enjoying these delectable cookies—one of the 20 varieties my sister bakes for the holiday. They have a pleasing pecan flavor and are so buttery and delicate, they almost melt in your mouth.

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1 egg, separated**
- 1 tablespoon half-and-half cream**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1/2 cup finely chopped pecans**

Additional chopped pecans

Halved red maraschino cherries or red jelly of your choice

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg yolk, cream and vanilla. Combine the flour and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture. Stir in finely chopped pecans. Roll into 3/4-in. balls.
- 2** In a small bowl, beat egg white. Dip balls in egg white, then roll in additional pecans. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.
- 3** Using the end of a wooden spoon handle, make an indentation in the center of each ball. Top each ball with a cherry half or fill with jelly. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until cookies are lightly browned. Carefully remove to wire racks to cool.

Yield: about 5-1/2 dozen.



COCONUT PEAKS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

patricia shinn, fruitland park, florida

I found this gem on a slip of paper in a cookbook I got at a yard sale. The candies get great flavor from browned butter. I've received many requests for this recipe over the years.

- 1/4 cup butter**
- 3 cups flaked coconut**
- 2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 1/4 cup half-and-half cream**
- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- 2 teaspoons shortening**

- 1** Line a baking sheet with waxed paper; set aside. In a saucepan, cook butter over medium-low heat until golden brown, about 5 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in the coconut, sugar and cream. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto prepared baking sheet. Refrigerate until easy to handle, about 25 minutes.
- 2** Roll mixture into balls, then shape each into a cone. Return to baking sheet; refrigerate for 15 minutes. Meanwhile, in a microwave or heavy saucepan, melt chocolate chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Dip bottoms of cones into chocolate. Return to waxed paper to harden. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 3 dozen.

CREAMY PEPPERMINT PATTIES

(PICTURED BELOW)

donna gonda, north canton, ohio

These smooth chocolate candies fill the bill for folks who like a little sweetness after a meal but don't want a full serving of rich dessert.

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
 - 1 teaspoon peppermint extract**
 - 9 cups confectioners' sugar**
 - 3/4 cup milk chocolate chips**
 - 3/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
 - 3 tablespoons shortening**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese and extract until smooth. Gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating well.
 - 2** Shape into 1-in. balls. Place on waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Flatten into patties. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour or until chilled.
 - 3** In a microwave, melt chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Cool slightly. Dip patties in melted chocolate; place on waxed paper until firm. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 4 dozen.



DIPPED PECAN SPRITZ

(PICTURED ABOVE)

sylvia neudorf, abbotsford, british columbia
With their pretty shapes, these treats look lovely at the center of the cookie plates I arrange for all our Christmas gatherings...and they are always the first to disappear. This is my husband's favorite Christmas cookie.

- 1-1/2 cups butter, softened**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract**
- 3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup finely ground pecans**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 3/4 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons shortening, divided**
- 3/4 cup vanilla or white chips**

Colored sprinkles

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy; beat in egg and extracts. Combine the flour, pecans and baking powder; gradually add to creamed mixture.
- 2** Using a cookie press fitted with disk of your choice, press the dough 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 5-7 minutes or until set (do not brown). Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 3** In a microwave, melt chocolate chips and 3/4 teaspoon shortening; stir until smooth. Melt vanilla chips and remaining shortening at 70% power; stir until smooth.

- 4** Dip half of the cookies halfway in semi-sweet mixture; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper to harden. Dip remaining cookies halfway in vanilla mixture; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper and sprinkle coated area with colored sprinkles. Let harden.

Yield: 12-1/2 dozen.

ALMOND CHERRY FUDGE

shellie tucker, hendersonville, tennessee

Cooked in the microwave, this fast fudge is a sweet addition to any holiday gathering. I make this when I need a quick treat for a school party or to take to a neighbor, too.

- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
 - 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
 - 1/2 cup chopped almonds**
 - 1/2 cup red candied cherries, chopped**
 - 1 teaspoon almond extract**
- 1** Line an 8-in. square pan with foil and grease the foil; set aside. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine chocolate chips and milk. Cover and microwave on high for 1 to 1-1/2 minutes or until chips are melted; stir until smooth. Stir in the almonds, cherries and extract. Spread into prepared pan. Cover and chill for 2 hours or until set.
 - 2** Using foil, lift fudge out of pan. Discard foil; cut fudge into 1-in. squares. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 1 pound.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in a 1,100-watt microwave.

FROSTED GINGERBREAD NUT COOKIES

(PICTURED AT RIGHT)

karyn rogers, hemet, california

I received the recipe for these soft ginger cookies from a dear lady, who has since passed away. A comforting classic like this always satisfies.

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 2/3 cup sugar**
- 1 egg**
- 1/2 cup molasses**

- 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cloves**
- 1/2 cup buttermilk**
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts**

FROSTING:

- 1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar**
 - 4-1/2 teaspoons butter, softened**
 - 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**
 - 2 to 3 tablespoons half-and-half cream**
- Walnuts halves, optional**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg and molasses. Combine the flour, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, salt and cloves; add to creamed mixture alternately with buttermilk. Stir in chopped walnuts.
- 2** Drop by tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until cookies spring back when lightly touched. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 3** For frosting, in a small bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar, butter, vanilla and enough cream to achieve desired consistency. Frost cooled cookies. Top each with a walnut half if desired.

Yield: 5 dozen.





APRICOT TEA COOKIES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

judith mcvickers, pittsburg, kansas

It just wouldn't be Christmas without these dainty melt-in-your-mouth cookies on my platter! Filled with apricots and drizzled with glaze, they couldn't be more delectable.

- 1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 6 tablespoons sugar**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**
- 4 ounces cream cheese**
- 1/2 cup cold butter, cubed**
- 1 tablespoon sour cream**

FILLING:

- 1-1/4 cups chopped dried apricots**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 5 tablespoons orange juice**

GLAZE:

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar**
- 4 teaspoons water**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, combine the flour, sugar and salt. Cut in cream cheese and butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add sour cream, tossing with a fork until dough forms a ball. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
- 2** Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, combine the filling ingredients; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes. Uncover; simmer 7-9 minutes longer or until most of the liquid is absorbed, stirring occasionally. Cool.

- 3** Divide dough in half. On a well-floured surface, roll out each portion into a 10-in. square; cut each into 2-in. squares. Place about 1/2 teaspoon of filling in the center of each square. Bring two opposite corners of square to the center; pinch firmly to seal.
- 4** Place on greased baking sheets. Bake at 325° for 18-20 minutes or until edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool. Combine the glaze ingredients; drizzle over cooled cookies.

Yield: about 4 dozen.

CREAMY CASHEW BROWNIES

(PICTURED BELOW)

karen wagner, danville, illinois

My sister-in-law dubbed me the "dessert queen" because of treats like this that I take to our family get-togethers. The brownies have a fudge-like texture and a rich cream cheese topping. Cashews and a hot fudge swirl make these pretty bars special.

- 1 package fudge brownie mix (13-inch x 9-inch pan size)**
- 1/3 cup water**
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil**
- 1 egg**
- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**

TOPPING:

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened**

1-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar



- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1 cup salted cashews, coarsely chopped**
- 1/2 cup hot fudge ice cream topping, warmed**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the brownie mix, water, oil and egg. Stir in chips. Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan.
- 2** Bake at 350° for 25-27 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean (do not overbake). Cool on a wire rack.
- 3** For topping, in a large mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and vanilla until smooth. Spread over brownies. Sprinkle with cashews; drizzle with hot fudge topping. Refrigerate before cutting. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 2 dozen.

EGGNOG SNICKERDOODLES

darlene brenden, salem, oregon

It simply wouldn't be Christmas without these scrumptious cookies on my platter! They have a lovely eggnog flavor and look great with their crunchy tops. The aroma while they bake is as mouth-watering as their taste.

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 1/2 cup shortening**
- 1-3/4 cups sugar, divided**
- 2 eggs**
- 1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon rum extract**
- 2-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 2 teaspoons ground nutmeg**

- 1** In a mixing bowl, cream butter, shortening and 1-1/2 cups sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and extract. Combine flour, cream of tartar, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture.
- 2** In a shallow bowl, combine the nutmeg and remaining sugar. Roll dough into 1-in. balls; roll in sugar mixture. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.

Yield: 6-1/2 dozen.



PEPPERMINT TAFFY

(PICTURED ABOVE)

elaine chichura, kingsley, pennsylvania

For a fun afternoon activity, get the kids or friends involved in an old-fashioned taffy pull. The soft, chewy taffy has a milky, minty flavor, and it won't stick to the wrapper. You can change the color and flavor, too.

- 2-1/2 cups sugar**
- 1-1/2 cups light corn syrup**
- 4 teaspoons white vinegar**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 cup evaporated milk**
- 1/4 teaspoon peppermint oil**

Red food coloring

- 1** Butter a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. pan; set aside. In a heavy large saucepan, combine sugar, corn syrup, vinegar and salt. Cook and stir over low heat until sugar is dissolved. Bring to a boil over medium heat. Slowly add the milk; cook and stir until a candy thermometer reads 248° (firm-ball stage).
- 2** Remove from the heat; stir in peppermint oil and food coloring, keeping face away from mixture, as odor is very strong. Pour into prepared pan. Let stand for 8 minutes or until cool enough to handle.
- 3** With well-buttered fingers, quickly pull candy until firm but pliable (color will become light pink). Pull into a 1/2-in. rope; cut into 1-in. pieces. Wrap each in waxed paper.

Yield: 1-3/4 pounds.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

PEANUT MALLOW BARS

(PICTURED BELOW)

Janice Huelsmann, Trenton, Illinois

Big and little kids alike look forward to eating these snacks that have all the flavor of Payday candy bars. Not only do they beat the clock when time is tight, they make great contributions to bake sales, too.

- 1 package (18-1/4 ounces) yellow cake mix**
- 2 tablespoons water**
- 1/3 cup butter, softened**
- 1 egg**
- 4 cups miniature marshmallows**

PEANUT TOPPING:

- 1 package (10 ounces) peanut butter chips**
 - 2/3 cup light corn syrup**
 - 1/4 cup butter, cubed**
 - 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
 - 2 cups crisp rice cereal**
 - 2 cups salted peanuts**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat the cake mix, water, butter and egg until blended (batter will be thick). Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan.
 - 2** Bake at 350° for 22-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Sprinkle with marshmallows. Bake 2 minutes longer. Place on a wire rack while preparing topping.
 - 3** In a large saucepan, combine the peanut butter chips, corn syrup and butter; cook and stir over medium-low heat until melted



and smooth. Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla, cereal and peanuts. Spread over marshmallows. Cool completely.

Yield: 2-1/2 dozen.

FONDANT-FILLED CANDIES

Debbi Loney, Central City, Kentucky

Here's an easy way to make two festive candies from one recipe! Half of the creamy fondant is flavored with mint for the centers of peppermint patties. Then you mix maraschino cherry juice with the rest of the fondant and use it to "wrap" cherries before dipping them in chocolate.

- 2/3 cup sweetened condensed milk**
 - 1 tablespoon light corn syrup**
 - 4-1/2 to 5 cups confectioners' sugar**
 - 2 to 4 drops peppermint oil**
 - 2-1/2 pounds dark chocolate candy coating, divided**
 - 1 jar (16 ounces) maraschino cherries**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, combine milk and corn syrup. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar (mixture will be stiff). Divide into two portions.
 - 2** For peppermint patties, add the peppermint oil to one portion. Shape 1/2 teaspoonfuls into balls and flatten. In a microwave or heavy saucepan, melt 1 pound of candy coating, stirring often. With a slotted spoon, dip peppermint disks in coating; place on waxed paper to harden. Refrigerate in an airtight container.
 - 3** For chocolate-covered cherries, drain cherries, reserving 3 tablespoons of juice; set cherries aside. Combine juice with remaining fondant. Add additional confectioners' sugar if necessary to form a stiff mixture.
 - 4** Roll into 1-in. balls; flatten into 2-in. circles. Wrap each circle around a cherry and carefully shape into a ball. Place on waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Cover loosely. Melt remaining candy coating; dip cherries in coating. Place on waxed paper to harden. Refrigerate in an airtight container for 1-2 weeks for candy to ripen and center to soften.

Yield: 4-1/2 dozen.

Editor's Note: Peppermint oil can be found in some pharmacies or at kitchen and cake decorating supply stores.



BUTTERSCOTCH FUDGE BARS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

edna hoffman, hebron, indiana

You can't go wrong with these chewy, tempting bars. Everyone enjoys the combination of chocolate and butterscotch.

- 1/2 cup butter, cubed**
- 1 square (1 ounce) unsweetened chocolate**
- 2/3 cup packed brown sugar**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**

Dash salt

- 1 cup butterscotch chips**

- 1** In a microwave, melt butter and chocolate; stir until melted. Stir in brown sugar until dissolved. Cool to lukewarm. Stir in egg and vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; stir into chocolate mixture until blended. Stir in chips.
- 2** Spread into a greased 9-in. square baking pan. Bake at 350° for 22-27 minutes or until a toothpick comes out with moist crumbs. Cool on a wire rack. Cut and serve.

Yield: 1 dozen.

CHINESE ALMOND COOKIES

(PICTURED BELOW)

jane garing, talladega, alabama

Each Christmas, my mother made lots of these tender butter cookies and stored them in clean coffee cans. When she passed away, I started giving our kids a can of these sentimental sweets.

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon almond extract**
- 3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds**
- 1 egg white**
- 1/2 teaspoon water**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg and extract. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture.
- 2** Roll into 1-in. balls. Place 2 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Flatten with a fork. Sprinkle with almonds.
- 3** In a small bowl, beat egg white and water. Brush over cookies. Bake at 325° for 14-16 minutes or until edges and bottoms are lightly browned. Cool for 2 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.

Yield: about 5 dozen.





FUDGY MACAROON BARS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

beverly zdurne, east lansing, michigan

Sweet teeth make a beeline for my dessert tray whenever these rich squares show up. They're attractive on the platter and delectable with fudge and coconut.

- 4 squares (1 ounce each) unsweetened chocolate**
- 1 cup butter**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten**

FILLING:

- 3 cups flaked coconut**
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract**

TOPPING:

- 1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts**

- 1** In a microwave, melt chocolate and butter; stir until smooth. Remove from the heat; cool slightly. Stir in the sugar, flour, salt, vanilla and eggs. Spread half of the batter into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan.
- 2** In a large bowl, combine filling ingredients. Spoon over chocolate layer. Carefully

spread remaining chocolate mixture over the filling.

- 3** Bake at 350° for 35-40 minutes or until the sides pull away from the pan. Immediately sprinkle with chocolate chips. Allow chips to soften for a few minutes, then spread over bars. Sprinkle with walnuts. Cool completely before cutting.

Yield: 3 dozen.

TENDER ITALIAN SUGAR COOKIES

(PICTURED BELOW)

weda mosellie, phillipsburg, new jersey

These traditional cookies are moist and tender. To tie into the colors of the Italian flag, you could tint the icing red, green and white.

- 3/4 cup shortening**
- 3/4 cup sugar**
- 3 eggs**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 3 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1/8 teaspoon salt**

ICING:

- 1/4 cup milk**
 - 2 tablespoons butter, melted**
 - 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**
 - 2-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- Food coloring and colored sugar, optional**



- 1 In a large mixing bowl, cream shortening and sugar. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Mix well.
- 2 Shape dough into 1-1/2-in. balls. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 400° for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 3 For icing, in a small bowl, combine the milk, butter, vanilla and confectioners' sugar until smooth. Tint with food coloring if desired. Dip the tops of cookies in icing. Sprinkle with colored sugar if desired. Place on waxed paper until set.

Yield: 3 dozen.

CHUNKY PEANUT BRITTLE

janet gonola, east mckeesport, pennsylvania
As a farm girl, I often made Christmas goodies with my mother for our family of eight candy-loving kids. Now, my own children and grandkids say the season wouldn't be the same without a tray filled with this chocolaty peanut brittle.

- 1-1/2 teaspoons plus 1-1/2 cups butter, divided**
- 2 cups peanut butter chips, divided**
- 1-3/4 cups sugar**
- 3 tablespoons light corn syrup**
- 3 tablespoons water**
- 1-1/2 cups salted peanuts, coarsely chopped**
- 1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips**

- 1 Butter the bottom and sides of a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan with 1-1/2 teaspoons butter. Sprinkle with 1 cup peanut butter chips; set aside.
- 2 In a heavy saucepan, bring sugar, corn syrup, water and remaining butter to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Cook and stir until butter is melted. Cook without stirring until a candy thermometer reads 300° (hard-crack stage).
- 3 Remove from the heat; stir in peanuts. Quickly pour onto prepared baking pan; sprinkle with chocolate chips and remaining peanut butter chips. With a knife, gently swirl softened chips over top of brittle. Cool before breaking into pieces. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: 2-1/2 pounds.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

CHOCOLATE HAZELNUT TRUFFLES

(PICTURED BELOW)

debra pedrazzi, ayer, massachusetts
I've given these delectable candies with a nutty surprise inside to teachers and friends.

- 3/4 cup confectioners' sugar**
- 2 tablespoons baking cocoa**
- 4 milk chocolate candy bars (1.55 ounces each)**
- 6 tablespoons butter**
- 1/4 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 24 whole hazelnuts**
- 1 cup ground hazelnuts, toasted**

- 1 In a large bowl, sift together confectioners' sugar and cocoa; set aside. In a saucepan, melt candy bars and butter. Add the cream and reserved cocoa mixture. Cook and stir over medium-low heat until the mixture is thickened and smooth. Pour into an 8-in. square dish. Cover; refrigerate overnight.
- 2 Using a melon baller or spoon, shape candy into 1-in. balls; press a hazelnut into each. Reshape balls and roll in ground hazelnuts. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Yield: 2 dozen.



CHERRY BARS

(PICTURED BELOW)

jane kampf, grand rapids, michigan

Want something simple to satisfy a large group? Try these festive fruit-filled bars. With their pretty color from cherry pie filling and subtle almond flavor, they're destined to become one of your most requested goodies.

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 4 eggs**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract**
- 3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 2 cans (21 ounces each) cherry pie filling**

GLAZE:

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar**
 - 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**
 - 1/2 teaspoon almond extract**
 - 2 to 3 tablespoons milk**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in the extracts. Combine flour and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture just until combined.
 - 2** Spread 3 cups batter into a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Spread with pie filling. Drop the remaining batter by teaspoonfuls over filling.



- 3** Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Combine the glaze ingredients; drizzle over bars.

Yield: 5 dozen.

RAISIN PUMPKIN BARS

mrs. j. b. hendrix, ganado, texas

These moist bars will keep well—if your family doesn't eat them all right away! They're nice to take to a potluck supper or for a snack or dessert anytime.

- 2 cups sugar**
- 1 can (15 ounces) solid-pack pumpkin**
- 1 cup vegetable oil**
- 4 eggs**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves**
- 1/2 cup raisins**
- 1/3 cup chopped pecans or walnuts**

FROSTING:

- 1/3 cup butter, softened**
 - 1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
 - 1 tablespoon milk**
 - 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
 - 2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, beat the sugar, pumpkin, oil and eggs. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, nutmeg, salt and cloves; gradually add to pumpkin mixture and mix well. Stir in raisins and nuts. Pour into a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.
 - 2** For frosting, combine the butter, cream cheese, milk and vanilla in a mixing bowl; beat until smooth. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar. Spread over bars. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 2 dozen.



BUTTERSCOTCH HARD CANDY

(PICTURED ABOVE)

darlene smithers, elkhart, indiana

I love making this classic butterscotch recipe. We think these irresistible bites are better than the store-bought variety...and they sure get gobbled up in a hurry!

1 teaspoon plus 1 cup butter, divided

2-1/2 cups sugar

3/4 cup water

1/2 cup light corn syrup

1/4 cup honey

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon rum extract

- 1 Butter a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan with 1 teaspoon butter; set aside. Cube remaining butter and set aside.
- 2 In a heavy saucepan, combine the sugar, water and corn syrup. Cover and bring to a boil over medium heat without stirring. Cook, uncovered, until a candy thermometer reads 270° (soft-crack stage). Add the honey, salt and remaining butter; stir constantly until mixture reaches 300° (hard-crack stage).
- 3 Remove from heat. Stir in rum extract. Pour into prepared pan without scraping; do not spread. Cool for 1-2 minutes or until the candy is almost set. Score into 1-in. squares; cool completely. Break squares apart. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: 1-1/2 pounds.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

CARAMEL NUT MARSHMALLOWS

(PICTURED BELOW)

berdine see, independence, iowa

These tempting candies could not be simpler to make. They're always a hit at holiday time.

1-1/2 cups finely chopped pecans

36 caramels

2 tablespoons hot water

20 large marshmallows

- 1 Line a baking sheet with waxed paper; set aside. Place nuts in a shallow dish. In a large microwave-safe bowl, combine caramels and water. Microwave, uncovered, on high for 30-90 seconds or until melted, stirring twice.
- 2 Dip each marshmallow into melted caramel, then roll in pecans. Place on prepared baking sheet. Let marshmallows stand until set.

Yield: 20 servings.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested with an 850-watt microwave.





PUMPKIN WHOOPIE PIES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

deb stuber, carlisle, pennsylvania

My kids start begging me for these cake-like sandwich cookies as soon as autumn arrives. I haven't met a person yet who doesn't like these fun treats.

- 1 cup shortening**
- 2 cups packed brown sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 3-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger**
- 1/2 cup canned pumpkin**

FILLING:

- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- Dash salt**
- 3/4 cup milk**
- 1 cup shortening**
- 2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream shortening and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, cinnamon and ginger; add to the creamed mixture alternately with pumpkin.
- 2** Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking pans; flatten slightly

with the back of a spoon. Bake at 400° for 10-11 minutes. Remove to wire racks to cool.

- 3** For filling, in a small saucepan, combine flour and salt. Gradually whisk in milk until smooth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cook and stir over medium heat 2 minutes or until thickened. Cover and refrigerate until completely cooled.
- 4** In a small mixing bowl, beat shortening, confectioners' sugar and vanilla until smooth. Add chilled milk mixture; beat for 7 minutes or until light and fluffy. Spread on the bottom of half of the cookies; top with remaining cookies. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 2 dozen.

CRANBERRY CHIP COOKIES

betty albee, buhl, idaho

Chock-full of cranberries, chocolate chips and nuts, these cookies are fun to eat. They offer a change of pace from traditional Christmas cookies...but don't wait until December to make them. My family requests them all year-round.

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 2-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1-1/2 cups semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1-1/2 cups dried cranberries**
- 3/4 cup chopped pecans**
- 1/2 cup English toffee bits or almond brickle chips, optional**

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and vanilla; mix well. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in chocolate chips, cranberries, pecans and toffee bits if desired (dough will be stiff).
- 2** Drop by rounded tablespoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Flatten slightly. Bake at 350° for 11-14 minutes or until set and edges are lightly browned. Cool for 2 minutes before removing to wire racks.

Yield: about 6 dozen.

CRANBERRY CRUMB BARS

This family favorite features cream cheese and cranberry fillings, a tender crust and a nutty crunch.

CHARLENE BAERT
WINNIPEG, MANITOBA

TRUFFLE CHERRIES

Chocolate is popular at our house, especially during the holidays, so these double-chocolate gems never last long!

ANNE DROUIN
DUNNVILLE, ONTARIO

WHITE CANDY BARK

Here is a speedy candy recipe that can be varied depending on the type of fruit or nuts you have on hand. Since we have a walnut tree, I use walnuts, but pecans could also be substituted as well as dried cherries for the cranberries.

MARCIA SNYDER
GRAND JUNCTION
COLORADO

GUMDROP COOKIES

These fun cookies are chock-full of chewy gumdrops. I use red and green ones at Christmas, black and orange for Halloween and pastel shades for Easter. I've made this recipe for years and find kids really love them.

**CAROLYN STROMBERG
WEVER, IOWA**

GUMDROP COOKIES

- 3/4 cup shortening**
 - 1 cup sugar, divided**
 - 1/2 teaspoon almond extract**
 - 1-3/4 cups all-purpose flour**
 - 1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
 - 1/4 teaspoon salt**
 - 1 cup chopped fruit-flavored or spiced gumdrops**
 - 2 egg whites**
- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream shortening and 3/4 cup sugar. Beat in extract. Combine the flour, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Stir in gumdrops.
 - 2** In a small mixing bowl, beat egg whites until soft peaks form. Gradually add remaining sugar, beating until stiff peaks form. Fold into dough.
 - 3** Drop by heaping teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 1 minute before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
- Yield:** 3-1/2 dozen.

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WHITE CANDY BARK

- 1 tablespoon butter, melted**
 - 2 packages (10 to 12 ounces each) vanilla or white chips**
 - 1-1/2 cups walnut halves**
 - 1 cup dried cranberries**
 - 1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- 1** Line a 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. pan with foil. Brush foil with butter; set aside. Place the chips in a microwave-safe bowl.
 - 2** Microwave, uncovered, at 70% power for 3-4 minutes; stir until smooth. Stir in the walnuts, cranberries and nutmeg. Spread into prepared pan. Chill until firm. Break into pieces.
- Yield:** 2 pounds.
Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in a 1,100-watt microwave.

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TRUFFLE CHERRIES

- 1/3 cup heavy whipping cream**
 - 2 tablespoons butter**
 - 2 tablespoons sugar**
 - 4 squares (1 ounce each) semisweet chocolate**
 - 1 jar (8 ounces) maraschino cherries with stems, well drained**
- COATING:**
- 6 squares (1 ounce each) semisweet chocolate**
 - 2 tablespoons shortening**
- 1** In a small saucepan, bring the cream, butter and sugar to a boil, stirring constantly. Remove from the heat; stir in chocolate until melted. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or until easy to handle.
 - 2** Pat cherries with paper towels until very dry. Shape a teaspoonful of chocolate mixture around each cherry, forming a ball. Cover and refrigerate for 2-3 hours or until firm.
 - 3** In a microwave, melt chocolate and shortening; stir until smooth. Dip cherries until coated; shake off excess. Place on waxed paper to harden.
- Yield:** about 2 dozen.

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CRANBERRY CRUMB BARS

- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
 - 1/3 cup confectioners' sugar**
 - 3/4 cup butter, cubed**
- FILLING:**
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
 - 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
 - 1/4 cup lemon juice**
 - 2 tablespoons cornstarch**
 - 1 tablespoon brown sugar**
 - 1 can (16 ounces) whole-berry cranberry sauce**
- TOPPING:**
- 1/3 cup all-purpose flour**
 - 2 tablespoons brown sugar**
 - 1/4 cup butter, cubed**
 - 3/4 cup finely chopped walnuts**
- 1** In a small bowl, combine flour and confectioners' sugar; cut in the butter until crumbly. Press into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking dish. Bake at 350° for 15-20 minutes or until edges are lightly browned.
 - 2** In a large mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Add milk and lemon juice. Pour over crust. In a small bowl, combine the cornstarch and brown sugar. Stir in the cranberry sauce until combined. Spoon over cream cheese layer. For topping, combine the flour and brown sugar in a bowl; cut in butter. Fold in walnuts. Sprinkle over filling.
 - 3** Bake at 325° for 40-45 minutes or until topping is golden brown. Cool on a wire rack. Cover and refrigerate for 3 hours before cutting.
- Yield:** 12-15 servings.

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GINGER CRANBERRY PINWHEELS

Here's a nice Christmas cookie with a different shape. They are fun to make and very delicious.

**LAUREL DOUGHTY
FRYEBURG, MAINE**

SHORTBREAD LEMON BARS

These special lemon bars have a yummy shortbread crust and a refreshing flavor. I'm never afraid to make this dessert for guests since I know it will be a hit with everyone.

**MARGARET PETERSON
FOREST CITY, IOWA**

FUDGY CHERRY BROWNIES

When I first saw this recipe in a local newspaper years ago, I couldn't wait to try it for our guests that very night. I knew it was a winner from the first bite. These rich, fudgy brownies have been making friends merry ever since!

**JEANNE HARTMAN
LITTLESTOWN
PENNSYLVANIA**

STRIPED ICEBOX COOKIES

I've been using this recipe ever since I was a little girl. I like it because it's easier than making cutout cookies. You can easily mix-and-match your favorite ingredients to create different looks.

**PATRICIA REESE
PEWAUKEE, WISCONSIN**

FUDGY CHERRY BROWNIES

- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips, divided**
- 1/4 cup butter, softened**
- 2 cups biscuit/baking mix**
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
- 1 egg**
- 1/2 teaspoon almond extract**
- 1/2 cup chopped maraschino cherries**
- 1/3 cup sliced almonds, toasted**

1 In a heavy saucepan or microwave, melt 1 cup chocolate chips and butter; stir until smooth. In a mixing bowl, combine biscuit mix, milk, egg and almond extract. Stir in chocolate mixture; mix well. Fold in cherries and remaining chocolate chips.

2 Pour into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Sprinkle with almonds. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out with moist crumbs and the edges pull away from the sides. Cool on a wire rack.

Yield: 3 dozen.

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SHORTBREAD LEMON BARS

- 1-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel**
- 3/4 cup cold butter**
- FILLING:**
- 4 eggs**
- 2 cups sugar**
- 1/3 cup lemon juice**
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel**
- 2 teaspoons grated orange peel**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- TOPPING:**
- 2 cups (16 ounces) sour cream**
- 1/3 cup sugar**
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract**

1 In a food processor, combine the flour, confectioners' sugar, and lemon and orange peel. Cut in butter until mixture is crumbly; process until mixture forms a ball. Pat into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 12-14 minutes or until set and the edges are lightly browned.

2 In a large mixing bowl, combine all the filling ingredients; mix well. Pour over hot crust. Bake for 14-16 minutes or until set and lightly browned.

3 In a bowl, combine topping ingredients. Spread over filling. Bake 7-9 minutes longer or until topping is set. Cool on a wire rack. Refrigerate overnight. Cut into bars just before serving. Store in refrigerator.

Yield: 3 dozen.

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STRIPED ICEBOX COOKIES

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1-1/2 cups sugar**
- 1 egg**
- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 cup chopped maraschino cherries, drained**
- 2 drops red food coloring**
- 1 square (1 ounce) semisweet chocolate, melted**
- 1 tablespoon nonpareils**

1 In a mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar. Beat in egg. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to the creamed mixture.

Divide into thirds; place in three bowls. Add cherries and food coloring to one portion, chocolate to another portion and nonpareils to remaining portion.

2 Line a 9-in. x 5-in. x 3-in. loaf pan with waxed paper. Spread cherry dough over bottom. Cover with chocolate dough, then remaining dough. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 2 hours or until firm.

3 Remove dough from pan; cut in half lengthwise. Cut each portion into 1/4-in. slices. Place 1 in. apart on lightly greased baking sheets. Bake at 375° for 10-12 minutes or until edges begin to brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.

Yield: 5 dozen.

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GINGER CRANBERRY PINWHEELS

- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour**
- FILLING:**
- 1/2 cup fresh or frozen cranberries**
- 1/4 cup sugar**
- 1 tablespoon water**
- 1/4 cup orange marmalade**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground ginger**
- 24 whole fresh cranberries**
- Confectioners' sugar**

1 In a large mixing bowl, beat the butter, cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Gradually beat in flour. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

2 In a large saucepan, bring 1/2 cup cranberries, sugar and water to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat;

simmer, uncovered, for 5-6 minutes or until berries pop. Remove from the heat; stir in marmalade and ginger. Set aside.

3 Divide dough in half. On a floured surface, roll each portion into a 16-in. x 12-in. rectangle. Let stand for 20 minutes. With a sharp knife or pastry wheel, cut dough into 4-in. squares. Place 3 in. apart on lightly greased baking sheets.

4 Spoon 1 teaspoon of filling into the center of each square. Cut through dough from each corner of square to within 1/2 in. of center. Fold alternating points to each center to form a pinwheel; pinch gently at center to seal. Gently press a whole cranberry in center of each one.

5 Bake at 350° for 12-15 minutes or until lightly browned around edges. Remove to wire racks to cool. Dust with confectioners' sugar.

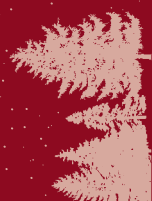
Yield: 2 dozen.

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CHOCOLATE PEANUT SQUARES

If you're a fan of peanut butter cups, you'll enjoy these two-layer treats. A slightly crunchy graham cracker and peanut butter layer is topped with a coating of chocolate chips and peanut butter.

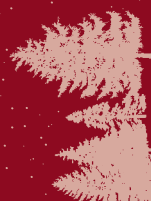
NICOLE TRUDELL
FORT LANGLEY
BRITISH COLUMBIA



PECAN CLUSTERS

I made these "turtle-like" concoctions one Christmas for a sweets exchange. My dad saw them and said they looked like they came from a candy shop. That's the best compliment I've ever received.

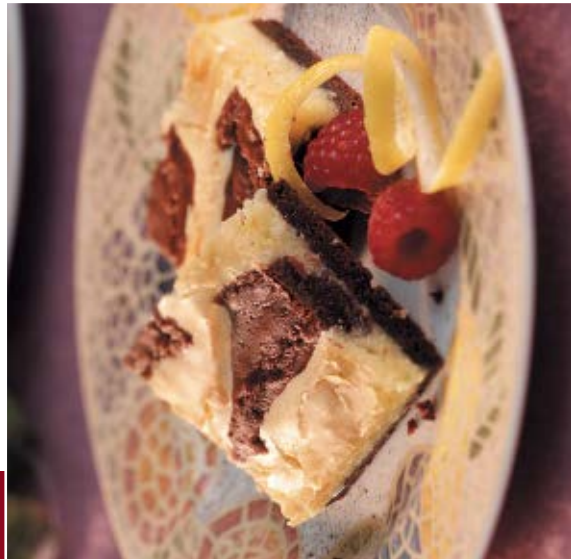
CARRIE BURKE
CONWAY
MASSACHUSETTS



COBBLESTONE BROWNIES

My family enjoys the combination of chocolate and coconut. So I stirred coconut extract into brownie batter and added flaked coconut to the cream cheese filling. These fudgy bars are the tasty result!

PHYLLIS PERRY
VASSAR, KANSAS



CARAMEL CHIP BARS

It's fun to take a yellow cake mix and create something that is this rich and wonderful. We like eating the bars when they are cold, right out of the refrigerator. They're ideal with a tall glass of milk.

LADONNA REED
PONCA CITY, OKLAHOMA



PECAN CLUSTERS

- 1** **teaspoon plus 1 cup butter, divided**
1 **cup light corn syrup**
2-1/4 **cups packed brown sugar**
1/8 **teaspoon salt**
1 **can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
1 **teaspoon vanilla extract**
1-1/2 **pounds pecan halves, toasted**
3/4 **cup milk chocolate chips**
3/4 **cup semisweet chocolate chips**
4 **teaspoons shortening**

1 Line baking sheets with waxed paper; lightly coat with nonstick cooking spray and set aside. Butter the sides of a heavy saucepan with 1 teaspoon butter. Cube remaining butter; place in pan. Add corn syrup, brown sugar and salt. Cook and stir until sugar is melted.

2 Gradually stir in milk. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a boil. Cook and stir until a candy thermometer reads 248° (firm-ball stage), about 16 minutes. Remove from the heat; stir in vanilla. Gently stir in pecans. Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls onto prepared baking sheets. Refrigerate until firm, about 12 minutes.

3 In a microwave-safe bowl, melt the chips and shortening; stir until smooth. Drizzle over clusters. Chill until firm. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 6 dozen.

Editor's Note: We recommend that you test your candy thermometer before each use by bringing water to a boil; the thermometer should read 212°. Adjust your recipe temperature up or down based on your test.

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CHOCOLATE PEANUT SQUARES

- 2** **cups confectioners' sugar**
3/4 **cup creamy peanut butter**
2/3 **cup graham cracker crumbs**
1/2 **cup butter, melted**
TOPPING:
2/3 **cup semisweet chocolate chips**
4-1/2 **teaspoons creamy peanut butter**
1/2 **teaspoon butter**

1 Line a 9-in. square pan with foil and butter the foil; set aside. In a large bowl, combine confectioners' sugar, peanut butter, graham cracker crumbs and butter. Spread into prepared pan.

2 Combine topping ingredients in a microwave-safe bowl; heat until melted. Spread over peanut butter layer. Refrigerate until cool. Using foil, left out of pan. Cut into 1-in. squares. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Yield: 1-1/2 pounds.

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CARAMEL CHIP BARS

- 1/2** **cup butter**
32 **caramels**
1 **can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
1 **package (18-1/4 ounces) yellow cake mix**
1/2 **cup vegetable oil**
2 **eggs**
2 **cups miniature semisweet chocolate chips**
1 **cup vanilla or white chips**
1 **Heath candy bar (1.4 ounces), chopped**

1 In a large saucepan, combine the butter, caramels and milk; cook and stir over medium-low heat until smooth. Cool.

2 In a large mixing bowl, beat the cake mix, oil and eggs until blended. Stir in chips and chopped candy bar (dough will be stiff).

3 Press three-fourths into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Place on a wire rack for 10 minutes.

4 Pour caramel mixture over the crust. Drop remaining dough by spoonfuls onto caramel layer. Bake for 25-30 minutes or until edges are golden brown. Cool for 10 minutes; run a knife around edges of pan. Cool 40 minutes longer; cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or until serving.

Yield: 2 dozen.

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COBBLESTONE BROWNIES

- 1** **package fudge brownie mix (13-inch x 9-inch pan size)**
1/2 **cup vegetable oil**
2 **eggs**
1/2 **teaspoon coconut extract**
FILLING:
1 **package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
2 **eggs**
1 **teaspoon coconut extract**
1 **teaspoon vanilla extract**
3-3/4 **cups confectioners' sugar**
1 **cup flaked coconut**

1 In a large mixing bowl, beat the brownie mix, oil, eggs and extract on medium speed until blended

(batter will be stiff). Set aside 1 cup for topping. Spread the remaining batter into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 10-15 minutes or until edges crack.

2 For filling, in a small mixing bowl, beat the cream cheese, eggs, extracts and confectioners' sugar until smooth and creamy. Fold in the coconut. Carefully spread over brownies.

3 Drop reserved batter by teaspoonfuls over filling. Bake for 45-50 minutes or until a knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: 3 dozen.

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MOCHA MOUSSE BROWNIES

Chocolate is one of my favorite foods, and these dark chocolate goodies are the perfect pairing of coffee-flavored mousse and fudge brownie. My friends and family love them.

STACY WALLER
EAGAN, MINNESOTA

**CHIPPY BLOND BROWNIES**

If you love chocolate and butterscotch, you won't be able to resist these moist brownies. Everyone, young and old, enjoys these sweet treats.

ANNA JEAN ALLEN
WEST LIBERTY
KENTUCKY

**HOLIDAY MINIATURES**

White candy coating adds sweetness to these bite-sized treats. Adding sprinkles and colored sugar to my mom's recipe makes them as much fun to bake as to eat.

ELAINE MILLION
DENVER, INDIANA

**HOMEMADE GUMDROPS**

Your friends and family will remember these chewy, fruity candies long after they've licked the last bit of sugar off their fingers! They're a great gift any time of year.

CHRISTIN HOLT
KINGSBURG, CALIFORNIA



HOMEMADE GUMDROPS

- 2-1/2 cups sugar, divided**
1-1/3 cups applesauce
2 packages (3 ounces each) red or green gelatin
2 envelopes unflavored gelatin
1 teaspoon lemon juice

1 In a large saucepan, combine 2 cups sugar, applesauce, red or green gelatin, unflavored gelatin and lemon juice; let stand for 1 minute. Bring to a boil over medium heat, stirring constantly. Boil for 1 minute. Immediately pour into a cold 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. pan coated with nonstick cooking spray. Refrigerate for 3 hours or until firm.

- 2** With a spatula, loosen gelatin from sides of pan. To remove, invert onto waxed paper. Using kitchen scissors or small sharp cookie cutters dipped in hot water, cut into 1-in. squares or shapes.
- 3** Place on waxed paper. Dry at room temperature for about 8 hours or until slightly sticky. Roll in remaining sugar. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: about 1-3/4 pounds.

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HOLIDAY MINIATURES

- 1 cup butter, softened**
1/4 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon lemon juice
2 cups plus 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
1 pound white candy coating
Colored sugar and/or nonpareils

1 In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in vanilla and lemon juice. Gradually add flour. Divide dough in half. Wrap in plastic wrap; refrigerate for 30 minutes or until easy to handle.

- 2** On a lightly floured surface, roll out each portion of the dough to 1/4-in. thickness. Cut with lightly floured 1-in. cookie cutters. Place 1 in. apart on ungreased baking sheets.
- 3** Bake at 350° for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 4** In a microwave, melt candy coating; stir until smooth. Dip cookies in coating and place on waxed paper-lined baking sheets. Sprinkle with colored sugar and/or nonpareils. Refrigerate for 30 minutes or until set.

Yield: 10 dozen.

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CHIPPY BLOND BROWNIES

- 6 tablespoons butter, softened**
1 cup packed brown sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1-1/4 cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1 cup (6 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips
1/2 cup chopped pecans

- 1** In a large mixing bowl, cream butter and brown sugar. Add the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla. Combine the flour, baking powder and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture. Stir in the chocolate chips and pecans.
- 2** Spread into a greased 11-in. x 7-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.

Yield: 2 dozen.

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MOCHA MOUSSE BROWNIES

- 2/3 cup semisweet chocolate chips**
1/2 cup butter
1 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
2 eggs
1/4 cup hot water
2 tablespoons instant coffee granules
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup baking cocoa
1 teaspoon baking powder
MOCHA MOUSSE:
1 package (3 ounces) cream cheese, softened
1/4 cup sweetened condensed milk
1/2 cup semisweet chocolate chips, melted
1 envelope unflavored gelatin
1/4 cup cold water
2 tablespoons instant coffee granules
1 cup heavy whipping cream

- 1** In a saucepan over low heat, melt the chips and butter; pour into a mixing bowl. Beat in sugar until smooth. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine hot water and coffee granules; add to chocolate mixture. Combine the flour, cocoa and baking powder; gradually beat into chocolate mixture.
- 2** Spread into a greased 13-in. x 9-in. x 2-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 15-20 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean (brownies will be thin). Cool on a wire rack.
- 3** For mousse, in a small mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth; beat in milk and melted chips. In a small saucepan, sprinkle gelatin over cold water; let stand for 1 minute. Cook and stir over low heat until gelatin is dissolved. Remove from the heat; stir in coffee granules until dissolved. In a small mixing bowl, beat whipping cream until slightly thickened. Beat in gelatin. Fold into cream cheese mixture. Spread over brownies. Cover and refrigerate 3 hours until firm. Cut into squares.

Yield: 2 dozen.

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GIFTS FROM THE KITCHEN



Folks will know you care when you share tempting treats like these prepared in your own kitchen. Nothing compares to that homemade goodness.

Peppermint Stick Sauce (p. 177)

Inset Photo: Cherry-Nut Muffin Mix (p. 183)



CARAMEL CRUNCH

(PICTURED ABOVE)

mary koogler, mitchellville, iowa

Our whole family has a sweet tooth, so this caramel-drizzled mix of popcorn, almonds and cereal goes quickly. My “off-limits” batches are divided into plastic bags, tied with ribbon and shared with all the snackers on my Christmas list.

- 9 cups popped popcorn**
- 9 cups Crispix cereal**
- 1 cup slivered almonds**
- 1 cup butter, cubed**
- 1/2 cup light corn syrup**
- 2 cups packed brown sugar**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda**

- 1** In a very large heatproof bowl, combine the popcorn, cereal and almonds; set aside. In a large heavy-duty saucepan, melt butter; stir in corn syrup and brown sugar. Cook and stir over medium heat until mixture comes to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low. Cook 5 minutes longer, stirring occasionally.
- 2** Remove from the heat. Stir in baking soda. (Mixture will foam up and get lighter in color.) Carefully pour over popcorn mixture; stir to coat evenly.
- 3** Transfer to two 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pans coated with nonstick cooking spray. Bake at 250° for 45 minutes, stirring every

15 minutes. Spread on waxed paper to cool. Store in airtight containers.

Yield: about 4-1/2 quarts.

EVERYTHING NICE NUTS

(PICTURED BELOW)

janet forden, okotoks, alberta

I wasn't satisfied with any spiced nut recipes I tried, so I created my own crunchy concoction. They're great to take to a party or to give as a tasty holiday gift.

- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- 1/2 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground allspice**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cardamom**
- 1/8 teaspoon ground cloves**
- 4-1/2 teaspoons water**
- 2 cups mixed nuts**

- 1** In a microwave-safe bowl, combine the first six ingredients. Microwave, uncovered, on high for 45 seconds. Stir; heat 30-60 seconds longer or until syrupy. Add nuts; stir to coat.
- 2** Spread into a microwave-safe 9-in. pie plate. Microwave, uncovered, on high for 3 to 3-1/2 minutes or until syrup is bubbly. Immediately spread onto a greased baking sheet. Cool; break into pieces.

Yield: 2 cups.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in a 1,100-watt microwave.





JALAPENO PEPPER JELLY

(PICTURED ABOVE)

bev elliott, peotone, illinois

My family relishes this jelly served with meat or spread on crackers with cream cheese. It's in hot demand as a gift.

5 cups sugar

2 medium tart apples, peeled and coarsely chopped

1-1/2 cups cider vinegar

3/4 cup finely chopped green pepper

8 to 10 jalapeno peppers, seeded and chopped

1/4 cup water

6 to 8 drops green food coloring

2 pouches (3 ounces each) liquid fruit pectin

Cream cheese and assorted crackers

- 1 In a large saucepan, combine the sugar, apples, vinegar, green pepper, jalapenos and water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Strain mixture and return to pan. Stir in food coloring. Return to a rolling boil over high heat. Stir in pectin; boil for 2 minutes, stirring constantly.
- 2 Remove from the heat; skim off foam. Pour hot liquid into sterilized jars, leaving 1/4-in. headspace. Adjust caps. Process for 10

minutes in a boiling-water bath. Serve with cream cheese on crackers or serve with meat.

Yield: about 5 half-pints.

Editor's Note: When cutting or seeding hot peppers, use rubber or plastic gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face.

PEPPERMINT STICK SAUCE

(PICTURED BELOW)

linda gronewaller, hutchinson, kansas

This pepperminty sauce is one of my favorite holiday gifts to give. I package it in a decorative jar and add a package of chopped nuts to sprinkle with it over ice cream, unfrosted brownies or chocolate cake.

1-1/2 cups finely crushed peppermint candies or candy canes

3/4 cup heavy whipping cream

1 jar (7 ounces) marshmallow creme

- 1 In a large saucepan, combine all of the ingredients. Cook over medium-low heat until mixture is smooth and candy is melted, stirring occasionally.
- 2 Pour into small airtight containers. Store in the refrigerator. Serve warm over ice cream, unfrosted brownies or cake.

Yield: 3 cups.



CURRANT SCONE MIX

(PICTURED BELOW)

delores hill, helena, montana

You can make a wonderful present of this mix. I pack it in a decorative container along with the recipe for making the scones. I also include a few tea towels.

- 4 cups all-purpose flour**
- 2/3 cup sugar**
- 1/2 cup nonfat dry milk powder**
- 4 teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- 1/2 teaspoon salt**
- 2/3 cup shortening**
- 1-1/2 cups dried currants or raisins**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS (for each batch):

- 1 egg, lightly beaten**
- 1/2 cup water**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, milk powder, baking powder, cinnamon and salt. Cut in shortening until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Add currants. Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place for up to 6 months.

Yield: 2 batches (6 cups total).

To prepare scones: In a large bowl, combine 3 cups mix, egg and water until moistened. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; knead 5-6 times. Transfer to a greased baking sheet and pat into a 9-in. circle. Cut into eight wedges (do not separate). Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

Yield: 8 scones.



GINGERBREAD CAKE MIX

(PICTURED ABOVE)

ruth seitz, columbus junction, iowa

I put together this mixture so I can bake moist, nicely spiced gingerbread in no time. It's especially handy during the hectic holiday season.

- 6-2/3 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1-1/2 cups sugar**
- 3/4 cup plus 1 tablespoon nonfat dry milk powder**
- 1/4 cup baking powder**
- 1 tablespoon salt**
- 2-1/2 teaspoons ground cinnamon**
- 2 teaspoons cream of tartar**
- 1-1/4 teaspoons ground cloves**
- 1-1/4 teaspoons ground ginger**
- 1-1/2 cups shortening**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS (for each batch):

- 1 egg**
- 1/2 cup water**
- 1/2 cup molasses**

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the first nine ingredients. Cut in shortening until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place for up to 6 months.

Yield: 5 batches (10 cups total).

To prepare cake: In a large mixing bowl, lightly beat egg, water and molasses. Add 2 cups cake mix; beat until well blended. Spread into a greased 8-in. square baking pan. Bake at 350°

for 35-40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack.

Yield: 9 servings per batch.

Editor's Note: Contents of cake mix may settle during storage. When preparing recipe, spoon mix into measuring cup.

MOLASSES PRETZEL SNACK

(PICTURED BELOW)

jacqueline traffas, medicine lodge, kansas
I've given this yummy munch mix as a Christmas gift to teachers, co-workers and many others.

- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- 1/4 cup butter, cubed**
- 1 tablespoon corn syrup**
- 1 tablespoon molasses**
- 1/4 teaspoon salt**
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/4 teaspoon almond extract**
- 5 cups miniature pretzels**
- 1 cup salted peanuts**

- 1** In a large microwave-safe bowl, combine the brown sugar, butter, corn syrup and molasses. Microwave, uncovered, on high for 45-50 seconds or until the butter is melted; stir.
- 2** Microwave 15-25 seconds longer or until mixture boils. Immediately stir in the salt, baking soda and extract (mixture will foam).
- 3** Stir in pretzels and peanuts. Microwave on high for 20-30 seconds or until pretzels and nuts are well coated, stirring twice.



- 4** Spread into a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. pan. Cool for 15 minutes, stirring twice. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: about 6 cups.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested in a 1,100-watt microwave.

SOUTHERN SPICED PECANS

(PICTURED ABOVE)

carol feaver, marion, ohio

Pop these tasty pecans in your mouth...and you'll immediately want more. A mix of salty and sweet, the nuts are seasoned with cumin, cayenne, sugar and salt. They make a great hostess gift, too.

- 1/2 cup butter, cubed**
- 1-1/2 teaspoons ground cumin**
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- 3 cups pecan halves**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- 1 teaspoon salt**

- 1** In a large skillet, melt butter. Add cumin and cayenne; cook and stir for 1 minute. Remove from the heat; stir in the pecans, sugar and salt; toss to coat.
- 2** Spread in a single layer in a greased 15-in. x 10-in. x 1-in. baking pan. Bake at 300° for 25-30 minutes or until lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Cool. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: 3 cups.



HEARTY SPAGHETTI SAUCE

(PICTURED ABOVE)

wendy prevost, cody, wyoming

I received this recipe from my sister-in-law and use it all the time. The addition of pepperoni and cinnamon makes it extra special. My family says it's the best spaghetti sauce ever!

- 1-1/2 pounds ground beef**
- 1-1/2 pounds bulk Italian sausage**
- 3 cans (28 ounces each) stewed tomatoes**
- 3 cans (6 ounces each) tomato paste**
- 1 can (15 ounces) tomato sauce**
- 1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced**
- 2 large onions, chopped**
- 3 medium carrots, finely chopped**
- 1 medium green pepper, chopped**
- 1 cup water**
- 2 packages (3 ounces each) sliced pepperoni, diced**
- 2 tablespoons sugar**
- 3 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 teaspoons Italian seasoning**
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper**
- 2 bay leaves**
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cinnamon, optional**

- 1** In a Dutch oven, cook beef and sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 2-3 hours or until sauce reaches desired consistency, stirring occasionally.
- 2** Discard bay leaves. Serve immediately. Or cool and pour into jars; cover and refrigerate.

Yield: 19 cups.

CRANBERRY MUFFIN MIX

(PICTURED BELOW)

ruth andrewson, leavenworth, washington

We enjoy muffins so much that I created this quick and simple mix. Cranberries give these golden treats a burst of color and just a bit of tartness that will keep friends and family asking for the recipe.

- 8-1/4 cups all-purpose flour**
 - 3 cups sugar**
 - 1/3 cup baking powder**
 - 1 tablespoon salt**
 - 1 cup shortening**
- ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS:**
- 1 egg**
 - 1 cup evaporated milk**
 - 1 tablespoon butter, melted**
 - 1 cup fresh or frozen cranberries**



1 In a large bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Cut in shortening until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place for up to 6 months.

Yield: about 4 batches (11-1/2 cups total).

To prepare muffins: Place 2-3/4 cups muffin mix in a bowl. Combine the egg, milk and butter; stir into mix just until moistened. Fold in cranberries. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups three-fourths full. Bake at 400° for 15-18 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack. Serve warm.

Yield: 1 dozen.

Editor's Note: Contents of muffin mix may settle during storage. When preparing recipe, spoon mix into measuring cup.

INSTANT STUFFING MIX

darlene brenden, salem, oregon
I use dry bread for this recipe, which costs just a fraction of the price of a store-bought mix.

- 3-1/2 cups unseasoned toasted bread cubes**
- 3 tablespoons dried celery flakes**
- 1 tablespoon dried parsley flakes**
- 2 teaspoons dried minced onion**
- 2 teaspoons chicken bouillon granules**
- 1/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning**
- 1/4 teaspoon rubbed sage**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup water**
 - 2 tablespoons butter**
- 1** Place bread cubes in a jar or resealable plastic bag. In a small plastic bag, combine the celery flakes, parsley flakes, onion, bouillon, poultry seasoning and sage. Tie the bag shut and attach to jar or bag of bread cubes.

Yield: 1 batch.

To prepare stuffing: In a saucepan over medium heat, bring water, butter and contents of seasoning packet to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat; add bread cubes and mix gently. Cover and let stand for 5 minutes. Toss with a fork before serving.

Yield: 6 servings per batch.



MINT COCOA MIX

(PICTURED ABOVE)

lavonne hegland, st. michael, minnesota
I've made this beverage mix many times as Christmas gifts for neighbors and our three sons' teachers. The mint flavor makes the warm drink so refreshing, you'll want to make extra to keep around your house, too.

- 1 package (30 ounces) instant chocolate drink mix**
- 1 package (25.6 ounces) nonfat dry milk powder**
- 2-1/2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 1 cup powdered nondairy creamer**
- 25 peppermint candies, crushed**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENT (for each serving):

- 1 cup milk**
- 1** In a large bowl, combine the first five ingredients; mix well. Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place for up to 6 months.

Yield: 53 servings (17-2/3 cups total).

To prepare hot drink: Warm milk; stir in 1/3 cup mix until dissolved.

Yield: 1 serving.

HOT DRINK MIX

(PICTURED BELOW)

nancy zimmerman

cape may court house, new jersey

This is a great mix to have in the cupboard for cold wintry days. Using strawberry drink mix instead of chocolate makes it fun for kids of all ages. For gifts, put it in a pretty jar and attach directions to fix one serving.

- 2-1/2 cups nonfat dry milk powder**
- 2 cups white or pastel miniature marshmallows**
- 1 cup instant chocolate or strawberry drink mix**
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar**
- 1/3 cup buttermilk blend powder**
- 1/3 cup powdered nondairy creamer**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENT (for each batch):

3/4 cup boiling water

- 1** In a large bowl, combine the first six ingredients. Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place for up to 6 months.

Yield: 15 batches (5 cups total).

To prepare hot drink: Dissolve 1/3 cup mix in boiling water; stir well.

Yield: 1 serving.



CANDY CANE REINDEER

(PICTURED ABOVE)

taste of home test kitchen

Our Test Kitchen staff had a blast creating these adorable candy cane stocking stuffers. Rudolph and his friends never looked sweeter than they do with pretzel antlers, chocolate eyes and red-hot candy noses.

- 8 ounces white candy coating**
- 12 candy canes (6 inches)**
- 12 to 20 regular-size pretzel twists**
- 12 red-hot candies**
- 24 candy-coated milk chocolate balls or miniature chocolate chips**

- 1** In a microwave or heavy saucepan, melt candy coating. Stir until smooth; keep warm. Holding the curved end of a candy cane, use a spoon to drizzle coating over the straight part of cane. Gently shake off excess. Place on waxed paper to dry. Repeat with remaining candy canes. Break pretzels into pieces to resemble antlers; set aside 24 pieces.
- 2** For each reindeer nose, dab a small amount of melted candy coating onto a red-hot. Press onto the end of the curved portion of the candy cane and hold for about 10 seconds. For the eyes, dab a small amount of coating on two chocolate balls and attach to candy cane above nose.
- 3** Select two similar pretzel pieces; dab a small amount of coating onto the candy

cane where antlers will be attached. Press pretzel pieces into the coating and hold for about 30 seconds. Repeat for remaining reindeer. Place in mugs or drinking glasses; let dry for about 1 hour.

Yield: 1 dozen.

Editor's Note: This recipe was tested with Hershey's candy-coated milk chocolate balls.

CRANBERRY ONION SALSA

jamie milligan, kimberley, british columbia

Tucked into a basket with a bag of crunchy tortilla chips, a jar of this homemade salsa makes an incredible edible gift. With only seven ingredients, it takes no time to make. This salsa also can be served warm as a condiment for pork or poultry.

- 1 can (8 ounces) crushed pineapple**
- 1 cup chopped onion**
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic**
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- 3 cups fresh or frozen cranberries**
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies**
- 1/2 teaspoon hot pepper sauce**

- 1** Drain pineapple, reserving the juice; set pineapple aside. In a nonstick large skillet coated with nonstick cooking spray, cook onion and garlic until tender. Stir in brown sugar and reserved pineapple juice; cook and stir until sugar is melted.
- 2** Add cranberries; cook and stir until mixture comes to a boil, cranberries pop and the mixture is slightly thickened. Remove from the heat; stir in the chilies, hot pepper sauce and reserved pineapple. Transfer to a bowl; cool. Store in the refrigerator.

Yield: about 3 cups.

CHERRY-NUT MUFFIN MIX

(PICTURED ABOVE RIGHT)

marianne clarke, crystal lake, illinois

Our home economists liked these fruit-and-nut muffins so much, they modified the recipe to layer the dry ingredients in a jar. Print the additional ingredients and directions for preparing the muffins and spiced butter on a holiday postcard and attach to the jar with a festive ribbon.

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup sugar**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**



- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom**
- 1/2 to 1 teaspoon ground cloves**
- 1/2 cup dried cherries or cranberries**
- 1/2 cup chopped walnuts**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup buttermilk**
- 1 egg**
- 1/2 cup butter, melted**

CARDAMOM BUTTER:

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 1/4 cup confectioners' sugar**
- 1 teaspoon ground cardamom**

- 1** In a small bowl, combine the flour, sugar and baking soda. In a 1-qt. glass container, layer the flour mixture, cardamom, cloves, cherries and walnuts, packing well between each layer. Cover and store in a cool dry place for up to 6 months.

Yield: 1 batch (about 4 cups total).

To prepare muffins: Place mix in a large bowl. Combine the buttermilk, egg and butter; stir into mix just until moistened. Fill greased or paper-lined muffin cups three-fourths full. Bake at 400° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks.

In a small mixing bowl, cream the butter, confectioners' sugar and cardamom until smooth. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator. Soften just before serving with the muffins.

Yield: 14 muffins (about 3/4 cup butter).



CHRISTMAS PICKLES

(PICTURED ABOVE)

patricia martin, shelbyville, tennessee

My pickle recipe was adapted from one a dear family friend shared. These morsels are delicious any time of year, but the green, red and white hues of the pickles, cherries and onions make them ideal for Christmas gift giving.

- 1 jar (16 ounces) whole dill pickles, undrained**
 - 11-1/4 cups sugar**
 - 1 cup white vinegar**
 - 1 tablespoon mustard seed**
 - 1 tablespoon whole cloves**
 - 3 to 4 jalapeno peppers, chopped**
 - 4 to 5 garlic cloves, minced**
 - 5 to 6 whole cinnamon sticks**
 - 1 pound whole candied cherries**
 - 3 jars (15 ounces each) pearl onions, drained**
 - 1 teaspoon olive oil**
- 1** Drain pickles, reserving juice; set juice aside. Cut pickles into 1/2-in. slices; set aside. In a large kettle, combine the sugar, vinegar, mustard seed, cloves, peppers, garlic, cinnamon sticks and pickle juice.
 - 2** Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes until the sugar is dissolved, stirring occasionally. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes. Remove from the heat; cool slightly. Discard

the cinnamon sticks.

- 3** In a large bowl, combine the cherries, onions and pickle slices. Pour liquid over pickle mixture. Stir in oil.
- 4** Cover and refrigerate for 48 hours, stirring occasionally. Divide mixture among jars. Cover and store in the refrigerator for up to 1 month.

Yield: 6-1/2 quarts.

Editor's Note: When cutting or seeding hot peppers, use rubber or plastic gloves to protect your hands. Avoid touching your face.

OAT PECAN COOKIE MIX

bev woodcock, kingston, ontario

This present will be welcomed by anyone who enjoys homemade cookies. The mix is simple to prepare and the results are yummy. I enjoy decorating the jar lids with fabric. As a finishing touch, I tie on a tag with baking instructions.

- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1/2 cup sugar**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1/2 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar**
- 3/4 cup old-fashioned oats**
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans**
- 1 cup crisp rice cereal**

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENTS:

- 1/2 cup butter, softened**
- 1 egg**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

- 1** In a small bowl, combine the flour, sugar, baking soda and baking powder. In a 1-qt. glass container, layer the flour mixture, brown sugar, oats, pecans and rice cereal, packing well between each layer. Cover and store in a cool dry place up to 6 months.

Yield: 1 batch (about 4 cups total).

To prepare cookies: In a large mixing bowl, cream the butter until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Gradually add the cookie mix.

Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Cool for 2 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

Yield: about 3 dozen cookies.

CHOCOLATE-CHERRY COFFEE MIX

(PICTURED BELOW)

jennifer waters, lubbock, texas

Cute packages of this flavored coffee mix are sure to delight friends and family. I wanted something that both coffee and non-coffee drinkers would enjoy, so I added cherry flavoring to a mocha mix. The creamy dessert coffee is the perfect end to a meal.

3 cups sugar

2 cups confectioners' sugar

1-1/3 cups powdered nondairy creamer

1-1/3 cups instant coffee granules

1 cup baking cocoa

1 envelope (.13 ounce) unsweetened cherry soft drink mix

6 cups miniature marshmallows, divided

6 teaspoons holiday sprinkles, divided

ADDITIONAL INGREDIENT (for each serving):

1 cup hot milk

- 1 Combine the first six ingredients. Place 1 cup mix in a 12-in. disposable decorating bag. Fold corners of bag into center and roll bag down; secure with transparent tape.
- 2 Place bag in a second disposable decorating bag. Top with 1 cup marshmallows and 1 teaspoon sprinkles. Gather and twist the top of the bag. Attach ribbon and gift tag. Repeat to make five more gift bags. Store in a cool dry place for up to 2 months.



Yield: 6 gift bags (1 cup/8 servings per bag).

To prepare coffee: In a mug, dissolve 2 heaping tablespoons mix in hot milk; stir well. Top with marshmallows and sprinkles.

Yield: 1 serving.

CAJUN SPICE MIX

(PICTURED ABOVE)

coleen deon, dover plains, new york

You can give fish, beef, pork or poultry a zesty boost with this spicy seasoning. I like to sprinkle the mix on catfish fillets before broiling them.

2 tablespoons paprika

1 tablespoon chili powder

2 teaspoons onion powder

2 teaspoons garlic powder

1-1/2 teaspoons salt

1-1/2 teaspoons white pepper

1-1/2 teaspoons pepper

1 teaspoon dried oregano

1 teaspoon dried thyme

- 1 In a small bowl, combine all of the ingredients. Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place for up to 6 months.

Yield: about 1/3 cup.

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Mealtime is warmer with a casserole from the oven.



make in minutes

Prep: 5 min. Bake: 50 min. Stand: 10 min. Makes: 4 servings

Cheesy Chicken & Rice Casserole

1 can (10 3/4 oz.) Campbell's® Cream of Chicken Soup (Regular *or* 98% Fat Free)
1 1/3 cups water
3/4 cup *uncooked* regular long-grain white rice
1/2 tsp. onion powder
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
2 cups frozen mixed vegetables
4 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves
1/2 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

1. Stir soup, water, rice, onion powder, black pepper and vegetables in 11 x 8" (2-qt.) shallow baking dish.
2. Top with chicken. Season chicken as desired. Cover.
3. Bake at 375°F. for 50 min. or until chicken and rice are done. Top with cheese. Let casserole stand. Stir rice before serving.



Try it Alfredo: Use 1/4 cup grated Parmesan for Cheddar. Add 2 tbsp. cheese with soup. Use broccoli flowerets for vegetables. Top chicken with remaining Parmesan.



Make it Crunchy: Prepare and bake as directed. Uncover. Top chicken with 1/3 cup French's® French fried onions, crushed. Bake for 5 min. more. Top with cheese and let stand 10 min.



CampbellsKitchen.com



M'm! M'm! Good! *Casserole*
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Introducing CROSSE & BLACKWELL® Seafood Classics™ Premium Sauces

Make Your Holiday Entertaining Simply Sensational



Shrimp in Creole Sauce

Ingredients

- 1 jar CROSSE & BLACKWELL® Bold & Spicy Creole Sauce
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 2 onion, chopped
- 4 stalks celery, thinly sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, thinly sliced
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp pepper
- 1 lb jumbo shrimp, peeled & deveined
- 2 Tbsp cilantro, chopped

Directions

Add oil to a large sauté pan and place over medium-high heat. Sauté onions, celery and bell pepper until soft; about 5 minutes. Season with salt & pepper. Add shrimp and sauté for an additional 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Add Creole Sauce and bring to boil; reduce heat and simmer for 3-4 minutes. Remove from heat, garnish with cilantro and serve immediately. *Makes: 4 servings.*

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Surf & Turf Appetizer Kabobs

Ingredients

- CROSSE & BLACKWELL® Seafood Classics™ Premium Sauces
- 1 1/2 lbs beef tenderloin, 1" cubes
- 1 lb jumbo shrimp, peeled & deveined
- 1 sweet onion, 1" pieces
- 1 red bell pepper, 1" pieces
- 2 Tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp pepper
- 2 cloves garlic, minced

Directions

Alternately thread beef, shrimp, onion & bell pepper onto 12" long skewers. Combine oil, salt, pepper & garlic in a small bowl. Prepare grill for direct cooking. Brush kabobs with oil mixture. Grill 5 min. over med. coals. Turn kabobs & brush with additional oil mixture & continue grilling for 5 min., or until shrimp is opaque. Serve with a selection of Seafood Classics™ Sauces for dipping. *Makes: 6 servings. Tip: Try grilling chicken or pork in this recipe.*

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Shrimp Remoulade Cocktail

Ingredients

- 1 jar CROSSE & BLACKWELL® Zesty Remoulade Sauce
- 2 Tbsp CROSSE & BLACKWELL® Non-Pareil Capers, drained
- 1 1/2 lbs large shrimp, cooked
- 6 lettuce leaves, shredded
- 3 avocados, pitted & chopped
- 2 Tbsp cilantro, chopped
- lemon wedges (optional)

Directions

Layer lettuce, shrimp, avocado, capers and remoulade sauce, ending with sauce, in six tall glasses. Garnish with cilantro and optional lemon wedges. Serve immediately. *Makes: 6 servings. Note: This Cajun-inspired dish is a nice beginning to any meal. Easy yet elegant!*

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