



Me Cook?

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I began this recipe book with recipes I collected from my mother. Recipes of things I remembered and liked from my childhood. Recipes like Roman Holiday which I like and Amy tolerates. It has the singular advantage of being simple to make and makes more than one meal. Of course, everyone makes something like it - noodles, beef, tomatoes, and cheese - just with a different name. These recipes were usually given to me on sheets of yellow legal paper, although some were on recipe cards. I stuffed them in an envelope in my desk as I received them. When I got my first decent computer I decided that it would be a good idea to type them out. That way I could include my own notations. Then, about thirty five years ago, I was discussing recipes with a non-traditional student in my astronomy class and she gave me some of her Indian-style vegetarian recipes to try. At this point I decided to add my own recipes to the recipe file, favorite recipes cooked by Amy over the years, recipes from my friends, recipes from newspapers and cook books, and many recipes from the Internet. What follows is the result of this work. It is a work in progress, this is just the current version.

The underlying theme of the book is that, where possible, the entree recipes should produce a good meal and, hopefully, a good leftover meal. Since I usually cook dinner once or twice a week I want to simplify my life somewhat. This seemed like a good start. The result is an eclectic mix of dishes, usually mercilessly plagiarized from others. I've tried most of them. If you get anything from them, thank those that gave them to me.

Dick Wheeler

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Beef Stroganoff

1½ lb thin cut sirloin steak
4 Tbs butter
1 cup finely chopped onion
1 clove finely chopped garlic
½-¾ lb thickly-sliced mushrooms
3 Tbs flour
2 tsp meat extract paste (if you have it)
1 Tbs tomato catsup
½ tsp salt
⅛ tsp pepper
1 10½ oz can of beef bouillon
¼ cup dry white wine
1 Tbs fresh dill (optional)
1 cup dairy sour cream
chopped parsley

Cut the sirloin steak into ½" thick, 1" long pieces. Sear the steak in 1 Tbs of the butter. Use a deep-sided frying pan or a wok big enough to contain the meat and all the final ingredients. Drain the meat and put it aside in a bowl.

Saute the onion and garlic in 3 Tbs of butter. Add the thickly sliced mushrooms. Cover and simmer for a five minutes, but don't overcook. You want the mushrooms soft and still juicy. They will give up a little fluid as they simmer.

Sprinkle on the flour, salt, and pepper. Add the meat extract paste and catsup. Stir until blended.

Gradually add the beef bouillon. Bring the mixture to a boil, stirring continually, then reduce the heat and simmer for a few minutes to blend the ingredients.

Stir in the white wine, fresh dill, and sour cream.

Return the browned beef strips to the pan and simmer until thoroughly heated.

Serve on rice with some chopped parsley as garnish.

This recipe lasts well in the refrigerator. If too thick, add a few Tbs water to loosen the mixture.

Chili Con Carne (Microwave)

1 lb ground beef
1 large onion
½ cup chopped green pepper (½ medium pepper)
1 lb can tomatoes, with liquid
1 8 oz can tomato sauce
⅓ cup catsup
1 lb can pinto beans
2-3 tsp chili powder
dash cayenne pepper
1 bay leaf
¼ tsp oregano
1 tsp salt

This recipe is about as easy as they come.

Combine the beef, onion, and green pepper in a 2½-3 qt Corning Ware dish. Cook, covered on full power for 5-8 minutes, or until vegetables are tender and beef is no longer pink. Stir halfway through to cook uniformly and break up the ground beef. Drain.

Drain the fluid from the can of pinto beans. If the liquid in the can is too thick I pour water over it in a strainer. Combine the beans and remaining ingredients with the beef mixture.

Cook on full power for 10-13 minutes, or until heated throughout. Stir halfway through the cooking time. Remove the bay leaf.

Serves 4 to 6. This recipe keeps well in the refrigerator.

You might like to have separate bowls of chopped onion and grated cheese as condiments

Harissa Meatballs and Tomato Sauce

10 oz ground beef
4 oz orzo pasta
1 8-oz can tomato sauce
4 oz sweet peppers
6 oz green beans
2 cloves garlic
1 Tbs red harissa paste
1 Tbs capers
¼ cup panko breadcrumbs
2 Tbs mascarpone cheese
1 tsp whole dried oregano



Fill a medium pot with salted water; cover and heat to boiling on high. Wash and dry the fresh produce. Peel and roughly chop 2 cloves of garlic. Cut off and discard the stems of the peppers; remove the cores. Halve the peppers lengthwise, then thinly slice crosswise. Cut the green beans into 1" pieces.

In a large bowl, combine the beef, breadcrumbs, oregano, and harissa paste. Season with salt and pepper; gently mix to combine. Shape the mixture into 10 tightly packed meatballs; transfer to a plate. In a large pan (nonstick, if you have one), heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the meatballs. Cook, turning occasionally (carefully, as the oil may splatter), 3 to 5 minutes, or until lightly browned on all sides.

Add the chopped garlic and sliced peppers to the pan; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, 2 to 3 minutes, or until slightly softened. Add the tomato sauce (carefully, as the liquid may splatter) and ¼ cup of water; season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally and spooning the sauce over the meatballs, 3 to 5 minutes, or until the sauce is slightly thickened and the meatballs are cooked through. Turn off the heat. Taste, then season with salt and pepper if desired.

While the sauce cooks, add the pasta to the pot of boiling water. Cook, uncovered, 6 minutes. Add the green bean pieces. Continue to cook 2 to 3 minutes, or until the pasta is tender and the green beans are slightly softened. Turn off the heat. Drain thoroughly and return to the pot.

Add the capers and mascarpone to the pot of cooked pasta and green beans. Stir to thoroughly combine. Taste, then season with salt and pepper if desired. Serve the finished meatballs and sauce over the finished pasta and green beans.

Tip: If you don't have mascarpone, blend 8 oz softened cream cheese with ¼ cup whipping cream. OR> blend 8 oz softened full-fat cream cheese with ¼ cup softened butter and ¼ cup cream.

Cincinnati Chili For Two (serve over spaghetti)

1 Tbs vegetable oil
½ lb ground beef
1 onion
1 clove garlic
2½ tsp chili powder
½ tsp allspice
½ tsp cinnamon
14 oz can crushed tomatoes
½ cup water
½ cube Knorr beef bouillon (1 cube other types)

Sauté the onion and garlic in oil until golden. Add the beef. Brown and drain.

Add the chili powder, allspice, and cinnamon. Cook for 5 minutes.

Add the remaining ingredients and cook for 30 to 45 minutes. This recipe should be rather thick and can be used over spaghetti or noodles.

Chili Kits

There are a number of chili kits you can buy at the grocery store. The one I like best is **Carroll Shelby's Chili Kit**. It contains packets of chili powder, corn flour, salt, and cayenne pepper. You add 2 lb of ground beef, 8 oz tomato sauce, and 16 oz water. In addition I always add some chopped green pepper, onion, and pinto beans. You can adjust the degree of hotness with the cayenne pepper. Start to finish is no more than a half hour.



Dick's Herbed Meat Loaf

½ green pepper, diced
1 medium yellow onion, diced.
½ cup finely chopped fresh parsley
1 Tbs dried basil
1½ tsp salt
½ tsp freshly ground pepper
2 Tbs tomato catsup
1 large egg
½ cup Panko bread crumbs
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
2 lbs meat loaf mix (1 lb beef, ½ lb veal, ½ lb pork, ground)
1 14 oz Campbell's tomato soup
5-6 slices of bacon

Place the first seven ingredients into a 1½-2 quart mixing bowl. Stir briefly. In a small saucer lightly beat the egg. Pour into the mixing bowl. Add the Worcestershire sauce and the Panko crumbs. Mix thoroughly.

You need a meat loaf mixture of meats, which is generally agreed to be 1 lbs ground beef, ½ lb pork, and ½ lb veal, 2 lb in all. Frequently grocery stores don't have the veal and will give you a mixture of beef and pork. Go with it. Place the meat loaf mixture in the mixing bowl. Knead the spice mixture in thoroughly. Don't overwork the mixture.

Form the resultant meat mixture into a rectangular solid shape in a rectangular Pyrex casserole dish, say 1½ quart, 6"×10". Pat it to get out the air. You want a rectangular shape, like a flat loaf of bread. Leave room on the sides for the grease and water, which will cook out of the meat loaf.

Cover the meat loaf with 5-6 strips of bacon on top and sides. This is just a little extra garnish and can be omitted. This is how my mom did it.

Bake at 350°F for 1½ hours.

About 20 minutes before the meat loaf is done, carefully drain the fat and juice from the meat loaf dish into a bowl. To do this use pads, one to hold the dish and one to hold the meat loaf from falling out. You can use the original bowl since it is now empty. Place a can of tomato soup in the bowl with the juice mixture. How much juice is up to you, but I usually pig out and add the entire amount, it is mostly water anyway, not fat. Heat the mixture and whisk it until it is smooth. You can add a few dribbles of milk if you like. Keep the mixture hot until ready to serve in a warm gravy ladle.

Meat loaf leftovers keep well in the icebox if wrapped. The gravy can be reheated. The gravy goes well with mashed potatoes.

Meatloaf with Egg

1 or 2 hard boiled eggs

For variety you can insert a hard boiled egg or two in the center of the meatloaf before cooking. This makes for an interesting color combination when the meatloaf is sliced. I do suggest that you remove the shells first.

Mom's Long-Cooking Stew (Weyerhauser Stew)

2½ lb stew meat

1 pkg dry onion soup

1 can cream of mushroom soup

1 can water

½ cup red wine or sherry

Combine all ingredients together and put in a covered roasting pot. Place in the oven for 6 hrs at 250°F.

Serve with noodles almondine, noodles, rice or baked potatoes. Excellent the next day.

Mom's Beef Roast (Dad's favorite)

3 lbs of round, rump, rolled chuck, or eye of round

salt

pepper

A1 sauce

Buy a firm piece of beef-round, rump, rolled chuck, or eye of the round (tends to be very dry). Wash it carefully, season with salt, pepper, and A1 sauce rubbed on it. Cover the meat completely with aluminum foil. The foil should be loose to provide air and room for fat to drip.

Place in a 325°F oven for 3½-4 hours, depending on the size of the roast. The foil should be opened carefully after 2½ hours or so to test the cooking process. You want it to be tender, but not to fall apart. It will be hard to cut with a regular knife while hot, but an electric knife does the job well.

A roast like this makes good gravy, although not a lot, and should be good for a second meal cold or reheated. Odds and ends left over can be ground up with a raw onion and a couple of raw potatoes and browned carefully in a skillet for roast beef hash.

Dick's Old Time Beef Stew

2 lbs beef stew meat or chuck, cut in ½"-1" cubes (bite-sized)
½ cup flour
2 Tbs vegetable oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1 14½ oz can beef broth
1 cup red wine, Gallo Hearty Burgundy will do
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
2 bay leaves
1 tsp salt (some like more, I can skip it)
1 tsp sugar
½ tsp paprika
¼ tsp pepper
dash ground allspice
1 medium onion, sliced

Slice the meat to bite-sized pieces. Place flour in a plastic shopping bag along with the meat. Shake the bag to coat all pieces. Remove meat from bag, shaking off excess flour.

Heat the vegetable oil and garlic in a heavy Dutch oven. Don't get it too hot or the garlic will fly all over the place. Brown the meat thoroughly on all sides, turning often. You may want to do the browning in batches.

When all the meat is browned, add the red wine. Cook for a few minutes. Add the beef bouillon and all the remaining ingredients. Simmer for at least 2½ hours, covered. Stir occasionally to prevent sticking.

Flour will form a crust on the bottom and sides of the Dutch oven. Use a metal spatula with a flat front blade to scrape the cooked flour into the stew. Do this at the very beginning of the cooking cycle and then again from time to time as new crust forms. This will form the base of the resultant gravy. Some recipes call for you to add a flour/water mixture at the end, but I find dredging the beef in flour initially works just as well and tends to eliminate any flour balls. Just make sure to scrape the cooked flour off the sides and bottom of the Dutch oven.

This stew works well on rice or noodles, serves an army, and lasts well in the refrigerator. If you want vegetables in the stew, add these after the first 1½ hours of cooking.

6 carrots, pared and quartered
1 lb small white onions
4 potatoes, pared and quartered (you might forego the pasta)

Dick's Beef Pot Roast

3-4 lb bottom or top beef round (top is better cut, but bottom works well)

¼ cup all-purpose flour

salt

pepper

2 Tbs vegetable oil

½ cup water

2 potatoes

4 carrots

4 medium onions

Put the meat in a plastic bag with the flour. Coat the meat liberally with the flour. Remove the meat from the bag and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Heat the oil in a large Dutch oven. Brown the meat slowly on all sides.

Turn the heat down. Add the water. Cover tightly and simmer for at least 2½ hours. Longer doesn't hurt. The meat will release some fat and fluid which along with the flour and water will make a delicious gravy.

Pare the potatoes and cut into golf ball size pieces. Pare and quarter the carrots. Take the skins off the onions. With about 1½ hours to go add the vegetables.

Remove the meat to a hot platter. There should be plenty of fluid left. Use as is or add a flour/water mixture to thicken and make gravy. Salt and pepper to taste.

Best Cuts for a Pot Roast

Chuck Roast

Chuck Roast Center Cut

Chuck Arm

7-Bone Roast

Shoulder Roast

Cross Rib Roast

Blade Roast

Rump Roast

Bottom Round

Beef Brisket

New England Dinner (Crockpot)

5 or 6 small white potatoes, pared and halved

5 or 6 medium carrots, pared and halved

1 small clove garlic

1 bay leaf

4 peppercorns

3 lb corned beef brisket

3 or 4 small to medium onions, peeled

approximately 5 cups of water

1 small head cabbage, quartered

The corned beef brisket usually comes in a closed foil pouch. When buying, squeeze the pouch. If there is a lot of give then the brisket contains too much useless fat. Make your choice of brisket accordingly.

Place the potatoes and carrots in the bottom of the Crockpot. Add the garlic, bay leaf, and peppercorns. Pack these items closely to minimize fluid space.

Cut the corned beef brisket in two and place the two pieces on their sides in the Crockpot on top of the vegetables.

Put onions along the sides of the brisket pieces. You are trying to minimize the airspace. You may want to pull up some potatoes to fill in space.

Barely cover the brisket with water, approximately 5 to 6 cups.

Cook on the low heat setting for 9 to 11 hours, or till done.

Remove meat and vegetables to a platter and place in a warm oven.

Place the remaining fluid in a 3 quart saucepan and bring to a simmer, you may do this in the Crockpot **set to high** but will have to wait until the broth comes to a simmer. While it requires another pot, I usually pour the fluid into a large saucepan and bring it to a boil on top of the stove. It is much faster this way.

Place the cabbage wedges into the broth and cook for 20 minutes.

Place on a platter and serve. Slice across the grain.

The vegetables don't save particularly well as leftovers. The meat, of course, does.

Dora's Roman Holiday
Dick's personal favorite*

1½ cups uncooked macaroni makes 2 cups cooked
1 16 oz can tomatoes (28 oz can if you like tomatoes)
1 medium onion chopped fine (peach size)
3 Tbs Wesson oil
1 lb hamburger
1 tsp salt
dash of pepper
⅓ lb sharp cheddar or 8 oz package of shredded sharp cheddar cheese
4 slices processed American or cheddar cheese
water

Cook the macaroni and drain.

Cut up the tomatoes in a bowl, saving the fluid.

Fry the onion carefully in the oil. Do not burn. When soft, add the meat and stir fry for about 5 minutes, breaking the lumps into small pieces. Add salt and pepper. Add a small amount of water if it tends to burn or get dry.

In a casserole, prepare a layer of macaroni (not too much), add a layer of meat and onion, add a layer of tomatoes, sprinkle with cheese. Repeat this procedure at least once. Add any drippings or tomato juice left over, because contents of casserole should be moist when pressed down. I usually add a small amount of water to tomatoes to insure moisture (half way up seems to work). Finish up with slices of cheese on top (if they are available) or plenty of grated cheese.

If I want to add a little zing to this recipe I layer a few thin slices of jalapeno pepper just under the top layer of cheese.

Bake at 350°F covered about 45 minutes. Remove cover and bake slowly another 10 minutes. With care, this casserole will keep well in a warm oven indefinitely. It is great for a meal where guests arrive late.

*In my first year as a graduate student I lived by myself in a second floor apartment on Calvert Street in Baltimore, about a mile from the Hopkins campus. One night I tried to concoct what I thought was my mother's recipe from scratch. I did this from memory, since, at the time, I had no instructions. As it turns out I had the ingredients about right. But it was a disaster. It hadn't occurred to me that one had to precook the macaroni. The result was very crunchy and dry. You live and learn at cooking. Unless you are very experienced, use a recipe.

Stuffed Peppers (Microwave Version)

1 cup rice cooked
4 medium green peppers, tall rather than squat
1 lb ground chuck beef
1 small onion, chopped (½ cup)
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 clove garlic, minced
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
1 can (10¾ oz condensed tomato soup)
½ cup water

Cook the rice.

Cut off the tops off the green peppers. Remove the seeds and membrane.

Mix the raw beef with the onion, cooked rice, salt, pepper, garlic, and cheese. Divide evenly into the peppers. Arrange the peppers upright, snugly in a 2½ quart square casserole (Corning Ware works well).

Blend the tomato soup and water until smooth, pour over the peppers.

Cover and **microwave at High(10) for 30 minutes**. This depends on the microwave you are using, but you want the bottoms of the green peppers to cook until soft.

Let stand for 5 or 10 minutes before serving. Tomato sauce tends to seep through to the bottom of the casserole. Be sure to ladle tomato sauce over peppers when serving.

This recipe is quite easy and beats having to precook the hamburger.

This recipe can also be made with ground pork or ground chorizo.

Mom's Swiss Steak

1 lb round or chuck beef, ½" thick
flour
salt
1 medium onion, sliced
drippings

Use round or chuck beef. Cut the meat no thicker than ½". It may be cooked in one large piece, but cutting it in portions is easier. On a breadboard or other firm surface, place wax paper. On paper prepare each piece of steak by sprinkling it generously with flour and salt, then, pounding it vigorously with the edge of a saucer. (Don't get carried away and break the saucer!!) My friend Julie had a nifty solid metal hammer which works well on a wood cutting surface. This Oxo hammer is just the thing. Do this on both sides of the steak. Shake free of extra flour and brown well in hot fat in the skillet.

The pieces of meat may be placed in a Corning Ware casserole or in a large Dutch oven, covered. Add hot water and any dripping from the skillet up to the sides of the meat. Don't make it soupy. Slice one onion and place on top. Cook at least 2 hours at 325°F in oven. If you have 6 to 8 pieces, the time will be longer. Watch from time to time in case more water is needed. Thicken gravy before serving if necessary. Tastes just as good the second day.



Slow-Cooker Beef Ragu

½ cup minced onion
1 bell pepper (any color), seeded and chopped
2 medium carrots, scrubbed and chopped
1 pound stewing beef, cut into 1" cubes
½ tsp coarsely ground black pepper
1 jar (about 24 oz) tomato-based pasta sauce
salt

In a 4-6 quart slow-cooker, layer the ingredients: first the onion, then the bell pepper, carrots and beef. Add the pepper and pasta sauce. Cover and cook on low setting for 8 to 10 hours, until the meat is very tender. Taste and season with salt if needed.

Divide the ragu evenly among individual shallow dishes and serve hot.

Servings: 4

Beef Fajitas

1 lb well trimmed round steak
1 green pepper
2 tomatoes
1 medium onion
package of 10, flour tortillas

Marinade

1 large orange
2 lemons
¼ cup pineapple
¼ cup white wine
¼ cup water
¼ cup soy sauce
2 tsp garlic powder
1 Tbs black pepper
3 Tbs butter

Condiments

guacamole
salsa
sour cream

Extract the juice from the orange and lemons. Mix with the other marinade ingredients. This is enough for two recipes, so put ½ of the marinade in the refrigerator for later use. Place the other half into a medium stainless bowl.

Cut the steak into ½ “ wide, 3"-4" long strips. Marinate the steak in the marinade for 30 minutes. Cut up the peppers, onions, and tomatoes and mix with the steak. Let stand awhile then drain and discard the marinade.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Place one rack on the bottom of the oven and another rack under the broiler.

Take the tortillas from the package and wrap tightly in aluminum foil. Place this package in the bottom of the oven for about 15 minutes.

Place the steak and vegetables on a cast iron fajita pan or roasting pan. Turn the oven to broil and immediately cook the steak and vegetables until done, approximately 3 to 5 minutes.

Remove tortillas to a wicker basket lined with a napkin. Place meat on insulated pad. Serve with condiments.

Swedish Meatballs

1 lb ground beef chuck
1 lb ground pork
3 cups panko (Japanese breadcrumbs)
1½ cups whole milk
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
2 garlic cloves, minced
coarse salt
ground pepper
¼ tsp ground allspice
3 Tbs butter
⅓ cup all-purpose flour
3 cups canned reduced-sodium beef broth
cooked egg noodles
chopped parsley

Preheat oven to 475°F. In a large bowl, combine beef, pork, panko, ½ cup milk, eggs, garlic, 1 Tbs salt, ½ tsp pepper, and allspice. Mix just until combined.

Using a rounded 1 Tbs measure for each, form mixture into meatballs (~ 48). Place meatballs onto two rimmed baking sheets; bake until golden brown and cooked through, 10 to 12 minutes, rotating sheets halfway through.

In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium-high. Add flour; cook, whisking, 1 minute (do not let darken). Gradually whisk in remaining cup milk and broth; bring to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer until sauce has slightly thickened, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl.

Using a slotted spoon, add meatballs to bowl with sauce; gently toss to combine. Serve as an appetizer, on toothpicks, or as a main, over noodles, garnished with parsley.

Cook's Notes

Divide meatballs and sauce among airtight containers; freeze up to 3 months. Thaw overnight in refrigerator (or place containers under cold running water to release frozen blocks). Reheat, thinning sauce with water if necessary.

Skillet Sirloin with Mushrooms

1¼ lb sirloin steak
1 tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
3 Tbs vegetable oil
8 oz sliced mushrooms
1 Tbs minced garlic
½ cup reduced sodium beef broth
½ cup dry red wine
½ tsp thyme

Sprinkle steak on both sides with salt and pepper. Cut into 4 pieces.

Heat 2 Tbs of the vegetable oil in a wide skillet over high heat until very hot.

Add the mushroom. Spread them out, but do not stir for three or four minutes, or until they start to brown. Stir several times, then spread them out again and cook another three minutes. The mushrooms should be turning a golden brown rather than the muddier brown of canned mushrooms. Transfer the mushrooms onto a bowl or platter.

Add the remaining Tbs of oil to the pan. Tip to coat the pan. Let the pan heat up before adding the beef. Spread th beef in the pan and allow it to cook for four minutes or to let it brown very well. Flip the steak and cook another three minutes to give it a good brown color. Transfer to the mushroom platter.

Add garlic to the pan. Let it cook several seconds to turn golden. Add the wine now and let it boil vigorously two or three minutes before you add the broth and thyme. Boil the liquid until it reduces to about ⅓ cup or so. Add the mushrooms and steak and heat through to serve.

Serve with potatoes roasted in a hot over with olive oil and green beans. Serves four.

Beef Short Ribs

3 lbs beef short ribs

flour

1 tsp salt

¼ tsp ground black pepper

1 lb carrots, about 6 medium, trimmed, peeled, and halved

1 lb potatoes, about 5 to 6 medium, peeled and halved

4 to 6 small white onions, peeled

1¾ cups beef broth

2 tbs horseradish

2 tbs prepared mustard

2 tbs cornstarch

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Dredge short ribs in a small bowl of flour. Shake off the residue. Place ribs in a Dutch oven. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sear the short ribs on all sides. Bake uncovered for 2 hours in the oven, then drain off excess fat. This is an important step since the short ribs give off a considerable amount of liquid fat. This is too much fat to put down the drain, so pour it in an empty can, put it in the freezer, then throw it out with the garbage on collection day.

Baking short ribs give off one of the most aromatic beef smells you will encounter when cooking. I am usually hungry long before dinner is ready.

Add carrots, potatoes, and onions. In a bowl, combine the broth with horseradish and mustard; whisk this combination and pour over the meat and vegetables. Cover and bake for 1 to 1½ hours longer, or until tender. Arrange the beef short ribs and vegetables on a serving platter and keep in the oven at Warm.

In a small bowl, mix the cornstarch with cold water. Whisk until the cornstarch is thoroughly dissolved. Stir into the Dutch oven with drippings and bring to a low boil, stirring constantly. Boil for 1 minute. The result will undoubtedly be too thick to use for gravy. So, add some more broth to achieve a smooth gravy consistency. Add salt to taste. Preheat a gravy boat and add gravy just before serving. Serve the pan gravy in a gravy boat with the platter of short ribs and vegetables. Serves 4.

Comment: If you want people to bolt through their meal, then serve everything on cold serving platters, vegetable bowls, and cold plates. Things congeal and lose flavor quickly when they cool. With a little extra effort, but a certain amount of pre-planning, you can put things in a warming oven where they come out steaming and remain nice and warm for awhile. Good restaurants know this.

Hamburger Soup

1-1⅓ lb ground beef
1 cup diced yellow onion (from 1 small onion or ½ large onion)
2 stalks celery, diced
2 large carrots, diced
1 sweet bell pepper, seeded and diced
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes
2 Tbs tomato paste
1 tsp dried oregano
1/ tsp salt
½ tsp ground black pepper
2 cups beef broth
½ cup red wine, optional
1 cup elbow macaroni, optional

In a large Dutch oven or stock pot over medium heat, brown the ground beef, breaking it apart with a wooden spoon into large chunks.

When browned, use a slotted spoon to transfer the ground beef onto a paper towel-lined plate to drain. Set it aside.

Pour off all but 1 Tbs of the rendered fat from the ground beef (or add enough olive oil to make 1 Tbs if there's not much fat). Add the diced onion, celery, carrot and bell pepper and cook over medium heat until softened, about 5 minutes.

Stir in the tomato paste and garlic, and cook about 30 seconds, until fragrant. Add in the oregano, salt, and pepper, and stir to combine.

Stir in the diced tomatoes, beef broth, and red wine (if using). Lastly, add the cooked ground beef back to the pan. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed.

Bring the soup to a rapid simmer. Reduce the heat to medium-low, cover the pot, and cook for about 20 minutes. If you are adding elbow macaroni, add it halfway through cooking, and cook until the pasta is tender.

Serve immediately. Leftovers will keep up to 5 days refrigerated, or up to 3 months frozen.

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

Julia's Boeuf Bourguignonne

1 lb mushroom, quartered
2 Tbs olive oil
3 lb lean bottom rump roast, cut into 2" cubes
6 oz thick sliced bacon (the fancy word is lardons)
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper, freshly ground
1 Tbs tomato paste
2 Tbs flour
3 cups red wine (a full bodied wine like Bordeaux or Burgundy or Chianti)
2 cans chicken stock
2 garlic cloves, mashed (you may choose to add more)
1 bay leaf, preferably fresh
18-24 white pearl onions, peeled
4 carrots, peeled and cut in thick slices
1 Tbs butter

Pre-heat the oven to 350°F.

Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium heat on the stove. Add the mushrooms and cook them gently until browned and caramelized, about 10 minutes. Remove mushrooms to a bowl, leaving behind the fat.

Dry off the pieces of beef. Generously season beef with salt and pepper. Add an additional Tbs oil to the pot and brown meat, in batches, 2 to 3 minutes per batch (add up to 1 Tbs oil per batch as needed) until nicely browned on all sides. Transfer to a plate between batches.

Pour off all but 1 Tbs oil. Slice the bacon into thin strips. Saute the bacon for 5 to 6 minutes until lightly brown and the fat has been rendered. Be sure to loosen the fond at the bottom of the Dutch oven.

Add the tomato paste for 30 seconds, then add flour. Mix to blend. Add back the browned beef. Add the chicken stock, red wine, garlic, and bay leaf. Bring to a boil, cover and transfer to oven. Place the pot in the oven for 1½ hours. While the meat is cooking prepare the carrots and onions. If using frozen onions, make sure they are defrosted and drained.

Remove the Dutch oven from the oven and add the carrots and onions. Return the Dutch oven to the oven. Cook for an additional 2 to 2½ hours. The meat is done when a fork pierces it easily. Add the mushrooms in the last 15 minutes.

Stir in 1 Tbs butter. Sprinkle with the cut parsley before serving.

Serve with the beef a fairly full-bodied, young red wine, such as Beaujolais, Côtes du Rhône, Bordeaux-St. Émilien, or Burgundy. This is Julia Child's recipe and it is good, if time consuming to make.

Marinated Flank Steak

1½-2 lb lean flank steak
¼ cup balsamic vinegar
1 Tbs olive oil
2 medium cloves garlic, finely minced
½ tsp dried leaf oregano
1 tsp Cajun seasoning
dash salt
dash black pepper
juice of ½ lemon, about 1-1½ Tbs
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
1 tsp honey

Flank steak may be hard to find, but worth the effort if you can.

Pierce the flank steak all over with a sharp fork. Put the steak in a shallow nonreactive dish or food storage bag.

Combine remaining ingredients; pour over the flank steak and turn several times to coat thoroughly with the mixture. Seal or cover the container and refrigerate for 2 to 4 hours, turning occasionally.

Heat the broiler (or grill). Position the oven rack about 4" from the heat source. Take the steak out of the marinade and place on the hot broiler pan. Broil for about 5 minutes on each side for medium rare, or until done as desired, depending on personal preference and thickness.

Serve the steak thinly sliced with potatoes or rice and a tossed salad.. Serves 4 to 6.

Japanese-Style Meat and Potatoes

2 Tbs vegetable oil

¾ lb ground beef

1 yellow onion, halved lengthwise and thickly sliced

1 large carrot, halved lengthwise and cut on the diagonal into 1" chunks

1½ Tbs minced peeled fresh ginger

¼ cup dry white wine

1½ lb potatoes (russets hold up well here), cut into 1" chunks

2 Tbs packed light brown sugar

1 cup low-sodium chicken broth

½ cup water

¼ cup soy sauce

salt

2 scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal (optional)

In a medium saucepan, heat the oil over medium-high heat until it shimmers. Add the beef and cook, stirring often and breaking up the meat, just until it's no longer pink, about 2 minutes. Add the onions, carrots, and ginger and cook, stirring often, for about 2 minutes.

Add the wine and briskly simmer, scraping up any caramelized bits from the bottom of the pan, until almost evaporated. Add the potatoes, brown sugar, broth, water, and soy sauce and stir to combine. (The liquid won't quite cover the solids.) Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat and simmer, partially covered and stirring occasionally, until the potatoes and carrots are tender, about 30 minutes. Check the seasonings, adding salt if needed. Serve hot or warm, sprinkled with scallions, if you like.

TIP: Ground beef that is 85 percent lean is preferable here. You can also use thinly sliced beef instead. Well-marbled cuts, such as rib eye, work best. Ground or thinly sliced pork is also an option.

Chinese Beef, Pepper, and Onions

- 1 lb top sirloin steak (beef)**
- ¼ cup soy sauce**
- 2 Tbs white sugar**
- 2 Tbs cornstarch**
- ½ tsp ground ginger**
- 3 Tbs vegetable oil (divided)**
- 1 red onion (cut into 1" squares)**
- 1 green bell pepper (cut into 1" squares)**
- 2 tomatoes (cut into wedges)**

Slice the steak into ½ " thick slices across the grain.

Whisk together soy sauce, sugar, cornstarch, and ginger in a bowl until the sugar has dissolved and the mixture is smooth. Place the steak slices into the marinade, and stir until well-coated.

Heat 1 Tbs of vegetable oil in a wok or large skillet over medium-high heat, and place ⅓ of the steak strips into the hot oil. Cook and stir until the beef is well-browned, about 3 minutes, and remove the beef from the wok to a bowl. Repeat twice more, with the remaining beef, and set the cooked beef aside.

Return all the cooked beef to the hot wok, and stir in the onion. Toss the beef and onion together until the onion begins to soften, about 2 minutes, then stir in the green pepper. Cook and stir the mixture until the pepper has turned bright green and started to become tender, about 2 minutes, then add the tomatoes, stir everything together, and serve.

Everyday Meatballs

Yield: 22 to 24 small (about 1.5" or 1.5 Tbs) meatballs

1 lb ground meat (I use a mix of beef and pork)
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup fresh bread crumbs or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup panko
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup milk or water
2 Tbs finely chopped parsley
2 Tbs finely grated Parmesan or Romano cheese (optional)
2 tsp coarse or kosher salt, divided
pinche of red pepper flakes or few grinds of black pepper
 $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp onion powder
2 large eggs
2 garlic cloves, minced, divided
2 Tbs olive oil
1 28-oz can of tomato puree or crushed tomatoes

Place meat, crumbs, milk or water, parsley, cheese (if using), 1 tsp salt, pepper, onion powder, eggs and half of your minced garlic in a large bowl. I like to mix all of this together with a fork, which does a good job of breaking up the eggs and chunks of meat. Form mixture into 1½-2" meatballs and arrange on a plate. I like to let them set in the fridge for a bit — 30 minutes, if you can spare it — which helps them keep their shape.

In a large pot, heat 2 Tbs olive oil over medium heat. Add remaining garlic and some pepper flakes and let sizzle until garlic is golden, 30 seconds to 1 minute. Add tomatoes (beware the splatter!) and season with remaining salt. Let mixture simmer over low heat for about 10 minutes (with a thicker puree) or 20 (for crushed tomatoes, which are usually more watery), stirring occasionally.

With stove on the lowest heat possible to maintain a gentle simmer, add meatballs to sauce one by one, and cover with a lid. It will be hard but please don't touch or move them for at least 20 minutes of the 25-minute cooking time, so that they have a chance to keep their shape. Meatballs should be fully cooked through at 25 minutes, but it cannot hurt to cut one and half to verify.

Beef Tips and Gravy

2 lb cubed beef (sirloin or stew meat such as chuck roast)

3 Tbs cooking oil (divided, or as needed)

½ onion (chopped)

8 oz sliced fresh mushrooms

3 cloves Garlic (minced)

4 cups low sodium beef broth (divided)

2 Tbs Worcestershire sauce

1 Tbs soy sauce

1 bay leaf

¼ cup all-purpose flour

¼ cup butter

2 cups beef broth (as needed)

browning sauce (optional)

salt to taste

fresh ground pepper to taste

Add 1 Tbs of cooking oil to a Dutch Oven, or pot, and heat on medium heat until shimmering, then add chopped onions. Cook until onions begin to brown and add mushrooms. Continue to saute until mushrooms are tender and onions have browned. Add minced garlic and cook 1 minute longer, or until fragrant. Remove onions, mushrooms, and garlic into a separate bowl and set aside.

Deglaze the bottom of the pot with ~ ¼ cup of beef broth, scraping the bottom of the pot to remove the burnt-on fond as the liquid boils. Pour off liquid into bowl with onions, mushrooms, and garlic.

Once beef is browned on all sides add the remaining 3¾ cups of beef broth to the pot along with the onions, mushrooms, garlic and deglazing liquid that was set aside. Also add Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, and bay leaf to the pot, cover the pot and bring to a simmer. Simmer on low for 60 – 90 minutes, or until beef is tender (the longer it is cooked, the more tender it becomes) Remove everything from the pot and pour through a strainer into a bowl to separate liquid.

Prepare the gravy in the Dutch Oven by melting ¼ cup of butter into the pot set on medium low heat. Sprinkle flour over the melted butter and whisk continually for 4 minutes to prevent scorching. Slowly add 2 cups of liquid to the flour mixture (roux) using any leftover liquid strained off from simmering the beef. If most of it evaporated add additional beef broth to equal 2 cups of liquid. Continue to add broth to reach a gravy consistency. Gently cook the gravy until it begins to thicken, then add salt and pepper to taste along with a few drops of browning sauce.

Return beef and mushroom mixture to the pot and combine with the gravy. Serve beef tips and gravy over a side of mashed potatoes or egg noodles.

If you do not like mushrooms, they can be omitted. If you really love mushrooms you can add 16 oz without negatively impacting the recipe.

Corned Beef Hash

1 lb baking (russet) potatoes, peeled and cut into ¼" dice
1 lb piece cooked corned beef, cut into chunks
1 cup chopped onion
1 large red bell pepper, cut into ¼" pieces
2 Tbs unsalted butter
¼ cup heavy cream
4 large eggs (optional)
1 Tbs chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Cook potatoes in boiling salted water to cover until just tender, about 3 minutes, then drain. Pulse corned beef in a food processor until coarsely chopped.

Sauté onion and bell pepper in butter in a 12" nonstick skillet over moderately high heat, stirring, until lightly browned, about 5 minutes. Add potatoes and sauté over moderately high heat, stirring occasionally, until browned, about 5 minutes.

Stir in corned beef and salt and pepper to taste, then cook, stirring occasionally, until browned.

Add cream and cook, stirring, 1 minute.

If desired, make 4 holes in hash and break 1 egg into each. Cook over moderately low heat, covered, 5 minutes, or until eggs are cooked to desired doneness, and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle hash with parsley.

Cuban Ground Beef Hash

1½ lb ground beef
1 medium green pepper, chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
1 can (14½ oz) diced tomatoes, undrained
3 Tbs tomato paste
⅓ cup raisins (optional)
⅓ cup sliced pimiento-stuffed olives
1 Tbs cider vinegar
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
½ cup frozen peas
hot cooked rice (optional)

In a large skillet, cook the beef, green pepper and onion over medium heat until meat is no longer pink; drain.

Stir in the tomatoes, tomato paste, raisins, olives, vinegar, garlic, cumin, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer for 5 minutes.

Add peas; cover and cook 5 minutes longer or until heated through. Serve with rice.

Enchiladas

½ cup + ½ cup all-purpose flour
2 Tbs neutral oil, like canola
1 lb ground chuck beef, ideally 20% fat
kosher salt
ground black pepper, to taste
2 medium white onion, peeled and chopped
2 cloves garlic, peeled and minced
1 jalapeño pepper or more to taste, seeds removed, stemmed and chopped
1 cup chopped or canned crushed tomatoes
3 Tbs chile powder
½ tsp ground cumin
½ t dried oregano, ideally Mexican
2 cups chicken stock, ideally homemade or low-sodium if store-bought
12 yellow corn tortillas
3 cups shredded Cheddar cheese, or 1½ cups Cheddar and 1½ cups Velveeta

Put ½ cup flour in a large sauté pan set over medium-high heat . Cook, stirring frequently, until it begins to turn golden brown and smell nutty, then pour it onto a plate to cool.

Wipe out sauté pan and return it to high heat with 2 Tbs oil. When oil is hot and shimmering, add ground beef to pan, and cook, breaking it up with a fork and stirring, until it is well browned, about 12-15 minutes. Season with salt, pepper, then use a slotted spoon to remove meat to a bowl, leaving drippings behind.

Add onion, garlic and jalapeño to pan and cook, stirring to scrape up any browned bits of meat, for 10 to 12 minutes, or until vegetables are soft. Stir in tomatoes and cook until their liquid has evaporated, then add chile powder, cumin and oregano and stir to combine. After a minute or so, when mixture begins to turn fragrant, return browned meat to pan, along with toasted flour, and stir well to combine.

Lower heat to medium-high and slowly stir in chicken stock, ½ cup at a time, until mixture has thickened and started to simmer. Lower heat again and allow chili to cook slowly for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until meat is tender. Add more stock or water if needed. Use immediately, or let cool, cover and refrigerate for up to a few days.

When you are ready to cook the enchiladas, heat oven to 425°F. In a medium sauté pan set over medium-high heat, heat ½ cup oil until it begins to shimmer. Using tongs or a wide spatula, place a tortilla in the hot fat; it should start to bubble immediately. Heat tortilla for about 10 seconds a side, until soft and lightly browned. Remove tortilla and set on a rack set over a baking pan, or just on a baking pan if you don't have a rack. Repeat with remaining tortillas, working quickly.

Using a ladle, put about ½ cup chili in the bottom of a 9"×13" baking pan and spread it out a little. Roll a few Tbs of cheese into each tortilla, along with a Tbs or so of chili, then place it seam-side down in the pan, nestling each one against the last. Ladle remaining chili over top of rolled tortillas and sprinkle with remaining cheese.

Transfer to oven and bake until sauce bubbles and cheese is melted, about 10 to 15 minutes. Sprinkle chopped onions over the top, and serve immediately.

Creamed Chipped Beef

1 (5 oz) jar dried chipped beef
½ cups half-and-half (or milk or cream)
3 Tbs all-purpose flour
⅓ cup unsalted butter
freshly ground pepper, to taste

Melt butter in a large pan over medium-high heat.

Tear chipped beef into small pieces and add it to the butter.

Cook beef for 10-12 minutes, or until the edges begin to curl. The meat will release some of its salt as it cooks.

Gradually add flour to the pan, stirring until a thick paste forms.

Pour in half-and-half and reduce heat to medium-low. Continue stirring until thick and creamy. Cook for at least 20 minutes, stirring occasionally, until desired consistency is reached.

Toast 4-6 pieces of bread and set aside.

Once desired thickness is reached, bring sauce back up to a boil and whisk vigorously for 1 minute. Taste and season with pepper (salt is probably unnecessary) and place a combination of beef and sauce over toast.

Serve immediately and enjoy.

Serves 4-6

Hungarian Goulash

3½ lb boneless beef chuck roast, trimmed of excess fat, cut into 1 ½" cubes

table salt

⅓ cup sweet paprika

12 oz roasted red peppers, drained and rinsed (about 1 cup)

2 Tbs tomato paste

3 tsp white vinegar, divided

2 Tbs vegetable oil

4 large onions, diced small

4 large carrots, peeled and cut into 1" rounds

1 bay leaf

1 cup beef broth, warmed

1 lb small potato, peeled

½ cup beef broth

1 cup water

ground black pepper

Place rack in lower-middle position of oven and heat to 325°F.

Sprinkle meat with 1 tsp salt and let stand 15 minute.

In a food processor, combine paprika, peppers, tomato paste and 2 tsp vinegar until smooth, 1-2 minutes.

Heat oil in Dutch oven until shimmering. Add onions and 1 tsp salt. Cover and reduce heat to medium. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions soften but are not brown, 8-10 minutes. Stir in paprika paste and cook until onions begin to stick to bottom of pan, 2 minutes.

Add beef, carrots and bay leaf. Stir until everything is well coated. Scrape down sides of pot, cover and place in oven. Cook, stirring every 30 minutes, until meat is tender, and liquid is ½" below top of meat, 2 to 2½ hours.

Remove pot from oven and add enough warmed beef broth to bring liquid level up to ¼" below top of meat. Do not cover meat in liquid! Replace pot cover and return to oven about 30 minutes more, until a fork slides in and out of beef easily.

Meanwhile, put potatoes, ½ cup beef broth and water in a saucepan. Bring to a boil, reduce to a rapid simmer, cover, and cook until potatoes are tender, 20-30 minutes.

Skim fat off surface of stew. Remove bay leaf and adjust seasonings. Serve over boiled potatoes.

The stew can be prepared up to 2 days ahead. Remove the hardened fat and add water to thin it.

Salisbury Steak with Mushroom Gravy

For the steaks:

- 1 lb ground beef**
- 1/3 cup plain breadcrumbs**
- 1 large egg**
- 1/2 tsp salt**
- 1/4 tsp ground black pepper**
- 2 Tbs neutral-flavored oil cooking oil (I use avocado oil)**

For the mushroom sauce:

- 8 oz crimini or brown mushrooms, sliced**
- 1 small yellow onion, sliced**
- 1 clove garlic, chopped**
- 2 Tbs tomato paste**
- 1 1/2 tsp prepared yellow mustard**
- 1 1/2 cups low sodium beef broth**
- 2 tsp cornstarch**
- 1 Tbs water**
- 2 Tbs chopped fresh parsley, for garnish (optional)**

In a mixing bowl, use your hands to mix together the ground beef, breadcrumbs, egg, salt, and pepper. Divide the mixture into four equal pieces, then use your hands to gently shape each piece into a 1/2"-thick patty.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium heat. When the oil is shimmering, sear the patties on one side for 3 minutes, then flip them with a thin, flexible spatula. Sear them on the other side for another 3 minutes. Transfer the patties to a plate.

There should be a few tsp of fat left in the pan from cooking the patties, but add additional oil if needed. Still over medium heat, add the mushrooms, onions, and garlic to the skillet. Cook, stirring often, until the mushrooms have given up their liquid and just begun to brown, 6 to 8 minutes.

Stir the tomato paste, mustard, and beef broth into the mushrooms and onions. Use a spoon to scrape up any brown bits from the skillet.

Return the patties to the skillet, spooning a bit of the cooking liquid, mushrooms, and onions over each one. Cover the skillet turn the heat down to low. Let the patties braise in the covered skillet for 30 minutes.

Uncover the skillet and use a spoon to nudge the patties to the side of the skillet. In a small bowl, stir together the cornstarch and water. Stir in the cornstarch mixture and let it boil for about a minute, until the gravy has thickened, then turn off the heat. Transfer the patties to plates and ladle the gravy over top. Sprinkle with chopped parsley, if you like, and serve hot with egg noodles or mashed potatoes alongside.

Mexican Spiced Beef and Rice

10 oz diced beef (sirloin is best)
½ cup jasmine rice
½ lb cocktail tomatoes
2 scallions
1 zucchini or summer squash
1 oz sliced pickled jalapeño pepper
1 lime
2 Tbs chicken demi-glace
1 Tbs Mexican spice blend



Wash and dry the tomatoes, scallions, and zucchini. Halve the zucchini lengthwise, then cut crosswise into ¼" pieces. Quarter the tomatoes; place in a bowl and season with salt and pepper. Cut off and discard the root ends of the scallions; thinly slice, separating the white bottoms and green tops. Halve the lime crosswise. Roughly chop the jalapeño pepper; thoroughly wash your hands immediately after handling.

In a small pot, combine the rice, a big pinch of salt, and 1 cup of water. Heat to boiling on high. Once boiling, reduce the heat to low. Cover and cook, without stirring, 12-14 minutes, or until the water has been absorbed and the rice is tender. Turn off the heat and fluff with a fork. Cover to keep warm.

While the rice cooks, in a medium pan (nonstick, if you have one), heat 2 tsp of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the sliced zucchini in an even layer and cook, without stirring, 3-4 minutes, or until lightly browned. Season with salt and pepper. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes, or until browned and softened. Add the seasoned tomatoes and cook, stirring frequently, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until combined. Transfer to a large warm bowl; add the sliced green tops of the scallions, the juice of ½ lime, and as much of the chopped pepper as you'd like, depending on how spicy you'd like the dish to be. Stir to combine and season with salt and pepper to taste. Wipe out the pan.

While the rice continues to cook, pat the beef dry with paper towels; place in a bowl and season with salt, pepper, and the spice blend. In the same pan, heat 2 tsp of olive oil on medium-high until hot. Add the seasoned beef in an even layer and cook, without stirring, 3-4 minutes, or until lightly browned. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, 1-2 minutes, or until browned. Add the demi-glace and sliced white bottoms of the scallions. Cook, stirring frequently, 1-2 minutes, or until the liquid is slightly thickened and the beef is cooked through. Turn off the heat and stir in the juice of the remaining ½ lime. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

Serve the cooked rice topped with the cooked beef and finished vegetables.

Chicken Fajitas

1 lb boneless, skinless chicken breast
1 green pepper
2 tomatoes
1 medium onion
package of 10 flour tortillas

Marinade

3 Tbs white wine
1 Tbs soy sauce
2 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp black pepper
6 Tbs butter

Condiments

guacamole
salsa
sour cream

Mix the marinade ingredients together and place in a medium stainless bowl.

Cut the chicken breasts into ½" wide, 3"-4" long strips. Marinate the chicken in the marinade for 30 minutes. Cut up the peppers, onions, and tomatoes and mix with the steak. Let stand awhile then drain and discard the marinade.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Place one rack on the bottom of the oven and another rack under the broiler.

Take the tortillas from the package and wrap tightly in aluminum foil. Place this package in the bottom of the oven for about 15 minutes.

Place the chicken and vegetables on a cast iron fajita pan or roasting pan. Turn the oven to broil and immediately cook the chicken and vegetables until done, approximately 3 to 5 minutes.

Remove tortillas to a wicker basket lined with a napkin.

Place meat on insulated pad.

Serve with condiments.

Chicken Livers and Green Peppers

1 Tbs olive oil
1 clove garlic
1 16 oz can whole tomatoes cut into chunk pieces
2 Tbs tomato paste
½ cup dry white wine
¼ tsp crushed dried oregano
2 bay leaves
dash crushed red pepper flakes
1 large green pepper, seeded and cut into 1" squares
1 lb chicken livers, rinsed, and halves separated. Throw out anything that doesn't look just right (yellowish).

Sauce

Heat the oil in a large skillet. Add the garlic and tomatoes and sauté over medium heat, five minutes.

Add the tomato paste, wine, oregano, bay leaves, and red pepper flakes. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-high and cook mixture until slightly thickened, about 2 minutes. Reduce to a simmer.

The Rest

Bring a half-full 3-quart pot of water to a boil. Cook green pepper squares for 5 minutes. Transfer the peppers to the sauce with a slotted spoon, reserving boiling water.

Place the chicken livers in boiling water for 7 minutes.

Transfer the livers to the sauce with a slotted spoon. There will be some scum on top of the water, which you can avoid.

Continue simmering everything for 10 minutes.

Serve with Parmesan cheese.

Chicken Breasts with Mushrooms and Tomatoes

½-¾ lb mushrooms
3 Tbs olive oil or vegetable oil
4 boneless chicken breast halves, skinless
1 16 oz can of chicken broth
¼ cup dry sherry
3 Tbs red wine vinegar
6 oz can tomato paste
chopped fresh parsley

Clean the mushrooms, quarter if large, halve if small so they're all roughly the same size.

Heat 1½ Tbs of the oil in a heavy, wide (preferably non-stick) skillet on high heat. [I do this in a non-stick electric deep-dish fry pan because it is convenient, but you don't get uniform heating and you have to be careful not to splatter things all over the place when cooking on high.] Add mushrooms, and stir frequently. They are dry at first and can burn if you are not careful. After a minute or so they start to give off liquid. Cook 4 minutes, or until the mushrooms look glossy and are browning lightly. You may cover the pan when you are not stirring. Spoon onto a warm plate in the oven.

Reduce heat to medium-high. Add the remaining oil to the skillet. Sprinkle the chicken breasts with salt and pepper and place in the skillet. Cook for 4 minutes until very brown on the cooking side. The chicken will not be cooked completely through. Remove to a warming plate.

Add chicken broth to the skillet and increase the heat to high. Bring to a boil. Add the vinegar and sherry and continue to boil (5 minutes or so). Add the tomato paste and stir to blend. You want enough paste to make a puree that is not too thin, but not so thick it won't cover easily.

Reduce the heat to medium. Add the chicken on the uncooked side and cook for 10 more minutes. Cover so you don't splatter tomato sauce all over the place.

When ready, place the chicken on a serving plate surrounded by the mushrooms. Spoon some sauce over the chicken and sprinkle with parsley, if desired.

Serve hot with cooked noodles or rice and pan-fried green peppers cooked in olive oil and garlic. You may use the remaining sauce to cover the noodles or rice. Serves 4.

Chicken and Snow Peas

4 medium-size dried mushrooms
2 tsp soy sauce
2 tsp cornstarch
2 tsp dry sherry
2 tsp water
dash of white pepper
1½ lbs chicken breasts, skinned, boned, and cut in bite-size pieces
3½ Tbs salad oil
cooking sauce (directions follow)
1 small clove garlic, minced
½ cup sliced bamboo shoots
¼ lb snow peas, ends and strings removed
wok, electric skillet, or large fry pan

Cover the mushrooms with warm water, let stand for 30 minutes, then drain. Cut off and discard the stems, squeeze the mushrooms dry, thinly slice, and set aside. If you don't have the Chinese dried mushrooms, just go with four large fresh mushrooms, stems cut, and sliced.

In a bowl, combine the soy, cornstarch, sherry, water, and pepper. Add the chicken and toss to coat, then stir in 1½ tsp of the oil and let stand for 15 minutes to marinate.

Cooking Sauce

½ cup water
1 Tbs dry sherry
2 Tbs oyster sauce or soy sauce
¼ tsp sugar,
1 tsp sesame oil
1 Tbs cornstarch

Mix all the ingredients of the cooking sauce together and set aside.

Place a wok or wide frying pan over high heat. When the pan is hot, add 2 Tbs of the oil. When the oil begins to heat, add the garlic and stir once. Add the chicken and stir-fry until the chicken is opaque (3 minutes or so, you don't want it underdone, but you don't want it tough.) Remove the chicken from the pan with a slotted spoon into a bowl.

Add the remaining 1 Tbs oil to the pan. When the oil is hot, add the mushrooms and bamboo shoots. Stir-fry for a minute or so, adding a few drops water if the pan appears dry.

Add the snow peas and stir-fry 1½ minutes, adding a few drops more water if the pan appears dry. How crunchy you like your vegetables determines the cooking time. I like them soft but not mushy, Amy likes them crunchy. You choose.

Return the chicken to the pan. Stir the cooking sauce (the cornstarch will have settled) add to the pan, and cook, stirring until the sauce bubbles and thickens.

Makes 3 or 4 servings.

Chicken and Peppers

Follow direction for the chicken and snow peas, but substitute **2 green peppers**, seeded and cut in 1" squares, for the snow peas. I actually like the peppers more than the snow peas.

Chicken and Sausage Stew

3 Tbs all-purpose flour
2 Tbs olive oil
2 cups chopped onion
1 cup chopped green bell pepper
1 cup chopped celery
¼ tsp dried thyme
4 ounces diced chicken andouille sausage
4 garlic cloves, minced
¼ tsp ground red pepper
12 ounces skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cut into 1" pieces
1½ cups lower-sodium marinara sauce
1½ cups fat-free, lower-sodium chicken broth
½ cup chopped green onions
3 cups hot cooked white rice

Heat flour and oil in a Dutch oven over medium-low heat; cook for 5 minutes or until lightly browned, stirring frequently with a whisk.

Add onion, bell pepper, celery, thyme, sausage, and garlic; increase heat to medium-high, and cook for 5 minutes, stirring mixture frequently.

Add ground red pepper and chicken; cook for 1 minute.

Stir in marinara sauce and chicken broth; bring to a boil, stirring frequently.

Cover, reduce heat, and simmer 20 minutes or until chicken is tender.

Remove from heat; stir in green onions.

Serve over rice.

Dick's Chicken Curry

2 lb boneless, skinless, chicken thighs, cubed (4-6 thighs)
¼ cup vegetable oil
2 large onions or 1 large Vidalia onion, diced
1 oz fresh ginger root, minced – 2 Tbs bottled
6 to 8 cloves of garlic, minced – 1 Tbs bottled
2 medium tomatoes, chopped (or 16 oz can peeled tomatoes)
1 tsp salt
1 Tbs tomato paste
1 cup sour cream
½ cup cilantro, chopped
2 tsp of Dick's Curry Powder (made from this recipe found on page 524)
 1 tsp cayenne pepper
 1 tsp turmeric
 1 tsp paprika
 1 heaping tsp garam masala (you can buy a version of this in the grocery store or make it yourself from a recipe on page 523.)

Cut up the chicken and set aside.

In a large frying pan or wok heat the oil and sauté the onions until light brown. Add the ginger and garlic and cook for 4 to 5 minutes over medium to high heat.

Add the tomatoes, salt and the curry mix and reduce fire to medium high. Cook 2 to 3 minutes.

Add the chicken and cook for 15 minutes, covered, stirring periodically. This looks dry to start, but, after cooking, some juice is released.

Add the tomato paste and sour cream, stirring until thoroughly mixed.

Simmer about 5 minutes. Add the cilantro, stir once and serve. Makes 6 servings.

This recipe lasts well in the ice box for a few days.

Chicken Curry II

2 Tbs unsalted butter or ghee
1 Tbs neutral oil, like canola
1 tsp cumin seeds
2 cinnamon sticks, approximately 2" long
2 large white or yellow onions, peeled and finely chopped
1 2½" piece of ginger, peeled and grated or minced
6 cloves of garlic, peeled and crushed
2 green cayenne or jalapeño peppers, stemmed, seeded and cut into half-moons
kosher salt, to taste
¾ cup plus 2 Tbs puréed tomatoes
2 Tbs tomato paste
1½ tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground turmeric
3 Tbs whole-milk yogurt, plus 1 cup to serve with the meal
1¾-2 lb skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cut into 1" chunks
3 Tbs slivered almonds
1 tsp garam masala
pinch ground cayenne pepper, or to taste

Melt the butter or ghee in the oil in a large Dutch oven set over medium heat, and when it is hot and shimmering, add the cumin seeds, ground cumin, ground turmeric and cinnamon sticks. Cook for a minute or two, stirring often, to intensify their flavors, then add the onions. Cook, stirring occasionally, until they are golden, approximately 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, put the ginger, garlic and peppers into a mortar and pestle with a pinch of salt, and smash them together into a coarse paste. (You can also do this on a cutting board, with a knife.)

Add the paste to the onions, and cook for 2 minutes or so, then pour in the tomatoes, and stir. Allow to cook for an additional 2 to 3 minutes, then add the tomato paste, and another pinch of salt, and stir to combine.

Add the yogurt slowly to the mixture, using a wooden spoon to whisk it into the sauce. It may be quite thick. When it begins to bubble, add the chicken. Lower the heat, put the lid on the Dutch oven and allow the curry to cook gently for 30 minutes or so, or until the chicken is cooked through. Add the almonds and the garam masala, along with a pinch of cayenne, and cook for 5 minutes more or so. Serve with basmati rice or naan, and the additional yogurt.

Hunan-Style Chicken

2 lb chicken thighs, boned, skin on
1 tsp Szechwan peppercorns
½ tsp salt
2 Tbs dark soy sauce
2 Tbs Chinese wine or dry sherry
2 tsp sugar
2 Tbs peanut oil
1 or 2 dried red chilies
2 Tbs finely chopped scallions
2 tsp finely chopped fresh ginger
1 tsp finely chopped garlic
1 tsp sesame oil
2 Tbs Chinese black vinegar or 1 Tbs red wine vinegar
1 small tsp chili bean sauce
wok, electric skillet, or large, heavy, frying pan

Lay the boned chicken pieces on a wooden chopping board, skin side down, and flatten them slightly by pounding with the blunt edge of a cleaver or with a meat mallet. Cut into bite-size pieces.

Roast the peppercorns in a dry pan for a few minutes, while shaking the pan, until fragrant. Allow them to cool, then grind them with a pestle and mortar. Mix with the salt. Sprinkle this over the chicken pieces. Mix and leave for 5 minutes.

Combine the soy sauce, wine and sugar, stir to dissolve the sugar, and pour over the chicken. Turn the chicken pieces well in the marinade. Leave for 30 minutes.

Heat the wok, add the peanut oil and swirl to coat the sides of the wok. Fry the dried chilies for 1 minute. Add the scallions, ginger and garlic and stir-fry for 10 seconds. Add the chicken together with the marinade and, on high heat, stir-fry for a few minutes, just until all the chicken has come into contact with the hot pan. Turn the heat to low, cover the wok and simmer for about 5 minutes or until the chicken is tender. Turn once or twice to insure good contact with the pan.

Uncover the wok and if the liquid is not thick, raise the heat and turn the chicken pieces over and over using a wooden spatula. The sauce will become thick and coat the chicken.

Meanwhile, mix together the sesame oil, vinegar and chili bean sauce. Add the sesame oil combination and mix quickly but thoroughly. Transfer to a serving dish immediately and discard the dry chilies. Serve with rice and vegetables.

Chicken Pot Pie

4½-5 lb chicken
1-1½ quart water
1 piece celery
1 slice onion
1 sprig parsley
1 whole carrot
1 Tbs salt

Place all the ingredients in a Dutch oven. Cook, covered, 1½ - 2½ hours over low heat. Remove the chicken and break apart for small bite-sized pieces of chicken. Strain and retain the chicken stock.

2 cups sifted flour
1 tsp salt
 $\frac{2}{3}$ **cup shortening**
7 Tbs water

While you are cooking the chicken, mix the flour and salt together well in a bowl. Blend in the shortening and water. Mix everything together, but try not to handle the dough too much or it gets tough.

Chill in wax paper in the icebox until needed.

1 potato, diced
3 carrots, diced
12 small onions, they may frozen, if so, thaw and bring to room temperature
1 package of frozen peas, thawed

During the last half-hour of cooking the chicken, place the vegetables in boiling water and cook until tender but not mushy.

6 Tbs chicken fat or butter
6 Tbs flour
3 cups chicken stock
 $\frac{1}{2}$ **cup cream or chicken stock**
salt
pepper to taste

In a Dutch oven, add the chicken fat or butter, then the flour. Whisk the mixture and cook until bubbly. Add the stock and cook until smooth. Whisk in the cream. Continue to cook until the mixture thickens and is smooth. Add additional stock as necessary to thin the roux. Salt and pepper to taste.

Combine the cut-up chicken and vegetables. Use single serving sized ramekins or aluminum potpie holders. Don't fill to overflowing. Roll out pastry and cut appropriately sized tops for the ramekins. Be sure to puncture the crusts in several places.

At this point those pot pies not eaten immediately can be cooled and frozen for later use.

Bake 10 minutes at 450°F. Reduce heat to 350°F and bake for 20 minutes more. These things tend to boil over when cooked, so put some aluminum foil at the bottom of the oven to catch spills.

You can use commercial pie dough for these pot pies, but there is quite a bit of wastage in cutting.

This recipe is a real production, time-wise. That said, it makes several pies, some of which you can cover and put in the freezer for another day.

Diane's Curried Chicken Salad

3 cups cooked chicken, cubed (3 breasts)
2+ tsp Curry powder
1 cup mayonnaise (½ cup mayo, ½ cup plain yogurt)
1 cup celery, diced
1 tart apple, diced
11 oz can mandarin oranges
½ cup chopped macadamia nuts
¼ cup blue cheese

Cook the chicken or use leftovers. When cool, dice the chicken.

Blend the curry powder into the mayonnaise until smooth.

Mix the chicken with the next four ingredients.

Crumble the blue cheese over the top of the mixture.

Recipe can be served on a bed of lettuce or by itself.

Serves 6.

Kung Pao Chicken

1 Tbs each dry sherry and cornstarch

½ tsp salt

⅛ tsp white pepper

1½ lb chicken breasts, skinned, boned, and cut in bite-size pieces

4 tsp salad oil

4 to 6 small, dry, hot chili peppers (Be careful how you handle these little guys, they can burn the skin.)

½ cup salted peanuts

1 tsp each minced garlic and fresh ginger

2 whole green onions cut in 1½" lengths

wok, electric skillet, or large fry pan

In a bowl, combine the sherry, cornstarch, salt, and pepper. Add the chicken and stir to coat, then stir in 1 Tbs of the oil and let stand for 15 minutes to marinate.

Heat a wok over medium heat. When the pan is hot, add 1 Tbs of the oil. Add whole peppers and peanuts and cook, stirring, until peppers just begin to char. Watch the chili peppers closely as they cook. If they burn, they release potent volatile oils, which sting the nose and eyes. If peppers become completely black, discard, remove peanuts from pan and repeat with new peppers.) Remove from pan and set aside.

Add the remaining 2 Tbs oil to the pan and increase heat to high. When the oil begins to heat, add garlic and ginger. Stir once, then add the chicken and stir-fry until the chicken is opaque (about 3 minutes, you don't want the chicken undercooked, but you don't want it tough).

Cooking Sauce

2 Tbs soy sauce

1 Tbs white wine vinegar

1 Tbs dry sherry

3 Tbs chicken broth or water

2 tsp sugar

2 tsp cornstarch

Stir the cooking sauce (the cornstarch will have settled) and add it to the pan. Cook, stirring, until the sauce bubbles and thickens.

Kung Pao Shrimp or Kung Pao Scallops Replace the chicken with 1½ lb of shrimp shelled and deveined or 1¼ lb of scallops.

Chicken Jambalaya

4-6 boneless, skinless chicken thighs
½-¾ lb smoked sausage, precooked
flour to coat chicken
salt
black pepper, freshly ground
pinch cayenne
3 Tbs cooking oil
3 medium onion, finely chopped
5 ribs celery, finely chopped
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
¼ bell pepper, chopped
¼ red bell pepper, chopped
2 cups rice, pre-washed
1 can beer
2½ cups water
salt to taste (tsp or so)
hot sauce to taste

Wash the rice carefully until the liquid runs clear. This is to remove some of the starch and keep the jambalaya from being sticky.

Cut the chicken thighs into fourths. Coat the chicken pieces with flour, season well with salt and pepper, and cayenne to taste. Heat the oil in a large skillet or Dutch oven. Fry the chicken thighs until brown, then remove from the skillet.

Add the onions, celery, garlic, and bell peppers and cook slowly until wilted with the top on.

Slice the sausage on the diagonal into ¼" slices. Add the chicken pieces. Cook slowly until the chicken is tender (about 20 minutes). There should be some fluid generated during this process.

Add the rice to the mixture. Stir thoroughly for 2 or 3 minutes. Pour beer over the mixture and stir thoroughly. Add salt to taste. Add hot sauce to taste. Cook slowly for 30 minutes until rice is cooked.

Serves 6.

Chicken Tetrazzini

¾ cup cooked spaghetti
½ cup chopped mushrooms
1 Tbs butter
2 Tbs flour
1 Tbs butter
1 cup milk
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp ground pepper
¼ tsp paprika
¼ tsp dry mustard
1 tsp lemon juice
1½ cups cooked chicken
¼ lb grated Parmesan cheese
¾ cup buttered crumbs

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Cook the spaghetti according to the instructions on the package.

Saute the mushrooms in the butter.

Make a roux from the flour, butter, milk, and salt. Add the pepper, paprika, mustard, and lemon juices and heat to the boiling point.

Add the chicken, cooked spaghetti, and mushrooms.

Fill a greased casserole with the mixture and top with the cheese and buttered bread crumbs. Bake in the oven for about 15 minutes or until the crumbs are very brown and the ingredients are warmed through and bubbly.

Indian Chicken in Light Sauce

3 Tbs tomato sauce
3 Tbs plain yogurt
4 coves garlic, peeled and coarsely chopped
1" cube of ginger, peeled and coarsely chopped
4 chicken legs (drumstick and thigh)
1 whole skinless, chicken breast
6 Tbs vegetable oil
1 cinnamon stick
2 bay leaves
5 whole cardamom pods
5 whole cloves
2 hot dried red peppers
1 tsp ground turmeric
1 tsp salt
1/8 tsp freshly ground pepper
1 Tbs lemon juice

In a small bowl combine the tomato sauce, yogurt, and 1 cup of water. Mix well and set aside.

Put the chopped garlic and ginger into an electric blender along with 2 Tbs water and puree into a paste.

Divide the legs into drumstick and thighs and quarter the breast. Remove skin from the pieces of chicken and pat dry.

Heat the oil in a heavy-bottomed, Dutch oven, pot over medium heat. Put in the chicken pieces, a few at a time, and brown on all sides. When each piece turns a golden brown, remove with a slotted spoon.

When all the chicken pieces have been done, put in the cinnamon stick, bay leaves, cardamom pods, cloves, and red pepper into the oil. Stir once. The spices will darken immediately. Now pour in the paste from the blender (keep your face averted). Add the turmeric. Stir and fry for about a minute.

Return the chicken pieces and the mixture of tomato sauce and yogurt. Add the water, salt, pepper, and lemon juice. Bring to a boil. Cover, lower heat, and simmer gently 20 to 25 minutes, turning the chicken pieces a few times.

Uncover the pot, raise the flame to medium, and cook 5 to 7 minutes or until the sauce is reduced to half, turning the chicken pieces over gently. Serve with rice.

Mom's Roast Turkey

1 medium sized turkey
salt

Mom doesn't say, but I like a 12 lb, frozen Butterball. Better stores now have a supply of fresh frozen turkeys of their own. Defrost the turkey in the icebox for three days. On the morning you are ready to cook, put it in the sink and wash thoroughly, patting dry with paper towels. Remove neck and giblet package from the neck and body cavity (Don't laugh, I once couldn't find them). Set aside. Rub salt in cavities to contain dressing. Cover if it is going to sit for awhile.

Stock

giblets
neck
1 stalk of celery
¼ onion
salt
pepper

Wash the giblets and neck and put on the stove in water to cover with the stick of celery, piece of onion, salt and pepper. Simmer for at least two or three hours. You will use this broth in the dressing and gravy for flavor.

Mom's Dressing for a Big Bird

½ to ¾ loaf of sliced bread
2 tsp fresh sage
4 stalks of celery, cut into small pieces
1 good sized onion, cut into small pieces
½ cup turkey broth or water
¾ tsp salt
pepper
butter

Allow the bread to dry out overnight. Place the bread slices on a cutting board and cut into narrow fingers. You may then cut in the other direction to form tiny cubes, or pull apart carefully. Try not to get the bread gummy or in hard pellets

Cut the celery into small pieces. This involves washing the pieces and slicing them into strips before cutting crosswise. Take some of the nicest leaves near the celery heart and cut finely. This gives an even better flavor than the celery, itself.

Cut the onion into very small pieces. Mix celery and onion lightly with bread. Flavor with salt and a sprinkling of pepper. Two tsp fresh sage may be sprinkled into the dressing. Moisten with about ½ cup water or turkey broth with a small amount of **butter** melted in it.

Dick's Dressing for a Medium Bird

5 cups or ⅔ of a 16 oz package of Pepperidge Farm cubed bread stuffing
1-cup medium onion diced finely
1-cup (4 stalks) celery, cut in strips, then finally diced

1 small stalk celery from the heart, with leaves

¾ tsp salt

¼ tsp freshly ground pepper

2 tsp fresh sage

1½ cups turkey broth + 3 Tbs melted butter

I'm too lazy to start from scratch, so I use the Pepperidge Farm stuffing. Mix all but the broth together well. Add broth until lightly moist, but not soggy.

You will have two or so cups of dressing left over whatever recipe you use. Put this in a covered casserole or cover the dish with aluminum foil. Add some fluid. For immediate use, cook with the turkey during the last hour, covered. For later use store in the icebox for another meal.

Amy's Oyster Stuffing for the Neck Cavity

½ cup chopped onion

½ stick butter

¾ cup chopped celery - 2 sticks

¼ cup chopped parsley

1 cup shucked oysters

2 cups crumbled bread, lightly toasted

½ cup chopped walnuts

½ tsp sage

½ tsp thyme

salt

pepper to taste

In a skillet sauté the onion and butter over moderate heat for 5 minutes, until softened. Add celery and parsley.

Drain the oysters, reserving the liquor, and then chop them coarsely.

Combine all ingredients. Moisten the stuffing, if desired, with the reserved oyster liquor or turkey stock.

Use this dressing in the neck cavity.

Roasting

4-6 link sausage

margarine or butter

Preheat oven to 450°F.

First, fill the neck of the bird with dressing and sew up with a coarse needle and thread or seal with two or three small skewers. Then turn the bird over and fill the lower cavity. Do not press down too hard. Sew this cavity if you can; otherwise, block the opening with a couple of link sausages. Even if I don't do this I place the little sausages in the crevices between the legs and wings and the turkey body.

Use clear string to tie the legs firmly together. Tie a length of string around the middle of the turkey, so that the wings are firmly against each side. Rub margarine or butter lightly on the legs and breast.

Place the turkey in a roasting pan and start turkey in oven at 450°F for about 20 minutes; then, turn to 325°F and roast until done (between 3 and 4 hours). During this time, a cover should be on the pan for the last hour. This is to cook, or steam through, the entire fowl.

From time to time the turkey may be basted. Start with a small amount of the turkey broth or a water and melted butter mixture, but later the turkey's own juice can be spooned over it. I would point out that in my estimate the only problem with using a Butterball, or self-basting turkey, is that the vegetable oil becomes part of the drippings. This isn't completely desirable since the drippings now contain a high level of fat, which you may want to drain off.

Do not undercook the turkey. It will be tough and have a poor flavor. When the turkey is thoroughly done, you can wiggle the legs easily. Remove the turkey from the oven and let it rest for several minutes during which the time the turkey will continue to drain.

Turkey Gravy

roasting pan
drippings
salt
pepper

Remove the turkey to a cutting board to rest. Mix the rest of the, by now cold, turkey broth and enough flour to thicken the drippings. How much flour you add depends on how much fat is in the drippings, but 2 or 3 Tbs would be appropriate in most cases. Bring the mixture to a boil over the stove, loosening the cooking stains from the cooking pan. This will give the mixture a dark brown color. Use plenty of salt and pepper to season. Don't let it get too thick. Add some water if this happens.

You might want to try David's gravy recipe, which is more uniform and far less greasy than the above approach. But I hate to waste any of the drippings.

Turkey Leftovers

Don't leave the turkey sitting out any longer than you can, especially with the dressing in it. A few possibilities come to mind for storage: 1) Return the turkey to the roasting pan with the cover in place and return the pan to the icebox. Admittedly this takes up a fair amount of room in the icebox, but it is the simplest solution to storage. 2) Place the pan in the garage if the weather is cool. An unheated attached garage typically has a temperature midway between the outdoor and indoor temperatures. In Upstate New York this might be about 50 °C, cool enough to store the turkey for a few days. 3) Cut the turkey up, wrap it tightly into several packets, and put in the freezer. The gravy and dressing can be stored in the refrigerator for several days.

Dick's Turkey Leftover Hash

1 cup cut up turkey chunks and slices
1 cup dressing
1 cup gravy

Heat the gravy up until smooth. You might add a Tbs or two of water if the gravy seems too thick. Add the turkey and dressing. Either mix together or not. Heat until hot. Serves two.

Spicy Hot Chicken Wings

1¾ lbs chicken wings
flour seasoned with salt and cayenne for dredging
2" hot vegetable shortening for deep-frying
1 Tbs red pepper flakes
½ stick unsalted butter, melted
1 Tbs fresh lemon juice
1 tsp Tabasco, or to taste, apricot mustard sauce and creamy
cucumber dill sauce as accompaniments

Cut off the tips of the chicken wings, reserving them for making stock if desired, halve the wings at the joints, and dredge them in the flour, shaking off the excess.

In a deep fryer or a kettle fry the chicken wings in 3 batches in 2" of hot vegetable shortening (375°F), turning them, for 10 minutes. As they are fried transfer them to paper towels to drain with a slotted spoon. (The chicken wings may be fried up to 1 day ahead and kept covered and chilled. Reheat the chicken wings in one layer in a baking dish in a preheated hot oven [400°F] for 15 to 20 minutes, or until they are heated through.)

In a blender grind the red pepper flakes to a powder and blend in the butter, the lemon juice, the Tabasco, and salt to taste.

Transfer the chicken wings to a large bowl, toss them with the butter mixture, and pack them in a large portable container.

Serve the spicy hot chicken wings with the Apricot Mustard or Creamy Cucumber Dill dipping sauces found in the Relishes section.

Serves 4 to 6.

Turkey Tetrazzini (with Spinach Noodles)

½ lb mushrooms, sliced
¾ stick unsalted butter (6 Tbs)
¼ tsp dried thyme
¼ cup medium-dry Sherry
3 Tbs flour
2 cups chicken stock
¾ cup half and half
¾ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
white pepper to taste
½ lb spinach noodles
3 cups cubed cooked turkey (1 split breast)

In a stainless steel or enameled skillet, saute the mushrooms in 1 Tbs of the butter over moderately high heat, stirring, for 3 minutes.

Add the thyme, 2 Tbs of the Sherry, and salt and pepper to taste. Cook the mixture, stirring, for 3 minutes.

In a saucepan, melt 3 Tbs of the remaining butter over moderately low heat, add the flour, and cook the roux, whisking, for 3 minutes.

Add the stock and the half-and-half in a stream, whisking vigorously, and simmer the sauce, stirring occasionally, for 10 minutes.

Stir in the remaining 2 Tbs Sherry, ¼ cup of the Parmesan, the white pepper, and salt to taste and keep the sauce warm, covered with buttered wax paper.

In a large saucepan of boiling salted water boil the noodles for 6 minutes, or until they are *al dente*, and drain them.

In a large bowl combine the noodles, the sauce, the mushroom mixture, and the turkey and transfer the mixture to a buttered shallow flameproof baking dish. Sprinkle the top with the remaining ½ cup Parmesan and dot it with the remaining 2 Tbs butter.

Bake the mixture in a preheated hot oven at 400°F for 20 minutes.

This is the one that Amy makes. It's a good recipe.

New Orleans Gumbo

2 Tbs Wesson oil

¼ cup all-purpose flour

2 16 oz cans chicken broth

¾ tsp ground black pepper

½ tsp garlic powder

pinch ground red pepper

1½ lbs boned and skinned chicken breasts cut into bite-size chunks

1 cup diced celery (3 large stalks)

1 cup diced green pepper (1 large pepper)

1 16 oz can chopped tomatoes

1 package (10 oz) cut up okra, drained

Heat the oil in a large saucepan (at least 3 quarts). I use a Dutch oven.

When the pan is hot, add the flour and cook the flour for a few minutes, stirring often. How long you cook the roux determines how dark it is. I like a nice ecru color. Some like it almost the color of chocolate. Watch it carefully.

Gradually add the chicken broth. Use a whisk to make the mixture smooth.

Add black pepper, garlic powder and red pepper. Cook and stir over medium heat until liquid thickens, about 3 minutes.

Add celery and green peppers and cook for about 3 minutes.

Add chicken and cook for another 5 minutes.

Stir in tomatoes and okra. Cook for another 5 minutes. Serves 4 to 6. Lasts well in the icebox.

Slow Cooker Chicken Marbella

Chicken Marbella is tasty on its own, but is excellent over rice pilaf, couscous, or pappardelle noodles. It also makes terrific leftovers.

1 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil
¼ cup red wine vinegar
½ cup pitted prunes
¼ cup pitted Spanish green olives
¼ cup capers with a little juice
3 bay leaves
2 Tbs garlic, crushed
2 Tbs dried oregano
½ tsp each of salt and pepper
2½ lb skinless, boneless chicken thighs
⅓ cup brown sugar
½ cup white wine

In a mixing bowl combine the olive oil, vinegar, prunes, olives, capers, bay leaves, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper, chicken. Cover and refrigerate for a few hours or overnight.

Doug's Turkey Chili

2 Tbs vegetable oil
2 lbs coarsely ground turkey (you want a fairly lean mix, so be careful what you buy)
1 cup chopped onion
1 green pepper, diced
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tbs chili powder
1 tsp ground cumin
¼ tsp ground oregano
½ tsp salt
1 quart water
28 oz can of whole tomatoes, chopped
2 Tbs flour
2 Tbs cold water
2 lb can pinto beans or kidney bean

Heat the vegetable oil in a large skillet. Add the turkey, onion, green pepper, and garlic. Brown the onions and cook the turkey carefully. The turkey does not give off much fat and has a tendency to burn if you don't watch things.

Transfer the mixture to a large Dutch oven. Add the chili powder, cumin, oregano, salt, green pepper, and water. Stir. Bring to a boil, then simmer for 5 minutes.

Add the tomatoes and beans. Return to a boil, then simmer for at least 2 hours.

If the chili needs thickening, mix the flour and water in a saucer until the slurry is uniform. Then stir the mixture into the chili.

This recipe lasts well in the refrigerator.

Lemon-Garlic Chicken Thighs

¼ cup fresh lemon juice
2 Tbs dark molasses
2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
4 garlic cloves, chopped
8 chicken thighs, skinned (about 2 lbs)
cooking spray
¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp black freshly ground pepper
lemon wedges (optional)
parsley sprigs (optional)

Combine the lemon juice, molasses, Worcestershire sauce and garlic in a large, non-reactive bowl. Stir. Add the chicken. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for 1 hour, turning occasionally.

Preheat the oven to 425°F. If the chicken is boned, use a 400°F oven.

Remove the chicken from the refrigerator dish. Reserve the marinade. Arrange the chicken in a shallow roasting pan coated with cooking spray. Pour the reserved marinade over the chicken, sprinkle with the salt and pepper.

Bake at 425°F for 20 minutes, basting the chicken with the marinade initially. Bake an additional 20 minutes or until the chicken is done.

Serve the chicken with the lemon wedges and garnish with the parsley.

The marinade tends to splatter as it cooks, but it comes clean from the cooking pan without too much trouble if you soak it.

Yields 4 servings.

Emeril's Chicken Marsala

½ cup all-purpose flour
1 Tbs Emeril's Essence
2 6-8 oz boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut in halves and pounded thin
1 Tbs olive oil
4 Tbs butter
3 cups sliced mushrooms (cremini, oyster, shiitake)
¾ cup Marsala
1 cup chicken stock
salt
freshly ground black pepper
chopped chives, for garnish

In a shallow bowl or plate combine the flour and Essence and stir to combine thoroughly. Quickly dredge the chicken breast halves in the seasoned flour mixture, shaking to remove any excess flour.

Heat the oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat until very hot but not smoking. Add 1 Tbs of the butter and cook the chicken breasts until golden brown on both sides, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to a plate and set aside.

Add 1 Tbs of the remaining butter to the pan and add the mushrooms. Cook, stirring frequently, until mushrooms are golden brown around the edges and have given off their liquid.

Add the Marsala wine and bring to a boil, scraping to remove any browned bits from the bottom of the pan. When the wine has reduced by half, add the chicken stock and cook for 3 minutes, or until the sauce has thickened slightly. Lower the heat to medium and return the chicken breasts to the pan and continue to cook until they are cooked through and the sauce has thickened, about 5 to 6 minutes.

Swirl in the remaining 2 Tbs of butter, add salt and pepper, to taste. Garnish with chopped chives and serve immediately.

Betsy's Teriyaki Chicken **(from James Beard)**

½ cup olive oil
⅔ cup soy sauce
2 Tbs grated fresh ginger
2 garlic cloves finely minced
1 zested orange rind + squeezed orange juice
1 zested lemon rind + squeezed lemon juice
¼ cup sherry (optional)
6 boneless and skinless chicken thighs

Prepare marinade from ingredients less chicken. Whisk until homogenous. This recipe makes more than enough marinade. You can split the marinade and refrigerate the remainder for later use.

Arrange chicken in a glass Pyrex dish. Pour marinade over chicken. Turn chicken over to thoroughly coat. Turn and repeat. Do this several times for about an hour.

Transfer chicken to an aluminum broiler pan and broil in your oven. Keep your eyes on what is happening. Turn once with tongs. You can do this outside too, but need to be careful of flames. You want the outer layers seared but not charred. This may present difficulties, but try to stay ahead of any flames.

Cook for 15 to 20 minutes until done. Place a finger on a piece to check firmness to see if the chicken is done. Transfer to a hot plate. Let sit for a few minutes. Serve as soon as possible.

Chicken Piccata

2 split (1 whole) boneless, skinless chicken breasts
kosher salt
freshly ground black pepper
½ cup all-purpose flour
1 extra-large egg
½ Tbs water
¾ cup seasoned dry bread crumbs
6 Tbs unsalted butter at room temperature
5 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil
⅓ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (2 lemons), lemon halves reserved
½ cup dry white wine
¼ cup brined capers, rinsed
sliced lemon, for serving
⅓ cup chopped fresh parsley leaves, for serving

Preheat the oven to 200°F.

Place each chicken breast between 2 sheets of parchment paper or plastic wrap and pound out to ¼" thick. Alternately, butterfly the chicken breast and separate each butterfly. Sprinkle both sides of each breast piece with salt and pepper.

Mix the flour, ½ tsp salt, and ¼ tsp of pepper in a shallow plate. In a bowl, beat the egg and ½ Tbs of water together. Place the bread crumbs on a third plate. Dip each chicken piece first in the flour, shake off the excess, then dip in the egg bowl, and finally in the bread crumbs to coat lightly.

In a large skillet over medium high heat, melt 2 Tbs of butter with 3 Tbs olive oil. When butter and oil start to sizzle, add half the chicken pieces and cook for 3 minutes. When the chicken is browned, flip and cook other sides for 3 minutes. Remove and transfer to an oven-proof plate. Place in the oven at very low temperature to keep warm. Melt 2 more Tbs butter and add another 2 Tbs olive oil. When butter and oil start to sizzle, add the other pieces of chicken and brown both sides in same manner. Add chicken to the warming plate.

Wipe out the skillet with a dry paper towel. Over medium heat, melt 1 Tbs of the butter and then add the lemon juice, capers, wine, the reserved lemon halves, ½ tsp salt, and ¼ tsp pepper. Boil over high heat until reduced in half, about 2 minutes. Off the heat, add the remaining 2 Tbs of butter and swirl to combine. Discard the lemon halves and serve. Spoon on the sauce and serve with a slice of lemon and a sprinkling of fresh parsley.

Serve with orzo to which you have added a few drops of olive oil, a tiny dash of garlic powder, and some chopped green onion, some lemon zest, or fresh cilantro.

Chicken Karahi

3 Tbs vegetable oil
2 tsp ginger, chopped
1 tsp garlic, chopped
1 lb skinless, boneless, chicken breast or thighs
½ tsp salt (according to taste)
1 16 oz can chopped tomatoes with juice
1 medium onion chopped
¼ tsp crushed black peppercorns
2 Tbs garam masala
handful of finely chopped cilantro leaves
1 lb potato (optional)

If you are adding potato to the dish, peel and dice the potatoes. Start a pot of water boiling.

Heat the oil in a shallow frying pan. Before the pan gets hot, add the chopped ginger and garlic, stirring frequently for 2 minutes.

Chop the chicken into bite-sized pieces. Add the chicken and salt to the frying pan. Stirring frequently, fry until the meat is well browned.

Put the potatoes in the boiling water.

Add the tomato and onion to the frying pan. Adjust the heat for the mixture to bubble. Cook about 10 minutes until the tomatoes are reduced to a pulp.. Cover and continue cooking on low. Add a little water, if necessary, to prevent the mixture from sticking to the bottom of the pan.

When the chicken is tender add the black peppercorn, garam masala and a little water to make a gravy. Stir everything.

If you are adding potatoes, use a slotted spoon to incorporate the potatoes into the karahi. If you don't use potatoes, serve with boiled rice. Sprinkle with the cilantro leaves. Serves three people.

Chicken karahi, also known as gosht karahi (when prepared with goat or lamb meat instead of chicken) and kadai chicken is a Pakistani and North Indian dish noted for its spicy taste. The Pakistani version does not have capsicum or onions whereas the North Indian version uses capsicum. It is said that only one utensil is required to cook this dish and that is a karahi (wok)

Chicken and Vegetables

12 oz red-skinned small potatoes
1 medium onion
2 medium carrots
3 Tbs extra-virgin olive oi
kosher salt
freshly ground black pepper
leaves from 4 stems fresh thyme
1½ lb bone-in, skin-on chicken thighs
1½ tsp sweet paprika
½ lemon

Place a 9" or 10" cast-iron or oven-proof skillet in the oven; preheat to 450°F.

Cut the potatoes and onion into ½" dice. Scrub the carrots, then trim and cut them into ½" dice; you want all these pieces to be the same size. Drizzle with 2 Tbs of the oil, then season generously with salt and pepper and toss to coat. Strip the leaves from the thyme stems, letting them fall on the pile of vegetables.

Remove the hot skillet from the oven; scrape the seasoned vegetables into it. Return to the oven; roast (top rack) or 15 minutes, using a spatula to shove them around after 7 minutes.

Meanwhile, use a small, sharp knife to detach and remove the thigh bones from each piece of chicken. Trim excess skin, if desired. Generously season the chicken all over with salt, pepper and the paprika.

Heat the remaining 1 Tbs of oil until shimmering in a medium nonstick skillet over medium heat. Add the chicken skin sides down; cook for a total of 10 minutes, turning it over once the skin sides are nicely browned.

Remove the pan of vegetables from the oven; give them a stir. Use tongs to transfer the chicken thighs to the big skillet, placing them atop the vegetables. Return them to the oven and roast for about 10 minutes, until the chicken is cooked through. The hash vegetables should be tender. To cut back on calories and fat, you can cook the chicken with its skin on, but remove the skin just before serving. It will have lent the dish flavor and kept the thigh meat

Squeeze the lemon half's juice evenly over the chicken and hash. If desired, drizzle a little of the chicken pan juices over the hash. Serve hot, right from the pan.

White Bean and Chicken Chili

2 (15 oz) cans white beans, rinsed and drained
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 Tbs vegetable oil
2 whole bone-in chicken breasts (3 lb) [thighs for dark meat]
salt
pepper
2 onions, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
2 (4 oz) cans roasted green chilies, drained
1 Tbs ground cumin

Place beans and broth in a slow cooker. Cover and cook on high until beans are tender, 2 hours.

Warm oil in skillet over medium-high heat . Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Place chicken skin side down in skillet; cook until brown, about 4 minutes. Turn and cook for 2 minutes more. Transfer to a plate; remove and discard skin. Drain all but 2 Tbs fat from skillet. Add onions and garlic; cook until softened, 5 minutes. Add onion mixture, chilies, 1 cup water and cumin to slow cooker. Stir; add chicken.

Cook on low for 6 hours, stirring twice. Remove 1 cup beans plus ½ cup liquid from slow cooker. Puree in a blender; return to slow cooker. Remove chicken, shred it and return to slow cooker. Spoon into individual bowls and serve.

Tomato-Chickpea Masala With Chicken

3 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil
2 Tbs unsalted butter
2 medium onions
3" piece ginger root
4 medium cloves garlic
1½ Tbs garam masala
⅛ tsp cayenne pepper
6-8 oz cooked chicken (white or dark meat)
30 oz (two 15-oz cans) no-salt-added chickpeas, such as Eden brand
56 oz (two 28-oz cans) whole tomatoes, preferably San Marzano
¾ cup low-fat coconut milk
1½ tsp sugar
1 tsp salt
leaves from 2 to 4 stems cilantro, for garnish
2 medium lemons, for serving
½ cup plain nonfat yogurt

Heat the oil and butter in a large, heavy-bottomed pot over medium-low heat.

Meanwhile, finely chop the onions. Peel the ginger, then grate it to yield 2 Tbs. Cut the garlic into very thin slices.

When the butter has melted, add the onions, garlic, ginger, garam masala and cayenne pepper; cook for about 5 minutes, stirring often, until the onions have softened.

Shred the chicken (to taste), discarding any skin. Rinse and drain the chickpeas. Coarsely chop the tomatoes, reserving their juices (discard any basil leaves in the can).

Stir the chickpeas and the tomatoes with their juices into the pot. Once the chickpeas have heated through, use a potato masher to mash about half of them. Add the shredded chicken. Increase the heat to medium; once the liquid starts to bubble, cook for about 8 minutes, then stir in the coconut milk, sugar and salt. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring as needed.

Meanwhile, coarsely chop the cilantro. Cut the lemon into wedges.

Taste, and adjust the seasoning as needed. Divide among individual plates; add spoonfuls of yogurt to each portion. Sprinkle with the cilantro and serve hot, with lemon wedges. Serves six. Can save in the refrigerator.

Chicken Kofta Curry

For the Koftas:

1 lb ground chicken
1 Tbs ginger & garlic paste
1 tsp garam masala or to taste
red chili powder to taste
1/8 tsp salt
a few sprigs of cilantro
1 egg

For the Curry:

2 cups vegetable oil
1/4 tsp cardamom seeds
3 cloves
1" piece cinnamon stick
1 bay leaf
1 medium onion, finely chopped
1/8 tsp salt
1 Tbs ginger & garlic minced
1 Tbs tomato paste
2 tomatoes, chopped
1/4 tsp turmeric powder
2 tsp coriander powder
1 tsp cumin powder
1 tsp garam masala or to taste
1 cup yogurt, plain, well beater
2 1/2 cups water or as needed
cilantro, for garnish

Mix all the ingredients for the Koftas and mix really well. Cover and marinate in the refrigerator for about 30 min.

For the curry part, heat oil in a pan on medium heat. Once hot, add the cinnamon stick and the Bay leaf.

Pound the cardamom seeds and the cloves in a mortar and pestle. Add to the oil. Immediately after that add the onions. Add a little salt to speed up the cooking. Once the onions get dehydrated and start to change color to a light golden, add in the minced ginger & garlic. Cook for just a couple of minutes. Add in the tomato paste and mix well. Add in the fresh tomatoes and turmeric powder and cook till the oil separates from the mixture.

Once the Oil has separated, add in the coriander powder, cumin powder and garam masala. Mix well and lower flame to a simmer.

Add in the well-beaten yogurt slowly and stir continuously while adding.

Add the water to form the curry. Increase the flame to a medium, cover and allow the curry to come to a rapid boil. Do the taste test and adjust the spices and the salt as needed.

Increase the flame to a medium-high and maintain the rapid boil. Take out the kofta mixture from the refrigerator and give it one more mix. Dip your hands in water and take a small amount of ground chicken (smaller than a golf ball) and drop it gently into the boiling Curry.

Repeat the process until all the koftas are in the curry. Do not touch the koftas.

Lower the flame back to a medium, cover and cook for 20-25 minutes (longer if the koftas are bigger). After the 20 minutes, remove cover and mix very gently.

Garnish with fresh Cilantro leaves and it's ready to serve. Serve on a bed of rice or with naans, chapatis (roti) or some bread.

Tips:

1. Use any ground meat of your choice – turkey, beef or lamb.
2. Make smaller koftas for faster cooking.
3. Increase the amount of garam masala and red chili powder to make it a spicier dish.

Chicken Tikka Masala (Crockpot Version)

2 Tbs olive oil
6 chicken thighs boneless, skinless, cut into 1" pieces
1 yellow onion diced
2 tsp garlic minced
2 tsp coarse salt
1½ Tbs garam masala
½ tsp paprika
3 Tbs tomato paste
28 oz canned diced tomatoes
15 oz coconut milk
cilantro to garnish

Heat the oil in a saute pan. Add the chicken and cook until it is golden brown on all sides. Add the chicken to the slow cooker and put the pan back on the heat.

Add the onion to the pan and saute for 2-3 minutes. Add the garlic, salt, Garam Masala, and paprika and saute for another minute. Stir the tomato paste in and cook for another minute. Add the tomatoes to the pan and bring to a simmer.

Pour the tomato sauce over the chicken in the slow cooker along with the can of coconut milk.

Cook on high for 4 hours or low for 6-8 hours.

Remove the lid of the slow cooker for the last 30 minutes of cooking to allow the sauce to thicken slightly.

Serve over rice and garnish with chopped cilantro.

Greek Chicken Stew With Cauliflower and Olives

2 Tbs extra virgin olive oil
1 large red onion, chopped
2-4 garlic cloves (to taste), minced
6-8 chicken legs and/or thighs, skinned
2 Tbs red wine vinegar
1 28-oz can chopped tomatoes, with juice, pulsed in a food processor
½ tsp cinnamon
salt
freshly ground pepper
½ tsp dried thyme, or 1 tsp fresh thyme leaves
1 small cauliflower, cored, broken into florets, and sliced about ½" thick
12 kalamata olives, rinsed, pitted and cut in half (optional)
1-2 Tbs chopped flat-leaf parsley
1-2 oz feta cheese, crumbled (optional)

Heat 1 Tbs of the oil over medium-high heat in a large, deep, heavy lidded skillet or casserole and brown the chicken, in batches if necessary, about 5 minutes on each side. Remove the pieces to a plate or bowl as they're browned.

Pour off the fat from the pan. Add the vinegar to the pan and scrape up all the bits from the bottom of the pan. Add the remaining Tbs of the olive oil to the pan, and turn the heat down to medium. Add the onion and a generous pinch of salt and cook, stirring often and scraping the bottom of the pan, until it begins to soften, about 5 minutes. Turn the heat to low, cover and let the onion cook for 10 minutes, stirring from time to time, until it is lightly browned and very soft.

Add the garlic and stir together for a minute or two more, until the garlic is fragrant, then add the tomatoes and their juice, the cinnamon, thyme, and salt and pepper to taste. Bring to a simmer and simmer 10 minutes, stirring from time to time, until the mixture is reduced slightly and fragrant.

Return the chicken pieces to the pot, along with any juices that have accumulated in the bowl. If necessary, add enough water to barely cover the chicken. Bring to a simmer, reduce the heat, cover and simmer 20 minutes.

Add the cauliflower and kalamata olives and simmer for another 20 minutes, or until the cauliflower is tender and the chicken is just about falling off the bone. Stir in the parsley, taste and adjust seasonings. Serve with rice, with the feta sprinkled on top if desired.

The stew keeps for 3-4 days in the refrigerator and freezes well.

Fried Chicken Livers

1 lb chicken livers, cut into bite-sized pieces
1½ cups buttermilk
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp sea salt
1½ tsp black pepper
¼ tsp cayenne
2½ cups saltine cracker crumbs, finely ground
2 large eggs, beaten
oil for frying
cream gravy, for serving, (next recipe)

In a large bowl, soak the chicken livers in ½ cup of the buttermilk for 1 hour.

Meanwhile, to prepare for breading the livers, mix the flour, salt, black pepper, and cayenne in a large plastic food-storage bag. In a bowl, whisk together the eggs with the remaining 1 cup of buttermilk. Place the saltine crumbs on a plate.

Once the livers have soaked, drain them (discarding the soaking buttermilk) then lightly season them with salt and pepper. Place the chicken livers in the flour bag and shake until they are well coated. In batches, dip the flour-coated livers into the eggs and then lightly dredge in the saltine crumbs. Place cracker-coated livers on a large plate or sheet. Repeat until all the livers are coated.

In a large cast-iron skillet, heat ½" of oil on medium-high heat until it reaches 350°F, about 5 minutes. If you don't have a thermometer, you can test the temperature by sticking a wooden spoon into the oil. If it bubbles around the spoon, it should be ready for frying. Line a sheet pan with paper towels.

Fry the livers for 5 minutes or until brown and crisp, turning once. (When you place the livers into the skillet, be careful, as there may be excessive popping of the oil.) Depending on the size of your skillet will probably have to fry them in several batches. Drain on paper towels. Serve warm with cream gravy.

Yield: 4-6 servings

Notes: While I like to keep it simple, adding other spices and herbs to the flour mixture, such as sage, garlic powder, and chili powder, are also very good

Cream gravy

2 Tbs drippings, bacon grease, or vegetable oil

2 Tbs all-purpose flour

1½ cups whole milk

1 tsp black pepper

salt to taste

Combine the fat with flour in a hot skillet, continuously stirring, cook on medium for a couple of minutes until a roux is formed.

Add milk slowly to the skillet, and mix with roux using either a whisk or wooden spoon (be sure and press out any lumps). Turn heat to low and continue stirring until mixture is thickened, a couple more minutes. Add the pepper then salt to taste.

If the gravy is too thick, you can thin it by adding either more milk or water a Tbs at a time. Goes great with mashed potatoes, fried chicken, biscuits, chicken fried steak, grits, vegetables, rice or anything else you can imagine.

Yield:

4-6 servings

Shrimp, Sausage, and Chicken Gumbo

½ lb medium shrimp shelled and deveined, halved
½ lb smoked andouille sausage, in ½"-thick rounds
½ lb boneless, skinless chicken thighs, small chunks
⅛ cup olive oil
⅛ cup all-purpose flour
32 oz can chicken broth
⅛ tsp salt
⅛ tsp pepper
½ tsp paprika
⅛ tsp cayenne
½ Tbs tomato paste
3 garlic cloves, minced
¾ cups diced onion
½ cup diced red or green bell pepper
¼ cup diced celery
½ cup diced ripe tomato, fresh or canned
1 cups chopped okra
½ Tbs filé powder

Peel shrimp. Cover and refrigerate. Cut up the chicken thighs into bite-sized pieces, cutting away any excess fat.

Slice the andouille sausage. Pan fry until brown. Set pan aside.

In a heavy-bottomed soup pot, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. When the pan is hot, add the flour and cook the flour until it turns a light brown. How brown is a matter of taste and visual appearance.

Gradually add the chicken broth. Use a whisk to make the mixture smooth. Add salt, black pepper, paprika, garlic, tomato paste, and cayenne pepper. Cook and stir over medium heat until liquid thickens, about 3 minutes.

Add onion, celery, and peppers, bring to a simmer, and cook for about 3 minutes until vegetables are soft.

Add chicken pieces and cook for another 5 minutes.

Stir in tomatoes and okra. Cook for another 5 minutes.

Return sausage to the pot. Heat to a simmer. Add shrimp and cook for 2 minutes more. Turn off heat. Stir in filé powder. Serve immediately over steamed rice. Yield 4-6 servings

Skillet Chicken Puttanesca

1 can (28 oz) whole peeled tomatoes, with their juices
4 anchovy fillets, coarsely chopped (optional)
1 cup pitted Kalamata or other black olives, coarsely chopped
¼ cup capers
1 tsp crushed red pepper, or more to taste
3 Tbs chopped fresh oregano
4 skinless, boneless chicken breasts (about 3 lb)
½ tsp salt, or more to taste
¼ tsp ground black pepper, or more to taste
3 Tbs olive oil, divided
2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
extra sprigs fresh oregano, for garnish
crusty bread, to serve (skip if serving gluten-free)

Prep the tomato sauce: Pour the tomatoes into a bowl and crush with your hands or with a wooden spoon until you have uneven 1" pieces. Mix in the anchovies, olives, capers, red pepper, and 2 Tbs of the oregano to the bowl. Set aside.

Sear the chicken: Sprinkle the chicken all over with salt and black pepper. In a large skillet over medium-high heat, heat 2 Tbs of the olive oil until hot. Add the chicken and cook without disturbing for 3 minutes, or until browned. If you are using a cast-iron or stainless steel skillet, do not turn until the chicken moves easily without prodding.

Turn and cook the other side for 3 minutes. Transfer to a plate.

Make the sauce: In the skillet over medium heat, heat the remaining 1 Tbs oil. Add the garlic and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Add the tomato mixture – be careful since the juices will splutter when you add them to the pan. Cook for 1 minute or until the spluttering stops. Stir well, turn down the heat, and simmer for 5 minutes. Taste for seasoning and add more salt, black pepper, or red pepper, if you like.

Add the chicken and finish the sauce: Add the chicken breasts and any juices to the skillet and spoon a little sauce over top. Cover the pan and simmer for 5 to 8 minutes, or until a meat thermometer inserted into the thickest part of the chicken registers 165°F.

Serve: Serve straight from the skillet or transfer to a serving platter. Sprinkle the remaining 1Tbs oregano over the top and garnish with oregano sprigs. Serve with plenty of crusty bread.

Chicken Marengo

1 chicken, 3 lb, cut into serving pieces
salt to taste, if desired
freshly ground pepper to taste
2 Tbs butter
2 Tbs olive oil
1½ cups thinly sliced mushrooms, about ½ lb
½ cup finely chopped onion
½ tsp finely minced garlic
1 bay leaf
2 sprigs fresh thyme or ½ tsp dried
½ cup dry white wine
2 cups cored and cubed red ripe tomatoes, or use canned tomatoes
¼ cup tomato paste
½ cup chicken broth
2 sprigs fresh parsley

Sprinkle the chicken with salt and pepper to taste.

Heat the butter and oil in a heavy skillet over medium-high heat. Add the chicken pieces skin side down. Cook until golden brown on one side, about five minutes. Turn the pieces and cook on the other side about two minutes. Pour off the fat from the skillet.

Scatter the mushrooms over the chicken. Stir to distribute. Add the onion, garlic, bay leaf and thyme and cook about five minutes.

Add the wine and scrape the bottom of the skillet with a wooden spoon to dissolve the brown particles that cling to the bottom of the pan. Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, chicken broth and parsley. Bring to the boil. Cover and cook 10 minutes.

Serve with rice and a tossed green salad.

Chicken Breasts With Tomatoes and Capers

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 2¼ lb)
salt
freshly ground white pepper to taste
2 Tbs olive oil
2 Tbs butter
6 Tbs finely chopped shallots
2 tsp finely chopped garlic
4 tsp finely chopped fresh tarragon, or 2 tsp dried tarragon
1 28-oz can of tomatoes, drained and chopped
¼ cup red wine vinegar
¼ cup drained capers
1 cup dry white wine
2 Tbs tomato paste
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley leaves

Sprinkle the chicken with salt and pepper. Heat the oil and butter in a heavy-bottom skillet. Add the chicken breasts and saute over medium-high heat, turning the pieces often until lightly browned, about 5 minutes.

Add the shallots and garlic around the chicken. Cook briefly; add the tarragon, tomatoes, vinegar, capers, wine and tomato paste. Stir to dissolve the brown particles adhering to the bottom of the skillet.

Blend well, bring to a boil, and then cover and simmer for 9 minutes. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

Slow Cooker Shredded Chicken Chili

2-2½ lb boneless, skinless chicken thighs
1 large yellow onion, diced
2 stalks celery, diced
2 15-oz cans tomato puree (about 3 cups)
1 cup chicken broth
4 cloves garlic, minced or pressed with a garlic press
2 Tbs chili powder
1 tsp cumin
1 tsp oregano
1 tsp salt
2 (15-oz) cans black beans, drained and rinsed
1 cup frozen corn kernels
1 Tbs cider vinegar

Optional chili toppings:

diced green onions
shredded cheese
diced avocado
chopped cilantro
sour cream

Special equipment:

6-quart slow cooker

Combine the chicken, diced onions, and diced celery in the bowl of a slow cooker: If you're using chicken breasts, cut them into 2 or 3 large pieces.

Add the tomato puree, broth, garlic, and spices to the slow cooker. Stir to mix.

Cover and cook on high for 2 to 4 hours, or low for 6 to 8 hours. It's fine if the chili ends up cooking a little longer on the "low" or "warm," too.

Shred the chicken using two forks. Shred the chicken right in the slow cooker; or if it feels easier, transfer the large pieces to a bowl, shred, and then return the chicken to the slow cooker. Taste the chili and add salt, pepper, or additional spices, if desired.

Stir in the beans, corn, and vinegar, then cover and continue cooking until warmed through. This should take about 15 to 30 minutes. Watch for the chili to start bubbling again.

Serve with toppings. Leftovers will keep refrigerated for up to a week or up to 3 months frozen.

Spanish Chicken and Rice

6 chicken thighs, skin-on and bone-in, about 4 lb
3 tsp kosher salt, divided
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper, divided
2 Tbs olive oil
1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 green bell pepper seeded and sliced
1 medium yellow onion, peeled and chopped
5 cloves garlic, minced
2 cups long grain rice
1½ cups white wine
1½ cups chicken broth
1 15-oz can garbanzo beans, drained
1 15-oz can diced tomatoes
2 tsp smoked paprika
1 tsp saffron threads, crushed
1 bay leaf
8 ounces Spanish chorizo, sliced into ¼" thick coins
½ cup green olives, halved
¼ cup Italian flat leaf parsley, chopped

Preheat the oven to 365°F.

Season the chicken thighs with 1 tsp kosher salt and ½ tsp black pepper. Heat a Dutch oven over medium high heat. When pan is hot, add the olive oil. Brown the chicken until golden brown, about 5 minutes on each side. Transfer the chicken to a platter and cover with foil to rest.

Add the red and green bell pepper and onion to the pan and cook for 4-5 minutes or until the vegetables soften, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute or until fragrant, stirring so the garlic doesn't burn and become bitter. Add the rice and cook for 3-4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the wine, chicken broth, garbanzo beans, diced tomatoes, smoked paprika, and the bay leaf. Stir in the saffron threads and the sliced chorizo and place the chicken back into the Dutch oven, nestling the chicken pieces into the rice. Cover with a lid and bake in the oven for 25-30 minutes or until the chicken registers 165°F and the rice has absorbed all of the liquid.

Stir in the green olives and garnish with flat leaf parsley. Serve and enjoy.

Chicken Massaman Curry

- 1 (13.5 oz) can coconut milk**
- 1 (4 oz) can massaman curry paste (I like the brand Maesri)**
- 1 Tbs high heat oil or clarified butter (vegetable, grapeseed or peanut oil all work)**
- 5 boneless skinless chicken thighs, trimmed of fat and cut into large cubes**
- 1 medium yellow onion, chopped**
- 1 medium red bell pepper, chopped**
- 1 medium yellow bell pepper, chopped**
- 4 mini gold potatoes, quartered**
- 3 medium plum tomatoes, quartered**
- ½ cup packed cilantro, roughly chopped**
- ¼-½ cup toasted unsalted peanuts, chopped or whole (for garnish)**
- Optional: rice for serving**

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together the coconut milk and curry paste until evenly combined. Heat to a simmer for a few minutes. Stir well. Set aside.

In a large Dutch oven or heavy-bottom saucepan, heat the oil on medium-high until shimmering, and then brown the chicken on both sides for several minutes. You might want to do this in batches to avoid crowding the pan.

Once the chicken is browned, stir in the onion, bell peppers, potatoes and tomatoes (add all of the chicken back into the pot first if it was cooked in batches). Add the coconut milk mixture and stir. Bring to a boil, cover, and turn the heat down to low.

Simmer for 20-25 minutes, or until the potatoes are soft and chicken is cooked through. Remove from the heat and stir in the cilantro. Serve over rice if using, and garnish with peanuts.

Homemade Coconut Milk

- 1¾ cups water**
- 2 cups unsweetened shredded coconut**

In a medium saucepan, heat the water until it begins to steam and simmer (you can also use a kettle for this step).

Add the water to a blender along with the shredded coconut.

Puree the mixture for 30-60 seconds, then strain into a bowl through a cheesecloth or nut milk bag, squeezing to extract all of the liquid.

Use immediately, or store in an airtight container for up to 4 days in the refrigerator. Homemade coconut milk can also be frozen for up to 3 months.

Yields 1½ cups.

Rotisserie Chicken Stroganoff

12 oz egg noodles
4 Tbs butter, divided
1 cup diced onion
8 oz cremini mushrooms, sliced
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 Tbs all-purpose flour
1 Tbs Worcestershire sauce
½ tsp salt, plus more to taste
black pepper, to taste
1½ cups chicken stock
½ cup sour cream
2 heaping cups shredded rotisserie chicken (about 1 lb of meat)
fresh parsley, garnish

Cook the egg noodles in salted water according to the package directions. Once the noodles are cooked, drain and return them to the pot with two tablespoons of butter, and toss to coat.

Meanwhile, melt the remaining two Tbs butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions and mushrooms and cook for 6 to 8 minutes until the vegetables have softened and are browned in spots. Add the garlic and cook for a final 30 seconds, until the garlic is fragrant. Season with a pinch of salt and pepper.

Add the flour to the skillet and use a spatula to work the flour into the vegetables, forming a paste-like coating on the vegetables. Cook for a minute and then add the Worcestershire sauce, salt, and some freshly ground black pepper.

Slowly add the chicken stock in ½-cup increments, stirring constantly to prevent lumps.

Once your chicken stock has been added, let the sauce thicken for a few minutes and then stir in the shredded chicken. Remove the pot from the heat and add the sour cream, and stir to combine. Taste the sauce and season it with salt and pepper to your liking.

Return the pan to low heat and warm until the sauce is once again piping hot. (If you aren't serving the sauce immediately, you can keep the sauce warm on very low heat for a little while. Be careful as it will curdle over higher heat.) If the sauce gets too thick, thin it with a drizzle of cooking water from the pasta.

Serve the stroganoff either by stirring the noodles straight into the sauce to combine everything, or portioning out the noodles onto individual plates and spooning the sauce over the top. Garnish with fresh parsley.

For leftovers, it's best to store the sauce and noodles separately and then reheat the sauce gently in a skillet with a few spoonfuls of water. You can microwave the noodles with a few spoonfuls of water and then combine everything. The leftovers will keep for a few days without a problem.

Turkey Meatballs

1 Tbs butter
1 large shallot, minced (about 1 Tbs)
1 clove garlic, minced (about 1 tsp)
6 oz mushrooms (a mix of shiitake and cremini), finely chopped
1 tsp herbes de Provence
1 lb ground turkey meat (we prefer thigh meat)
1 Tbs chopped fresh parsley (plus more to sprinkle over when you serve)
1 tsp Dijon mustard
½ tsp balsamic vinegar
¼ tsp lemon zest (optional, if you have it use it)
1 Tbs mayonnaise
1 tsp Kosher salt
½ tsp ground black pepper
1 Tbs olive oil

Optional Marinara Sauce

1 Tbs olive oil
¼ cup minced onion
2 cloves garlic minced (2 tsp)
1 (28-oz) can whole peeled tomatoes
salt and pepper to taste

Melt the butter in a small frying pan on medium heat. Add the minced shallots and cook gently for 3 to 4 minutes until softened. Stir in the minced garlic and the mushrooms. Continue to cook on medium heat until the mushrooms are cooked through and have given up some, but not all, of their moisture. Stir in the herbes de Provence. Remove from heat. Place in a bowl and quickly chill to cool.

In a large mixing bowl, place the ground turkey, parsley, Dijon mustard, balsamic vinegar, lemon zest if using, mayonnaise, salt, black pepper, and the cooled mushroom shallot mixture. Using your clean hands gently mix the turkey and other ingredients together until well combined. Don't over mix.

Form meatballs, 1"-1½" wide, depending on your preference. Smaller meatballs will be easier to serve as a one-bite appetizer, larger meatballs for a main dish. Place meatballs on a tray.

Heat olive oil in a large sauté pan on medium low to medium heat. Once the oil is hot, place the meatballs in the pan, allowing for space around each meatball. Do not crowd the pan; if your pan isn't big enough, cook the meatballs in batches. Gently cook the meatballs until cooked through, turning them frequently so that they get lightly browned on all sides. If meatballs are not browning, increase the burner heat a little.

Heat a Tbs of olive oil in a sauté pan on medium heat. Add the minced onions and cook until translucent, about 4 to 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for one minute more.

Pulse the canned tomatoes in their juices in a blender or food processor until chopped, but not completely smooth. Add the tomatoes to the onion garlic mixture. Cook for ten minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste. Add meatballs to the sauce. Sprinkle with a chopped parsley to serve.

Ground Turkey and Peppers

extra virgin olive oil

1 cup chopped yellow onion, including some chopped greens from scallions or green onions

1 bell pepper (red or yellow preferred), chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

kosher salt

1 lb ground turkey, preferably ground turkey thighs

1 tsp chipotle powder or chili powder (or to taste)

2 Tbs chopped fresh parsley or cilantro

Heat 2 Tbs olive oil in a large skillet on medium high heat. Add the chopped onions and bell pepper and cook until onions and peppers are softened, a couple minutes.

Add the garlic and cook 30 seconds more.

Push the vegetables to the edge of one side of the pan and position that side of the pan so that it is off the burner, away from the heat. The empty part of the pan should be right over the burner.

Add one or two more Tbs of oil to coat the empty part of the pan. Put crumpled chunks of ground turkey in the pan, sprinkle with salt and chipotle or chili powder.

Cook the turkey without stirring until it is browned on one side, then turn the pieces over to brown the other side.

Once the turkey is just cooked through, stir in the onions and peppers, and sprinkle with more salt and chili powder to taste. Remove from heat.

Stir in fresh chopped parsley or cilantro.

Serve alone, or with steamed rice or noodles.

Amy's Creamed Ham

2 cups diced cooked ham
1 Tbs olive oil
1 medium onion
1 green pepper cut into 1" pieces
8 mushrooms, sliced
2 hard boiled eggs, sliced
salt
pepper to taste

Make 2 cups of roux.

Hard boil the two eggs, slice and put in roux.

In a pan sauté sliced mushrooms, green peppers and onions in olive oil. Don't overcook, but you want the peppers less than raw. Add to roux.

Add diced ham to mixture.

Grind in several shakes of fresh pepper. If you like salt, put in a tsp

Serves four, can be refrigerated.

Julia Child's Pork and Sauerkraut

2 lb of sauerkraut (no sugar added, usually kosher)

3 cups of chicken broth

½ tsp caraway seeds

½ tsp dried thyme

several grinds of pepper

salt to taste

2 bay leaves

1½ lb bratwurst

a dribble or so of white wine, vermouth or chicken broth

boiled potatoes

Drain the sauerkraut in a colander, wash it under cold water, then soak it in a large bowl of cold water for 10 minutes. Drain, wash, and soak again. Repeat, if you wish, depending on how sour you wish your kraut to be. Drain, squeeze by handfuls to extract excess water, then fluff up the strands.

While the sauerkraut is soaking, bring the chicken broth and the next four ingredients to a simmer in a Dutch oven. Add the sauerkraut to the Dutch oven. Bury the bay leaves in the sauerkraut mass. Simmer uncovered slowly for about 30 minutes, stirring it up occasionally, until the liquid has concentrated and the sauerkraut is tender.

While the sauerkraut is braising, brown the meat. Prick the bratwurst with a fork in several places. Bury all the meat in the sauerkraut. Add additional broth or wine if the kraut seems dry. Cover the Dutch oven and heat contents on top of the stove for 10 minutes or until liquid is bubbling. Place the Dutch oven in the oven at 350°F and continue baking for another 20 to 30 minutes. Serve directly from the casserole or make a rapid but stylish arrangement on a big platter with the sausages surrounded by the sauerkraut and boiled potatoes. It is the cooking of the sauerkraut with the meat that gives both their special flavors.

The Dutch oven can remain for some time in the oven at low temperature if you want to delay serving the meal.

Pork and Apples

2 Tbs flour
2 Tbs dry mustard
1 tsp salt
1/8 tsp pepper
4 pork chops
2 Tbs butter
2 Tbs olive oil
2 medium onions thinly sliced
1 cup chicken stock
1 cup apple cider
1 tsp sage
1 tsp thyme
generous pinch of cloves
3 medium apples, peeled, cored, and chopped (or more)

Mix the flour, mustard, salt, and pepper together in a bowl.

You need a big fry pan. Dredge the chops in the flour/mustard mixture (reserve the remaining flour/mustard mixture for a moment) then brown in the butter and oil, 3-4 minutes per side.. Remove from the pan momentarily.

Sauté the onions for 5 minutes.

Sprinkle in the remaining flour mixture. Blend in the sage, thyme, and cloves with the stock and cider. Bring to a simmer.

Return chops to the pan. Simmer for 20 minutes covered.

Add apples and simmer 30 minutes more. Don't let the gravy get too thick. Use the remaining chicken broth or some more apple cider as necessary.

Kidney Bean Casserole

One of the many virtues of this casserole is that it can be reheated and, if such is possible, tastes better than when it is fresh from the oven.

6 Tbs butter (¾ stick)
2 12-oz packages of "little" pork sausages, fresh if you can find them
2 cups dry red wine
1 bay leaf
3 whole cloves
3 Tbs tomato paste
3 medium yellow onions, peeled and sliced thin
2 large sweet green pepper, seeds and fibers removed, ¼" dice
1 clove garlic, minced
2 cans (15¼ oz size) dark red kidney beans, thoroughly drained, rinsed
salt
freshly ground pepper

This is a large recipe. Use a little of the butter to thoroughly butter a three-quart casserole. Set aside.

In a large skillet cook the sausages in ¼" boiling water. Cook gently until the water boils away, then continue cooking over low heat for another ten minutes. Turn continuously to prevent scorching. Drain and set aside.

In a sauce pan bring the wine to the boiling point with the bay leaf and the cloves. Simmer for a minute. Discard the bay leaf and cloves. Then thoroughly stir in the tomato paste with a whisk.

Melt the remaining butter in the skillet. Add the onions and green pepper and cook over moderate heat, giving the mixture an occasional stir, for five minutes. Stir in the garlic. Then combine with the beans.

To complete the casserole, set aside six of the cooked sausages. Now put one third of the bean mixture in the prepared casserole. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add half of the remaining sausages, then a second layer of the beans. Again sprinkle with salt and pepper. Add the remaining sausages and finally the remaining beans. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Place the six sausages on top of the beans, spoke-fashion.

Strain the hot wine mixture over the top. Place in a preheated 350°F oven and cook for one hour, or longer, if you like. Long cooking improves this excellent casserole. Serve accompanied by a big green salad. Serves six.

To reheat leftover casserole, add a ¼ cup water, place, covered, in a 350°F oven for 45 minutes or so. Check the temperature. Serve.

Pork Chops and Rice

4 4-oz pork chops
2 Tbs vegetable oil
¼ cup uncooked long grained rice
1 cup boiling water
½ tsp rosemary
½ tsp sage
1 tsp sugar
1 large tomato, sliced
½ green pepper, sliced
½ tsp basil
pepper to taste
4 tsp unsalted butter

Brown the chops in vegetable oil in a frying pan. Place in a casserole with the rice around the chops.

Drain the fat off the frying pan and add boiling water to the frying pan. Add the rosemary, sage, and sugar. Pour over the chops and rice.

Add the sliced tomatoes and green pepper. Sprinkle with basil and pepper. Dot with butter. Cover tightly. Bake 45 to 60 minutes at 350°F.

The trick is to have enough fluids to cook the rice. You don't want the mixture dry. At the same time, you don't want the mixture soupy.

You can add more tomatoes and peppers if you like. This may be desirable if you want to use only half the recipe one night and the rest another night.

Pork Chops and Green Peppers in Tomato Sauce

salt

pepper to taste

4-6 loin pork chops, about 2 lb in all

2 Tbs olive oil

2 tsp minced garlic

6 large mushrooms cut in thick slabs ($\frac{3}{4}$ lb for large recipe of vegetables)

1 very large green pepper cut into 1" squares

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup dry white wine

1 16 oz can whole tomatoes, cut into chunks (28 oz for large recipe)

1 tsp oregano

$\frac{1}{2}$ lb noodles, cooked and buttered

Sprinkle the chops with salt and pepper.

Heat the olive oil in a large skillet or electric skillet. Then brown the pork chops on all sides, about 5 minutes per side. Keep the skillet covered since the pan splatters.

Add the garlic, mushrooms, and peppers. Close the cover and cook about 5 minutes.

Add the wine, tomatoes, oregano, and salt and pepper to taste.

Cover and cook at a simmer for about 35 to 40 minutes.

Serve with buttered noodles sprinkled with Parmesan cheese.

If I am trying to stretch this recipe for two meals I usually add more mushrooms and tomatoes to increase the fluid medium.

Peppercorn Pork Medallions With Cranberry

1 lb pork tenderloin
1-2 tsp cracked black pepper
1 tsp lemon pepper
1 tsp vegetable oil
3 Tbs balsamic vinegar
2 Tbs water
1 cup Spirited Cranberry-Apricot Sauce (see below)
2 tsp butter or stick margarine

Trim fat from the pork loin. Cut crosswise into 8 pieces. Place each piece between 2 sheets of heavy-duty plastic wrap. Flatten each piece to ½" thickness using a meat mallet or rolling pin. Sprinkle both sides of pork with cracked pepper corns.

Heat the oil in a 10" cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add the pork and cook 5 minutes on each side or until done. Remove from the skillet and keep warm.

Add the vinegar and water to the pan. Cook 30 seconds, stirring constantly. Stir in the Spirited Cranberry-Apricot Sauce and butter, and cook 1 minute, stirring constantly. Serve sauce with pork. Yield: 4 servings (serving size: 3 oz pork and ¼ sauce).

Spirited Cranberry-Apricot Sauce

½ cup thinly sliced dried apricots (about 3 oz or 12 halves)
¼ cup sherry or orange juice
¾ cup water
⅔ cup sugar
¼ cup honey
1 (12 oz) package fresh or frozen cranberries (you may drain a can of whole berry cranberry sauce and use this instead)

Combine apricots and sherry in a small bowl; cover and let stand 8 hours.

Combine water and sugar in a medium saucepan; bring to a boil. Add apricot mixture, honey, and cranberries. Cook over medium heat 8 minutes or until slightly thick. Spoon mixture into a bowl; cover and chill.

Cumberland Sauce on Ham

1 cup ruby port
½ cup dark seedless raisins
¼ cup red currant jelly
1 tsp dry mustard
½ tsp grated lemon peel (about half the lemon)
½ tsp grated orange peel (about half the orange)
¼ tsp allspice
2 Tbs cornstarch
¼ cup orange juice (juice of one orange)
1 fully cooked ham slice
aluminum foil

Preheat oven to 325° F. In a small saucepan over medium heat, heat to boiling the first seven ingredients, then back off to a simmer. Be sure the jelly dissolves. My local grocer didn't have current jelly, so I used raspberry jelly instead. It seemed to pass the taste test. Meanwhile, slash fat edges off ham slice and put in 10"×6" or 8"×8" baking dish. If the ham steak is too large, just cut it into single portion slices and layer them in the dish.

In cup, blend the cornstarch and orange juice until smooth, The mixture is somewhat sluggish at the start, but with enough stirring the cornstarch blends. Gradually stir into hot wine mixture and cook, stirring constantly until thickened. The thickening takes place suddenly, so do not walk away at this point. Pour over ham slice(s) in baking dish. Cover tightly with foil and bake approximately 1¼ hours. Makes 2 or 3 servings.

Pork Tenderloin with Raisin Sauce

1-1¼ lb peppercorn pork tenderloin
1 Tbs peppercorns (if needed)
Creole or Cajun seasoning
1 cup raisins
⅓ cup water
1 tsp finely shredded orange peel
⅓ cup orange juice
1 tsp finely shredded lemon peel
3 Tbs lemon juice
¼ cup white wine vinegar
¼ cup sugar
1 Tbs dry mustard
1 Tbs Worcestershire sauce
¼ tsp ground allspice
¼ tsp ground ginger
2-in. stick cinnamon

Preheat oven to 425°F.

If the pork tenderloin needs peppercorn, crush the peppercorns and rub the pork liberally. Place the pork on a rack in a shallow roasting pan. Sprinkle lightly with the seasoning. Roast, uncovered, for 30 to 35 minutes or until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the center registers 155°F. Remove from the oven and let stand for 5 minutes or until the thermometer registers 160°F.

While the meat is cooking, combine the raisins, water, orange peel, lemon peel and juice, vinegar, sugar, mustard, Worcestershire, allspice, ginger and cinnamon in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil and reduce the heat. Simmer, uncovered, for 8 to 10 minutes or until the sauce reaches the desired consistency. Remove the cinnamon stick

Slice the pork. Serve the pork with the sauce.

Makes 4 servings.

Lemon-Garlic Grilled Pork Tenderloin

Admittedly, Amy buys this pre-marinated down at Wegman's. But in a pinch this recipe sounds like it would do the same. The pork has great flavor, and if you are careful not to heat the grill up too high, the meat is very moist.

2 Tbs canola or vegetable oil

1½ tsp lemon juice

1½ tsp grated lemon peel

3 garlic cloves, minced

1½ tsp dried oregano

¼ tsp salt

¼ tsp pepper

1-1½ lb pork tenderloin

In a resealable plastic bag, combine the oil, lemon juice, peel, garlic, oregano, salt and pepper; then, add pork. Seal the bag and turn to coat the meat. Refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight.

Drain and discard the marinade.

Preheat the gas grill on medium. Sear the meat on two sides, about two minutes to each side. Turn the gas grill to low. Grill, covered, for about 25 minutes or until juices run clear and a meat thermometer reads 160°F. Let stand for 5 minutes before slicing.

Chorizo Spice Mix

1 Tbs cumin seed
1 tsp coriander seed
5 whole cloves
2 bay leaves
¼ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp oregano
½ tsp thyme
1 Tbs granulated garlic
1 tsp sea salt
5 whole peppercorns (or ½ tsp ground black pepper)
2 Tbs Ancho chile powder or make your own (see below)

Use plastic gloves for handling the chorizo spices.

In a mortar and pestle grind the cumin seed, coriander seed and cloves. Break up the bay leaves with your hands as much as possible and add them to the spices in mortar and pestle, grind until you have a fine powder. Next add the remaining spices to the mortar and pestle and grind/mix until everything is well combined

Chorizo Sausage

3 Tbs apple cider vinegar (can substitute with red wine vinegar)
1 lb ground pork
Chorizo Spice Mix (see above, ~ 5 Tbs)

Using your hands, break up the ground pork in a large glass bowl.

Next you may want to put on some plastic gloves to prevent burning and staining to your hands. Pour in the vinegar and half the spices, spread them evenly on the pork, and start working it into the ground pork. Adding more of the spice mixture until it has all been used up. Keep working the meat until it turns red (from the chile) and all the spices have been well combined into the meat.

It is best to let the chorizo sit overnight before cooking with it. This will allow all of the flavors to come together and make for a better tasting chorizo.

Chili Powder

¼ cup sweet paprika
1 Tbs garlic powder
1 Tbs cayenne pepper
1 Tbs onion powder
1 Tbs dried oregano
2 tsp ground cumin

Place all ingredients in a small container with a tight-fitting lid and shake to mix. Store in a cool, dark place.

Pork Goulash

1½ lb boneless pork butt or shoulder trimmed of excess fat and cut into ½" cubes
salt
pepper
3 Tbs olive oil, more as needed
1 lb Polish sausage or kielbasa, cut into ½" pieces (or 1 lb extra pork butt)
1 large onion, chopped
1 12 oz pkg mushrooms, sliced
1 Tbs chopped garlic
1½ tsp caraway seeds
2 Tbs Hungarian paprika, more to taste
2 Tbs tomato paste
1 48 oz can chicken broth (or 1 qt + 1 pt containers)
1 cup flour
¾ cup water
1 bunch parsley, chopped
2 baking potatoes, peeled and cut into ½" pieces

Place the pork pieces in a large bowl and season with 1 tsp salt and ¼ tsp pepper, tossing the pork so that it is evenly coated.

In a 4-quart, heavy-bottom pot, heat the oil over medium-high heat until hot. Add the pork and sauté, stirring frequently, until the pieces are browned on all sides, about 15 minutes. This may need to be done in batches. Remove the pork to a bowl and set aside.

Add the sausage to the pot and sauté until the pieces are lightly browned on all sides, 3 to 5 minutes. Strain and set aside with the sautéed pork.

Add the onions and mushrooms to the pot, along with a little extra oil if needed. Sauté the vegetables until the onions are lightly colored, stirring frequently. Stir in the garlic, caraway seeds and paprika and continue to cook, stirring constantly, until the garlic and spices become fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in the tomato paste, coating the vegetables evenly, and cook for a minute or two until the paste just begins to darken in color.

Stir in 2 cups chicken stock and increase the heat to high. Cook, stirring the contents of the pot and scraping any flavorings from the bottom of the pot, until the mixture comes to a good simmer. Add the pork and sausage back to the pot, along with the rest of the chicken stock.

In a medium bowl, combine the flour and water to form a slurry, making sure there are no lumps. Whisk the slurry into the pot, and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to a strong simmer and cook until the meat is tender and the pork almost falls apart, about 30 minutes. Stir frequently, making sure to scrape the bottom of the pot so the flour does not burn.

Stir in the parsley and potatoes and cook until the potatoes are tender but not falling apart, 10 to 15 minutes. This makes about 2½ qt stew.

Season to taste with additional salt, pepper and paprika before serving.

Hot Ham and Cheese Party Rolls

1 can Pillsbury™ refrigerated Classic Pizza Crust
¾ lb deli ham (thinly sliced, but not shaved)
12 slices Swiss cheese (thinly sliced)
½ cup (8 Tbs or 1 stick) butter
2 Tbs brown sugar
1 Tbs Worcestershire sauce
1 Tbs Dijon mustard
1 Tbs poppy seeds

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Coat a 9"×13" baking dish with cooking spray.

Unroll the pizza dough onto a cutting board and press into approximately a 13"×18" rectangle.

Top with ham and cheese slices. Starting on the longer side of the rectangle, roll up the edge tightly. When you reach the end, pinch the seam together and flip the roll so that the seam is face down. Cut into 12 slices, approximately 1" wide. Arrange in prepared baking dish.

Next combine the butter, brown sugar, Worcestershire sauce, mustard, and poppy seeds in a sauce pan over medium heat. Whisk until the butter is melted and the glaze is smooth and combined. Pour evenly over the rolls.

Cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours or bake, uncovered for 25 minutes until golden and browned. Enjoy!

Yield: 12 rolls.

Hoppin' John

6 slices bacon, chopped
1 (1-1½ lb boneless ham or ham steak, cut into ¾"-thick squares
1 onion, chopped fine
2 celery ribs, chopped fine
4 garlic cloves, minced
½ tsp dried thyme
4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
2 16-oz cans black-eyed peas
2 bay leaves
1 cup long-grain rice
3 scallions, sliced thin

Pour the chicken broth into a large pot. Turn on the stove top to medium to heat the broth.

In a colander, drain and thoroughly rinse the black eyed peas. Add these to the pot.

Chop the bacon and fry in a skillet over medium heat until crisp, about 8 minutes. Using slotted spoon, transfer bacon to a warm plate. Add the ham to the skillet. Brown on all sides and transfer to the plate with bacon.

Add onion and celery to the skillet and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic, bay, and thyme and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Add to the pot with a slotted spoon. Discard grease from pan.

Reduce heat to low and simmer, covered, until peas are just tender, about 20 minutes.

Return the bacon and ham to the pot. Simmer for another 10 minutes. Remove the bay leaves.

While preparing the peas, cook rice according to instructions on the package. Simmer covered until liquid is absorbed and rice is tender, about 20. Remove from heat and let stand a few minutes.

Fluff rice with fork. Serve rice in large bowls. Ladle on ham and peas. Sprinkle on chopped scallions as a condiment

Serves 8

Cassoulet

1 cup dried Great Northern beans
2 slices bacon, chopped
2 leeks, white and pale green parts thinly sliced
1 rib celery, sliced
8 oz andouille or Italian sausage, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
1 Tbs olive oil
salt
freshly ground pepper to taste
¼ cup brandy
1 cup chopped tomatoes
2 cups chicken stock (preferably homemade)
1 Tbs sugar (optional)
2 Tbs chopped fresh sage leaves

Sort and rinse the beans. Soak the beans in water to cover in a bowl for 8 to 10 hours. Drain the beans, discarding the liquid. Place in a medium saucepan and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 1 hour or until tender.

Saute the bacon, leeks and celery in a medium heavy stockpot or Dutch oven for a few minutes. Add the sausage, garlic and olive oil. Season well with salt and pepper. Cook until the leeks are golden brown. Add the brandy, stirring to deglaze the stockpot by scraping the bottom to loosen up the browned bits. Add the tomatoes, stock, sugar and sage. Drain the beans, discarding the liquid. Stir into the sausage mixture. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 1 hour.

Paella for Two

3 Tbs olive oil
4" of kielbasa sausage, sliced into ½" rounds
½ chicken breast, cut into 8 pieces
2 Tbs chopped onion
2 garlic cloves, minced
¼ cup chopped green bell pepper
¼ cup white wine
pinch of saffron (or ½ tsp each turmeric and paprika)
1 cup white rice, uncooked (Arborio, Spanish rice Bomba)
2 cups chicken stock, heated
1 small can diced tomatoes
½ cup frozen peas, thawed
½ cup chopped cilantro (or parsley flakes)
1 bay leaf
1-2 dashes Tabasco sauce (or pinch cayenne pepper)
sea salt
fresh ground black pepper
½ lb peeled and deveined shrimp

Heat the chicken stock in a saucepan.

Add the olive oil to a large non-stick skillet. Over medium heat, fry sausage until fat is released. Be careful to control the heat so nothing sticks to the pan. Push sausage to the side of the pan.

Add chicken pieces and fry for 5 or 6 minutes until they brown a little. Push to the side.

Add onion, garlic, and bell pepper. Cook until wilted and fragrant.

Add wine and stir.

Add rice, stock, tomatoes, peas, saffron, cilantro, bay leaf, Tabasco, salt and pepper. Stir. Cover pan and simmer for 14-15 minutes.

Add shrimp, continue simmering until rice is done and seafood is pink (about 5 minutes). Add more stock if needed.

Italian Sausage, Peppers, and Onions

1 lb(6 4-oz-links) sweet Italian sausage
2 Tbs butter
1 yellow onion, sliced
½ red onion, sliced
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 large red bell pepper, sliced
1 green bell pepper, sliced
1 tsp dried basil
1 tsp dried oregano
¼ cup white wine

Place the sausage in a large skillet over medium heat, and brown on all sides. When thoroughly cooked, remove from skillet, and slice.

Melt butter in the skillet. Stir in the yellow onion, red onion, and garlic, and cook 2 to 3 minutes. Mix in red bell pepper and green bell pepper. Season with basil, and oregano. Stir in white wine. Continue to cook and stir until peppers and onions are tender.

Return sausage slices to skillet with the vegetables. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer 15 minutes, or until sausage is heated through.

Pork Stew

1 lb lean boneless pork shoulder
1 Tbs olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
½ cup chopped celery
1 tsp dried leaf basil
½ tsp dried leaf rosemary
¼ tsp pepper
½ cup chicken broth or water
8 oz sliced mushrooms
1½ cups sliced (½" thickness) carrots
1 bell pepper, green or red, cut in 1" pieces
½ cup dry red wine
1 can (8 oz) tomato sauce

Cut pork into 1" cubes, trimming and discarding fat.

Heat the oil in a large saucepan over medium heat and cook the pork, stirring frequently, for 5 minutes.

Stir in the onion and celery and cook for 2 minutes longer. Add the herbs, pepper, and broth or water. Bring to a boil; cover and simmer for about 1 hour, or until pork is tender.

Add remaining ingredients and bring to a boil. Cover and simmer for 30 to 45 minutes, or until vegetables are tender. Stir occasionally.

Bratwurst, Apples, and Onions

4 Tbs unsalted butter

1 large yellow onions, cut in ¼" half-moons (about 4 cups)

salt

pepper

1 bay leaf

1 cloves

1 allspice berries

¼ tsp caraway seeds

1 thyme sprig

2 large tart apples, peeled and cut into ½" slices (about 2 cups) (Granny Smith, Pink Lady, Braeburn, McIntosh, Jonathan, Empire, or Cortland)

4 bratwurst or other sausages, about 3-4 oz each

parsley sprigs, for garnish (optional)

Put 2 Tbs butter in a large cast-iron skillet or wide, heavy-bottomed pot over medium-high heat. Add onions, season generously with salt and pepper and stir to coat with butter. Add bay leaf, cloves, allspice, caraway and thyme. Cook, stirring frequently, until soft and nicely browned, about 10 minutes. Reduce heat as necessary to keep onions from browning too quickly.

Remove onions from pan and arrange on a warm platter. Put 2 more Tbs butter in pan, and add apples. Raise heat to medium-high and brown apples on both sides, using a spatula to turn them, 2-3 minutes per side. Remove apples and arrange them on top of onions. Keep platter warm in a low oven.

Keep stove top heat at medium and place sausages in pan in one layer. Prick (or not, at low heat) each sausage in several places with the tip of a sharp paring knife or toothpick. Let sausages brown slowly on one side (check their progress by turning them over with a fork or tongs) for 6-8 minutes. Lower the temperature if they're browning too quickly.

Turn sausages over, and add ½ cup water or apple cider to the pan. Let water evaporate completely, then continue to let sausages brown slowly for about 5 more minutes. (Cooking sausages at too high a temperature will cause them to burst; err on the cooler side.)

To serve, place cooked sausages in the center of the onion-apple mixture on platter. Garnish with parsley, if desired.

Grilled Bacon-Wrapped Stuffed Hot Dogs

1 cup prepared sauerkraut, drained, roughly chopped
1 tsp ketchup
1 tsp Dijon mustard
4 large hot dogs, knockwurst, or kielbasa
½ oz cheddar cheese, cut into long sticks
2 Tbs chopped onions
4 slices bacon
vegetable oil
4 long hot dog buns



Prepare your grill for direct medium high heat.

Mix together the ketchup and mustard in a small bowl. In a separate bowl, mix the sauerkraut with the chopped onion, set aside.

Slice open the hot dogs, down the center, lengthwise, forming a deep pocket in each, but not cutting all the way through.

Coat the inside of each hot dog with the mustard ketchup mixture.

Place a strip of cheese deep within the pocket of each hot dog. Top with sauerkraut and onions.

Encapsulate the cheese at the ends with the sauerkraut mixture as well, so that no cheese is exposed (otherwise it will drip out when cooking).

Wrap a strip of bacon around each stuffed hot dog, securing with toothpicks at each end. Make sure you wrap tight enough so that the stuffing stays in, but not so tight so that when the hot dog expands will cooking the bacon would tear.

Brush the grates of your grill with vegetable oil so that the hot dogs don't stick. If you have a grill screen (a screen with smaller holes so that small pieces of whatever you're cooking don't fall through the grill), you can use it, just coat it with vegetable oil first and pre-heat for a couple of minutes.

Place the stuffed hot dogs on the grill, stuffing side down. Grill for 2 minutes, until the bacon on that side is cooked, turn the hot dogs a quarter turn and grill for a couple more minutes.

Continue to grill for a few minutes each on all sides until the bacon is cooked. Cover the grill in between turnings to help with the cooking.

During the last minute of cooking, open up the hot dog buns and place them open-side down on the grill to lightly toast.

Remove the hot dogs and buns from the grill. Remove the toothpicks from the hot dogs. Place the hot dogs in the buns and serve.

Sausage, Peppers, and Onions

- 4 Italian sausage links (sweet, hot, or a couple of each)**
- 2 Tbs extra virgin olive oil**
- 1 green bell pepper, sliced into 2"-3"-long strips**
- 1 red bell pepper, sliced into 2"-3"-long strips**
- 1 bell pepper of another color (yellow or orange or purple), sliced into strips 2"-3"-long**
- 4 garlic cloves, sliced into slivers**
- 1 large sweet or yellow onion, sliced into ¼" half-moons**
- 1 small (15-oz) can crushed tomatoes**
- 1 Tbs dried oregano**
- ½ cup Marsala or red wine (optional)**
- ½ tsp red pepper flakes (optional)**
- salt to taste**

Heat the olive oil over medium heat in a large pan that has a lid. When the oil is hot, add the sausages and brown them slowly. If they sizzle and crackle too much, turn the heat down. You want a gentle browning, not a sear. Cook for several minutes, turning them occasionally so they brown on all sides. When the sausages are browned, remove from the pan and set aside.



Increase the heat to high and add the onions and peppers. Toss so they get coated with the oil in the pan and sear them as well as you can, stirring every so often. Once the onions and peppers soften, sprinkle some salt on them. Once you get some blackening from a good sear on the onions and peppers, add the garlic, and cook for one more minute.

Add the Marsala or red wine if you are using. Scrape the bottom of the pan with a metal spatula or wooden spoon to release all the browned and blackened bits. Let the wine cook down by half.

Add the tomatoes, oregano, and red pepper flakes (if using) and stir well to combine. Add the sausages back in. Bring to a simmer, then reduce the heat to low. Cover and simmer until the peppers are soft and the sausages are cooked through, about 20 minutes.

Serve over polenta, penne pasta, or load it up on a hoagie roll. Sausage and peppers and onions will keep for several days in the fridge.

Franks and Sauerkraut Paprikash

1½ lb franks, hot dogs, or mild German or Polish sausage, cut into 2½" segments
2 Tbs butter
2 cups chopped onion
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tsp paprika
1 tsp dried dill, or 1 Tbsp fresh chopped dill
1 tsp caraway seed
1 cup beef broth or chicken broth
1 2 lb fresh bag or (25-28 oz) can sauerkraut, drained
2 cups sour cream

Heat a large thick-bottomed pan or Dutch oven on medium heat. Melt the butter, add the onion, garlic, and paprika, cook until the onion is soft, about 5 minutes.

Add the franks, dill, caraway, and broth. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer for 15 minutes.

Add the sauerkraut, simmer, covered, 15 minutes longer.

Remove from heat, stir in the sour cream (do not let the mixture boil after you've added the sour cream).

Serve plain, or with boiled or mashed potatoes.



Broiled Lamb Patties **(one of my favorites)**

1½ lb ground lean lamb
3 Tbs plus 1 tsp butter
⅓ cup finely chopped onion
½ cup fresh bread crumbs
3 Tbs plus 2 tsp finely chopped dill or parsley
1 egg, lightly beaten
salt
freshly ground pepper to taste
¼ lb mushrooms, quartered or sliced
1 Tbs finely chopped shallots
¼ cup dry white wine
½ cup heavy cream.

Place the lamb in a mixing bowl.

Heat 1 tsp of butter in a skillet and add the onion. Cook, stirring until clear. Add this to the lamb.

Add the bread crumbs, 3 Tbs chopped dill, one egg, salt and pepper to taste. Blend well and divide into eight portions. Shape each portion into a patty.

Heat 2 Tbs butter in a skillet and cook the lamb patties, 3 or 4 minute to a side.

Remove the patties and wipe out the skillet. Add the remaining 1 Tbs butter and the mushrooms. Cook until lightly browned. Add the shallots and wine. Cook until liquid evaporates almost entirely. Add the cream. Cook about 5 minutes and add the remaining dill. Serve the hot sauce poured over the patties.

Shepherd's Pie (another favorite)

3 cups chopped cooked lamb (1½ to 2 lb)
1 large clove garlic, peeled
1 medium onion
1 tsp rosemary (or savory), crumbled
4 tbs butter
2 tbs flour
¾ cup beef broth
½ tsp salt (perhaps more to taste)
freshly ground pepper
4 medium potatoes, peeled, cooked and mashed (no milk or butter), about 3 cups
5 little to medium fresh carrots

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Peel, dice, and cook the carrots until soft, but not mushy. Put aside.

At the same time be cooking the potatoes. When soft, mash thoroughly. This is not a job for a fork. Use an electric mixer or ricer.

Dice the onion and mince the garlic. Combine the lamb, garlic, onion, and rosemary (or savory). I really think that this recipe gets its aroma from fresh rosemary, so find it in your grocery store. It's exorbitant, but trust me on this one. The resulting mixture should be coarse, not too fine. If you are starting from ground lamb, saute this mixture until the meat is cooked. Try to break the larger clumps of cooked lamb into small pieces.

Melt the butter in a large skillet and stir in the flour. Cook for a few minutes until smooth and blended. Use a whisk. Slowly add the beef broth until the gravy is thickened, cooking at least 5 minutes to get rid of the raw flour taste. Add the meat mixture and carrots, stir to blend, and add salt and pepper to taste.

Spoon into a 1½ qt casserole or deep pie dish. Spread the mashed potatoes on top and cover evenly to the edge of the casserole. Make a crisscross design with a fork. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes, or until the meat is bubbling hot and the potatoes are browned. Don't get uptight if the potatoes don't brown that much.

If you make enough of the meat/vegetable mixture for a second meal you have two options: 1) If you are a purist, place ½ the leftover meat/vegetable mixture covered in the icebox. When ready to use again, make a new batch of mashed potatoes and proceed as before. 2) You can just make two casserole dishes with mashed potatoes. Cover the second dish and refrigerate. 3) If you can't be bothered, just cook everything, serve selectively from one half the casserole, then cover the remaining casserole and place in the icebox. Reheat when you are ready for a second meal. I usually can't be bothered, so prefer the second method.

Shepherd's pie with Hamburger

1½ lb hamburger

The same recipe, but substitute the hamburger for the lamb.

Braised Lamb Shanks

4 lamb shanks
2 Tbs flour
2 Tbs vegetable oil
2 cups diced white onions
2 cups dry red wine
1 cup balsamic vinegar
1/3 cup olive oil
4 cloves garlic, pressed
2 lemons, quartered
1 cup diced carrots
1/4 cup diced celery
2 14.5 oz cans diced tomatoes
1 Tbs kosher salt
1 Tbs cracked black pepper
1 bunch fresh basil, chopped
1/4 tsp thyme
1/2 tsp rosemary

Preheat the oven to 300°F.

Place flour in a plastic bag. Place shanks in the bag and shake well to coat them evenly. Brown the shanks well in hot fat in a large skillet. You may have to brown two at a time. The shanks are big. Remove the shanks momentarily.

Place the diced onions in a layer in the bottom of a Dutch oven or medium roasting pan with a lid. Scatter the diced carrots and celery on the onions. Nestle the lamb shanks in the vegetables. Pour the wine, balsamic vinegar and olive oil over the lamb. Place a clove of pressed garlic next to each shank, and a quarter of a lemon on each side. Pour the tomatoes over everything, then season with salt, pepper, thyme, rosemary, and basil.

Cover and place in the preheated oven. Cook for 3-4 hours. Use juices and thoroughly cooked vegetables from the pan to make a nice flavorful gravy.

You can save an hour of cooking by heating the Dutch oven up on top of the stove before placing it in the oven.

Serve with mashed potatoes and a green vegetable.

Spanish-Style Lamb Stew

3 lb boneless lamb stew meat (preferably shoulder), cut into 1" chunks
salt
pepper
3 Tbs extra virgin olive oil
2 medium or 1 large onion, chopped
1 large red bell pepper, stemmed, seeded and chopped
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 Tbs smoked paprika, preferably picante (hot) or agridulce (medium)
1 28 oz can whole peeled tomatoes, with their juice
¾ cup red wine, preferably Rioja, but Merlot works
3 cups chicken stock
2 Tbs sherry vinegar or red wine vinegar
3 bay leaves
2 16 oz cans cooked white beans, rinsed and drained
¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

Warm oil in a large (at least 5 qt) heavy-bottom pot with a lid or Dutch oven over medium-high heat. When oil is hot, sprinkle lamb generously with salt and pepper and cook in two batches to avoid overcrowding, turning once or twice, until each piece is well browned all over, about 15 minutes total. Transfer pieces to a plate as they brown.

Pour off all but 2 Tbs of fat and add onions, bell pepper, garlic and a generous sprinkle of salt and pepper. Cook, stirring occasionally, until onions and peppers are softened, about 5 minutes. Add pimentón and stir for a minute. Stir in tomatoes, breaking them into bite-size pieces and scraping browned bits from the pot. Add wine, chicken stock, vinegar and bay leaves and bring just to a boil.

Return lamb to pot and reduce heat so mixture is bubbling very gently. Partly cover pot and cook, stirring every 20 minutes or so, until lamb is very tender, about 2 hours. Discard bay leaves. Stir in beans and cook another 10 minutes to heat them through. Stir in parsley and adjust the seasoning if necessary.

Yield: 6 servings.

Lamb Vindaloo

2 Tbs coriander seed
1 Tbs cumin seed
10 black peppercorns
½ tsp cardamon seed
1 cinnamon stick, crumbled
2 tsp mustard seed
½ tsp cloves
½ tsp cayenne
1 Tbs turmeric
14 garlic cloves, crushed
1 ginger (fresh), 2", chopped
1 cup red wine vinegar
6 bay leaves
2 lb lamb, cubed
2 medium onions
2 lb tomatoes, crushed
2 Tbs butter
1 cup water
2 medium potatoes

Lightly roast the first seven spices by frying with no oil for a minute or so, stirring constantly. Do not scorch the seeds. Grind the spices in a mortar and pestle or high speed grinder. Combine them into a paste with the other spices, the garlic, ginger and ¼ cup red wine vinegar in a blender or food processor. Add the bay leaves to the marinade. Add the lamb to the marinade and mix well. Seal in a plastic bag to marinate overnight. Refrigerate for 24 hours while mixing every few hours as convenient.

Heat the oil in a heavy bottomed pan and fry the onions over a medium heat until golden brown. Remove lamb from the marinade bag. Add the lamb to the pan and fry for 15 minutes until golden. Be careful not to splatter since the marinade residue can stain.

Stir in the tomatoes and fry until all the liquid has been absorbed and the oil appears on the surface.

Add the remaining wine vinegar and water, bring to the boil, cover and cook over a medium-low heat for 40 minutes until the meat is tender.

Cube the potatoes and cook in boiling water until tender. Serve the lamb on top of the potatoes. This recipe can be halved with not much trouble.

Lamb Curry

2 lb boneless (or 3 lb bone-in), lamb stew meat, lamb shanks, and/or lamb shoulder steaks
2 onions, chopped (about 3-4 cups)
3-5 cloves of garlic, crushed
2-3 Tbs ghee (clarified butter), or 1 Tbs olive oil with 1 Tbs butter
2-3 Tbs curry powder (to taste)
2 tsp salt
1 Tbs black pepper
1 Tbs ground coriander
1 Tbs cumin
1 tsp fresh rosemary, chopped
1 tsp thyme, dried
2 slices of lemon, with rind (use 3 slices if using Meyer lemons)
2 peeled and chopped apples, preferably tart green Granny Smith apples (about 2 cups)
¼ cup of golden raisins
1½ cups chicken stock
1½ lb small potatoes, quartered
cooked rice to serve

Heat the ghee or the butter-with-olive-oil in a large, thick-bottomed pot (with cover) or Dutch oven on medium-high. Working in batches if necessary, brown the meat well on all sides and remove it from pan.

Lower the heat to medium low and add the curry powder to the ghee or oil. Cook gently for a minute or two. Add onions and garlic and cook 5 minutes.

Return the lamb to the pan, and add the coriander, black pepper, cumin, rosemary, thyme, sliced lemon, apples, raisins, chicken stock, and salt. Bring to a simmer, lower the heat to low, and cover the pot. (You can also put the pot in a 300°F oven).

Check at 2 hours to see if the meat is falling off the bone. It should be starting to do so.

Add the potatoes and cook for another 45 minutes.

To serve, you can pull the meat off the bones or leave it on. Taste for salt and add some more curry powder or add cayenne if you want things spicier.

Serve over cooked rice.

Lamb Shanks in Wine with Herbs

6 (12-16-oz) lamb shanks, trimmed of fat
2 Tbs vegetable oil
3 carrots, peeled and cut into 2" pieces
2 onions, sliced thick
2 celery ribs, cut into 2" pieces
4 garlic cloves, minced
2 Tbs tomato paste
1 Tbs herbes de Provence
2 cups dry red wine such as Cotes du Rhone
3 cups low-sodium chicken broth

Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350°F. Pat lamb shanks dry and season with salt. Heat oil in Dutch oven over medium-high heat until just smoking. Brown half of shanks on all sides, 7 to 10 minutes. Transfer shanks to large plate and repeat with remaining Tbs oil and remaining lamb shanks.

Drain all but 2 Tbs fat off pan. Add carrots, onions, celery, garlic, tomato paste, herbes de Provence, and pinch salt and cook until vegetables are just starting to soften, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in wine, then broth, scraping up browned bits on bottom of pan, and bring to simmer. Nestle shanks, along with any accumulated juices, into pot.

Bring to simmer, cover pot, transfer to oven, and cook for 1½ hours. Uncover and continue to cook until tops of shanks are browned, about 30 minutes. Flip shanks and continue to cook until remaining sides are browned and fork slips easily in and out of shanks, 15 to 30 minutes longer.

Remove pot from oven and let rest for 15 minutes. Using tongs, transfer shanks and vegetables to large plate and tent with aluminum foil. Skim fat from braising liquid and season with salt and pepper to taste. Return shanks to braising liquid to warm through before serving.

Serve with polenta or mashed potatoes.

Turkish Meatballs (Koftas)

4 cloves garlic, minced
1 tsp kosher salt
1 lb ground lamb
3 Tbs grated onion
3 Tbs chopped fresh parsley
1 Tbs ground coriander
1 tsp ground cumin
½ Tbs ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground allspice
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
¼ tsp ground ginger
¼ tsp ground black pepper
1 cup Panko bread crumbs
1 egg
1 Tbs olive oil

Mash the garlic into a paste with the salt using a mortar and pestle or the flat side of a chef's knife on your cutting board. Mix the garlic into the lamb along with the onion, parsley, coriander, cumin, cinnamon, allspice, cayenne pepper, ginger, and pepper in a mixing bowl until well blended.

Whisk the egg lightly in a bowl. Add the Panko. Blend well into the meat mixture.

Form the mixture into 28 balls. Place the balls onto a baking sheet, cover, and refrigerate at least 30 minutes, or up to 12 hours.

Heat the oil in a heavy skillet, and fry the balls or patties until cooked through and evenly browned. The meatballs should be stirred several times, the patties turned once. Remove them with a slotted spoon to drain. Serve the meatballs hot or at room temperature as an appetizer.

Makes 36 meatballs

Koftas in Tomato Sauce

2 Tbs korma curry paste

2½ cups tomato pasta sauce

½ cup water

3 cups steamed basmati rice, to serve

fresh coriander, to serve

Heat a large heavy-based saucepan over medium heat. Add curry paste. Cook for 2 minutes, stirring, or until aromatic. Add tomato sauce and water. Stir to combine. Add uncooked lamb balls. Bring to the boil. Reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes, shaking pan occasionally to prevent meatballs from sticking.

Spoon steamed rice into serving bowls. Top with meatballs. Sprinkle with coriander.

Korma curry paste is a mixture of many spices. It would be easier to buy a jar at the supermarket or foreign food store.

Indian Lamb Curry

4 Tbs vegetable oil
2 large onions (thinly sliced)
2 large tomatoes (diced)
2 Tbs garlic paste
1 Tbs ginger paste
2 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp garam masala
1 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground turmeric
½ tsp red chili powder
2 lb boneless lamb shoulder or stew meat (cut into 1½" chunks)
½ cup hot water
salt (to taste)
garnish: chopped fresh cilantro
for serving: Naan or steamed basmati rice

Heat the cooking oil in a heavy-bottomed pan over medium heat. When hot, add the onions. Sauté until the onions begin to turn pale golden brown, about 8 minutes. Remove from the oil with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towels. Reserve the oil in the pan and turn off the heat.

In a food processor, pulse the onions into a smooth paste, adding a tsp of water if necessary to blend. Transfer to a separate container and reserve.

Blend the tomatoes, garlic, and ginger pastes together in the food processor until you have a smooth paste. Transfer to a separate container and reserve for later use.

Reheat the oil leftover from frying the onions over medium heat and add the reserved onion paste.

Add the tomato mixture, coriander, garam masala, cumin, turmeric, and red chili powder and mix well. Sauté until the oil begins to separate. This can take up to 10 minutes.

Add the lamb pieces to the mixture, and stir to fully coat. Sauté until the lamb is browned well, about 8 minutes.

Add ½ cup of hot water to the pan and stir to mix well. Bring to a boil, reduce the heat to a simmer, and cover the pan. Cook until the lamb is tender. You will need to keep checking on the lamb as it cooks and adding more water if all the water dries. Stir often to prevent burning. The dish should have a fairly thick gravy when done. Season with salt to taste. This should take roughly 45 minutes.

When the lamb is cooked, garnish with chopped cilantro and serve with naan or hot steamed rice.

Bob Cook's Cajun Salmon

salmon filets
extra virgin olive oil
lemon pepper
Cajun seasoning
garlic powder

Fillet the salmon and then skin the fillets. Pull out the bones that can be felt along the inside of the fillets with pliers or other suitable instrument. King or Red salmon is best, but any salmon species will do ok. Cut the fillets into portions that can easily be turned on a grill.

In a large baking dish or other suitable dish coat the fillets with olive oil, both sides. Sprinkle liberally both sides of the fillet with lemon pepper and garlic powder. Also sprinkle both sides of fillets liberally with Cajun seasoning. (The two seasons together should cover the sides of the fillets from 50 to 100% of the visible surfaces. Lesser application of the pepper seasonings is ok for Northerners or those of Scandinavian descent.) Nothing else is needed.

Cover the fillets with a plastic wrap or other cover and let stand for up to 24 hours in the peppery/oily marinade. Refrigerate, if you expect that more than an hour will pass before grilling.

Grill over a hot fire, about five minutes on a side, longer if fillets are 1" thick or more. A propane burner not subject to flaring is desirable; however, regular charcoal grilling will be fine. Mesquite or alder wood chips can be used; however, they do not seem to add too much to the Cajun seasoning. After turning fillets on the grill, baste the browned side with the remaining marinade. Do not overcook. Remove thinner fillets so as not to allow them to dry out. The olive oil should prevent the fillets from sticking to the grill.

Serve hot or as warm as possible. Ice water, Marled or cold beer goes well with this Cajun salmon.

The brand of Cajun seasoning is important. The best is "Cajun's Choice" from Louisiana Foods. It is also referred to as a Creole Seasoning on the label. (Cajuns Choice, Louisian Foods, Inc. Box 21716, Baton Rouge, LA 70894, Telephone 800-942-2586). The producer says that they will send free Cajun recipes if you send them a self-addressed envelope. The seasoning contains the following ingredients: "Some salt, red, black and white peppers, little bit of garlic, touch of paprika and other spices and no MSG." It seems to be mostly red pepper.

Shrimp and Feta Cheese (One of Amy's Favorites)

1 Tbs olive oil
1 clove garlic
2 medium tomatoes, seeded and diced
1 Tbs tomato paste
½ cup dry white wine
¼ tsp crushed dried oregano
2 bay leaves
dash crushed red pepper flakes
½ to ¾ lb large raw shrimp, shelled and deveined
freshly ground white pepper
½ cup crumbled feta cheese
cooked orzo (P&R Rosa Marina-30)

I am fairly lazy and usually buy the shrimp that has been cut and deveined. If you buy the raw unprocessed shrimp cut of the scale and devein the shrimp. Put aside for a moment.

While this recipe is cooking prepare a cup of uncooked rice or orzo. A recipe for orzo is included on page 216.

Heat the oil in a large skillet. Add the garlic and tomatoes and sauté over medium heat until tender, about 5 minutes.

Add the tomato paste, wine, oregano, bay leaves and red pepper flakes. Bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium-high and cook mixture until slightly thickened, about 2 minutes.

Add the shrimp and reduce heat to low. Cover and simmer until the shrimp are done, about 10 minutes.

Remove from the heat and discard the bay leaves.

Season to taste with pepper.

Immediately sprinkle on feta cheese so it melts from the heat of the sauce.

Spoon orzo onto 2 plates and spoon shrimp with sauce over top.

Shrimp and Rice with Curry Sauce

1 large onion, minced
7 Tbs butter
¾ cup long grain rice
2 cups hot white fish stock or 1½ cups hot clam juice + ½ cup dry white wine
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp thyme
pinch pepper
1 lb small shrimp, cooked, shelled, and deveined
3 Tbs flour
1 Tbs curry powder
2 cups hot chicken stock or hot chicken broth
½ cup heavy cream
½ cup slivered blanched toasted almonds
½ cup golden raisins
1 tsp grated lemon rind

In a saucepan cook the minced onion in 4 Tbs butter over moderate heat until softened. Add the rice and, stirring to coat, cook for 5 minutes.

Stir in the hot fish stock with the salt, thyme, and pepper to taste. Simmer, covered, for 20-25 minutes, until the rice is tender and the liquid is absorbed.

Stir in the shrimp and transfer the mixture to a buttered 1½-quart baking dish. Keep the mixture warm and covered in a preheated slow oven (300°F).

In a saucepan melt 3 Tbs butter, stir in the flour and curry powder. Cook the roux over low heat, stirring, for 3 minutes.

Remove the pan from the heat, add the chicken stock and heavy cream in a stream, whisking vigorously, and whisk sauce until it is thick and smooth. Simmer the sauce, stirring, for 10 minutes.

Add the almonds, raisins, and grated lemon rind.

Invert a serving plate over the baking dish and invert the rice mixture onto the plate. Ladle ½ cup of the fish sauce over it. Serve the remaining fish sauce in a heated sauceboat. Serves 6.

Baked Fish Fillets

8 skinless, boneless, fillets of flounder or sole, about 1¾ lb
salt
pepper to taste
3 Tbs butter
4 tsp finely chopped shallots
¼ cup dry white wine
¼ cup heavy cream
¼ cup fine fresh bread crumbs
1 Tbs finely chopped parsley

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Sprinkle the fish fillets lightly with salt and pepper. Roll each of the fillets compactly.

Grease a baking dish large enough to hold the fish rolls in a single layer. Grease the bottom of the dish with 1 Tbs of butter, salt, pepper, and 3 tsp of shallots. Arrange the fish rolls over this bed, seam side down

Pour wine and cream over the fish.

Sprinkle the fish evenly with salt, pepper, bread crumbs, parsley, and the remaining tsp of shallots.

Melt the remaining 2 Tbs butter and pour over all. Place in the oven and bake 20 minutes or until fish rolls are cooked and the crumbs are lightly browned.

Carole's Almond Fish

2 oz almonds
1 whole egg
salt
pepper
Tilapia fillets
juice of a lemon
parsley

I did some culinary experimentation this weekend. If you ever want to bake something, especially fish, with breading but don't want to use breadcrumbs, try this instead.

Chop the almonds in a food processor or blender until they are quite fine.

Mix with a little salt and pepper

Beat the egg. Dip the fish in the egg. Then dredge the filets in the seasoned almond crumbs.

Bake in a greased dish.

Bake at 370 for about 30 minutes.

I added chopped parsley afterwards, but you could add that to the almond crumbs before baking.

I drizzled some fresh squeezed lemon juice on top after I took it out of the oven.

YUMMY! A low carb and healthful alternative to breadcrumbs!!

Marinated Swordfish

2 lb swordfish steaks

Marinade

½ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup soy sauce
¼ cup fresh orange juice
¼ cup fresh lemon juice
1 tsp freshly grated lemon peel
2 Tbs grated fresh ginger
6 cloves garlic, minced

Combine all ingredients for the marinade. Arrange steaks in large glass baking dish. Prick the fish in several places with a fork, and cover with the marinade. Refrigerate for 1 to 3 hours, turning at least twice.

Grill 6 minutes per side, brushing frequently with the marinade. Or, you may pan fry the steaks for 5 to 6 minutes per side on a hot skillet using 1 Tbs butter and 2 Tbs olive oil. Pan frying is the way Amy does it. She uses a non-stick frying pan.

Lemon Curry Fish

4 Tbs unsalted butter
4 garlic cloves, finely grated or minced
1½ Tbs minced thyme leaves
1½ tsp curry powder
1½ tsp grated ginger
¼ tsp fine sea salt, more as needed
¾ tsp finely grated lemon zest
ground black pepper, to taste
4 (6-oz) blackfish, flounder or hake fillets
fresh lemon juice, for serving
dill fronds or fresh parsley, for serving

Heat the broiler. In a small saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Stir in garlic, thyme, curry powder, ginger and ¼ tsp salt; heat until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in lemon zest.

Season fish with salt and pepper and place on a rimmed baking sheet. Pour sauce over fish and broil until fish is flaky and cooked through, about 5 minutes. Top with a squeeze of lemon juice and fresh dill, and serve.

Ina's Lobster Corn Chowder

3 (1½ lb) cooked lobsters, cracked and split
3 ears corn
6 Tbs (¾ stick) unsalted butter
1 cup chopped yellow onion
¼ cup cream sherry
1 tsp sweet paprika
4 cups whole milk
2 cups heavy cream
1 cup dry white wine
1 Tbs good olive oil
¼ lb bacon, large-diced
2 cups large-diced unpeeled Yukon gold potatoes (2 medium)
1½ cups chopped yellow onions (2 onions)
2 cups diced celery (3 to 4 stalks)
1 Tbs kosher salt
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
2 tsp chopped fresh chives
¼ cup cream sherry

Remove the meat from the shells of the lobsters. Cut the meat into large cubes and place them in a bowl. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate. Reserve the shells and all the juices that collect. Cut the corn kernels from the cobs and set aside, reserving the cobs separately.

For the stock, melt the butter in a stockpot or Dutch oven large enough to hold all the lobster shells and corncobs. Add the onion and cook over medium-low heat for 7 minutes, until translucent but not browned, stirring occasionally. Add the sherry and paprika and cook for 1 minute. Add the milk, cream, wine, lobster shells and their juices, and corn cobs and bring to a simmer. Partially cover the pot and simmer the stock over the lowest heat for 30 minutes. (I move the pot halfway off the heat.)

Meanwhile, in another stockpot or Dutch oven, heat the oil and cook the bacon for 4 to 5 minutes over medium-low heat, until browned and crisp. Remove with a slotted spoon and reserve. Add the potatoes, onions, celery, corn kernels, salt, and pepper to the same pot and saute for 5 minutes. When the stock is ready, remove the largest pieces of lobster shell and the corn cobs with tongs and discard. Place a strainer over the soup pot and carefully pour the stock into the pot with the potatoes and corn. Simmer over low heat for 15 minutes, until the potatoes are tender. Add the cooked lobster, the chives and the sherry and season to taste. Heat gently and serve hot with a garnish of crisp bacon.

Scallops and Mushrooms in Cream Sauce

3 Tbs butter
2 pints (12) ocean scallops
salt
freshly ground pepper
2 Tbs finely chopped shallots
2 cups (8 medium) quartered or sliced fresh mushrooms
12 cherry tomatoes
¼ cup dry white wine
1 cup heavy cream
1 Tbs finely chopped parsley

Heat 2 Tbs butter in a large skillet. Take care that scallops when added will not be crowded in the pan. If they are too close together they will not “sear” properly and the juices will flow.

When the butter is quite hot and before it browns, add the scallops. Cook over high heat, shaking the skillet and stirring. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Cook about 1 or 2 minutes, until lightly golden all over. The less cooking time the better.

Using a slotted spoon, remove the scallops and keep them warm.

To the skillet add the shallots and cook briefly. Add the mushrooms and cherry tomatoes and cook, stirring often, about 1 minute. Add the wine and reduce the liquid by half, about 5 minutes.

Add the cream, salt and pepper to taste. Cook down over high heat about 3 minutes. Add the scallops. Swirl in the remaining Tbs of butter. Sprinkle with chopped parsley and serve. Serve with rice.

Total time about 15 minutes. Yields four servings. For two people half the scallops and mushrooms.

Hot Honey Shrimp

1 Tbs honey

1/8 tsp cayenne

1/4 tsp grated lime zest

1/4 tsp freshly grated ginger

1 garlic clove, grated on a microplane or finely minced

1/4 tsp kosher salt

1/4 tsp ground black pepper

1 lb cleaned extra-large shrimp, patted very dry with paper towels

1 Tbs very cold butter, cubed

lime wedges, for serving

1 jalapeño, halved, seeded and very thinly sliced, for serving

**1 Tbs chives or scallion greens, finely chopped, for serving
mayonnaise, for serving (optional)**

Heat oven to 500°F.

In a medium bowl, combine honey, cayenne, lime zest, ginger, garlic, salt and pepper. Toss in shrimp to coat.

Spread shrimp on a large rimmed baking sheet and dot with butter. Roast until shrimp is pink and opaque, but before the edges have started to curl, about 5 minutes. Sprinkle generously with fresh lime juice and toss with jalapeños and chives or scallions. Serve with mayonnaise if you like.

Pan-Seared Shrimp With Sweet Soy-Ginger Glaze

12 oz extra-large (21-25) peeled and deveined shrimp (defrosted as needed)

1/8 tsp kosher or sea salt

1/8 tsp freshly ground black pepper

1/8 tsp sugar

1" fresh ginger root

1 scallion

2 tsp canola oil

2 Tbs sweet soy sauce (kecap manis, available in Asian markets)

1 Tbs water

1 1/2 tsp unseasoned rice vinegar

pinch crushed red pepper flakes

Pat the shrimp dry with paper towels and place in a mixing bowl. Season them with the salt, pepper and sugar, tossing to coat evenly.

Peel the ginger, then mince it to yield 2 tsp. Trim the scallion, then cut the white and light-green parts on the diagonal into very thin slices to yield about 3 Tbs.

Heat the oil in a large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat until the oil shimmers.

Meanwhile, whisk together the sweet soy sauce, water, ginger, vinegar, scallion and crushed red pepper flakes in a liquid measuring cup.

Add the shrimp to the skillet; stir-fry for 1 to 2 minutes so the shrimp are just cooked through. Add the sauce mixture, tossing to coat. Cook for about 30 seconds, until fragrant.

Divide among individual plates; serve hot.

Serve with steamed rice and snow peas or sugar snap peas. Leftovers taste great cold.

2 to 3 servings

Crab and Avocado (great summer dish)

½ lb crabmeat, drained, flaked and cartilage removed
½ cup sliced celery
½ cup shredded lettuce
3 Tbs mayonnaise
1 tsp finely chopped onion
½ tsp lemon juice
⅛ - ¼ tsp seafood seasoning or Old Bay
⅛ tsp paprika
2 medium ripe avocado, halved and pitted

In a bowl, combine the first eight ingredients.

(1) Spoon onto avocado halves. Serve immediately.

(2) Alternatively, pit and peel the avocado and cut it into ½" chunks. In a small bowl toss the avocado chunks gently with **1 Tbs lemon juice** and season with salt to taste.

Stand an empty 15-oz can with both top and bottom removed on a serving plate. Scoop a quarter of the avocado into the can. Place ¼ of the crabmeat mix on top and press down gently into the mold. Gently pull the can off the avocado and crab mixture. Repeat with the remaining 3 servings and serve. Garnish each mold with ½ **tsp of chives**.

Serves 4.

Do not use canned crab meat. Buy the chilled crab meat in the butcher's cold case.

Maryland Jumbo Lump Crab Imperial

1 lb jumbo lump crabmeat or lump (do not use canned)
½ cup Hellman's mayonnaise
1 tsp sugar
1 tsp old bay
1 tsp finely chopped Italian parsley
1 large egg lightly beaten
squeeze of lemon juice

Mix mayonnaise, egg, sugar, old bay, lemon juice and parsley together and blend well, this is your imperial sauce. Gently fold crabmeat into imperial sauce, being careful not to break up crab meat. Place portions in baking dish. Bake in 350°F oven for 20-25 minutes (top will turn golden brown) or until a thermometer reaches an internal reading of 165°F.

Allow to cool just a few minutes before serving, it will set and be more flavorful as it cools slightly.

Eastern Shore Crab Imperial

1 lb lump crabmeat, bits of shell and cartilage removed (do not use canned)

2 slices firm-textured white bread

2 Tbs unsalted butter, melted

2 Tbs curly parsley leaves, rinsed and wrung dry in paper toweling

½ tsp salt

⅛ tsp freshly ground black pepper

pinch ground hot red pepper (cayenne)

⅔ cup mayonnaise (use light, if you like)

½ tsp dry mustard

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Lightly coat 6-cup au gratin pan or shallow casserole; set aside. Place the crab in a medium-size mixing bowl and set aside also.

Tear the bread into small chunks, letting them drop into a mini food processor. Using 3 to 4 brisk pulses, reduce to moderately coarse crumbs. Drizzle the melted butter over all and pulse 2 to 3 times to incorporate. The crumbs should now be moderately fine. Tip onto a piece of wax paper and reserve.

Add the parsley, salt, black pepper, and cayenne to the processor (no need to wash the bowl or blade), and pulse briskly 3 to 5 times until the parsley is coarsely chopped.

Add the mayonnaise and mustard and churn until smooth, about 5 seconds. Scoop on top of the crab and toss lightly to mix.

Mound the crab mixture in the scallop shells or spread evenly in the au gratin dish, and scatter the buttered crumbs on top.

Bake uncovered on the middle oven rack until bubbling and touched with brown, 12 to 15 minutes. Serve at once, accompanying with a tartly dressed salad of greens.

Shrimp Avocado Salad

1 Tbs olive oil
1 lb jumbo shrimp, raw, peeled and deveined
1 tsp salt, divided
½ tsp black pepper
¾ tsp chili powder, divided
3 limes, juiced, divided
1 cup sweet corn
½ avocado
¼ cup Greek yogurt
1 cup cilantro, leaves and stems, chopped
2 cloves garlic
1 head romaine lettuce, chopped
2 medium tomatoes, chopped
½ cup red onion, small dice

In a large sauté pan, heat oil over medium-high heat.

In a medium bowl, while the pan is heating, place the shrimp, ½ tsp of the salt, the pepper, ½ tsp of the chili powder, and juice from one of the limes (about 2 Tbs). Toss gently.

Add the shrimp to the pan in batches and sauté for 1 to 2 minutes on each side, until cooked all the way through and pink. Set aside.

Add the corn to the sauté pan. Sprinkle with the remaining ¼ tsp of chili powder, and cook until charred. Set aside.

In the bowl of a food processor, add the avocado, Greek yogurt, cilantro, garlic and juice from the remaining two limes (about 4 Tbs). Process until smooth.

In a large bowl, combine the romaine, tomatoes, onion, corn, and shrimp. Toss gently with the dressing and serve immediately.

Mussels With Pasta

2 lb mussels, farm-raised preferred
3 Tbs butter
2 Tbs all-purpose flour
1½ cups chopped onion
½ cup chopped celery
½ cup chopped green bell pepper
3 cloves garlic, minced, about 1 Tbs of minced garlic
1 can (14.5 oz) diced tomatoes with juice
2 Tbs tomato paste
1 cup low sodium chicken broth or clam juice
2 Tbs lemon juice
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper
pinch oregano
kosher salt or sea salt, to taste**
hot cooked pasta for two (linguine, spaghetti, fettuccine, etc.)
garlic bread or French bread

Scrub the mussels under cold running water and remove any beards they may have. The "beards" on mussels are fibers which help them attach to other mussels and hard surfaces, and are more common on wild mussels. [To remove a beard, just grab it near the mussel and give a good tug.] Farm-raised mussels are already quite clean and they tend to have fewer beards, so don't worry if you don't see any. Discard cracked or damaged mussels, and any that stay open even after light tapping.

In a large stockpot or Dutch oven over low heat, melt the butter. Add the flour and cook, stirring constantly, for 5 to 7 minutes, or until the roux is light brown, or "blonde."

Add the onion, bell pepper, and celery; stir to blend with the roux. Cover and cook over low heat until for 6 to 8 minutes, until the vegetables are softened. Stir occasionally.

Stir in the tomatoes, tomato paste, broth or clam juice, and lemon juice, along with the cayenne and black peppers and oregano. Simmer sauce, uncovered, stirring occasionally, 15 minutes, or until thickened.

Add the mussels to the sauce; stir. Cover and continue simmering over low heat for 5 to 8 minutes, until the mussels open.

Meanwhile, cook the linguine in boiling salted water following package directions. Drain.

Remove the opened mussels to a large bowl and discard any unopened mussels.

Taste the sauce and add kosher salt or sea salt, if needed. The mussels will naturally release some salty liquid into the sauce as they cook, so taste the sauce after the mussels have opened before adding more salt.

Divide the pasta between two wide, shallow bowls. Arrange the mussels around the pasta. Spoon sauce over all.

Serve with garlic bread or French bread. Yield: 2 Main Dish Servings

Lobster Rolls

Lobster or lobster tail sometimes goes on sale. Be prepared to take advantage of the sale. You want cold-water lobster, not warm-water lobster. There is a difference in taste and texture.

2 (7-8 oz) lobster tails
2 Tbs real mayonnaise
juice from ½ a lemon
1 Tbs finely chopped chives
pinch of salt
4-5 Tbs butter
4 New England-style buns (if you can find them!)

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the lobster tails and simmer at a rolling boil for 4-5 minutes, until the tail is bright pink. Remove the tails and let cool a few minutes. Then snap off the end of the tail, and either push the meat through, or cut the shell with scissors and extract the meat. Then give the lobster meat a rough chop.

In a small bowl, whisk together the mayo, lemon juice, the chives and salt. Toss the lobster meat in the mayo and let chill a few minutes while you toast the buns.

Melt 2 Tbs of butter in a small pan, and place the buns side-down right in the pan. Toast each side in the butter, until golden brown.

Pile the lobster meat into each bun and drizzle with the remaining 2-3 Tbs of melted butter. Give the rolls an extra squeeze of lemon juice. Serves four. (or 2, if you pig out)



Shrimp with Olives, Tomatoes, and Orzo

8 oz orzo pasta

3 Tbs olive oil

3 cloves garlic, minced

1 lb ripe fresh tomatoes (about 4 medium tomatoes), chopped (about 3 cups)

1½ cups of chopped ripe black olives

2 Tbs capers (including caper juice)

½ tsp salt

½ tsp black pepper

1 lb medium to large raw shrimp, peeled and deveined

1 cup chopped fresh baby arugula (or ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley)

Cook the pasta: Put a pot of salted water (1 Tbs of salt for 2 quarts of water) on to boil. When the pasta water is at a rolling boil, add the orzo. Once the water returns to a boil, the pasta should take about 8 to 10 minutes to cook to reach al dente (cooked but still a little firm to the bite).

While the water is heating and the pasta is cooking, cook the tomatoes and shrimp in the next steps.

Cook the garlic and tomatoes: Heat 3 Tbs oil in a large, wide sauté pan on medium heat. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant (about 30 seconds). Stir in the chopped tomatoes, increase the heat to medium high, and let cook for about 5 minutes.

Add the olives, capers, salt, pepper: Stir the capers and chopped olives in with the tomatoes. Add 1/2tsp each of salt and pepper.

A few minutes before the orzo is ready, add the shrimp to the tomatoes and olives. Let the shrimp cook on one side for a couple minutes, then turn them over to cook for a minute or two on the other side. Remove from heat as soon as the shrimp are almost cooked through.

Drain the pasta, add to shrimp and tomatoes: When the pasta is al dente, drain it and stir it into the tomatoes and shrimp. Stir in the chopped arugula or parsley.

Crab Cakes

8 oz crab meat (from the grocery refrigerated section, not canned)
½ tsp Old Bay Seasoning
1 egg
1 tsp Worcestershire sauce
⅛ tsp dry mustard
1 Tbs. mayonnaise
½ tsp lemon juice
1½ tsp mustard
1½ tsp melted butter
½ tsp parsley flakes
¼ cup breadcrumbs, Panko, or Ritz crackers, finely crushed

In a large mixing bowl, combine all ingredients except for crab meat. Gently fold in the crab meat, being careful not to break up the lumps. Shape into cakes.

Pan fry or bake at 375°F for 12-15 minutes or until evenly brown on each side and reaches an internal temperature of 165°.

Garlicky Shrimp and Soba Noodles

12 oz soba noodles
1 lb medium shrimp, peeled and deveined
kosher salt
freshly ground black pepper
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
3 pieces ginger, peeled and cut into matchsticks
1 bunch scallions, cut into 1" pieces
3 garlic cloves, thinly sliced
2 Tbs low-sodium soy sauce
2 Tbs dry white wine
2 Tbs honey
2 Tbs sesame oil (optional)

In a large pot of boiling water, cook soba noodles according to package directions.

Season shrimp with salt and pepper and set aside.

Meanwhile, in a large skillet over high heat, heat oil. Add ginger and cook until softened and flavor infuses oil, 5 minutes. Reduce heat to medium-high and add scallions and garlic. Cook, stirring to prevent garlic from burning, 2 minutes. Add shrimp and sear on both sides until just barely pink. Transfer to a plate.

Add soy sauce, wine, and honey to skillet. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer until mixture becomes a thick sauce, about 5 minutes. Add shrimp and noodles and toss. Drizzle with sesame oil (if using) and serve.

Crab and Shrimp Bisque

3 Tbs butter
2 Tbs chopped green onion
2 Tbs chopped celery
3 Tbs all-purpose flour
2½ cups milk
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper
1 Tbs tomato paste
1 cup heavy whipping cream
8 oz crab meat
4-8 oz small cooked shrimp or other seafood
2 Tbs sherry wine

Melt the butter in a Dutch oven or large saucepan over medium-low heat; add the chopped green onion and celery. Saute, stirring, until tender.

Blend the flour into the butter and vegetables until well incorporated. Continue cooking, stirring, for about 2 minutes.

Warm the milk in another saucepan over medium heat.

Slowly stir in the warmed milk and continue cooking and stirring until thickened.

Add the freshly ground black pepper, tomato paste, and heavy cream.

If desired, puree the soup in a blender or food processor at this point and then return it to the saucepan.

Stir in the crab, shrimp, and the sherry. Bring to a simmer. Serve hot.

Salmon Salad

½ cup mayonnaise
½ cup chopped celery
the whites of 2 spring onions
¾ tsp dried dill
2 tsp Dijon mustard
2 Tbs capers, drained
1 Tbs fresh lemon juice
1 14 oz can chilled salmon
salt
pepper to taste

Mix the first seven ingredients in a bowl. Flake and add the salmon. Salt and pepper to taste.

Serve on leaves of lettuce.

Shrimp Étouffée

Optional Shrimp Stock:

shells from 2 lb of shrimp
½ large onion, chopped
top and bottom from 1 green pepper
2 garlic cloves, chopped
1 celery stalk, chopped
5 bay leaves

Étouffée:

2 lb shrimp, shell on (remove shells for use in the shrimp stock, if not making your own stock, you can get shrimp already shelled)
¼ cup vegetable oil or lard
heaping ¼ cup flour
½ large onion, chopped
1 bell pepper, chopped
1-2 jalapeno peppers, chopped
1 large celery stalk, chopped
4 garlic cloves, chopped
1 pint shrimp stock (see above), or clam juice or pre-made fish or shellfish stock
1 Tbs Cajun seasoning
½ teaspoon celery seed
1 Tbs sweet paprika
salt
3 green onions, chopped
hot sauce (Crystal or Tabasco) to taste

Pour 2 quarts of water into a pot and add all the shrimp stock ingredients. Bring to a boil, drop the heat down and simmer the stock gently for 45 minutes. Strain through a fine-meshed sieve into another pot set over low heat. You will have extra stock, which you can use for soup, risotto, etc. It will last in the fridge for a week.

To make the etouffee, start by making a roux. Heat the vegetable oil or lard in a heavy pot over medium heat for 1 to 2 minutes. Stir in the flour, making sure there are no clumps. Let this cook, stirring often, until it turns a very brown; this should take about 10 minutes or so.

Add the celery, green pepper, jalapeño and onion, mix well and cook this over medium heat for 4 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the garlic and cook another 2 minutes.

Slowly add the hot shrimp stock, stirring constantly so it incorporates. The roux will absorb the stock and seize up at first, then it will loosen. Add enough stock to make a sauce about the thickness of syrup, about 1 pint.

Add the Cajun seasoning, celery seed and paprika and mix well. Add salt to taste, then mix in the shrimp. Cover the pot, turn the heat to its lowest setting and cook for 10 minutes.

Add the green onions and hot sauce to taste. Serve over white rice.

Shrimp and Tomatoes

1 lb large (or extra large) frozen shrimp, thawed, peeled and deveined
4 Tbs butter
1 Tbs Extra-virgin olive oil
4-5 cloves garlic, minced
½ cup white wine (like a sauvignon blanc)
1½ cup cherry tomatoes, halved
1 pinch red pepper flakes
1 lemon
coarse salt
crusty bread and a green salad, for serving

Melt 2 Tbs butter and 1 Tbs oil in a large sauté pan. Add the garlic and tomatoes, and sauté for 30 seconds, until fragrant. Add the remaining butter, wine and crushed red pepper to the pan, and let the tomatoes and garlic simmer for 2-3 minutes, until the tomatoes begin to wilt.



Add the shrimp to the pan and season with a good pinch of salt. Squeeze half the lemon into the pan and let the shrimp cook about two minutes, until opaque. Stir in the parsley and give it a taste. Need more lemon? More salt? Season it to your liking.

Serve with toasted crusty bread and a simple green salad.

Serves about 4.

Aloo Palak
(creamed spinach and potatoes)

12 oz fresh spinach
4 garlic flakes
1" ginger piece
2 onions, chopped
4 green chilies, chopped
½ lb or 2 large potatoes
1 tsp turmeric
4 Tbs ghee or butter
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp garam masala
1 tsp coriander
1 tsp cumin powder
1 Tbs fresh cream
Salt to taste

Boil the spinach with garlic, ginger, onions, and green chilies. Blend them to a coarse puree and set aside.

Peel, then cut potatoes into cubes and boil with salt and turmeric. When boiled, set aside.

Heat ghee or butter in a pan. Fry the cumin seeds along with the spinach-onion paste for few minutes.

Now add the boiled potatoes, garam masala, and coriander-cumin powder. If the mixture is too dry, add a little water. Boil for few minutes until the potatoes absorb the flavor.

Season with fresh cream if desired.

Serve hot with hot naan bread or rice.

Aloo Gobhi
(cauliflower and potatoes)

¼ cup vegetable oil
2 large onions, sliced
1 oz ginger root, minced
5 to 6 cloves of garlic, minced
1 tsp salt
½+ Tbs Dick's Curry Powder or
 ½ tsp cayenne pepper
 ½ tsp turmeric
 ½ tsp paprika
 1 tsp garam masala
2 medium tomatoes, sliced
2 lb fresh cauliflower, cut up, approximately ½ a head
2 large potatoes, cut into 1" cubes
1 cup frozen peas
½ cup cilantro, chopped

In a large saucepan, heat the oil and sauté the onions until light brown. Add the ginger and garlic and cook 2 to 3 minutes.

Reduce the fire to low; add the salt, spices and tomatoes and then the cauliflower and potatoes. Mix thoroughly and cover.

Cook 15-20 minutes, stirring periodically, until the potatoes are done. Add the peas, stir, and cover for another 4 to 5 minutes. Add the cilantro, stir and serve. Makes 6 servings.

Campbell's Green Bean Casserole

1 can (10¾ oz) Campbell's Condensed Cream of Mushroom Soup

½ cup milk

1 tsp soy sauce

Dash ground black pepper

4 cups (1½ lb) cooked cut fresh green beans

1⅓ cups French's® French Fried Onions

Mix the soup, milk, soy, black pepper, beans and ⅔ cup onions in 1½-qt casserole. Bake at 350°F. for 25 min. or until hot.

Sprinkle with the remaining onions. Bake an additional 5 min.

You can find this recipe in any cookbook. It is so simple. But, it is good.

Vegetable Curry

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

½ cup chopped onion

3 Tbs Chopped unsweetened coconut

4 tsp curry powder

2-3 cloves minced garlic

2 cups water

2 lbs assorted raw vegetables cut into bite-sized pieces

3 cups tomatoes, peeled and diced

2 tsp kosher salt

4 tsp sugar

***Optional:* dash of thyme**

Heat the oil in a large skillet with cover. Add the onion, coconut, curry powder and garlic. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is tender.

Add the vegetable, tomatoes, water, salt, sugar and a dash of thyme if you are adventurous. Cover tightly and cook over low heat until vegetables are tender, between 30 and 45 minutes. Don't overcook to the point where the vegetables turn to mush. You want them on the firm side.

Serves 6.

Dan's Curry
(cauliflower and potatoes)

1 Tbs peanut oil or ghee (clarified, seasoned butter)
1 cup onions, minced
2-3 cloves garlic, pressed or minced
1 tsp mustard seeds
½ tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp coriander powder
1 Tbs fresh(!) ginger, chopped
1 jalapeno pepper, minced finely
1½ lbs cauliflower, chopped
1 lb potatoes, cubed
1 tsp turmeric
2 tomatoes, peeled and seeded [douse for 10 sec in boiling water]
handful fresh cilantro, chopped
½ tsp garam masala

Fry the onions in the oil for a few minutes.

Add the garlic, then the spices, ginger, and jalapeno. Keep frying until nicely browned and the seeds are popping.

Add the cauliflower a little at a time, so it doesn't all flood the pan. Then toast it well.

Add the potatoes and turmeric. [Should turn a nice yellow.] The potatoes won't cook well since there'll be no fat left, so add the chopped tomatoes and enough water to cover. Cover and braise 10 minutes or so.

Add the cilantro and cover for 5 to 10 minutes more, until the potatoes are done.

Take from the heat, add the garam masala [and a little sugar if you want] and serve over...

Serves 5 or so

Harvard Beets

2 lb beets - this seems to be the size of a bunch bought in the store

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup beet cooking water

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup sugar

2 Tbs corn starch

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup wine vinegar

4 Tbs butter

Wear an apron to make this recipe. Beet juice stains are hard to remove.

Cut the leaves to within 1" of the tops of the beets, no more. Place in a large saucepan with water to just cover the beets. Gently boil, covered, for 40 to 50 minutes. Remove the beets to cool for a few moments. Reserve $\frac{2}{3}$ cup of the cooking fluid. Slice the tops and bottoms off of the beets, then slip them out of their skins. The skins should come off easily.

Cut the beets into $\frac{1}{4}$ " thick slices. If they are large cut the slices into fourths. Alternatively, cut thick slices and slice these to make small cubes.

Mix the other ingredients in a saucepan. Heat, smooth the texture, and stir until the mixture thickens and bubble.

Add the beets. Heat thoroughly. Be sure the beet slices separate and are coated individually.

Serves 4 or 5.

Reheats well.

Lemon Lima Bean Bake

1 medium onion, chopped

½ clove garlic, minced

3 Tbs butter, melted

6 Tbs brown sugar, firmly packed

⅓ cup fresh lemon juice = 1 lemon

1 tsp dry mustard

1½ tsp salt

1 Tbs Worcestershire sauce

½ cup catsup

½ tsp garlic salt

2 10 oz packages frozen lima beans

½ recipe

(2 Tbs butter for half recipe)

(3 Tbs brown)

(½ lemon)

(½ tsp dry mustard)

(1 package of lima beans)

This recipe is better with the Fordhook, large lima beans, not the baby limas.

Cook the lima beans according to directions, reserving ⅓ cup of the liquid.

Sauté the onion and garlic in butter in a small saucepan over medium heat until lightly browned.

Stir the sugar and seasonings into the sautéed onions and heat until boiling.

Place the lima beans and liquid in a baking dish. Pour sauce over the beans.

Cover and bake at 350°F for 45 minutes.

This recipe can be halved. Use the amounts shown in parentheses.

Pauline's New Orleans Red Beans and Rice

By old New Orleans tradition, red beans and rice was served every Monday in working class homes. This was because Monday was wash day, and all the effort of the day was concentrated on dirty laundry. The red beans could be left slowly cooking the whole day long, with little or no attention from the over-worked woman of the house. Old-fashioned cafes, up-market bistros and now all classes of homes still feature this Monday treat in the Crescent City.

1 lb red kidney beans
1 Tbs bacon fat
1 large onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 lb smoked sausage
1 ham bone or ½ cup diced ham
2 bay leaves
1 tsp cumin
red and black pepper to taste (be brave!)
salt
freshly cooked rice

Rinse the beans and pick them over for small stones. Cover with cold water and soak overnight.

Drain the beans, discarding the water.

In a large, heavy saucepan, melt the bacon fat and sauté the onion and garlic over medium heat until just starting to brown. Remove from the pan and set aside.

Add the sausage to the pan and sauté until well browned.

*Return the vegetables to the pan and add the soaked beans, ham bone or ham, enough water to cover, the bay leaves, cumin, and red and black pepper. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat then reduce to a simmer. Partially cover the pan and let cook for two hours, stirring occasionally and topping up with water as necessary.

Add salt to taste and cook at least another hour. The beans are done when they are very soft and literally slip out of their skins and the entire stew is a mushy, thick mess.

Serve over hot rice with buttered cornbread on the side and a bottle of Tabasco in easy reach for those who like to feel the heat. Serves 6-8.

Note: Six slices chopped bacon may be substituted for the ham. Until you know how hot you like your beans and rice, try starting with about $\frac{1}{16}$ th of a tsp of red and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of black pepper.

Dick's Note: Long cooking does not hurt this recipe. Starting at the point (*) you can place everything left in a Crockpot, add water to just cover (~3 cups), and cook on low for 8-9 hours.

Ina's Potato Salad

3 lbs small white potatoes
Kosher salt
1 cup mayonnaise
¼ cup buttermilk
2 Tbs Dijon mustard
2 Tbs whole-grain mustard
½ cup chopped fresh dill
Freshly ground black pepper
¾ cup chopped celery
¾ cup chopped red onion

Place the potatoes and 2 Tbs of salt in a large pot of water. Bring the water to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, until the potatoes are barely tender when pierced with a knife. Drain the potatoes in a colander, then place the colander with the potatoes over the empty pot and cover with a clean, dry kitchen towel. Allow the potatoes to steam for 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, buttermilk, Dijon mustard, whole grain mustard, dill, 1 tsp of salt, and 1 tsp of pepper. Set aside.

When the potatoes are cool enough to handle, cut them in quarters or in half, depending on their size. Place the cut potatoes in a large bowl. While the potatoes are still warm, pour enough dressing over them to moisten. Add the celery and red onion, 2 tsp of salt and 1 tsp of pepper. Toss well, cover, and refrigerate for a few hours to allow the flavors to blend. Serve cold or at room temperature.

Vivian's Lentil and Potato Stew

1 cup lentils, washed and any foreign matter removed
4 cups water
1 tsp salt
1 bay leaf
1 Tbs butter
1 Tbs olive oil
2 to 3 large potatoes, peeled and cut into ½ “ cubes
1 tsp turmeric
¼ tsp cayenne, or to taste
¼ tsp salt
freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 large ripe tomatoes, peeled and chopped or 1 16 oz can whole tomatoes drained and chopped
2 tsp garam masala (A reasonable facsimile of garam masala can be made by mixing 1 tsp cumin, 1 tsp chili powder and a pinch of black pepper.)
1 tsp sugar or honey
water, if necessary

In a medium-sized saucepan, combine the lentils, water, salt, and bay leaf. Bring the ingredients to a boil, reduce the heat to medium-low, and simmer the lentils for 30 minutes or until they are just soft (uncovered). **Do not drain the lentils.** Discard the bay leaf, and set the lentils and broth aside.

In a Dutch oven or large saucepan with a non-stick surface, heat the butter and oil briefly, and add the potatoes. Sprinkle them with the turmeric, cayenne, salt, and pepper. Cook the potatoes, tossing them, over medium heat for about 5 minutes.

Add the tomatoes, the reserved lentils and their broth, the garam masala, and the sugar or honey to the potatoes.

Cook the stew over medium-low heat for 10-15 minutes or until the potatoes are tender, stirring the mixture from time to time and adding water if the stew seems too dry.

This recipe is meant to be meatless, but if you prefer some meat, add a 1 lb precooked ham steak, cut into bite-sized pieces in the last step or 1 lb cooked, skinned, boneless chicken second joints or legs. Cooked chicken second joints or legs will also do.

Jane's Bok Choy Salad

2 Tbs soy sauce (low sodium)
½ cup sugar
¼ cup rice wine (or white wine) vinegar
¾ cup olive oil
1 large (or two small) head bok choy
4 green onions (both the green and white parts)
one stick of butter or margarine
1 large (or 2 small) cans of LaChoy rice noodles
2 Tbs sesame seeds (or more, to taste)
2 Tbs slice almonds (or more, to taste)

Dressing

Combine the soy sauce, sugar, rice wine and olive oil in a bowl. Mix well and boil together for one minute. Chill.

Greens

Combine the chopped up bok choy, using the entire bok choy leaf and stalk, plus the onions, thinly sliced.

Topping

Melt (using medium low heat) the butter or margarine in a large skillet. Stir in the rice noodles, sesame seeds, and almond slices. Continue cooking until butter is absorbed and ingredients are slightly browned, stirring all the time so that it does not burn. (Note: it is important to use rice noodles because they stay crisp longer in the dressing.)

Shortly before serving, mix the greens with dressing and then topping so that it is distributed throughout the salad.

Catherine's Creole Eggplant

1 medium to large eggplant
2 slices bacon
1 large onion
1 red bell pepper
1 stalk celery
2 large eggs
1 16 oz skinless, diced, tomatoes
1 bay leaf
1 Tbs brown sugar
salt
pepper to taste
cracker crumbs
1 Tbs butter

Peel and dice the eggplant into ½" cubes. Place the eggplant into water, bring to a boil, and gently cook for 10 minutes. Drain and put aside for the moment.

Fry the bacon until crispy. Remove the bacon and put aside. Leave the bacon drippings in the frying pan.

Dice the onion, pepper, and celery. Saute in the bacon drippings in the frying pan.

Add the tomato, bay leaf, sugar, salt, and pepper. Heat until combined.

Add the eggplant and mix together.

Grease a casserole dish and add the mixture. Top with cracker crumbs and bacon bits. Dot with butter and cook at 350 °F for 25 to 40 minutes.

Doug's Corn Pudding

1½ Tbs unsalted butter
1 cup finely diced yellow onion
3 cups sweet corn kernels (16 oz bag of frozen corn kernels works)
2 eggs, lightly beaten
1 cup cream, milk, or evaporated milk (I use cream)
1 cup grated cheese such as Fontina, cheddar or smoked Gouda (I use cheddar)
2 Tbs chopped parsley (optional)
1 Tbs chopped fresh marjoram or 1 tsp dried marjoram (I use dried)
1 tsp salt
dash freshly ground black pepper
dash sweet paprika

Set the oven rack on the middle rung and preheat to 350.

Lightly butter a 6 cup gratin or baking dish.

In a medium skillet over low heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and cook, stirring occasionally, just until it's soft and lightly colored, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan over high heat, bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Add the corn kernels and cook for 1 minute, regardless of whether the water returns to a boil. Drain and set aside.

In a medium bowl, combine the eggs, cream or milk, corn, cooked onion, cheese, parsley, marjoram and salt. Add pepper to taste. Transfer the mixture to the prepared baking dish and sprinkle with paprika. Bake until it is puffed and golden, about 45 minutes.

Serve warm. Serves 6-8.

You may bake, cook, cover and refrigerate up to 1 day in advance. Reheat covered in a 325°F oven.

Eggplant Parmesan

Eggplant

2 lbs globe eggplant (2 medium), cut crosswise into ¼ in.-thick rounds
1 Tbs kosher salt
8 slices high-quality white bread (about 8 oz), torn into quarters
1 cup grated Parmesan cheese (about 2 oz)
table salt
ground black pepper
1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
4 large eggs
6 Tbs vegetable oil

Tomato Sauce

3 cans (14½ oz each) diced tomatoes
2 Tbs Tbs extra-virgin olive oil
4 medium cloves garlic, minced or pressed, (about 1 generous Tbs)
¼ tsp red pepper flakes
½ cup fresh basil leaves chopped
table salt
ground black pepper

8 oz whole milk mozzarella or part-skim mozzarella, shredded (2 cups)
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese (about 1 oz)
10 fresh basil leaves torn, for garnish

Use kosher salt when salting the eggplant. The coarse grains don't dissolve as readily as the fine grains of regular table salt, so any excess can be easily wiped away. To be time-efficient, use the 30 to 45 minutes during which the salted eggplant sits to prepare the breading, cheeses, and sauce.

Eggplant

Toss half of the eggplant slices and 1½ tsp kosher salt in a large bowl until combined. Transfer the salted eggplant to a large colander set over a bowl. Repeat with the remaining eggplant and kosher salt, placing the second batch in the colander on top of the first. Let stand until the eggplant releases about 2 Tbs liquid, 30 to 45 minutes. Arrange the eggplant slices on a triple layer of paper towels; cover with another triple layer of paper towels. Firmly press each slice to remove as much liquid as possible, then wipe off the excess salt.

While the eggplant is draining, adjust the oven racks to the upper- and lower-middle positions, place rimmed baking sheet on each rack, and heat the oven to 425°F. Pulse the bread in a food processor to fine, even crumbs, about fifteen 1-second pulses (you should have about 4 cups).

Transfer the crumbs to a pie plate and stir in 1 cup Parmesan, ¼ tsp salt, and ½ tsp pepper; set aside. Wipe out the bowl (do not wash) and set aside.

Combine the flour and 1 tsp pepper in a large zipper-lock bag; shake to combine. Beat the eggs in a second pie plate. Place 8 to 10 eggplant slices in the bag with flour; seal the bag and shake to coat the eggplant. Remove the eggplant slices, shaking off excess flour and set on paper towels momentarily.

Remove the preheated baking sheets from the oven and add 3 Tbs of the oil to each sheet, tilting to coat evenly with oil.

Dip the eggplant in the eggs, let the excess egg run off, then coat evenly with bread crumb mixture; set breaded slices on the hot baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining eggplant. Place half of the breaded eggplant on each sheet in a single layer; bake until the eggplant is well browned and crisp, about 30 minutes, switching and rotating the baking sheets after 10 minutes, and flipping the eggplant slices with a wide spatula after 20 minutes. Do not turn off oven.

Tomato Sauce

While the eggplant bakes, process 2 cans of the diced tomatoes in a food processor until almost smooth, about 5 seconds. Heat the olive oil, garlic, and red pepper flakes in a large heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium-high heat for about 3 minutes, stirring occasionally, until fragrant and the garlic is light golden. Stir in the processed and remaining can of diced tomatoes. Bring sauce to a boil, then reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened and reduced, about 15 minutes (you should have about 4 cups). Stir in the basil and season to taste with salt and pepper.

Assembly

Spread 1 cup of the tomato sauce in the bottom of a 13"× 9" baking dish. Layer in half of the eggplant slices, overlapping slices to fit. Distribute 1 cup of the sauce over the eggplant; sprinkle with half of the mozzarella. Layer in the remaining eggplant and dot with 1 cup sauce, leaving the majority of the eggplant exposed so it will remain crisp; sprinkle with ¼ cup of the Parmesan and remaining mozzarella. Bake until bubbling and cheese is browned, 13 to 15 minutes. Cool for 10 minutes; scatter basil over the top, and serve, passing the remaining tomato sauce separately.

Serves 6 to 8.

Tiella **(Italian zucchini casserole)**

1½ lb russet potatoes peeled and cut into ¼" rounds
5 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil plus extra for baking dish
1 lb zucchini
3 Tbs minced garlic
Sea salt, preferably gray salt
Freshly ground black pepper
3½ cups tomato puree, recipe follows
4 Tbs chopped garlic
1 cup freshly grated Parmesan
About 1 cup fine dried bread crumbs
⅓ cup coarsely chopped fresh basil leaves

Place potatoes into a glass bowl, coat lightly with about 2 Tbs of extra-virgin olive oil. Mix to coat.

Trim the ends of the zucchini, then cut lengthwise into ¼"-thick slices. Put in a separate bowl. Top with 3 Tbs of extra-virgin olive oil, and season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Lightly oil a deep 2½ to 3-quart baking dish (about 9"×12"). Then place about ¼ cup of tomato puree and spread out to coat the bottom of the pan.

In zucchini and potato bowls, add 2 Tbs of garlic each and mix in well with a rubber spatula. Using the potatoes and zucchinis, make a layer in the prepared baking dish, alternating between the potato and zucchini, filling in any gaps with small pieces. Spread ½ cup of the tomato puree on top, then sprinkle 2 Tbs of the Parmesan and 2 Tbs of the bread crumbs. Top with some of the basil. Repeat the layering of the vegetables, tomato puree, Parmesan, bread crumbs and basil using all the vegetables. Cover the top with the remaining bread crumbs and Parmesan.

Bake, uncovered, for about ½ an hour, then cover for the next 45 minutes of baking, finally uncovering for the last 15 minutes, until tender and bubbling, about 1½ hours total cooking time. Remove from the oven and let cool to room temperature to allow the dish to settle and deepen in flavor.

Tiella may be served hot, warm, or at room temperature. Reheat in a low oven, if desired. To serve, cut into squares and carefully lift out of the pan with a spatula.

Tomato Puree

20 tomatoes, core removed

Bring 2 large pots of water to a boil. Lower the tomatoes into the water, blanch for 45 seconds to 1 minute. Place blanched tomatoes on a baking sheet, and peel the loosened skins. With a colander over a bowl, squeeze the seeds and innards out of each tomato. Set aside and refrigerate the clear strained liquid for other uses. Slice the peeled tomatoes into 1" chunks, and place chunks into blender. Puree thoroughly. Pour into bowl.

Yield: 10 to 12 cups

Moosewood Garlic Mashed Potatoes

4 cups peeled and diced Yukon Gold or other yellow potato (¼" cubes)

2 to 4 garlic cloves, coarsely chopped

4 to 5 cups water

1 tsp salt

½ cup warmed buttermilk

¼ tsp ground black pepper

In a covered pot, combine the potatoes, garlic, water and salt and bring to a boil on high heat. Reduce the heat and simmer for about 10 minutes, until the potato cubes are soft and knife can be easily inserted and withdrawn.

Drain the potatoes and transfer to a bowl. Mash the potatoes and garlic with the buttermilk. Stir in the pepper. Serve piping hot.

Add more or less garlic, depending on how much garlicky flavor you like.

Serves 4

Total time: 35 minutes

Ina's Potato Salad

3 lbs small white potatoes
Kosher salt
1 cup mayonnaise
¼ cup buttermilk
2 Tbs Dijon mustard
2 Tbs whole-grain mustard
½ cup chopped fresh dill
Freshly ground black pepper
¾ cup chopped celery
¾ cup chopped red onion

Place the potatoes and 2 Tbs of salt in a large pot of water. Bring the water to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer for 10 to 15 minutes, until the potatoes are barely tender when pierced with a knife. Drain the potatoes in a colander, then place the colander with the potatoes over the empty pot and cover with a clean, dry kitchen towel. Allow the potatoes to steam for 15 to 20 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a small bowl, whisk together the mayonnaise, buttermilk, Dijon mustard, whole grain mustard, dill, 1 tsp of salt, and 1 tsp of pepper. Set aside.

When the potatoes are cool enough to handle, cut them in quarters or in half, depending on their size. Place the cut potatoes in a large bowl. While the potatoes are still warm, pour enough dressing over them to moisten. Add the celery and red onion, 2 tsp of salt and 1 tsp of pepper. Toss well, cover, and refrigerate for a few hours to allow the flavors to blend. Serve cold or at room temperature.

Four-Cheese Macaroni

1/3 cup all-purpose flour
2 2/3 cups 1% low-fat milk
3/4 cup (3 oz) Fontina cheese or Swiss cheese
1/2 cup (2 oz) grated fresh Parmesan cheese
1/2 cup (2 oz) shredded extra-sharp cheddar cheese
3 oz light processed cheese (Velveeta works)
1 1/2 cups uncooked elbow macaroni (3 cups cooked)
1/4 tsp salt
cooking spray
1/3 cup crushed onion Melba toasts (about 12 pieces)
1 Tbs soft butter or margarine

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Cook the macaroni in salted water according to instructions on the box.

Place flour in a large saucepan. Gradually add milk, stirring with a whisk until the mixture is blended. Cook over medium heat for 8 minutes or until thick, stirring constantly.

Add cheeses. Cook for 3 minutes or until the cheeses melt, stirring frequently. Remove from the heat.

Stir in the cooked macaroni and salt. Spoon the mixture into a 2-quart casserole coated with cooking spray.

Combine the crushed toasts and margarine in a small bowl, stirring until blended. Sprinkle over the macaroni mixture.

Bake at 375°F for 20 minutes or until bubbly.

Scalloped Potatoes

3 or 6 medium potatoes, pared and thinly sliced (3 or 6 cups)

¼ cup finely chopped onion

⅓ cup all-purpose flour

1½ tsp salt

⅛ tsp ground fresh pepper

1-2 cups whole milk

How many potatoes and how much milk you use in this recipe depends on how much you want to make. For two or three people I will make the recipe using three potatoes and the smaller casserole dish.

Mix the onion, flour, salt, and pepper in a small dish.

Place half the potatoes in a greased 1- or 2-quart casserole. Sprinkle with half the onion-flour mix. Repeat with the rest of the potatoes and onion-flour mix. Pour milk overall just to the top of the potatoes... If desired, sprinkle the top with 3 Tbs buttered fine dry bread crumbs.

Cover and bake at 350° for 1¼ to 1½ hours. Uncover; bake an additional 15 minutes.

Serves 3-6.

This recipe has a tendency to bubble over and get all over the oven. I would place the casserole dish on a plate to solve this problem.

Potato Fennel Gratin

2 small fennel bulbs
1 yellow onion, thinly sliced
2 Tbs olive oil
1 Tbs unsalted butter (plus more for greasing pan)
2 lbs russet potatoes (4 large potatoes)
2 cups plus 2 Tbs cream
2½ cups grated Gruyère cheese (about ½ lb)
1 tsp kosher salt
½ tsp freshly ground black pepper

This is a great recipe from The Barefoot Contessa.

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter the inside of a 10"×15"×2" baking dish.

Remove the stalks from the fennel and cut the bulbs in half lengthwise. Remove the cores and thinly slice the bulbs crosswise. Sauté the fennel and onions in the olive oil and butter on medium low heat until tender.

Peel the potatoes, then thinly slice them by hand or on a mandolin. Mix the sliced potatoes in a large bowl with 2 cups of the cream, 2 cups of the Gruyère, salt and pepper. Add the sautéed fennel and onion and mix well.

Pour the potatoes into the baking dish. Press down to smooth the potatoes. Combine the remaining 2 Tbs of cream and ½ cup of Gruyère and sprinkle over the top.

Bake for 1½ hours, until the potatoes are very tender and the top is browned and bubbly. Allow to set for 10 minutes and serve.

This recipe can be made ahead. Cool the baked dish to room temperature, cover, then refrigerate. Reheat at 350°F, covered, until heated through, about 30 minutes.

Serves 10.

Warm Potato Salad with Goat Cheese

Salad

1½ lbs Yukon gold or red bliss potatoes
salt
freshly ground pepper to taste
2-4 Tbs finely chopped red onion rinsed with cold water and drained
2 Tbs chopped flat-leaf parsley
1-2 oz soft goat cheese
2-3 sage leaves, cut in thin slivers, or a few sprinkles of dried sage (optional)

Dressing

1 Tbs white wine vinegar or sherry vinegar
1 Tbs freshly squeezed lemon juice
salt
pepper to taste
1 tsp Dijon mustard
1 small or medium garlic clove, minced or pureed
⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil

Make the dressing first. You can do this several hours before the potatoes are cooked. Whisk together the lemon juice, vinegar, mustard, salt, pepper, and garlic. Whisk in the olive oil. Taste and adjust seasonings. Set aside. Do not refrigerate, this is a warm dish. I make the dressing in an open-mouthed gravy boat or Pyrex measuring cup, then, a moment before adding it to the potatoes, I nuke it in the microwave for one minute.

Scrub the potatoes and cut into ¾" dice, if large. Steam above 1" of boiling water until tender but not mushy, about 10 to 14 minutes. You do not want the potatoes mushy, but you want them cooked through. Test with a fork. Don't be afraid to break a few pieces. Remove from the heat and, with a large spoon, mix while hot in a bowl with salt and pepper to taste, the onions, parsley, goat cheese, and dressing. Goat cheese is rather salty and brings out the vinegar taste in the dressing, so experiment with how much you like. Sprinkle the sage over the top and serve.

Yield: Serves 4

Stuffed Mushroom Caps

½ - ¾ lb large mushrooms

3-4 Tbs butter

2-3 cloves minced garlic

¼ - ½ tsp salt

pinch - ⅛ tsp pepper

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Wash and trim the end of stems from mushrooms to get the dried ends removed, approximately ⅛". Grasp the remaining stem as close to the cap as possible, wiggle gently to remove the remaining stem. Place the mushroom caps aside for the moment. Dice the stems finely and set aside. To increase the volume of the stem remains I frequently dice finely a few of the whole mushrooms.

In a no-stick, small, frying pan melt the butter. Add the garlic, spices, and the reserved chopped stems. Use low heat. Do not burn the garlic. Cook until the mushroom bits are soft.

Turn the heat off the pan. Fill the mushroom caps with a small spoon. Place on a broiler-safe pan on the highest rack in the oven for 20 minutes. The larger the mushrooms, the longer you have to cook things until the mushrooms are soft. You don't want the mushrooms to be crunchy. Turn the broiler on until things seem to be sizzling, perhaps 5 minutes or so.

Serve from the pan.

There are a myriad of possible additions to this basic recipe. To name a few:

sprinkle with buttered bread crumbs,

add a little crab meat, sardine, or sausage,

add a little cumin or Cajun spice.

I've had spinach and cheese fillings, but I really don't like them.

Emeril's Soccatash

4 Tbs unsalted butter
½ cup diced country ham
1 cup small dice onion
4 cups fresh, sweet corn
1 Tbs minced garlic
2 cups chicken stock
2 tsp fresh thyme
1¼ tsp salt
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
2 cups frozen or fresh lima beans
1 cup peeled, seeded and chopped Roma tomatoes
1 cup heavy cream
1 Tbs chopped fresh parsley

In a heavy-bottomed 10" cast-iron skillet set over medium heat, heat the butter until melted. Add the ham and sauté until lightly caramelized, 2-3 minutes.

Add the onions and cook until soft and translucent, 4-5 minutes. Add the corn and cook, stirring occasionally, for 7-8 minutes. Add the garlic and cook until fragrant, 30-45 seconds. Add the stock, bring to a boil, and then reduce the heat to a simmer. Add the thyme, salt, and cayenne pepper and cook, stirring occasionally, for 7-8 minutes. Add the lima beans and cream and cook for 10 minutes. Add the tomatoes and chopped parsley to the pan and re-season if necessary.

Yield: 4 cups

Avocado and Orange Salad

2 Valencia or navel oranges

1 Florida avocado or 2 regular avocados

juice of 1 lime

½ small red onion, thinly sliced

1 scant Tbs dried oregano, preferably Mexican

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus some for sprinkling

¼ tsp salt

1 tsp of your favorite hot sauce

handful cilantro leaves

Segment the oranges by slicing off the ends with a sharp knife. Put the orange on one end and, with a small, sharp knife, cut off the peel and white pith. Segment the orange by slicing between the membranes. Remove the segments and drop into a bowl. Squeeze the juice out of the remaining membranes into the bowl with the segments. Reserve the juice.

With a dinner knife (not the sharpest knife in your kitchen), cut each halved avocado half lengthwise into segments, cutting through the meat to (not into) the skin. Then cut around the outside of the avocado meat and, using the knife, push the pieces out of the skin and into the bowl with the oranges.

Add the lime juice, red onion, oregano, olive oil, salt, hot sauce and the reserved orange juice. Using a large spoon, mix all the ingredients together so that everything is coated and well combined.

Remove to a serving bowl. Garnish with cilantro leaves and drizzle with more olive oil. Serves 4 as an appetizer or antipasto.

Grilled Eggplant

1 large eggplant
3 Tbs olive oil
2 Tbs balsamic vinegar
2 cloves garlic, very finely minced
1 pinch each thyme, basil, dill, and oregano
salt
freshly grated black pepper

Heat grill.

Slice eggplant about ½" thick. In a small bowl, whisk together the olive oil, balsamic vinegar, garlic, herbs, salt, and pepper. Brush both sides of the eggplant slices with the oil and vinegar mixture.

Place eggplant on the hot pre-heated grill. Grill about 15 to 20 minutes, turning once.

Spinach and Pear Salad

¼ cup honey
1 Tbs balsamic vinegar
2 pears, preferably Corella pears
4 Tbs walnuts
½ lb baby spinach leaves
6 chives, coarsely chopped

Feta Dressing

¼ cup milk
1 sprig rosemary
1 oz soft feta, crumbled
⅛ cup olive oil
salt, to taste
fresh ground pepper, to taste

Place the honey and vinegar in a medium bowl and stir until well combined. Cut the pears lengthways into ½"-thick pieces and toss in the honey mixture.

Toss the walnuts in the remaining honey and balsamic vinegar mixture, and cook on a heated oiled grill pan, turning frequently, for 2 minutes or until golden brown. Set aside to cool.

Place the milk and rosemary in a small saucepan and bring to the boil; remove and cool; discard the rosemary. Place the feta in a medium bowl and gradually whisk in the milk, a little at a time until it forms a smooth paste, whisk in the oil and season to taste.

Place the pears and walnuts in a large bowl, add the baby spinach leaves and chives, pour over the feta dressing, toss well and serve.

Molded Cranberry Sauce

1¼ lb fresh cranberries
1⅓ cups sugar
2 tsp orange zest
¾ cup plus 2 Tbs fresh orange juice
pinch of salt
1 cup water
1 Tbs unflavored gelatin

In a large saucepan over medium-high heat, combine the cranberries, sugar, orange zest, orange juice, salt and ¾ cup plus 2 Tbs water. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to medium-low and simmer, stirring occasionally, until the sauce thickens and the cranberries have burst, 25 to 35 minutes. Note: The sauce should measure no more than 3¾ cups.

Meanwhile, pour the remaining 2 Tbs water into a bowl and sprinkle with the gelatin. Let stand until the gelatin softens and swells, 5 to 10 minutes.

Spoon ¾ cup of the hot juices from the cranberries into the gelatin and whisk until the gelatin has dissolved. If you prefer a sauce with a smoother texture, transfer the remaining cranberry mixture to a food processor and pulse for 2 seconds (10 to 15 times), then proceed as directed.

Pour the gelatin mixture into the cranberry mixture and whisk to combine. Lightly coat the inside of a ceramic cranberry mold with nonstick cooking spray. Pour the cranberry mixture into the prepared mold and let cool to room temperature. Cover loosely with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 8 hours or up to overnight.

To unmold, set the mold in a large bowl of warm water (115°-120°F) so the water reaches almost to the rim of the mold. Let stand for 30 seconds, then remove the mold from the water. Carefully insert a small offset spatula or paring knife along the side of the mold. Gently pull the gelatin away from the mold to release the suction, then remove the spatula. Place a serving platter upside down on top of the mold and invert the platter and mold together. Remove the plug. Gently shake the mold until you hear the gelatin begin to release, then lift off the mold. If the gelatin does not release, replace the plug and return the mold to the warm water for 15 seconds, then repeat the steps as directed above.

Serves 14 to 18.

Caprese Salad

2 cups balsamic vinegar
3 whole ripe tomatoes, sliced thick
12 oz mozzarella cheese, sliced thick
fresh basil leaves
olive oil, for drizzling
kosher salt
freshly ground black pepper

In a small saucepan, bring balsamic vinegar to a boil over medium-low heat. Cook for 10 to 20 minutes, or until balsamic has reduced to a thicker glaze. Remove from heat and transfer to a bowl or cruet. Allow to cool.

When you're ready to serve, arrange tomato and mozzarella slices on a platter. Arrange basil leaves between the slices. Drizzle olive oil over the top of the salad, getting a little bit on each slice. Do the same with the balsamic reduction, making designs if you want. Store extra balsamic reduction in fridge for a later use.

End with a sprinkling of kosher salt and black pepper . Serve as a lunch, with crusty bread. Or serve alongside a beef main course for dinner.

Cider Baked Beans

1 lb dried navy beans, picked over to remove any impurities and rinsed well
3 bay leaves
2 Tbs olive oil
12 oz yellow onions, coarsely chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
2 Tbs tomato paste
1 Tbs powdered mustard
2 tsp ground coriander
1 tsp freshly cracked black pepper
1 Tbs plus 1 tsp grated fresh ginger root
½ cup apple cider syrup
2 Tbs maple syrup
1½ tsp sea salt

Place the beans in a large, heavy non-reactive pot. Add enough filtered water to cover by 2". Bring to a boil and cook for 1 to 2 minutes. Soak for at least 8 hours or up to overnight. Drain and rinse beans.

Place in non-reactive pot, cover with water plus 3". Add the bay leaves; place the pot over high heat and bring to a boil, then reduce the heat, cover and cook for 1 to 2 hours, stirring occasionally (the cooking time will depend on the freshness of the beans), until the beans are just tender. Drain. Discard the bay leaves.

Preheat the oven to 325°F.

Heat the oil in a no-stick fry pan. Add the onions and cook for about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally, until golden. Add the garlic and cook for 2 or 3 minutes, until fragrant, stirring a few times, then add the tomato paste and cook for 1 minute, stirring. Stir in the powdered mustard, coriander, pepper and ginger.

Place the beans in a large, non-reactive, lidded pot. Add the onion mixture and enough filtered water until the mixture is quite soupy. Stir gently to incorporate, then stir in the boiled cider, maple syrup and salt. Cover, transfer to the oven and bake for 2 hours. Check occasionally to stir and add additional hot water if the mixture seems to be getting too dry. Uncover and bake for an additional 1-1½ hours, stirring once or twice as needed.

The beans are ready when their liquid has substantially reduced and the beans are lightly saucy.

6 to 8 servings

Onions in Cream

4 small (1¼") onions per person

½ white wine + ½ chicken broth to cover halfway up the onions

1 Tbs butter per 2 dozen onions

1 bay leaf

a pinch of thyme

a pinch of salt to taste

1 cup heavy cream

pinch of ground fresh pepper

pinch of white pepper

1 or 2 Tbs soft butter

sprinkle of fresh chopped parsley

For easy peeling, drop the onions in boiling water for 30 seconds to loosen the skin. Shave off the root ends and slip off the peel. To minimize their bursting, pierce a cross ¼" deep in the root ends.

Arrange the onions in a wide pan in one layer. Add the wine and chicken broth to halfway cover the onions. Add the butter, bay leaf, thyme and salt. Simmer, covered, for about 25 minutes or until just tender when pierced.

If the liquid has not evaporated, raise the heat and boil it off. Don't scorch the pan. Add the heavy cream and boil several minutes to thicken lightly.

Cover. Reheat just before serving, correct seasoning. You may add a few grinds of white pepper, some butter, and a sprinkling of fresh chopped parsley for flavor.

Guacamole

2 ripe Hass avocados, peeled and cut in half
2 cloves of garlic, crushed
1 Serrano pepper, diced
½ cup of chopped cilantro
juice from ½ a fresh lime
salt to taste

Mix all the ingredients together either with a fork in a bowl or in a Mexican mortar and pestle (molcajete) until desired consistency. If you're using a molcajete, there's no need to crush the garlic. And you can add another Serrano pepper if you like it extra hot.

Serves two to four.

Candied Sweet Potatoes

2 lb sweet potatoes
¼ cup butter
¼ cup maple syrup
⅓ cup packed brown sugar
¼ tsp cinnamon

Cover potatoes with water, bring to a boil. Lower heat and simmer for 25 minutes, until done. When cooled, peel and cut into chunks.

Place in 2-qt baking dish.

In small saucepan combine remaining ingredients, cook and stir until mixture boils. Pour over potatoes.

Bake at 350°F for 40 minutes.

Strawberry Spinach Salad

4 oz (about 1 cup) pecan halves
1-2 Tbs light brown sugar
3 Tbs balsamic vinegar
½ cup extra-virgin olive oil
1 Tbs honey
salt
freshly ground black pepper
7 oz (about 5 cups) baby spinach leaves, rinsed and dried
1 pint strawberries, hulled, rinsed and cut into halves
2 oz feta cheese, crumbled

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil.

Spread the pecan halves on the baking sheet in a single layer, then sprinkle evenly with the brown sugar (to taste). Bake for 6 to 8 minutes, until fragrant and toasted. Cool completely.

Combine the vinegar, oil and honey in a clean glass jar with a tight-fitting lid. Season with salt and pepper to taste; seal and shake to form an emulsified dressing. The yield is about $\frac{2}{3}$ cup.

Combine the spinach and cooled pecans in a mixing bowl. Drizzle half of the vinaigrette over them and toss lightly to coat. Divide among individual plates; top each portion with equal amounts of the strawberries and the crumbled feta.

4 servings

If you do not have the vinaigrette ingredients on hand, use Newman's Own Balsamic Vinaigrette.

Delmonico Potatoes

3 Tbs unsalted butter
1 onion, chopped fine
2 garlic cloves, minced
2½ cups heavy cream
1½ cups low-sodium chicken broth
2½ lb Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cut into ½" cubes
⅛ tsp fresh grated nutmeg
salt
pepper
1 tsp grated zest and 2 tsp juice from 1 lemon
5 cups frozen shredded hash brown potatoes, thawed and patted dry with paper towels
(Ore-Ida Country Style)
¾ cup Parmesan cheese, grated
¼ cup finely chopped fresh chives

Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 450°F. Melt 1 Tbs butter in Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Cook onion until softened, about 3 minutes. Stir in garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir in 2 cups cream, 1 cup broth, Yukon Golds, nutmeg, 2 tsp salt, and 1 tsp pepper. Bring to boil, then reduce heat to medium and simmer until potatoes are translucent at edges and mixture is slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. Off heat, stir in lemon zest and juice.

Transfer potato mixture to 13"×9" baking dish and bake until bubbling around edges and surface is just golden, about 20 minutes. Meanwhile, melt remaining butter in large nonstick skillet over medium-high heat. Cook shredded potatoes until beginning to brown, about 2 minutes. Add remaining cream, remaining broth, and ½ tsp pepper to skillet and cook, stirring occasionally, until liquid has evaporated, about 3 minutes. Off heat, stir in ½ cup cheese and 2 Tbs chives.

Remove baking dish from oven and top with shredded potato mixture. Sprinkle with remaining cheese and continue to bake until top is golden brown, about 20 minutes. Let cool 15 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining chives. Serve.

The recipe can be made through paragraph 1, cooled completely, transferred to the baking dish, and refrigerated, covered with plastic wrap, for 1 day. To serve, proceed as directed, increasing baking time to 25 to 30 minutes. Serves 8 to 10

Sweet Corn Soufflé

1²/₃ cup corn kernels (cut from about 4 medium ears of sweet corn)

2²/₃ cup milk (use whatever type you have)

2²/₃ cup heavy cream

1 Tbs butter, unsalted

1¹/₂ Tbs all-purpose flour

1/2 tsp salt (plus an additional pinch)

2 large eggs, room temperature

You do not have to pre-cook the corn. Cut the corn off the cobs with a large, sharp knife. Cut only about 2/3 of a kernel deep. Scrap the corn cobs with the back of a knife or the edge of a heavy spoon to remove all the pulp. Keep all the fluid, kernels, and pulp. Measure out the required corn. Save whatever is left for another side dish.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Butter four 8 oz ramekins.

In a medium saucepan, heat the milk, cream and corn over medium-high heat until simmering (watch carefully so it doesn't boil over or scald); lower flame and continue to simmer for 2 minutes. Take off heat and let cool slightly.

In a blender or food processor, purée half of the corn mixture. Add it back to the reserved (unprocessed) corn mixture.

In another medium saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the flour and whisk (it will look clumpy) for two minutes. Slowly whisk in the corn mixture until thickened, one minute. Whisk in salt. Remove from heat and let cool five minutes. Whisk in egg yolks and continue to cool, about 15 minutes.

(You can make the recipe up to this point; stick in the fridge overnight or leave it out at room temp, covered, for about an hour. Proceed.)

In a clean, non-reactive bowl, use a hand mixer to beat the egg whites with a pinch of salt until firm peaks form. (If you pull the whisk from the whites and they stand up on end, you've reached the firm peak stage.) Mix one-third of the whites into the corn mixture to lighten it (this technique is also referred to as "sacrificing" the whites). Gently fold in the rest of the whites.

Spoon the mixture into the prepared ramekins. Set in a small casserole or cake pan and add water to reach about a third up the sides of the ramekins. (This creates a water bath to cook the soufflé gently and evenly.) Bake for 25-30 minutes, until puffed, browned, and slightly jiggly in the centers. I tried this recipe in a single casserole dish and 30 minutes was not enough. Probably 40-45 minutes would be a better guess.

Note: if very fresh corn is hard to come by where you live, this recipe works well with good-quality frozen. (It might actually be tastier than using older fresh corn that's gone to starch.)

Chana Masala

1 Tbs vegetable oil
2 medium onions, minced
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tsp grated fresh ginger
1 fresh, hot green chili pepper, minced
1 Tbs ground coriander
2 tsp ground cumin
½ tsp ground cayenne pepper
1 tsp ground turmeric
2 tsp cumin seeds, toasted and ground
2 tsp paprika
1 tsp garam masala
1 15-oz can of whole tomatoes with their juices, chopped small
⅔ cup water
2 (15-oz) cans chickpeas, drained and rinsed
½ tsp salt
1 lemon (juiced)
½ cooked chicken, skin removed (optional)

Heat oil in a large skillet. Add onion, garlic, ginger and pepper and sauté over medium heat until browned, about 5 minutes. Turn heat down to medium-low and add the coriander, cumin, cayenne, turmeric, cumin seeds, paprika and garam masala. Cook onion mixture with spices for a minute or two, then add the tomatoes and any accumulated juices, scraping up any bits that have stuck to the pan. Add the water and chickpeas. Simmer uncovered for 10 minutes, then stir in salt and lemon juice.

Eat up or put a lid on it and reheat it when needed. Curries such as this reheat very well, later or in the days that follow, should it last that long.

If you want a meat curry, cut up a cooked chicken, skin removed, and add to the masala. I just buy one at the grocery store. Let them do the work.

Joellen's Carrots

4-6 big carrots, cut into rounds ½" thick

1 Tbs finely diced onion

¼ cup mayonnaise

1 Tbs horseradish, as fresh as possible

¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

⅛-¼ cup reserved cooking fluid

¼ cup panko bread crumbs

2 Tbs melted butter

salt

ground black pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Place carrots into a saucepan and cover with water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer for 15 minutes or until carrots are tender. Drain, reserving ⅛-¼ cup of cooking liquid.

Mix onion, horseradish, mayonnaise, Parmesan cheese, and reserved liquid in a bowl. Toss horseradish mixture with carrots. Transfer carrot mixture to a shallow baking pan. Season with salt and black pepper.

Melt butter in a small bowl, add Panko bread crumbs, mix.

Sprinkle panko bread crumbs over carrots.

Bake in the preheated oven, uncovered, until bread crumbs are lightly browned, about 20 minutes.

Serves 4.

Sauteed Maple Syrup Apples

1 Tbs unsalted butter

2 juicy, sweet-tart apples, such as 'Jonathan,' peeled and cut into 12 wedges each

2 Tbs pure maple syrup

¼ tsp coarse salt

Melt butter in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add apples; cook, turning once, until golden brown, about 5 minutes total. Stir in syrup and salt; reduce heat to low. Simmer until apples are soft, about 5 minutes. Serve warm.

Stewed Apples with Cinnamon and Brown Sugar

1 Tbs unsalted butter
6 cups chopped peeled Granny Smith apple (about 2 lb)
½ cup packed brown sugar
¼ cup apple juice or water
1 tsp fresh lemon juice
1 tsp ground cinnamon
⅛ tsp ground nutmeg
⅛ tsp salt

Peel and core the apples. Make sure all the skin is off the apple slices; skin won't cook down and will be tough.

Melt the butter in a medium pot, then add the apples and all the other ingredients. Stir gently to combine.

Cook on medium-high heat for 15-20 minutes with the pot top on. Cooking apples on fairly high heat is necessary to cook all the apples evenly. You want the juice boiling and foaming up. This cooks all the apples; on low heat the apples on the bottom would cook while the apples on top would still be cold. It also means you don't have to stir frequently – just once or twice. Don't be afraid to add more water during cooking if they seem a bit dry. Near the end of the cooking time, gently push against an apple slice with your stirring spoon. Does it give a little? The apples are done. You don't want the apple slices falling apart as you stir.

You can serve the apples while warm by themselves or with ice cream. For later use, let the apples cool completely, then transfer them (and their juice) to a leftover container.

When you need a topping, either heat them or use them cold.

Chickpea, Avocado, and Feta Salad

1 can chickpeas, rinsed and drained
2 avocados, pitted, and chopped
1/3 cup chopped cilantro
2 Tbs green onion
1/3 cup feta cheese
juice of 1 lime
salt
black pepper, to taste

In a medium bowl, combine chickpeas, avocado, cilantro, green onion, feta cheese, and lime juice. Stir until mixed well. Season with salt and pepper. Serve. Yield: Serves 4

Potato Pancakes (Latkes)

3 Tbs. all-purpose flour
1 tsp. salt
1/2 tsp. baking powder
1/4 tsp. ground black pepper
1 medium sized onion
1 large egg, beaten
4 medium baking potatoes (2 1/2 lb.)
1/2 cup vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 250°F.

Line a cookie sheet with paper towels. Place in the oven.

In a large bowl combine the flour, salt, baking powder, black pepper, onion, and eggs.

Peel the potatoes and grate. You may use a food processor if you have one. Place the potatoes in a paper towel in a colander. Cover and squeeze to extract any fluid.

Place the potatoes in a metal bowl and stir in the onion mixture.

Place the vegetable oil in a non-stick frying pan. Heat the oil.

Measure 4 1/2-cup pancakes into the frying pan. Press outward with a blunt instrument such as a large serving spoon until the pancakes are 3 to 4 inch ovals. Fry for 8 to 10 minutes, turning as they cook, until golden brown.

Remove pancakes to heated cookie sheet. Cover. Let drain, but keep warm. Repeat the process with the remaining mixture. Add more oil as necessary.

Spinach Souffle

2 Tbs melted butter

2 Tbs flour

1 cup whole milk

½ tsp salt

dash pepper

3 egg yolks

1 (10 oz) package chopped frozen spinach, cooked

½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

¼ cup minced onion

3 egg whites

Melt butter; blend in flour. Gradually blend in milk; add salt and pepper. Slowly stir in beaten egg yolks. Add spinach, then cheese.

Saute onion in a little additional butter and add to above.

Beat egg whites and fold into above.

Turn into greased 1½ quart casserole.

Place casserole in oven in pan of hot water.

Bake 350°F 50 minutes

Serves 6

Baked Sweet Potato Cubes

4 sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1" cubes
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus more for drizzling potatoes after cooked
¼ cup honey
2 tsp ground cinnamon
salt
freshly ground black pepper

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Lay the sweet potatoes out in a single layer on a roasting tray. Drizzle the oil, honey, cinnamon, salt and pepper over the potatoes. Roast for 25 to 30 minutes in oven or until tender.

Take sweet potatoes out of the oven and transfer them to a serving platter. Drizzle with more extra-virgin olive oil.

Sauteed Zucchini

1½ lb small zucchini
2 Tbs olive oil
salt
freshly ground pepper to taste
2 Tbs fresh bread crumbs
1 Tbs butter
2 Tbs chopped shallots
4 Tbs chopped parsley

Rinse the zucchini and pat dry. Trim off the ends, but do not peel them. Cut into ½" slices.

Heat the oil in a nonstick skillet and when the oil is hot, add the zucchini. Saute the zucchini over high heat, shaking the pan and tossing gently. Add salt and pepper, and cook a total of 5 minutes.

Add the bread crumbs and butter to the pan. When the crumbs start to brown, add the shallots and cook for another minute, tossing. Serve sprinkled with parsley.

Brussels Sprouts

¼ cup pecans

4 slices bacon, cut into ¼" small strips

1 lb Brussels sprouts; stems and outer loose leaves removed.

2 Tbs extra virgin olive oil

¼ tsp kosher salt

¼ tsp freshly ground black pepper

⅛ tsp red pepper flakes, optional

1 Tbs balsamic vinegar

1 Tbs maple syrup

Heat oven to 350°F and line a baking sheet with foil.

Place pecans on prepared baking sheet and bake until fragrant and a little darker in color, approximately 3-5 minutes. Watch closely so they don't burn. When done, transfer pecans to a heat-resistant bowl to cool and increase oven temperature to 425°F.

While pecans are toasting, cook the bacon pieces, over medium heat, in a medium-size skillet. Fry the bacon until crisp, then transfer bacon pieces to a bowl. Keep the bacon fat/drippings.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine Brussels sprouts, bacon fat, olive oil, salt, pepper and red pepper flakes. Spread the Brussels sprouts onto the same foil-lined baking sheet used for the pecans. Roast the sprouts 10 minutes or just until tender.

In a small bowl, whisk together the balsamic vinegar and maple syrup and pour the mixture over the Brussels sprouts. Toss lightly to coat the sprouts evenly, and place back in the oven for 5-8 minutes until caramelized. Do not allow the sprouts to burn.

Transfer baking sheet to a cooling rack, season to taste (if needed). When ready to serve, sprinkle the sprouts with toasted pecans and crispy bacon. Enjoy!

Crispy Hasselback Potatoes

6 Yukon gold potatoes, about 6 oz each
4 Tbs unsalted butter, melted
3 Tbs olive oil
3 Tbs chopped fresh parsley, plus more for garnish
flaky sea salt, to taste

Preheat the oven to 425°F.

Set a potato on a cutting board and place a chopstick on either side of the potato. With a sharp, thin knife, make deep vertical cuts $\frac{1}{8}$ " apart, but without cutting all the way through the potato. The chopsticks should keep you from accidentally cutting too deeply or going all the way through.

Place the potatoes with the cut side up in the baking dish, spaced a little apart so each one has some room. Fan the potatoes open slightly.

In a small bowl, combine the melted butter, oil, and parsley. Drizzle this over the potatoes and then use a pastry brush to spread the butter and oil mixture evenly and in between the slices of each potato. Sprinkle with salt.

Bake for 1 hour and 15 minutes, or until golden and crispy. The potatoes will fan out more during cooking and take on their accordion-like appearance. Serve hot.

Simple Cranberry Sauce

1 12-oz bag fresh or thawed frozen cranberries

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup orange juice, preferably fresh squeezed

zest of 1 orange, or to taste

Place cranberries in a small saucepan over medium-high heat and pour the sugar and orange juice over them. Stir to combine.

Cook until sugar is entirely melted and cranberries begin to burst in the heat, 4 to 6 minutes. Stir again, add zest, and cook for 2 or 3 minutes longer, turn off heat, cover pan, and allow to cool.

Put cranberry mixture in a serving bowl, cover, and place in refrigerator until cold, at least 2 hours, or until you need it.

Mashed Potatoes

5 lb russet or Yukon gold potatoes

$\frac{3}{4}$ cups butter

1 package (8 oz) cream cheese, softened

$\frac{1}{2}$ - $\frac{3}{4}$ cups half-and-half

$\frac{1}{2}$ -1 tsp Lawry's seasoned salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ -1 tsp black pepper

Peel and cut the potatoes into pieces that are generally the same size. Bring a large pot of water to a simmer and add the potatoes. Bring to a boil and cook for 30 to 35 minutes. When they're cooked through, the fork should easily slide into the potatoes with no resistance, and the potatoes should almost, but not totally, fall apart.

Drain the potatoes in a large colander. When the potatoes have finished draining, place them back into the dry pot and put the pot on the stove. Mash the potatoes over low heat, allowing all the steam to escape, before adding in all the other ingredients.

Turn off the stove and add $1\frac{1}{2}$ sticks of butter, an 8-oz package of cream cheese and about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of half-and-half. Mash, mash, mash! Next, add about $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of Lawry's Seasoning Salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp of black pepper.

Stir well and place in a medium-sized baking dish. Throw a few pats of butter over the top of the potatoes and place them in a 350°F oven and heat until butter is melted and potatoes are warmed through.

Note: When making this dish a day or two in advance, take it out of the fridge about 2 to 3 hours before serving time. Bake in a 350°F oven for about 20 to 30 minutes or until warmed through.

Creamed Corn

6 ears fresh corn
2 Tbs butter
sliver of garlic
sea salt
¾ cup milk
¼ cup heavy cream
fresh sage leaves or chopped parsley, for garnish

Scrape corn kernels from cobs, running knife edge along cobs to squeeze out juices. (If the corn is not very fresh, then blanch in boiling water for 2 to 3 minutes before scraping kernels from cobs.)

Place a medium saucepan over medium heat. Drop in butter and melt until foamy. Add corn, garlic and juices. Season with salt and cook until kernels become tender. Pour in milk and simmer until milk is almost gone. Pour in cream and simmer for 5 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning. Serve.

Couscous with Raisins, Pine Nuts, and Capers

1½ cups water
2 Tbs olive oil, divided
⅓ cup golden raisins
½ tsp salt
1 cup couscous
1 small red onion, thinly sliced
⅓ cup pine nuts, toasted
2 Tbs capers, drained and rinsed
salt
freshly ground black pepper

In a medium saucepan, bring water, 1 Tbs olive oil, raisins, and salt to a boil. Add couscous, cover, and remove from heat. Let stand 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, heat remaining Tbs olive oil in a pan and sauté onion until golden brown.

Fluff couscous with a fork and mix in onions, pine nuts, and capers. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Serves 4

Zucchini Boats

3 medium uniformly-sized zucchini
1 24 oz jar tomato basil marinara, divided
1 Tbs olive oil
1 lb lean ground turkey or beef
1/3 cup chopped onion
1 tsp minced garlic
1/3 cup chopped red bell pepper
1/2 cup chopped brown button mushrooms
1/4 cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
1 tsp Italian seasoning
1/2 tsp salt
fresh ground black pepper to taste
1/4 tsp crushed red pepper or to taste
1 1/2 cups shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese
1/4 cup shaved or shredded Parmesan
2 Tbs Italian style panko bread crumbs

Preheat oven to 375°F. Measure out 1 cup of the marinara sauce and set aside.

Trim ends from zucchini and slice in half, lengthwise. Use the tip of a spoon to scrape out the zucchini flesh, chop it and set it aside. Place the scooped out zucchini boats into a 13"×9" baking dish and add about 1" of water. Cover with foil and bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes, until just slightly fork-tender. Remove from oven, and set aside to cool slightly.

Meanwhile, add olive oil to a 12" skillet and place over MEDIUM heat. Add turkey (or beef), onion, bell pepper, and garlic to the skillet. Cook, stirring to break up the ground meat as it cooks. Continue to cook and stir until meat is thoroughly cooked and veggies have softened. Drain off as much grease as possible and return the skillet to the heat.

Add the chopped zucchini flesh, mushrooms, remaining marinara in jar, parsley, Italian seasoning, salt, fresh ground black pepper, and crushed red pepper. Stir well to combine. Bring to a simmer, then reduce heat and allow to simmer over low heat for about 15 minutes.

Remove partially cooked zucchini from baking dish and pour off water. Pour the 1 cup of reserved marinara sauce into the empty baking dish and place zucchini boats on top of the sauce.

Divide the filling between the zucchini boats. If you have extra filling, spoon it into the dish around the zucchini boats. Cover the dish with foil, and bake for 20 minutes, or until zucchini is fork tender. Remove dish from oven and set oven to BROIL.

Remove foil and sprinkle zucchini boats with mozzarella, Parmesan and the panko bread crumbs. Place dish in oven, watching closely, and cook for just a couple of minutes until cheese has melted and bread crumbs are golden brown.

Potato-Cauliflower Stew

2 tsp ground coriander
2 tsp ground cumin
1½ tsp ground cinnamon
1½ tsp ground turmeric
1¼ tsp salt
¾ teaspoon ground pepper
⅛ teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 small head cauliflower, cut into small florets (about 6 cups)
2 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil, divided
extra virgin olive oil
1 large onion, chopped
1 cup diced carrot
3 large cloves garlic, minced
1½ tsp grated fresh ginger
1 fresh red chile pepper, such as Serrano or jalapeño, minced, plus more for garnish
1 (14 oz) can no-salt-added tomato sauce
4 cups low-sodium vegetable broth
3 cups diced peeled russet potatoes (½-inch)
1 (14 oz) can coconut milk
2 tsp lime zest
2 Tbs lime juice

Preheat oven to 450°F.

For your spice mixture, combine coriander, cumin, cinnamon, turmeric, salt, pepper and cayenne in a small bowl. Toss cauliflower with 1 Tbs oil in a large bowl, sprinkle with 1 Tbs of the spice mixture and toss again. Spread in a single layer on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast the cauliflower until the edges are browned, 15 to 20 minutes. Set aside.

Meanwhile, heat the remaining 1 Tbs oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Add onion and carrot and cook, stirring often, until starting to brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Reduce heat to medium and continue cooking, stirring often, until the onion is soft, 3 to 4 minutes. Add garlic, ginger, chile and the remaining spice mixture. Cook, stirring, for 1 minute more.

Stir in tomato sauce, scraping up any browned bits, and simmer for 1 minute. Add broth, potatoes, lime zest and juice. Cover and bring to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to maintain a gentle simmer and cook, partially covered and stirring occasionally, until the vegetables are tender, 35 to 40 minutes. Stir in coconut milk and the roasted cauliflower. Return to a simmer to heat through. Serve garnished with cilantro and chiles, if desired.

To make ahead: Refrigerate for up to 5 days.

Tomato Nicoise

- 1 small shallot, finely diced**
- 2 garlic cloves, grated**
- salt**
- pepper**
- 2 Tbs red wine vinegar**
- 3 Tbs olive oil**
- 8 anchovy fillets, 2 finely chopped and 6 for garnish**
- 2 Tbs roughly chopped black niçoise olives, plus whole olives for garnish**
- 6 small red tomatoes**
- 12 cherry tomatoes in assorted colors**
- 1 Tbs small capers, rinsed**
- 12 basil leaves**

Put the shallot in a small bowl. Add garlic, salt and pepper and cover with red wine vinegar. Macerate 10 minutes, then whisk in olive oil, chopped anchovy and chopped olives. This is your vinaigrette.

Cut each tomato crosswise into 2 thick slices. Place slices on a platter in one layer and season with salt and pepper. Season cherry tomatoes with salt and dress with vinaigrette. Spoon cherry tomatoes and vinaigrette evenly over tomato slices.

Top each tomato slice with half an anchovy filet, then sprinkle with capers. Garnish with basil leaves and whole olives. Serve at cool room temperature.



Creamed Spinach

4 Tbs unsalted butter
1 medium yellow onion minced
3 cloves garlic minced
4 tsp Kosher salt divided
1 tsp freshly ground black pepper
½ tsp freshly grated nutmeg
¼ cup all-purpose flour
3½ cups half-and-half
2¼ lb fresh leaf spinach or 1 lb frozen
1 cup mozzarella cheese*
4 oz cream cheese*
½ cup grated Parmesan cheese

Bring a large pot of water to a boil with two tsp of salt. Add the spinach and cook just until wilted, about 1 minute. Drain the spinach in a strainer or colander. Rinse with cold water until cool and squeeze the water out of each fistful of spinach. Chop the spinach bundles into a ¾" width.

In a large skillet melt the butter with the garlic and onions. Cook on medium low for 8-10 minutes or until the onions are translucent. Add in the remaining kosher salt, black pepper and nutmeg.

Add in the flour and mix with a wooden spoon over low and cook for 2-3 minutes until the aroma is a bit nutty. Add the half an half and cook until boiling.

Optional: Add in the mozzarella cheese and cream cheese

Cook for 6-8 minutes or until the mixture has thickened.

Add in the spinach and the Parmesan cheese and stir to combine.

Pasta Carbonara

12 oz pasta, any variety
8 pieces thick cut bacon, diced small
½ whole medium onion, diced small
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 whole eggs (or 2 eggs and 1 egg yoke)
¾ cups finely grated Parmesan
¾ cups heavy cream
salt
plenty of black pepper
½ cup peas
a dash of nutmeg if you like

Cook pasta according to package directions.

While the pasta is cooking, fry the bacon until just barely crisp. Remove from the pan and drain on paper towels. Pour off all of the bacon grease, but don't clean the pan. Return the pan to the stove over medium-low heat and throw in the onions and garlic. Cook until golden brown. Set aside.

In a bowl, mix together eggs, Parmesan, cream, and salt and pepper until smooth.

When the pasta is done, reserve a cup or two of the pasta water. Drain the pasta and place it in a bowl. While the pasta is still really hot, slowly drizzle in the egg mixture, stirring the pasta the whole time. The sauce will become thick and should coat the pasta. Splash in a little hot pasta water if needed for consistency.

Halfway through, add the peas, bacon, and sauteed onion/garlic. Finish adding the sauce, stirring until it's all combined.

Serve immediately with extra Parmesan.

Pasta e Fagioli **(Pasta and Beans)**

3 Tbs olive oil
1 cup chopped onion
1 large carrot, peeled and chopped
1 large celery stalk, chopped
2 large garlic cloves, minced
¼ tsp chile flakes
1 tsp Italian seasoning
6 cups chicken or vegetable stock for vegetarian option
1 cup chopped peeled tomatoes, fresh or canned
½ lb ditalini pasta
2 15-oz cans cannellini or borlotti beans, drained and rinsed (or 3½ cups of freshly cooked beans*)
¼ cup chopped parsley
salt
black pepper to taste

* To cook the beans from scratch, start with 1¾ cups dry beans. Either soak them overnight in water, or cover them with boiling water and let them sit for an hour, then drain. Place the soaked beans in a pot, cover with 2" of water, bring to a simmer, and cook until tender, about an hour.

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Sauté the onion, carrot and celery for 2-3 minutes, until its soft and translucent. Add the garlic, chile flakes and Italian seasoning and sauté another minute.

Add the chicken stock and tomatoes and bring to a boil. Add the pasta and keep the soup at a strong simmer.

When the pasta is al dente, add the beans and cook another 2-3 minutes. Turn off the heat and stir in the parsley. Add salt and black pepper to taste.

Pasta With Garlic, Anchovies, Capers and Red Pepper

½ lb spaghetti

salt

3 Tbs extra virgin olive oil

4 garlic cloves, peeled and roughly chopped

1 2-oz tin flat anchovy filets in olive oil, roughly chopped

1 Tbs capers, rinsed and roughly chopped

½ tsp red pepper flakes, or to taste

2 Tbs chopped parsley, optional

Parmesan for grating, optional

Put the spaghetti in a large pot of well-salted rapidly boiling water and cook only until firmly al dente. (Depending on the brand of pasta, this will be 8 to 10 minutes, but check frequently to see.)

While the pasta is cooking, warm the olive oil in a small skillet over medium heat. Add the packing olive oil from the anchovies. Add the garlic and cook for about 1 minute, without letting it brown. Stir in the chopped anchovies, capers and red pepper flakes and cook for a half-minute more, then remove from the heat.

Drain the pasta and return it to the pot. Pour in the garlic mixture, add the parsley, if using, and toss well to coat. Serve with grated Parmesan if desired.

Yield: 2 servings.

Time: 15 to 20 minutes

Yogurt-Ginger Rice

1 cup basmati rice, cooked (directions to follow)

1²/₃ cups water

1 tsp dried ginger or 1 Tbs ginger, minced finely

**1/2 - 2/3 cup good plain yogurt (none of this low-fat/non-fat crap, get the real thing if you can)
cilantro, for garnish**

Rinse the rice, until it rinses clear. Soak in H₂O 20 minutes, then drain. Boil the water. Making sure it's well drained, add the rice, put it at its lowest possible setting and steam the rice 20 minutes. Cut the heat off, steam 5 minutes more. Combine the ingredients and serve with garnish (good cold for breakfast, too.)

Serves 3.

Basmati Rice with Cumin

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1 tsp cumin seed

2 cups basmati rice

1 tsp salt

3 cups boiling water

Heat the oil in a saucepan and add the cumin seed to the hot oil. Sauté briefly until the cumin seeds turn brown.

Add the dry rice and fry for about 5 minutes, stirring constantly until the rice grains turn white. Add boiling water and salt.

Boil until most of the water has evaporated. Reduce heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes with saucepan covered. Makes 8 servings.

Microwave Rice

1 cup long-grain white rice
2 cups water
Saran Wrap

This recipe is foolproof. Place the rice in a microwavable dish. I prefer to use a Pyrex 4½" × 8½" × 3" deep brick shaped dish. Add 2 cups of water. Cut a piece of Saran Wrap to overlap the sides of the dish and seal gently. With a sharp knife, make a lengthwise slit in the middle of the wrap to accommodate escaping water vapor.

Place in a microwave at full power for 5 minutes. Reset the microwave for half power and continue to microwave for an additional 15 minutes.

Let sit for a minute or two before removing the Saran Wrap. This technique is a lot simpler than trying to boil rice.

Peking Rice

¾ tsp salt
¼ cup raisins
1 cup long-grained rice
2 cups water
1 tsp turmeric
¼ tsp cinnamon
2 Tbs almond slices
2 Tbs butter

Combine the water, rice, and spices in a Pyrex cooking bowl. I prefer the rectangular type with high sides. Cover loosely with a piece of Saran wrap. Cook on high for 5 minutes. Rotate and cook on half/max for 15 minutes.

While cooking, toast the almonds in the butter until brown.

When all is done, carefully toss the buttered almonds into the rice.

Macaroni Salad

2 cups cooked macaroni, drained, rinsed, cooled

1/3 - 1/2 cup mayonnaise

2 tsp sugar

2 tsp vinegar

1/2 tsp prepared mustard

1/4 cup chopped celery

1/4 cup chopped onion

4 radishes, sliced

4 cherry tomatoes, halved

1/4 cucumber, skinned, diced

1/2 tsp salt, or to taste

pepper, to taste

Combine the first five ingredients. Stir well. This is the basic macaroni base and can be skipped by buying a lb of prepared macaroni salad from the grocery store. Do this only if it is made with good ingredients and you have tasted it.

Add the celery, onion, radishes, tomatoes, and cucumbers. Stir well. If you think things look a little dry, add more mayonnaise.

Add salt and pepper to taste. I will sometimes add a flavored salt like Spice Islands Beau Monde or some cumin powder to perk the recipe up a bit. Don't overdo.

Orzo

3/4 cup uncooked orzo (rice-shaped pasta)

2 tsp olive oil

1 Tbs minced Italian parsley

1/2 Tbs grated lemon peel

salt freshly ground pepper

Stir orzo into medium pan filled with boiling water and cook until tender following package directions. Drain well and return orzo to pan.

Stir in oil, parsley and lemon peel.

Season to taste with salt and pepper.

If necessary, reheat over low heat 1 to 2 minutes. Makes 2 servings.

Pasta and Tuna Salad

1 lb campanelle pasta
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus ¼ cup
1 small or ½ medium red onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 (6 oz) can Italian tuna in oil, such as Flott, drained
1 pint (2 cups) cherry tomatoes, halved
8 oz frozen artichoke hearts, thawed and quartered
2 Tbs capers, rinsed and drained
2 Tbs chopped fresh thyme leaves
¼ cup chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley
kosher salt
freshly ground black pepper

Campanelle (which is Italian for "little bell") is a bell-shaped pasta with fluted, petal-like edges and a hollow center for capturing sauce.

Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the pasta and cook until tender but still firm to the bite, stirring occasionally, about 8 to 10 minutes. Drain and reserve about 1 cup of the pasta water.

In a 14" skillet, heat ¼ cup oil over medium-high heat. Add the onion and cook, stirring frequently, until soft, about 5 minutes. Add the garlic and cook for 30 seconds until aromatic.

Add the tuna to the skillet and, using a fork, break into chunks

Add the cherry tomatoes, artichoke hearts, capers, and thyme. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the tomatoes begin to soften, about 8 to 10 minutes.

Add the pasta, the remaining ¼ cup olive oil, and the parsley. Toss until all the ingredients are coated, adding a little pasta water, if needed, to thin out the sauce. Season with salt and pepper, to taste. Transfer the pasta to a serving bowl and serve warm or at room temperature.

Tabbouleh

1 cup bulghur wheat

1½ cups boiling water

1/ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice (2 lemons)

¼ cup good olive oil

3½ tsp kosher salt

1 cup minced scallions, white and green parts (1 bunch)

1 cup chopped fresh mint leaves (1 bunch)

1 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley (1 bunch)

1 hothouse cucumber, unpeeled, seeded, and medium-diced

2 cups cherry tomatoes, cut in half

1 tsp freshly ground black pepper

Place the bulghur in a large bowl, pour in the boiling water, and add the lemon juice, olive oil, and 1½ tsp salt. Stir, then allow to stand at room temperature for about 1 hour. Drain in a sieve, pressing on bulgur to remove any excess liquid.

Add the scallions, mint, parsley, cucumber, tomatoes, 2 tsp salt, and the pepper; mix well. Season, to taste, and serve or cover and refrigerate. The flavor will improve if the tabbouleh sits for a few hours.

You can use seedless cucumbers. These long, narrow cucumbers are often marketed as "European" and are usually sold in plastic wrap to protect their thin, delicate, unwaxed skin.

Pasta and Chickpeas Pasta e Ceci

2 Tbs olive oil
2 cloves garlic, peeled and smashed
3 Tbs tomato paste
1 tsp kosher salt, plus more to taste
freshly ground black pepper or red pepper flakes, to taste
1½ cups cooked chickpeas (from one 15-oz can, drained and rinsed)
 or cannellini or Goya small white beans
½ cup uncooked ditalini pasta (or another small shape, annellini, O's)
2 cups boiling water
2-3 Tbs olive oil (estimate 1 per serving)
1 clove of garlic, peeled and finely chopped
1 tsp minced fresh rosemary
salt
red pepper flakes

In a medium-large heavy-bottomed pot or deep saute pan, heat 2 Tbs olive oil until it shimmers. Add 2 smashed cloves of garlic and cook, stirring until it becomes lightly, barely browned but very fragrant.* Stir in the tomato paste, salt, and pepper and cook them with the garlic for 30 seconds or so. Add the chickpeas, pasta, and boiling water. Stir to scrape up any browned bits on the bottom of the pot, lower the heat, and simmer until the pasta is cooked and a lot of the liquid has been absorbed, about 15 to 20 minutes. Taste and adjust seasoning and ladle into bowls.

Heat 2-3 Tbs olive oil in a small sauce- or frying pan over medium-low heat with remaining clove of garlic, rosemary, a pinch or two of salt and pepper flakes, until sizzling; pull it off the heat as soon as the garlic is going to start taking on color. Drizzle this over bowls of pasta e ceci and eat it right away.

* For additional flavor you can add the following at this point. Cook until soft.

2 anchovies filets, cut up
2 oz pancetta, cut into ¼" pieces
1 small carrot, peeled and cut into ¼" pieces
1 small celery rib, cut into ¼" pieces
1 onion, halved and cut into ¼" pieces

Elizabeth's Chicken Soup

3 big carrots
3 big pieces of celery
5 to 6 lb whole chicken
8 cups water, to cover chicken
12 oz bag of noodles
salt to taste
garlic to taste (3 cloves)
1 tsp sage
pepper to taste
1-2 chicken bouillon cube (optional)

Boil all carrots and celery with whole chicken for 45-50 minutes.

Remove chicken. Add salt, pepper, sage, and garlic. Boil broth for ½ hour to 45 minutes.

Strain it all.

Bone chicken and de-skin. Make bite-sized pieces.

Boil noodles for 5 minutes, maximum. Add to broth.

You're done. You can let that sit on the stove all day, but you may have to add water periodically.

Chicken Broth

3 big carrots
3 big pieces of celery
5 to 6 lb whole chicken
8 cups water, to cover chicken

Boil all carrots and celery with whole chicken for 45-50 minutes.

Remove chicken and reserve for later use.

Strain all fluid and place in 1 qt containers. Refrigerate. Resultant broth is jelly-like when cold. Remove the fatty layer from on top before use.

Spicy Black Bean and Sausage Soup

2 (15 oz) cans of black beans, drained, and divided

2½ cups water, divided

1 Tbs olive oil

2 cups diced onion

1 tsp chili powder

½ tsp ground cumin

¼ to ½ tsp hot sauce

¼ tsp black pepper

1 garlic clove, mince

6 oz kielbasa, diced

Place 1 cup of the bean and ½ cup of the water in a food processor or blender and process until smooth.

Heat the olive oil in a large Dutch oven over medium high heat. Add the onion and saute for 4 minutes or until the onion is soft.

Add the bean puree, the remaining beans, 2 cups of the water, the chili powder, the cumin, the hot sauce, the black pepper, and the minced garlic. Cover, cook at reduced heat, and simmer for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Stir in the diced kielbasa. Cook 1 minute or until thoroughly heated.

This recipe keeps well in the refrigerator.

Mem's Gazpacho

1 28 oz can tomatoes
½ medium size onion, minced
1" of celery stalk, minced
1 slice of toast, broken up
1½ tsp salt
½ tsp pepper
¼-½ tsp paprika
½ tsp ground cumin
¼ cup olive oil
¼ cup apple cider vinegar
⅛-¼ cup dry sherry
1½ clove minced garlic
1 Tbs cilantro, cut up

Cut up the tomatoes, removing the centers with seeds. Makes 2 cups tomato pulp. Strain remaining fluid and set aside.

Place the tomato pulp and all the remaining ingredients in a 5-cup blender. Pulse and then puree. This should make about 4 cups. Add tomato juice to make 5 cups. Blend one last time. Sprinkle with cilantro.

Chill in the icebox.

To serve, prepare small condiment bowls of chopped green pepper, tomato, onions, and cucumber.

½-¾ fairly good size cucumber cut into small pieces
½ green pepper, minced
½ medium size onion, cut in small bits
1 tomato cut into small pieces

Croutons can be bought or prepared by frying toast squares in olive oil and minced garlic.

Mom's Vegetable Soup

2 cups meat and bones
5 or 6 cups water
1 medium onion chopped small
1 cup celery cut small (2 or 3 spears)
3 peppercorns
2 Tbs parsley
1 16 oz can of whole tomatoes
1 16 oz can of Vegall (drained) or any vegetable medley
handful of Scotch Brand Barley (¼ - ½ cup)
¼ tsp salt

Stock

To make the basic stock for soup: use about 2 cups meat and bones. (Some bones may be too large to measure, so this can be approximated - especially easy after doing it a few times. The point is that leftovers and bones are always excellent.)

Put meat and bones and 5 or 6 cups of water in a good-sized pot (heavy club-aluminum is good). Add salt, the onion (chopped small), celery cut small (you can use the bulky pieces not eligible for salad or other dishes), the peppercorns, parsley if you have it. Cover and cook slowly for at least two hours. Remove the bones.

Soup

Add tomatoes (chop pieces if they are large). Cook another ½ to 1 hour. Add water if you have not covered pan and the fluid boils down.

Finally, add the can of mixed vegetables (Vegall, drained). If you do not have these, other vegetables like carrots, potatoes, turnips, may be cut small. Big hunks in soup are never palatable.

At this point, add a generous handful of Scotch Brand Pearl barley. This is the thickening agent, and it is what makes the soup so good.

The soup will require another hour of slow cooking - simmering will be all right.

Taste to see if it has enough salt. The original amount is never enough.

Cool, and remove bones and gristle. Cut meat smaller if necessary. Skim fat when cold. Reheat to serve. Stores well in the icebox.

Congressional Bean Soup (Crockpot version)

1 lb dried small white beans (navy or great northern)
3 quarts soaking water
1 cup finely chopped celery
1 medium to large onion, finely chopped
2 Tbs finely chopped parsley
1 lb ham steak cut into cubes or 2 ham hocks or big chunks of ham
1 to 2 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 bay leaf
8 cups of cooking water

In a large pan, bring the beans to a boil in soaking water. Boil gently for 2 minutes, cover and set aside. Let stand overnight if possible, but certainly for 1 hour.

Drain and rinse beans and discard water - this apparently gets rid of some of the products which cause flatulence. Pour the beans into the Crockpot.

Add the remaining ingredients and cover with 6 cups of the cooking water. Mix the ingredients together, then add the rest of the water to cover ingredients, but not to overflow.

Cover and cook on low heat for 12 to 14 hours. I usually do this about six in the morning, but you can do it the night before, then reheat at night.

Remove bay leaf. If using ham hocks or ham chunks, remove, and cut into little bite-sized pieces.

Puree about half the mixture to give the soup a creamier texture.

This makes 3 ½ quarts of soup. It lasts well in the icebox.

Makes 6 to 8 servings.

Be sure if storing to equally distribute the fluid between containers.

White Bean Soup **(with Rosemary, Basil and Garlic Croutons)**

2 16-oz cans white beans, such as cannellini, drained
2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 cup of your favorite marinara pasta sauce
2 large garlic cloves, minced
¼ cup packed fresh basil leaves, or 1 tsp dried basil leaves
1 tsp minced fresh rosemary
¼ tsp red pepper flakes
Garnish: Quick Garlic Croutons (see recipe below)

Purée all ingredients except garnish in a blender until smooth. Pour into a large saucepan or Dutch oven, and bring to a simmer. Simmer, partially covered and stirring frequently, to blend flavors, 4 to 5 minutes. Serve, garnishing with croutons.

Quick Garlic Croutons

1 cup ½" bread cubes from good-quality French or Italian loaf
2 tsp olive oil
⅛ tsp garlic powder
Pinch of salt

Heat an 8" skillet over low heat while preparing bread. A minute before you are ready to cook, increase heat to medium. Toss bread in a bowl with oil, garlic powder and salt. Cook, stirring frequently, until golden brown and crisp, 7 minutes. Makes ¾ cup.

Italian Wedding Soup **(this is a winner)**

1½ cup onions, coarsely chopped
1½ cup celery, coarsely chopped
1 clove garlic, finely chopped
3 Tbs olive oil
28 oz can whole Italian tomatoes
1 cup tomato puree
6 cups (48 oz) chicken broth
½ tsp oregano
½ tsp basil
2 bay leaves
⅛ tsp thyme
½ cup parsley, chopped
1½ lbs hot Italian sausage (links cut up are easier to handle and cook)
1 cup small pasta (ditalini)

Heat the oil in a good sized frying pan. (I use a wok shaped pan.) Sauté the celery, onion and garlic until just barely tender. Remove from the pan with a slotted spoon into a bowl. Put aside. There should be some oil left in the pan.

Cut the sausage into small bite-sized chunks and add to the pan. Cook until lightly brown. Transfer to a 5 qt soup pot (3½ qt is too small). Amy prefers sausage balls, so I cut up the links, remove the meat, and roll into about 36 balls.

Open the can of tomatoes and remove them singly, crushing gently over the sink to remove the seeds. Crumble the tomato pulp and add to the pot. Save the tomato juice. Add the puree. Cook 10 minutes. Add the chicken broth, oregano, basil, bay leaves, thyme, and parsley. (The original recipe calls for 3 Tbs sugar, but I can't see it.) Return onion and celery to the pot. Simmer 30 minutes.

Add the pasta and cook until done. Quantities of sausage or pasta may be varied according to taste and thickness of soup desired. Add the reserved tomato juice to thin the soup as desired.

This recipe saves well in the refrigerator. On reheating, add water to thin the soup.

Yield: 8-10 servings.

Manhattan Crab Chowder

2 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil
1 cup finely diced onion
1 cup finely diced cored fennel bulb, plus 2 Tbs chopped fronds, divided
2 Tbs minced garlic
2 tsp Italian seasoning blend
1/8 tsp salt
1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper
1 14-oz can reduced-sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth
1 1/2 cups water
2 cups precooked diced potatoes
2 cups canned crushed tomatoes
1 lb pasteurized crabmeat, drained if necessary

Heat oil in a large saucepan over medium heat. Add onion, fennel bulb, garlic, Italian seasoning, salt, pepper and cook, stirring often, until the vegetables are just starting to brown, 6-8 minutes.

Add broth, water and potatoes; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer and cook until the vegetables are tender, 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in tomatoes, crab and fennel fronds. Return to a boil, stirring often; immediately remove from heat.

Manhattan Clam Chowder (Crockpot Version)

1/4 lb bacon, diced, about 5 to 6 slices, or use a meaty salt pork
1 cup chopped onion
3 ribs celery, thinly sliced
2 small to medium carrots, diced
1 tsp dried parsley flakes
1 can (28 oz) tomatoes
1 1/2 tsp salt
3 cans clams (approximately 7 oz each) minced clams with liquid
1 8 oz bottle clam juice
1/4 tsp ground black pepper
1 1/4 tsp dried leaf thyme, crumbled
1 small bay leaf, optional
2 1/2 cups diced potatoes, about 3 medium peeled potatoes
1 Tbs flour blended with 1 Tbs melted butter or bacon grease, optional

Brown bacon in a large skillet; add onions and celery; cook just until onions are tender.

Transfer to slow cooker and add remaining ingredients. Cover and cook on LOW for 7 to 9 hours, or until vegetables are tender. Serves 8 to 10.

New England Clam Chowder

3 slices bacon, diced
1 cup chopped onion
3 cups diced potatoes
1 bottle (8 oz) clam juice
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
2 cans (approximately 7 oz each) minced clams with liquid
3 Tbs flour
2 cups half-and-half
1 cup milk

Cook bacon until crisp in a Dutch oven or large, heavy saucepan. Remove bacon to paper towels with slotted spoon; drain. Add onion to bacon drippings; sauté until softened. Add potatoes and clam juice, salt, and pepper. Cover and simmer for about 15 minutes, or until potatoes are tender. Remove from heat.

Add minced clams with their liquid. Whisk flour into milk; add to chowder with half-and-half. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until clam chowder thickens and bubbles, or about 3 minutes. Clam chowder recipe serves 4.

Italian Tomato Bean Soup

1 Tbs olive oil
1 medium onion, diced
1 clove garlic, minced
2 diced carrots
28 oz jar of chunky marinara sauce
1 can cannellini beans, drained and washed
½ tsp red pepper flakes
4 cups unsalted chicken broth
½ cup small pasta
½ tsp salt

Pour olive oil into Dutch Oven or 3 qt saucepan. Add minced onions, ¼ tsp salt, minced garlic, and diced carrots. Simmer covered for a few minutes until soft.

Add marinara sauce, red pepper flakes, ¼ tsp salt, chicken broth, and cannellini beans. Simmer for a few moments to blend everything, then add the small pasta. Simmer for ten minutes until the pasta has plumped up. The soup is rich and spicy.

Makes about two quarts. Holds in the icebox well.

Italian Chicken Soup

1 box Ditalini pasta (very short macaroni-type pasta noodles)
1 Tbs olive oil
1 whole cut-up fryer chicken
8 cups low-sodium chicken broth
1 whole medium onion, diced
2 whole green bell peppers, diced
2 stalks celery, diced
2 whole fresh jalapenos, diced
1 Tbs olive oil
1 28-oz can whole tomatoes
2 cups heavy cream
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil
4 Tbs minced fresh oregano
salt
freshly ground pepper
Parmesan cheese shavings, for serving

Cook pasta in a pot according to package directions, being sure not to overcook it. Drain and rinse in cold water to cool. Toss in 1 Tbs olive oil and set aside.

Place chicken in a large pot or Dutch oven and cover in chicken stock. Bring to a boil, then simmer chicken, covered, for 30 minutes. Turn off heat and leave covered for 30 minutes. Remove chicken from pot and shred meat. Discard bones and set meat aside. Reserve chicken stock in Dutch oven.

Dice canned tomatoes and return them to their juice. Set aside.

Heat a small skillet over medium high heat. Add olive oil and oregano and turn off heat, stirring over the next minute to keep oregano from burning. Set this aside.

Use a frypan to saute onion, green pepper, celery, and jalapenos in 1 Tbs olive oil over medium heat until tender and golden brown, about 10 minutes.

Add these vegetables to the chicken broth along with shredded chicken and tomatoes with their juice. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer.

Add cooked pasta, cream, and all the oregano and olive oil from the small skillet. Stir to combine. Turn off heat. Serve with lots of Parmesan sprinkled on the top - the more the better! Crusty Italian bread is good, too.

Columbia Black Bean Soup

1 lb black beans
3 quarts water
1 oz (2 Tbs) olive oil
½ oz (1 Tbs) garlic
1½ oz (3 Tbs) chopped onion
1 oz (2 Tbs) green pepper,
½ oz (1 Tbs) salt
⅛ tsp cumin
¼ tsp oregano
¼ oz (1 Tbs + ½ tsp) sugar
¼ tsp pepper

Soak beans in water overnight in a 4-quart pot.

Bring beans to a boil in the pot, using the same liquid that beans were soaked with and then simmer.

Heat oil and then brown garlic in a pan.

Puree onion and peppers, then add puree mixture to oil and garlic in pan, saute for 4 minutes. Then add mixture to the beans simmering in the pot.

Add salt, cumin, oregano, sugar and pepper to the mixture in pot. Stir, simmer until beans are tender.

This is a soup served over rice. You may puree the soup slightly to get a thick consistency, but this is not necessary with the Columbia's version as the rice soaks up much of the liquid. You may want to simmer the beans for about an hour before adding the other ingredients. Estimated time is probably 1½-2 hours complete cooking time.

Spanish Bean Soup

½ lb garbanzo beans (chickpeas), dried
2 quarts water
1 Tbs salt
1 ham bone
1 beef bone
¼ lb salt pork, cut in thin strips
1 onion, finely chopped
2 potatoes, peeled and cut in quarters
½ tsp paprika
pinch of saffron
1 chorizo (Spanish sausage), sliced in thin rounds

Wash garbanzos. Soak overnight with 1 Tbs salt in enough water to cover beans.

Drain the salted water from the beans. Place beans in 4-quart soup kettle; add 2 quarts of water and the ham and beef bones. Cook for 45 minutes over low heat, skimming foam from the top.

Fry salt pork slowly in a skillet. Add chopped onion and saute lightly. Add to beans along with potatoes, paprika, and saffron. Add salt to taste. When potatoes are tender, remove from heat and add chorizo. Serve hot in deep soup bowls.

For a thicker soup, stew it longer.

Serves 4.

Bean with Bacon Soup

1 lb dry Great Northern white beans, covered with a couple inches of water and soaked overnight

5 oz of bacon, cut into ½" wide pieces

2 cups chopped onion (1 large onion)

¾ cup chopped celery (about 2 ribs of celery)

¾ cup chopped carrots (1 large carrot)

3 cloves garlic, minced (about 1Tbs)

6 cups chicken stock

2 bay leaves

1 Tbs fresh thyme

2½ tsp kosher salt

¼ tsp black pepper

3 Tbs tomato paste

½ tsp paprika

1 oz bacon (1 to 2 slices), cooked and crumbled for garnish (optional)

2 Tbs chopped fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

Drain the beans that have been soaking in water. (If you haven't already soaked the beans, and you don't have time to do so overnight, you can put them in a large pot of water, bring to a boil, remove from heat and let sit for an hour, then drain.)

Put the bacon into a large (5 to 6 quart) thick-bottomed Dutch oven on medium high heat. Let the bacon cook for a minute or two to start rendering out some of its fat, then add the chopped onion, celery, and carrots. Lower the heat to low, cover and cook for 12 to 15 minutes, until vegetables are completely cooked through and softened. Add the garlic and cook a minute more.

Add the drained beans to the pot. Add the stock, the bay leaves, thyme, salt and pepper. Increase heat to high to bring to a simmer, then lower the heat to maintain a simmer, partially covered, for 1 hour or until the beans are very soft.

Stir in the tomato paste and the paprika. Cook for 5 more minutes.

Using an immersion blender, purée most of the soup. You don't want the soup to be perfectly smooth, but you want to purée enough of it so that the beans create a creamy base.

Add more salt and pepper to taste. Garnish with crumbled cooked bacon and chopped parsley.

Dan's Golden Daal (Lentil Soup)

3 cups water

1 cup red lentils (not brown. Well, they taste fine, but it's just not the same.)

1 tsp turmeric

½ Tbs fresh ginger, minced

1 jalapeno, minced

½ tsp ground coriander (If you use seed, you may bite them. This can be either fun or annoying.)

¼-½ tsp cumin seeds mustard, fennel, ...)

1 Tbs cooking oil or ghee

cilantro

Boil H₂O.

Add lentils and turmeric. THIS WILL WANT TO FOAM AND BOIL OVER, DON'T LET IT!
Cook at low heat for ~45 minutes. (Until the lentils are dissolved.)

About halfway along, add the ginger and jalapeno.

After the lentils are dissolved and it looks like golden-colored gruel, fry the seeds in oil, add the coriander, and wait till they toast. Add to the soup, cook 10 more minutes. Serve garnished with cilantro.

Daal (also spelled Dal/Dahl/Dhal)

Corn, Ham, and Potato Chowder

4 Tbs butter or olive oil
1 small onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
4 cups chicken broth
4 medium red skin potatoes, diced
2 medium carrots, peeled and diced
1 stalk celery, diced
1½ cups milk or half & half
1 lb ham, chopped
½ tsp poultry seasoning
½ tsp ground pepper
½ tsp rubbed sage
2 16-oz packages frozen corn
1 15-oz can cream-style corn

In a stock pot over medium heat, melt the butter. Add the onion and garlic; cook until translucent.

Add the broth, potatoes, carrots and celery. Simmer 15-20 minutes.

Add the remaining ingredients and let cook through until hot over medium heat. Be careful as this will scorch, so stir it occasionally.

Curried Lentil Soup With Ham

½ lb lean country smoked ham
3 medium-size carrots
½ lb green lentils
2 Tbs butter
1 cup finely chopped onions
1 Tbs finely chopped garlic
2 Tbs curry powder
5 cups fresh chicken broth or canned
2 cups water
1 bay leaf
3 sprigs fresh thyme or 1 tsp dried
salt to taste
1 Tbs red-wine vinegar
2 Tbs finely chopped coriander

Remove most of the fat from the ham and cut into ½" cubes.

Trim and scrape the carrots and cut them into ¼" cubes.

Pick over the lentils, wash them and drain into a colander.

Heat 1 Tbs of the butter in a kettle or saucepan. Add the ham, carrots, onions, garlic and curry powder. Cook briefly over medium heat, stirring, until the onions are wilted.

Add the lentils, 4 cups of the chicken broth, water, bay leaf, thyme and salt. Bring to a boil, and simmer for 24 to 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Remove one cup of the soup, with more lentils than liquid, and set aside. Discard the bay leaf and thyme sprigs. With a potato masher or wire whisk stir the soup briskly to mash the lentils, and return the soup to a boil. Add the remaining cup of chicken broth, the reserved lentils, the vinegar and the remaining butter. Check for seasoning and serve, sprinkled with the coriander.

Dairy Free Corn Chowder

1 russet potato, peeled and diced into ½" cubes (about 2 cups)

1 Tbs olive oil

8 oz thick-cut bacon, cut into ½" pieces

1 onion, diced

2 stalks celery, diced

3 garlic cloves, minced

1 red bell pepper, diced

4 ears corn, husked

4 cups chicken stock

4 sprigs thyme, leaves only

1 dried bay leaf

1 Tbs sherry vinegar

kosher salt

minced chives, for garnish (optional)



Heat olive oil in large pot over medium heat.

Add bacon and cook until crispy, about 10 minutes. Use slotted spoon to remove bacon to paper-towel lined plate. Set aside.

Add onion, celery, garlic and bell pepper to bacon drippings. Season with salt. Cook for 5 minutes, until onion is softened.

Meanwhile, cut corn kernels off the cob. Pro tip: Do this on a rimmed baking sheet so the kernels don't go flying everywhere. Use the back of a knife to scrape along the cobs to extract the corn milk. Add remaining kernels, corn milk and whole corn cobs to the pot.

Add chicken stock, thyme, bay leaf, potatoes and 1 tsp salt. Bring to a boil, then reduce to a simmer and cover. Cook for 15 to 20 minutes, or until potatoes are tender.

Remove corn cobs and bay leaves; discard.

Transfer 2 cups of the soup to a blender and blend until very smooth, about 1 minute. Return puree to pot and stir to combine. You can also use an immersion blender to blend directly in the pot until desired consistency is reached.

Stir in sherry vinegar then serve immediately. Garnish with reserved cooked bacon and minced chives.

Serves 4

Cathey's Christmas Omelet

5 slices white sandwich bread

1/3 cup butter

3/4 lb grated sharp cheddar cheese

2 cups milk

4-5 large eggs

1 tsp prepared mustard

1/2 tsp salt

pinch cayenne pepper

Pull crusts from the bread and tear into 1" squares. Spread evenly in a well-greased 9"×9" Pyrex dish. Melt the butter and drizzle evenly over the bread. Cover the bread with the cheddar cheese.

Beat together the milk, eggs, mustard, salt, and cayenne pepper. Pour over the bread and cheese. Cover tightly with foil and refrigerate at least 8 hours or overnight.

Bake, still covered, in a preheated 325°F oven for one hour or until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Uncover and cook 5 more minutes.

The recipe is nice with sectioned grapefruit or cantaloupe.

Ibba's Sausage, Egg, and Tomatoes

1 lb sausage
4 tomatoes, sliced in two
8 slices of cheese
8 eggs
butter
basil flakes
dried bread crumbs
chives
salt
pepper
parsley flakes

In a 10"×13" baking pan, broil sausage until almost done. Remove sausage to a plate. Pour off grease.

In the pan, arrange tomato halves uniformly. Place a pat of butter on each half. Sprinkle on some dried basil flakes then dried bread crumbs. Broil for five minutes. Remove pan from broiler.

Place a slice of cheese on each tomato half. Crack the eggs between the tomato halves. Lay sausages in any space available. Sprinkle with chives, salt, pepper, and parsley flakes.

Turn the oven down and bake for 8-10 minutes at 375°F until the egg whites have thickened.

Serves 4. Serve with English muffins.

Emily's Egg-in-a-Hole

1 thick slice country bread, whole wheat or white

1 large egg

1 Tbs unsalted butter

salt

pepper

Use a 2" cookie cutter to cut a hole in the middle of bread. Reserve the removed portion to toast, if desired.

Break egg into a teacup.

Heat a heavy cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat, or over a medium-hot grill, for about 2 minutes. Add butter. When butter stops foaming, place bread in pan and reduce heat to medium. Cook 3 minutes and flip over.

Gently tip egg into hole.

Sprinkle salt and pepper over egg and cook 3 minutes. Carefully flip egg and bread over, and cook for another 30 to 40 seconds, until egg is cooked just over-easy.

Transfer to a plate and serve.

Buttery Breakfast Casserole

Yields 8 to 10 servings

1 lb croissants (about 5-7), split in half lengthwise
1 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil, more for baking dish
1 bunch scallions (6-7), white and light green parts thinly sliced, greens reserved
¾ lb sweet Italian sausage, casings removed
2 tsp finely chopped fresh sage
8 large eggs
3 cups whole milk
1 cup heavy cream
8 oz Gruyère, grated (2 cups)
1¼ tsp kosher salt
1 tsp black pepper

Heat oven to 500°F

Spread croissants on a large baking sheet and toast, cut side up, until golden brown, 5 to 10 minutes (watch carefully to see that they do not burn). Let cool, then tear into large bite-size pieces.

In a medium skillet over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil. Add sliced scallions and sausage meat; cook, breaking up meat with a fork, until mixture is well browned, about 5 minutes. Stir in sage, and remove from heat.

In a large bowl, toss together croissants and sausage mixture. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, cream, 1½ cups cheese, salt and pepper.

Lightly oil a 9"×13" baking dish. Turn croissant mixture into pan, spreading it out evenly over the bottom. Pour custard into pan, pressing croissants down gently to help absorb the liquid. Cover pan with plastic wrap and refrigerate at least 4 hours or overnight.

When you're ready to bake the casserole, heat oven to 350°F. Scatter the remaining grated cheese over the top of the casserole. Transfer to oven and bake until casserole is golden brown and firm to the touch, 45 minutes. Let stand 10 minutes. Garnish with sliced scallion tops before serving.

Shirred Eggs

¼ tsp softened butter
2 tsp heavy cream
2 eggs
salt
pepper to taste
1 tsp minced fresh chives
1 tsp grated Parmesan cheese

Preheat oven to 325°F.

Rub the inside of a 6 oz ramekin with butter. Pour cream into the ramekin, then crack the eggs on top of the cream without breaking the yolks. Use a spoon to position the yolks towards the center of the ramekin, then sprinkle with salt, pepper, chives, and Parmesan cheese.

Bake in preheated oven until the whites of the eggs have set and the yolks are still soft, 12 to 15 minutes. Remove from oven, and allow to set for 2 to 3 minutes before serving.

Poached Eggs

1 or 2 eggs
2 tsp vinegar
1 tsp kosher salt

Add enough water to come 1" up the side of a narrow, deep 2-quart saucier. Add 1 tsp kosher salt and 2 tsp white vinegar and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Meanwhile, crack 1 very fresh cold large egg into a custard cup or small ramekin. Use the handle of a spatula or spoon to quickly stir the water in one direction until it's all smoothly spinning around.

Carefully slide the egg(s) into the center of the whirlpool. The swirling water will help prevent the white from "feathering," or spreading out in the pan. Let it poach. Turn off the heat, cover the pan and set your timer for 5 minutes. Don't peek, poke, stir or accost the egg in any way.

Remove the egg(s) with a slotted spoon and serve immediately

Admittedly there are other ways of poaching an egg, for example with a poaching ring. In this case brush the inside of the ring with a little oil and place it in a small frying pan. Pour in just enough water to cover the base by a few millimeters, and then bring to the boil. Crack the egg into the rings, cover the pan and cook for 2-3 minutes until done to your liking.



Shakshuka for With Chick Peas and Peppers

1 Tbs extra-virgin olive oil
1 small red onion, finely chopped
1 large garlic clove, minced
4 oz small sweet peppers
1 Tbs red harissa paste
½-1 15-oz can of chickpeas
1 14 oz can whole plum tomatoes
3 large eggs
1 handful fresh parsley leaves
salt
freshly ground black pepper, to taste
8 oz can tomato sauce (optional)



Halve, peel, and medium dice the onion. Peel and roughly chop clove of garlic. Cut off and discard the stems of the sweet peppers; remove the cores, then thinly slice into rings, drain and rinse the chickpeas. Place the tomatoes in a bowl; gently break apart with your hands. Retain the liquid.

Heat the oil in a medium-sized skillet over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, stirring occasionally, being careful not to let it burn. Season with salt and pepper. When it's soft and golden brown, add the peppers until slightly softened.

Add the harissa paste and chickpeas to the pan. Cook, stirring frequently, 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until thoroughly combined. Add the tomatoes (carefully, as the liquid may splatter). Cook, stirring occasionally, 2 to 3 minutes, or until slightly thickened. If the sauce seems too thick, add tomato sauce as needed. Taste the sauce - if you want more of a kick, add more harissa. Turn off the heat.

Using a wooden spoon, make three small divots in the sauce and carefully crack the eggs into them. Cover the skillet with a lid and cook for 5-10 minutes or until the egg whites have set. Don't walk away - as soon as the egg whites are set, remove the pan from the heat. It is easy to overcook the eggs, and you want the yolk to remain runny.

Sprinkle the pan with fresh parsley to taste. Serve with multigrain bread or fresh pita.

Omelette in a Mug

cooking spray or olive oil

2 eggs

1 Tbs milk

1 Tbs grated cheddar cheese

1 Tbs finely chopped red bell pepper

1 tsp finely chopped chives or green onion greens

pinch salt

pinch of black pepper

Spray the inside of a large, *microwave-safe* mug* lightly with cooking oil spray, or coat the inside of the mug with olive oil.

Crack 2 eggs into the mug, add 1 Tbs of milk, and beat with a fork.

Add grated cheese and other extras such as chopped red bell pepper or chives. Add a sprinkle of salt and pepper. Stir with a fork until well mixed.

Microwave and stir in 20 to 30 second increments: Microwave for 30 second on high. Remove from microwave and stir with a fork.

Return to the microwave and cook for another 20 to 30 seconds. (Whether it's 20 or 30 depends on the power of your microwave, you may need to experiment to see what times work best for your situation.)

You'll see patches of firm cooked egg mixture beginning to form. Remove and stir again.

Return to the microwave and cook for another 20 to 30 seconds or until the omelette has set.

Microwave Poached Egg

Fill a 1-cup microwaveable* bowl or teacup with ½ cup water. Gently crack an egg into the water, making sure it's completely submerged. Cover with a saucer and microwave on high for about 1 minute, or until the white is set but the yolk is still runny. Use a slotted spoon to transfer the egg to a plate.

* You can test your mug by filling it with water and then heating it for ~30 seconds. The water should be hotter than the mug. If the mug/glass is hotter than the water, do not use it for microwaving.

Baked Egg

butter or oil as needed

1 slice tomato

1 small slice prosciutto

1 egg

salt

freshly ground black pepper

Heat oven to 375°F. Smear a bit of butter or oil in ramekin; line with tomato and prosciutto. Break egg into ramekin, then put on a baking sheet.

Bake 10 to 15 minutes, or until egg is set and white has solidified. Because the cup retains heat, egg will continue to cook after you remove it from the oven, so it is best to undercook it slightly. Precise time, in a good oven on a middle rack, is 12 minutes. Sprinkle with salt and pepper and serve.

You can also bake the eggs in a water bath. Place the ramekin in a shallow oven proof dish of already boiling water. The whites come out well cooked and the yolks still runny.

Immersion Blender Hollandaise Sauce

1 egg yolk
1 tsp water
1 tsp fresh lemon juice
 $\frac{1}{8}$ **tsp salt**
pinch of cayenne pepper
5 Tbs butter or ghee (see page 287)

Melt the butter.

In a small jar, just wide enough to fit the immersion blender in it, add the egg yolk, lemon juice, water, salt, and cayenne. (The size of the jar is important for uniform emulsification.) Place the immersion blender in the jar. As you begin blending, slowly pour the melted butter into the egg mixture. It should begin thickening immediately. Important: the butter must be slowly added while the immersion blender is going in order for it to emulsify and thicken properly. Also, make sure you have that water in there. One little tsp actually makes a difference in the texture!

Blend until you've achieved your desired texture. The more you blend, the thicker it'll get. Taste and adjust salt and lemon, or pepper levels if needed. Serve immediately for best results.

Makes four servings.

Eggs Benedicts

eggs, 4 for two people
English muffins
Canadian bacon

First, choose your base. English muffins are standard. Drizzle a little olive oil, salt and pepper over the tops, then bake for approximately 5 minutes, until soft and crisp.

Second comes a layer of meat. Traditionally, Canadian bacon is used, but there are many other possibilities such as ham, andouille sausage, or prosciutto.

Finally comes the eggs which are poached. Heat some water in a shallow saucepan over medium-high heat. Add a few Tbs apple cider vinegar to the water. It's best to add one egg at a time by first cracking the egg into a cup to slide it into the water smoothly.

Using a spoon, swirl the water so it whirlpools before adding the egg. When the egg swirls in the water, it keeps the white snug around the yoke. Bring the bowl right to the water and let the eggs carefully slide in so there's no rough splash. Let the eggs cook for five minutes or so, depending on how soft you like your yolks, continuing to swirl the water ever so often. When done (you can test with your finger by pressing on the yolk), scoop them out with a spoon and set them on a warm, but not hot, plate until serving. Arrange the base and meat. Put one egg on each base. Then scoop some sauce over the tops. A sprinkle of paprika is always pretty.

Tater Tot Breakfast Casserole

12 oz ground pork breakfast sausage

6 oz (1½ cups) shredded cheddar cheese, plus extra to sprinkle over top

8 large eggs

½ cup (whole) milk

1 tsp kosher salt

¼ tsp ground black pepper

1 32-oz bag frozen tater tots

thinly sliced chives, for serving

12" cast iron skillet, or other oven-safe skillet

Preheat the oven to 350°F.

Warm a 12" oven-safe skillet over medium heat, and add the sausage. Cook, breaking it apart with a wooden spoon, until browned and cooked through, 5 to 7 minutes. Remove the pan from heat.

Whisk together the eggs, milk, salt and pepper in a medium bowl.

Spread the sausage into an even layer over the bottom of the skillet. Sprinkle with the shredded cheese, and pour the egg mixture over the top.



Arrange the frozen tater tots over the egg mixture in concentric circles, starting with a row around the rim of the pan and working your way in, or vice versa. (You won't use the entire bag; reserve remaining tater tots for another use.)



Bake until the eggs have fully set and the cheese has melted, 35 to 40 minutes. If desired, sprinkle some additional cheese over top and bake an extra minute or two, until the cheese has melted.

Let the casserole cool slightly before cutting into wedges. Sprinkle with some sliced chives and serve. Leftovers will keep for about 5 days.

Richard's Quick Eggs

This is an incredibly fast, easy, and good way of making 2 eggs for breakfast with no watching or standing around. No sticking either. Take a shower while they cook, using a timer so you'll get the yolks cooked just right.

serves 1

nonstick cooking spray (or a little unsalted butter or olive oil)

1 thin slice ham (Serrano, prosciutto, or whatever you've got)

1 or 2 large eggs, as desired

1 tablespoon cream, unsalted butter, and/or grated cheese

Preheat your oven or toaster oven to 350°F.

Spray, butter, or oil an 8-oz ramekin or custard cup. Put in the ham slice, break an egg (or 2 eggs) on top, and then put the cream, butter, or cheese, or any combination of these, on top of the egg(s). Bake for 12 minutes for 1 egg, 17 minutes for 2 eggs. To serve, grasp the ham by the edge and slip the ham and egg out of the custard cup and onto a plate - or else just eat it tidily from the cup.

Nonstick Cooking Spray Tip: While nonstick spray is great at keeping food from sticking, it can create an aerosol mess on your kitchen countertops. So to contain any unwanted oily mess, before spraying, place your dish in the sink (or the inside door of your dishwasher, if you have one).



David's Gravy That Won't Gag You

roasting pan with residue from beef roast

¼ cup of drippings

¼ cup flour

2-3 cups water

salt to taste

pepper

Drain the drippings into a saucepan. Dispose of the remainder of the drippings (or save for later use). Do not scrape out roasting pan yet.

In a saucepan, add the flour to the previously added drippings. Brown the mixture over medium heat.

In a roasting pan, add 1 cup of the water to the pan and mix thoroughly with the remainders of meat-scrap residue from pan into mixture.

Now, add the roasting pan mixture to the sauce pan and add another cup water. Bring to the boil and stir until thickened. Salt and pepper to taste. Gravy needs salt, but you don't have to overdo it if your food is already salted. Somewhere between ½ and 1 tsp should do although you can try more.

Makes four servings. 11/6/94

Cranberry Sauce

12 oz bag of cranberries

1 cup sugar

1 strip orange peel

2 Tbs water

Empty a the bag of fresh or frozen cranberries into a saucepan reserving ½ cup to a small bowl. Add 1 cup sugar, 1 strip orange or lemon zest and water to the pan and cook over low heat, stirring occasionally, until the sugar dissolves and the cranberries are soft, about 10 minutes. Increase the heat to medium and cook until the cranberries burst, about 12 minutes. Reduce the heat to low and stir in the reserved cranberries. Add sugar, salt and pepper to taste and cool to room temperature before serving.

Barbecue Sauce

4 Tbs brown sugar
6 Tbs Worcestershire sauce
1/8 tsp dry mustard or more
1/2 cup lemon juice
1/4 cup Wesson oil
2 cups catsup
1 1/2 cups water
1/4 cup vinegar
1/4 cup onion
1/4 cup celery seed or 1 stalk + 1 Tbs seed

Simmer until vegetables are softened.

Steak Marinade

1/4 cup olive oil
1/4 cup balsamic vinegar
1/4 cup Worcestershire sauce
1/4 cup soy sauce
2 tsp Dijon mustard (optional)
2 tsp minced garlic
salt
pepper to taste

Mix olive oil, balsamic vinegar, Worcestershire sauce, soy sauce, Dijon mustard, and garlic in a small bowl. Season with salt and pepper.

Fish Marinade

½ cup vegetable oil
¼ cup soy sauce
¼ cup orange juice
¼ cup lemon juice
2 tsp grated lemon peel
2 Tbs grated ginger root
6 cloves garlic (or 3 tsp prepared chopped garlic)
½ cup dry vermouth

Mix all ingredients together.

2 lbs fish, 1" thick. This works well with swordfish, salmon, and tuna.

Place fish in rectangular glass baking dish just big enough to accept fish. Pierce the fish in several places.

Cover fish with marinade and place in refrigerator for 1-3 hours. If you need to cook immediately you can forget this step.

Turn fish from time to time.

Remove fish from refrigerator fifteen minutes before grilling so marinade can thin out.

Grill or pan fry steaks 6 minutes per side, brushing frequently with marinade. You can also cook 5-6 minutes per side in a hot skillet using 1 Tbs of butter and 2 Tbs of olive oil.

This method works particularly well with salmon because salmon is relatively fatty and comes out moist.

Marinara Sauce

2 Tbs olive oil (or less)
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 14 oz can crushed tomatoes (This recipe is especially good with fresh tomatoes. Use 1 lb, peeled and roughly chopped.)
½ tsp sugar
2 Tbs fresh parsley, minced (1 Tbs dried)
½ tsp oregano
¾ tsp basil
½ tsp pepper
salt to taste

Sauté the garlic in the oil until golden. Add the remaining ingredients and simmer 15 minutes.

Tomato Sauce with White Wine

2 Tbs butter
2 cloves garlic, minced
14 oz can crushed tomatoes
¼ cup dry white wine
½ tsp sugar
½ tsp pepper
½ tsp salt

Sauté the garlic in the butter until golden. Add the remaining ingredients and simmer 10 minutes.

Hari Cilantro Chutney

This is the green chutney you get at Indian restaurants

1 large bunch of cilantro. about 2 cups, remove stems
3 green chilies chopped about 2 tbsp
3 Tbs lemon juice
½" ginger
1½ tsp salt
1 tsp cumin seeds
1 tsp oil
1 tsp sugar
⅛ tsp asafoetida (hing)



Blend all ingredients, except the cilantro, into a paste. Add cilantro, a little at a time, and blend until smooth. Add water as needed.

Taste and adjust salt, green chilies, or lemon juice as desired.

Tips: Using a little oil and sugar keeps the color fresh.
While cleaning cilantro chop off the thick stems.

Raspberry Vinegar

fresh raspberries (a pint per quart jar)
white vinegar (1 pint)

Gently wash the raspberries and drain them in a colander. Loosely fill a 1-quart Mason jar with raspberries to within 2" of the top. Heat the vinegar until the first bubbles appear, and add it to the raspberries until the jar is filled. Cover the jar with plastic wrap (to prevent acid build-up and rust from the metal top), and screw on the top. Store the jar in a dark, cool place for 6 weeks. Strain the vinegar through a tea strainer lined with coffee-filter paper (a **must** to remove infinitesimal debris), pour it into a fresh bottle, insert a cork, and label.

Raspberry Fruit Dressing

1 cup sour cream (or plain yogurt)
3 Tbs honey
3 Tbs raspberry vinegar
1 Tbs raspberry jam

Mix all the ingredients together, and refrigerate in a covered container for 3 hours. Serve over mixed fruit salad (orange, apple, kiwi, or banana slices, halved green grapes, pineapple chunks, coconut, and so on).

Raspberry Cream Dressing

1 cup sour cream
¼ cup whipping cream
1 Tbs confectioners sugar
¼ cup raspberry vinegar
pinch of salt
dash of fresh or dried thyme
¼ cup vegetable oil

Mix together all the ingredients but the oil. Add the oil in a slow, steady stream until blended. Refrigerate. Use within 3 days on sliced cucumber salad.

Spaghetti Sauce

1 lb ground beef
2-Tbs olive oil
1 finely chopped onion
1 finely chopped green pepper
2 cloves finely chopped garlic
1 12 oz can tomato sauce
1 6 oz can tomato paste
1 cup beef bouillon
1 Tbs chopped parsley
1 bay leaf
½ tsp oregano
½ tsp basil
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp red pepper flakes

Use a large pot, heavy club aluminum if you have it.

In a little oil brown the meat. Remove the fat and put the cooked hamburger aside in a bowl.

In the same large pot saute the oil, onion, pepper, and garlic.

Add the rest of the ingredients and let simmer for a bit to have things combine. Add the hamburger and simmer covered for 1 hour.

If you double the recipe you might consider going to a pint canner.

Honey/Red Wine Vinegar Dressing

¼ cup honey
½ cup olive oil
¼ cup red wine vinegar
1 clove garlic, diced

Place the ingredients in a covered jar, shake well, and store in the refrigerator.

Take it out a few minutes before using to allow the ingredients to change to the fluid state.

This is a nice no-salt recipe.

Aurora Inn Garlic/Onion Salad Dressing

1 clove garlic, diced
5 green onions, slice thinly
3 Tbs honey
1 cup white wine vinegar
salt
pepper
1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups canola oil

Chop up the green onions finely using both the white and green. Finely chop the garlic. Place in a blender with the honey, vinegar, salt, and pepper. Mix well.

Drizzle in the canola oil with the blender on low speed.

Refrigerate.

Martina's Mustard Dill Sauce

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
1 cup chopped fresh dill or $1\frac{1}{2}$ tsp dried dill
1 cup Dijon mustard
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup white wine vinegar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mayonnaise
2 Tbs vegetable oil

Mix the sugar and dill in a small bowl. Add the Dijon mustard, vinegar, and mayonnaise. Mix well. Stir in the oil gradually. Serve over cold poached salmon. Serves 16.

The recipe can be halved easily.

Hollandaise Sauce (Microwave Version)

4 Tbs butter
2 Tbs lemon juice
1 Tbs water
2 egg yolks
½ tsp salt

This Fannie Farmer microwave recipe seems to work fairly well. Admittedly it is not haute cuisine, but it is easy.

Put the butter, lemon juice, and water in a 1-2 cup Pyrex® measuring cup with handle. Microwave on high for about 50 seconds or until butter has just melted. Do not overdo this or the butter will separate.

Remove from the microwave and whisk to blend. Let cool to the touch about 3 to 4 minutes, whisking occasionally.

Add the egg yolks and salt and whisk to blend.

Cover with Saran wrap, poke a hole to vent, and microwave on medium for 15 seconds. Remove the plastic wrap and whisk to blend. Re-cover and microwave on medium for another 15 seconds. Remove cover and whisk to blend. The sauce will thicken as it sits. If you wish a very thick sauce, microwave again for 5 seconds or so. If you wish a thinner sauce, add warm water 1 Tbs at a time and whisk to blend.

Hollandaise Sauce

½ cup butter
3 large egg yolks
1 Tbs plus 1 tsp of lemon juice
⅛ tsp salt
dash cayenne pepper or hot pepper sauce
2 Tbs hot water
finely chopped fresh parsley, if desired

Heat butter in a heavy saucepan until hot and foamy, but not browned.

In a small bowl, whisk or beat egg yolks with lemon juice, salt, and cayenne pepper or hot sauce. Gradually beat in butter, then water. Return mixture to saucepan and beat over very low heat until mixture is slightly thickened.

Serve immediately or let stand over warm water for up to 30 minutes. If desired, sprinkle with chopped fresh parsley before serving. Makes about $\frac{2}{3}$ cups.

Sour Cream and Dill Sauce

1 cup sour cream
¼ cup mayonnaise
½ salt
¼ tsp pepper
2 Tbs chopped fresh dill
1 Tbs drained caper
1 tsp lemon juice

Combine all ingredients in a small bowl, then refrigerate until ready to use.

Make this sauce ahead to give the flavors time to blend together. This may be served with salmon baked with a combination of white wine, tarragon, dill and shallots or scallions.

Quick Tomato Catsup

2 6 oz cans tomato paste
½ cup white vinegar
4 Tbs brown sugar
1 Tbs garlic powder
1 Tbs onion powder
¼ tsp allspice
1 tsp salt
1 tsp molasses
1 tsp agave nectar
2½ cups water

Mix together. Makes about 16 oz.

Roux **(White Sauce)**

4 Tbs flour
4 Tbs butter
2 cups milk

This is a recipe for 2 cups roux; the standard recipe is half this amount. Use a 3-quart pot, since everything ends up here.

Place flour and butter in the pot. Gently cook the mixture for two minutes. You are cooking the flour, do not scorch the mixture. Add the milk and bring to simmer. Use a whisk to smooth out the roux. Cook a few minutes until the mixture thickens. The result should be smooth and creamy. Cover and let stand for the other ingredients.

Tomato Catsup

10 lb tomato, dead-ripe
1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
4 large onions, chopped
1½ cups cider vinegar
2 garlic cloves, crushed
1 tsp peppercorns
1 tsp whole allspice
1 tsp whole cloves
5 cinnamon sticks
1 tsp celery seed
½ tsp dry mustard
¼ tsp cayenne
4 Tbs brown sugar, packed firm
3 Tbs granulated sugar
1 tsp salt

Cut tomatoes in quarters and puree them in food processor along with bell pepper. Strain puree through a coarse sieve to remove skins and seeds. (You can dump the puree into a colander and work it through with your hands until there is nothing left in the colander but a dryish pulp of skins and seeds.)

Now puree onions, combine with tomato and pepper puree, and pour into a large stainless steel or enameled kettle. Cook and stir occasionally over low heat until it is reduced by about a third and is considerably thicker.

Meanwhile put garlic, peppercorns, allspice, cloves, cinnamon, and celery seed into the vinegar in a small pot and simmer covered for ½ hour to steep spices in the vinegar. Pour about half the spiced vinegar through a tea strainer into the thickened tomato mixture. Stir. Also add sugar, mustard, cayenne, and salt at this point.

Here is where the tasting comes in. You can adjust any of these ingredients to suit you. You can add more spiced vinegar. Or a little plain vinegar. More or less sugar, mustard, cayenne. Just sort of tinker with it. Cook it some more, stirring often, until it looks like catsup should look. Taste and adjust again. You may notice that it looks slightly curdled. Hit it a lick in the food processor. Smooths right out. Pour into sterile jars leaving ⅛" of head space. Process in a boiling water bath 15 minutes.

Indian Gravy

Most gravied Indian dishes have certain ingredients in common, so preparing and storing one when you have some spare time is a great idea. That way when you're ready all you do is add the meat or veggie to the gravy and cook through! This recipe makes enough gravy for a single dish.

2 large onions cut into quarters

2 medium tomatoes cut into quarters

3 Tbs vegetable oil

2 tsp garlic, minced

1 tsp ginger, minced

2 tsp coriander powder

1 tsp cumin powder

1 tsp red chilli powder (reduce quantity if you want less heat)

½ tsp turmeric powder (optional)

Grind the onion and tomato together in a food processor till you get a smooth paste. Try not to add too much water while grinding.

Heat the cooking oil in a medium-sized, heavy-bottomed pan on a medium flame. Before the pan gets too hot, add the ginger and garlic and fry for 2 minutes. Add the paste you just prepared. Fry for 5 minutes.

Now add the powdered spices and fry till the oil begins to separate from the masala.

Turn off the fire and allow the paste to cool completely (if you're not using it immediately). Put into a suitable container, label container with date and freeze.

Tip: You can also make this gravy with thinly sliced onions and tomatoes (instead of grinding them into pastes). This makes a gravy with a thinner consistency.

Italian Spaghetti Sauce

½ cup olive oil
1 clove garlic mined
1 lb ground round steak
½ lb ground pork
28 oz can Italian tomatoes
½ cup Italian tomato paste
½ cup beef stock
1½ tsp salt
¼ tsp pepper
1 bay leaf
½-¾ lb thickly sliced mushrooms
1-2 tsp fresh basil or oregano
Romano or Parmesan cheese

Heat the olive oil and minced garlic in a large skillet. Add the beef and pork. Brown.

Drain the tomatoes into a bowl. Chop the tomatoes into quarters. Extract the seeds into the bowl. Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, beef stock, salt, pepper, and bay leaf to the skillet. Strain the remaining tomato fluid, removing the seeds, into the skillet. Simmer uncovered for 1 hour.

Add the mushrooms and basil or oregano and simmer for an additional 15 minutes. Add additional beef stock so that the sauce does not become too thick.

Serve with noddles or spaghetti. Top with the cheese.

Serves 6. You may refrigerate or freeze what you do not use for another meal.

Apricot Mustard Sauce

½ cup apricot preserves
2 Tbs Dijon-style mustard

Force the apricot preserves through a fine sieve into a small bowl and stir in the mustard. (The sauce may be prepared several days ahead and kept covered and chilled.)

Transfer the sauce to a portable container and serve it at room temperature. Makes about ½ cup.

Creamy Cucumber Dill

1 cucumber, peeled, seeded, and minced
½ cup sour cream
½ cup plain yogurt
1 Tbs snipped fresh dill
white pepper to taste

In a fine sieve set over a small bowl let the cucumber drain for 1 hour, press out any remaining juice from the cucumber, and discard the juice.

In a small bowl combine the cucumber, the sour cream, the yogurt, the dill, the white pepper, and salt to taste. (The sauce may be prepared up to 1 day ahead and kept covered and chilled.)

Transfer the sauce to a small portable container and keep it chilled. Makes about 1½ cups.

Durkee's Famous Sauce Clone

½ cup cold water
4 Tbs cornstarch
½ cup + 2 Tbs balsamic vinegar , plus
1 Tbs + 2 tsp salt
½ cup sugar
1 egg
4 Tbs prepared mustard
4 Tbs unsalted butter

Put all ingredients, except for the butter, into your blender. Blend on high speed about 2 minutes or until mixture is smooth.

Pour into top pan of a double boiler. Cook over gently boiling water. As sauce begins to heat, add butter, stirring often to incorporate. Cook for 12-15 minutes (stirring often) or until sauce becomes thick and smooth.

Remove from heat and allow to cool. Cooled sauce may be run thru blender, again, on high speed for about a minute till smooth.

Refrigerate sauce in covered container for several hours before using.

Will keep, refrigerated, about 1 month.

Yield: 2 cups

Mom's Mint Sauce for Lamb

1 cup white wine vinegar

6 Tbs sugar

¼-½ cup fresh mint

Rinse young, healthy mint leaves, strip from the stems, and chop into fine pieces. You can process most of the leaves in a blender, with a little of the vinegar, leaving some aside to chop by hand. The leaves chopped in the blender will be very fine, and infuse a fine flavor, while those done by hand are a little coarser and will be more visible in the final sauce.

Bring vinegar to a simmer in a small saucepan. Add sugar until dissolved, then the chopped leaves. Simmer for about 20 minutes to infuse the mint flavor. Add more sugar or add a little water to taste, depending on how strong or how sweet you want the sauce. Put sauce into a serving bowl and cover. Set aside for at least an hour until the sauce is at room temperature.

You can store the mint sauce in glass jars. Vinegar has natural preservative qualities, and mint sauce should keep for 2 to 3 months in cold storage or for 6 to 8 months in the refrigerator. Be sure the jars are sterilized in boiling water. You can add a small fresh sprig of mint to your jars, if you wish, for visual appeal - just insert into the jar before adding the mint sauce. Use a funnel to add the sauce, stirring as you pour it into the funnel to make sure you get lots of mint leaves mixed with the vinegar. You'll find that the mint settles to the bottom of the jar, so the mint sauce should be gently shaken or stirred before serving.

Cucumber-Tomato Marinade

¼ cup water

2 Tbs sugar

½ cup apple cider vinegar

1 cucumber, thinly sliced rounds

2 ripe tomatoes, sliced into eights

Add the water and sugar to a glass measuring cup with a pouring spout. Microwave for 30 seconds. Stir to dissolve the sugar.

Add the vinegar to a 1 quart glass bowl. Pour the sugar/water in by dribs and drabs. Taste to find the right mixture of sweet and sour. It could be all the fluid.

Place the cut up cucumber and tomatoes into the marinade, stirring to wet all parts. Place in a refrigerator for an hour, stirring every once in a while. The marinade will draw out some fluid from the vegetables.

Transfer the vegetables to another bowl to serve.

Homemade Pizza Sauce

3 garlic cloves, minced
3 Tbs olive or vegetable oil
1 (29 oz) can tomato puree
1 (28 oz) can crushed tomatoes
2 Tbs brown sugar
1 Tbs Italian seasoning
1 tsp dried basil
½ tsp salt
½ tsp crushed red pepper flakes

In a large saucepan, saute garlic in oil until tender. Stir in the remaining ingredients. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer, uncovered, for 30 minutes or until sauce reaches desired thickness. Sauce may be refrigerated for up to 1 week.

Ghee - Clarified Butter

1 lb unsalted butter

Ghee is an ingredient in many Middle Eastern dishes. It is also called clarified butter. Ghee can be quite expensive in the stores; making it in your own kitchen is easy and inexpensive. Ghee is made by simmering unsalted butter in a cooking vessel until all water has boiled off, the milk solids (or protein) have settled to the bottom, and a froth has floated on top. After removing the froth, the cooked and clarified butter is then spooned off or tipped out carefully to avoid disturbing the milk solids on the bottom of the pan. You can store ghee in an airtight container on a pantry shelf.

Using a medium saucepan, heat butter on medium heat.

Allow butter to melt and bring to a boil, stirring constantly. You will notice that the oil will separate itself. The top will begin to froth; remove froth.

Allow the oil to become clear. Once clear, remove from heat and allow to cool for 15 minutes.

After cooling, strain ghee through a very fine strainer into container or jar, or through 3-5 layers of cheesecloth.

Put lid on container and store on shelf (for a few weeks) or in refrigerator (for a few months).

Giblet Gravy

Giblets (gizzard, neck, heart and liver), removed from turkey cavity and washed

1 onion, cut in half

1 stick of celery, cut into four or five pieces.

1 large carrot, peeled and cut into four or five pieces

4 cloves of garlic, peeled

1 bay leaf

1 stick of butter

8 Tbs of flour

1-2 tsp of turmeric

1-2 tsp of paprika

2-3 Tbs of Worcestershire sauce (can add more to taste)

1 cup of turkey pan drippings

salt

pepper

Place the giblets in a pot with the onion halves, celery, carrots, garlic cloves and bay leaf, and cover with 8 cups of water. Bring to a boil, and then turn heat down to low, simmering the stock for an hour and a half, stirring occasionally.

Remove giblets and chop meat into small cubes. Remove aromatics and strain the stock (should have about 5 cups).

To make your roux, in a pot heated on medium-low, melt the butter and then slowly add the flour. Constantly stir the flour and butter for about 10 minutes, or until the mixture is golden and tan.

Add the giblet stock, chopped giblet meat and pan drippings, and then add the spices and Worcestershire sauce, turn the heat up to medium-high and bring to a boil. (You may use Lawry's Seasoned Salt instead of the turmeric and paprika, and if you prefer, you can use it, too.)

When mixture boils, quickly turn heat back down to medium-low and continue stirring until thick. Adjust seasonings to taste.

Makes 6 cups

Note: Some people like to add a sliced hard-boiled egg to their giblet gravy. You can make the gravy the day before using chicken stock instead of the pan drippings. It keeps in the fridge for three days and it can also be frozen.

Pico de Gallo (salsa Mexicana)

2 cups ripe red tomatoes diced (about 4 medium tomatoes)
1 clove of garlic, minced
¼ cup diced onion (about ¼ of a small white onion)
¼ cup chopped cilantro
2 jalapenos (stems and seeds removed) diced
1 lime, juiced
½ Tbs olive oil
salt, to taste

Mix all the ingredients and let it sit for half an hour. Makes 2 cups. Serve immediately.

Will last a day in the refrigerator, though it may get extra juicy. You can drain some of the juice if you like.

In Mexican cuisine, pico de gallo is a fresh, uncooked condiment made from chopped tomato, white onion, and chilis. Pico de gallo can be used in much the same way as other salsas, but since it contains less liquid, it can also be used as a main ingredient in dishes such as tacos and fajitas.

Mighty Mo Sauce (for the Mighty Mo Burger)

½ cup catsup
¼ cup chili sauce
1½ tsp A-1 sauce
½ tsp Worcestershire sauce
2 drops Tabasco sauce
½ cup sweet pickle, finely chopped
1¼ cups mayonnaise

Combine catsup, chili sauce, A-1 sauce, Worcestershire sauce and Tabasco sauce.

Finely chop sweet pickles and add to the sauce mixture.

Combine the sauce/pickle mixture with mayonnaise, stirring until well-blended.

Yield: 2½ cups

Ketchup I

2 (6 oz) cans tomato paste
½ cup white vinegar
4 Tbs brown sugar
1 Tbs garlic powder
1 Tbs onion powder
¼ tsp allspice
1 tsp salt
1 tsp molasses
1 Tbs corn syrup
2½ cups water

Mix together the tomato paste, white vinegar, brown sugar, garlic powder, onion powder, allspice, salt, molasses, corn syrup, and water in a saucepan over low heat; simmer gently until you get the consistency of ketchup, 45 minutes to 1 hour. Taste and adjust salt if necessary before serving.

Ketchup II

6 large ripe tomatoes, quartered
1 bulb fennel, chopped
1 yellow onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
¼ cup white sugar
¼ cup molasses
¼ cup red wine vinegar
10 whole cloves
2 whole star anise pods
1 Tbs salt

In a large saucepan combine tomatoes, fennel, onion, garlic, sugar, molasses, vinegar, cloves, anise pods and salt. Reduce over low heat until mixture becomes very thick.

Puree mixture in a blender and strain through a mesh strainer. Chill and store in refrigerator.

Chicken Stock

1 chicken carcass, pulled apart
1 medium onion, sliced
1 large carrot, skin removed, cut in rounds
2 stalks celery, cut in 1" lengths
handful of parsley
½ tsp salt
¼ tsp ground pepper

Put the leftover bones and skin into a large stock pot and cover with cold water. Add vegetables, salt, and pepper.

Bring to a boil and immediately reduce heat to bring the stock to barely a simmer.

Simmer uncovered at least 4 hours, occasionally skimming off the foam that comes to the surface.

Turn off the heat and allow the stock pot to cool a bit.

Remove the bones and strain the stock. Use rubber gloves if the stock is still warm. Reserve any chicken that is found on the bones or in the strainer. This chicken will be tough from cooking so long, but can provide the base of chicken noodle or chicken rice soup.

If making stock for future use in soup you may want to reduce the stock by simmering a few hours longer to make it more concentrated and easier to store.

Place in quart-sized containers. If you are going to use the stock within a few days, let the containers cool and then store in the refrigerator. If you want to keep the stock for later use, leave an air gap in the containers and place them in the freezer with the lids loosely attached until the stock expands and then freezes.

A cute trick for freezing is to place the stock in ice cube containers and freeze the stock into cubes. When frozen, place in a resealable plastic bag and use them as you need them.

Note about the fat. You can skim the fat from the stock after it has cooled and the fat has congealed on top. I prefer to let the fat settle in a layer on top and leave it there. This way, the fat acts as a protective layer against bacteria, which is found in the air. The stock will last longer if you keep the fat layer on. Your stock can be stored in the refrigerator and used for up to a couple of weeks this way.

Remoulade Sauce

Remoulade or rémoulade, invented in France, is a popular condiment in many countries. Very much like the tartar sauce of some English-speaking cultures, remoulade is often aioli- or mayonnaise-based. Although similar to tartar sauce, it is often more yellowish (or reddish in Louisiana), often flavored with curry, and sometimes contains chopped pickles or piccalilli. It can also contain horseradish, paprika, anchovies, capers and a host of other items. While its original purpose was possibly for serving with meats, it is now more often used as an accompaniment to seafood dishes, especially pan-fried breaded fish fillets and crab cakes. Here is a possible recipe.

¼ cup fresh lemon juice
¾ cup vegetable oil
½ cup chopped onion
½ cup chopped green onions
¼ cup chopped celery
2 Tbs chopped garlic
2 Tbs prepared horseradish
3 Tbs Creole whole-grain mustard
3 Tbs prepared yellow mustard
3 Tbs ketchup
3 Tbs chopped parsley leaves
1 tsp salt
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
⅛ tsp freshly ground black pepper

Combine all ingredients in the bowl of a food processor and process for 30 seconds. Use immediately or store. Will keep for several days in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Tzatziki Sauce

1 cup Greek whole milk yogurt
1 English cucumber, seeded, finely grated and drained
2 cloves garlic, finely minced
1 tsp lemon zest plus 1 Tbs fresh lemon juice
2 Tbs chopped fresh dill
kosher salt
freshly cracked black pepper

In a medium bowl, whisk together the yogurt, cucumber, garlic, lemon zest, lemon juice and dill. Season with salt and pepper. Chill.

BYOC: For some extra flavor, add some olive oil and some coarsely chopped fresh mint. Serve with crudities at your next party. Brush a pita with some olive oil and sprinkle za'atar on top. Bake in the oven until crispy and serve.

Browned Flour

1-2 cups flour

Make browned flour as a base for Brown Gravy. This flour can also be used to flavor and thicken stews, and it renders browning the roux, for gumbo or etouffee, unnecessary.

Heat a clean, dry medium cast-iron skillet over medium-low heat until hot but not smoking. Add flour, preferably White Lily brand (you can find it at Walmart or Kroger), and stir frequently with a wooden spoon until flour begins to color; then stir constantly until flour turns deep golden brown, 40-50 minutes. Set aside to cool completely. Store in a sealed jar in a cool dark place for

Bolognese Sauce

1 Tbs vegetable oil

3 Tbs butter plus 1 Tbs for tossing the pasta

½ cup chopped onion

⅔ cup chopped celery

⅔ cup chopped carrot

¾ lb ground beef chuck (or you can use 1 part pork to 2 parts beef)

salt

black pepper, ground fresh from the mill

1 cup whole milk

whole nutmeg, ⅛ tsp grated

1 cup dry white wine

1½ cups canned imported Italian plum tomatoes, cut up, with their juice

1¼-1½ lb pasta

freshly grated parmigiano-reggiano cheese at the table

Put the oil, butter and chopped onion in the pot and turn the heat on to medium. Cook and stir the onion until it has become translucent, then add the chopped celery and carrot. Cook for about 2 minutes, stirring vegetables to coat them well.

Add ground beef, a large pinch of salt and a few grindings of pepper. Crumble the meat with a fork, stir well and cook until the beef has lost its raw, red color.

Add milk and let it simmer gently, stirring frequently, until it has bubbled away completely. Add a tiny grating -- about ⅛ tsp -- of nutmeg, and stir.

Add the wine, let it simmer until it has evaporated, then add the tomatoes and stir thoroughly to coat all ingredients well. When the tomatoes begin to bubble, turn the heat down so that the sauce cooks at the laziest of simmers, with just an intermittent bubble breaking through to the surface. Cook, uncovered, for 3 hours or more, stirring from time to time. While the sauce is cooking, you are likely to find that it begins to dry out and the fat separates from the meat. To keep it from sticking, add ½ cup of water whenever necessary. At the end, however, no water at all must be left and the fat must separate from the sauce. Taste and correct for salt.

Toss with cooked drained pasta, adding the Tbs of butter, and serve with freshly grated Parmesan on the side.

Masala Sauce

2 Tbs ghee or canola oil
1 medium yellow onion, halved and thinly sliced
2" piece fresh ginger, peeled and finely grated
1 Serrano chile, finely diced
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped
1 Tbs tomato paste
2 tsp smoked Spanish paprika
2 tsp garam masala
1 (28-oz) can plum tomatoes, pureed until smooth
honey
¼-½ tsp cayenne powder (depending on how spicy you like it)
½ cup water
salt
freshly ground black pepper
¾ cup heavy cream
chopped cilantro leaves

Heat the ghee in a medium Dutch oven over medium heat until it begins to shimmer. Add the onion and cook until soft and lightly golden brown, about 10 minutes. Stir in the ginger, chile and garlic and cook for 1 minute. Add the tomato paste, paprika, and garam masala and cook for 1 minute. Add the tomatoes, honey, to taste, the cayenne and ½ cup of water and cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened. Season with salt and pepper, to taste.

Stir in the heavy cream, bring to a simmer and cook until the sauce thickens.

For an entree, add some diced, cooked, chicken to the sauce and cook for a few minutes, just to heat through. Serve over basmati rice. Garnish with cilantro leaves.

Alternatively, add a can of chick peas, drained, to the sauce.

This sauce is the base for a variety of Indian dishes. You can prepare a batch or two in advance and add meat or vegetables at a later time.

Marinara Sauce

1 28-oz can whole San Marzano tomatoes, certified DOP*. if possible
1 cup water
¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
7 garlic cloves, peeled and slivered
small dried whole chile, or pinch crushed red pepper flakes
1 tsp kosher salt
1 large fresh basil sprig, or ¼ tsp dried oregano, more to taste

Pour tomatoes into a large bowl and crush with your hands. Pour 1 cup water into can and slosh it around to get tomato juices. Reserve.

In a large skillet (do not use a deep pot) over medium heat, heat the oil. When it is hot, add garlic. As soon as garlic is sizzling (do not let it brown), add the tomatoes, then the reserved tomato water. Add whole chile or red pepper flakes, oregano (if using) and salt. Stir.

Place basil sprig, including stem, on the surface (like a flower). Let it wilt, then submerge in sauce. Simmer sauce until thickened and oil on surface is a deep orange, about 15 minutes. (If using oregano, taste sauce after 10 minutes of simmering, adding more salt and oregano as needed.) Discard basil and chile (if using).

* DOP stands for Denominazione d' Origine Protetta (roughly, "protected designation of origin"). We are talking about San Marzano tomatoes here. DOP certification guarantees that a tomato is of the San Marzano variety and grown under certain standards. Not all San Marzano tomatoes are DOP. Individual tastes may not discern a difference.

Blue Cheese Dressing

1 cup mayonnaise, preferably homemade
2 Tbs finely chopped onion
1 tsp finely minced garlic
¼ cup finely chopped parsley
½ cup sour cream
1 Tbs lemon juice
1 Tbs white wine vinegar
¼ lb crumbled blue cheese
salt to taste, if desired
freshly ground pepper to taste

Combine all the ingredients in a mixing bowl. Chill until ready to serve.

Gravy Without the Bird

4 Tbs browned flour (recipe below)
4 Tbs unsalted butter
2 cups Swanson Chicken Stock or Broth
salt
fresh cracked black pepper to taste

Yield: makes 2 cups

Set oven to 400°F

To make the browned flour: put the flour in a shallow pan or skillet, I used my 10" cast iron skillet. Put the skillet in the oven and toast the flour for about 40-50 minutes, stirring every 5-7 minutes or so, until the flour turns a nutty brown. You can put it in a jar after it's cooled and it will keep for a couple of months in the cupboard.

To make the gravy, melt the butter over medium heat in a heavy skillet or pan, and add the browned flour to it, stirring until combined. Continue stirring for a minute and then slowly add the Swanson broth to the pan, stirring or whisking as you go.

Bring the gravy to a simmer, stirring constantly. Taste and add salt and fresh cracked black pepper to taste.

If you would like your gravy even thicker, you can whisk in some Wondra flour. Notes: Use plain flour for a paler gravy.

Confused about stock versus broth? Stocks are a little bit richer than broths, but with limited seasonings so the flavor profile is pure and the cook has complete control over flavor. When I want a stronger flavor I go with stock. I use broth when I am making soups, and it's a perfect choice as a water replacement when cooking rices, couscous, and other grains. The flavor will infuse into the grains without overpowering.

Ideas for adding color and flavor to gravy without the drippings. Try caramelizing shallots, or shallots and mushrooms, for color and a rich flavor. This means simply cooking them long and slow so their natural sugars 'caramelize', and they turn a rich flavorful brown. If you do that you can either puree the gravy, strain out the solids, or serve it as is, depending on what texture you prefer.

Giblet Gravy

For the Stock

turkey neck, giblets, heart

1 Tbs salt

10 cups water

1 onion, quartered

1 carrot, chopped and peeled

1 celery rib, chopped

chicken stock as needed

While the turkey roasts, make the turkey stock by gently simmering the neck, giblets, and heart (save the liver for another use) in a large pot with 10 cups salted water, 1 quartered onion, 1 chopped and peeled carrot, and 1 chopped celery rib over medium heat. After 3–4 hours, and by the time the turkey is out of the oven, you have a flavorful broth for making gravy. If there's not enough, simply add chicken stock to make 8 cups. The turkey neck has lots of good meat on it; chop it, along with the giblets, and add it to the gravy, if you like.

For the Gravy

1 cup browned flour (see browned flour recipe)

8 cups turkey stock

salt

pepper

When the turkey comes out of the oven, transfer it from the roasting pan to a cutting board or a large platter. Put the roasting pan on the stove top straddling two burners. Bring the pan drippings to a simmer over medium heat, stirring and scraping the bottom of the pan with a whisk or wooden spoon to loosen any browned bits stuck to the bottom.

Sprinkle 1 cup browned flour into the simmering pan drippings and whisk until smooth and thickened, about 1 minute. While whisking constantly, pour in 8 cups turkey stock. Simmer over medium heat, whisking occasionally, until the gravy is thick and smooth, 10–15 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve hot in a gravy boat.

Makes 6-8 cups You can also make this gravy with chicken.

Alfredo Sauce

1½ cups whole milk, plus extra as needed
2 Tbs unsalted butter
2 Tbs all-purpose flour
1-1½ cup grated Parmesan cheese (3-3⅓ oz)
salt, to taste
pepper, to taste

Warm the milk: In the microwave (30-second bursts) or on the stove top, warm the milk until it's warm to the touch and a bit steamy. (It does not need to be boiling hot; just warm.) Set aside.

Make the roux: Melt the butter over medium heat. Sprinkle the flour over top, then whisk together using a whisk.

Continue to cook the roux, whisking constantly, for 1 minute. This cooks off the raw flour flavor. It's ok if the roux turns a golden color, but continue immediately to the next step if it starts to brown significantly.

Whisk in the warm milk: Add about ¼ cup of the warm milk to the roux and whisk. Add another ¼ cup and whisk some more. The roux will seize up into clumps.

Continue adding the milk in small ¼-cup increments, whisking continuously. The clumps will eventually smooth out and look like mashed potatoes, then a thick puree, and then a sauce. Once it looks like a sauce, whisk in any remaining milk. This step should only take about a minute. You can move through the phases fairly quickly.

Cook the sauce: Once all the milk has been added, continue to cook the sauce over medium heat while whisking, for 3 to 5 minutes. It's ready when it looks like heavy cream -- slightly thickened and silky.

Stir in the Parmesan: Add all of the cheese at once. Whisk until the cheese has melted into the sauce and is no longer visible. At this point, the sauce should look quite thick and creamy.

You can cook it a little longer, whisking occasionally, to let it thicken a little more if you like, but it's better to err on the side of a too-thin sauce at this point. It will thicken a bit more when you reheat it.

Store the Alfredo sauce: Transfer the sauce to storage containers and cool completely. A skin will form on the surface of the sauce and the sauce will

Applesauce

3-4 lb of apples (about 7 to 10 apples, depending on the size), peeled, cored, and quartered*
(use apples varieties that are good for cooking such as Granny Smith, Pippin,

Gravenstein, McIntosh, Fuji, Jonathan, Jonagold, or Golden Delicious)

2 strips of lemon peel (use a vegetable peeler to strip 4 lengths, zest only)

3 Tbs lemon juice or apple cider vinegar (more or less to taste)

½ tsp ground cinnamon

up to ½ cup of white sugar (can use half of the white sugar with brown sugar) depending on your taste and the apple sweetness)

1 cup of water

½ tsp of salt

*To prep the apples, use a sharp vegetable peeler or paring knife and cut away the outer peel. Then quarter the apple and use a paring knife to cut out the tough core parts from the quarters. Or use an apple peeler/corer.

Place the peeled, cored, and quartered apples into a large pot. Add the strips of lemon peel, the lemon juice or vinegar, cinnamon, sugar, water and salt. (You might want to start with half the sugar at this point and add more to taste later.) Bring to a boil on high heat, then lower the temperature, cover the pot, and maintain a low simmer for 15-20 minutes, until the apples are completely tender and cooked through.

Once the apples are cooked through, remove the pot from the heat. Remove the lemon peels.

Use a potato masher to mash the cooked apples in the pot to make a chunky applesauce. For a smoother applesauce you can either run the cooked apples through a food mill, or purée them using a stick blender or a standing blender. (If you use a standing blender, do small batches and do not fill the blender bowl more than halfway.)

If the applesauce is too thick, add more water to thin it out.

If not sweet enough, add more sugar to taste. If too sweet, add more lemon juice.

This applesauce is delicious either hot or chilled. It pairs well with pork chops for savory dishes, it's terrific with cottage cheese as a snack or light lunch, and it's great with vanilla ice cream or yogurt.

Freezes well and will last at least a year in a cold freezer. If you freeze it, make sure to allow enough headroom in your jar for expansion. At least an inch.

Hummus

2 15-oz cans chickpeas (garbanzo beans) drained, liquid reserved

2 cloves garlic, minced

1½ tsp kosher salt

½ tsp ground cumin

⅓-¾ cup tahini, stirred well, to taste

5 Tbs freshly squeezed lemon juice

¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus extra for service

smoked paprika to taste, optional

Place the chickpeas in the bowl of a food processor along with the garlic, salt and cumin. Process for 20 to 30 seconds. Scrape down the sides of the bowl, add the tahini and process for another 15 seconds.

Add the lemon juice and ¼ cup of the reserved bean liquid and process for 20 seconds, then scrape down the sides of the bowl. With the processor running, drizzle in the olive oil and process another 20 seconds or until smooth.

To serve, transfer the hummus to a bowl and drizzle with additional olive oil and sprinkle with the smoked paprika if desired.

Tahini

2 cups *hulled* white sesame seeds

1-2 Tbs olive oil

Preheat oven to 350°F, and arrange sesame seeds on a bare baking sheet. Bake for 10 minutes, or until slightly golden brown (being careful not to burn).

Remove from oven and let cool for 5 minutes. Then add to a food processor and blend until smooth, adding 1-2 Tbs olive oil to encourage blending. The amount of oil you need will depend on the freshness of your sesame seeds and the power of your food processor.

Scoop into a jar or sealed container and store in the refrigerator up to 3-4 weeks.

Mayonnaise with an Immersion Blender

2 egg yolks (must be at room temperature)

1 tsp lemon juice or apple cider vinegar

½ tsp salt

½ tsp dry mustard (optional)

1 tsp honey

1 cup canola oil, olive oil, or any other oil

Combine the yolks, lemon juice, salt, honey, and mustard in the blender cup or canning jar. The cup should be just wide enough to accept the immersion blender. Place the blender at the bottom of the cup. Pulse with the immersion blender a few times to break up the yolks and to mix the ingredients. You may need to tilt the cup so the blender blade reaches the yolks.

With the immersion blender running, add the first ½ cup of oil a few Tbs at a time. Make sure each addition of oil is completely blended before adding the next. The mixture should start to thicken and lighten. (Once you've made this a few times and have a feel for it, you can try going more quickly, or even try pouring all the oil on top of the eggs and then blending all at once — going slowly at first is just an extra level of insurance.)

Once the first half cup of oil has been added, you can add the rest more quickly. Add as much of the oil as needed to reach the consistency you prefer; the more oil you add, the thicker the mayo will become. You may not need to use all the oil. If the mayo becomes too thick and you'd like to thin it out, blend water, 1 tsp at a time, into the mayo until you reach your desired thickness.

Transfer any mayo not being used immediately to a storage container (or leave it in the canning jar and seal it with a lid). Homemade mayo will keep for about 1 week in the refrigerator.

Jellied Cranberry Sauce

12 oz fresh cranberries (1 bag)

½ cup white sugar

½ cup light brown sugar

½ cup water

½ cup orange juice

Take the bag of cranberries and give it a quick rinse under running water, picking out any cranberries that are damaged and discarding them. Add them to a medium size pot and pour the water in. The orange juice is next (you can use all orange juice if you like.) The white and brown sugars are added next. Cook this until all the sugar has melted

Then add the cranberries. Set the heat to high and bring this to a boil. Can you hear the cranberries popping? It sounds like popcorn. As soon as it comes to a boil, lower the heat to medium and cook until the mixture has thickened and all the cranberries have popped, this will take about 15min.

The sauce is now ready, don't worry about the foam it will disappear. At this point you can leave it as is. Just put into a mason jar and serve as a relish or continue to the next step to make the jellied version.

Take a bowl and put a large fine mesh sieve on it. Slowly add the hot cranberry sauce on it. Gently start mashing the sauce through the sieve using a large spoon or a rubber spatula. Do this until no more pulp can be pushed through the sieve. What is left behind are the skins of the cranberries. This can be discarded.

Put the jellied cranberry In a mason jar to cool off. When it has cooled put the jellied cranberry sauce in the refrigerator. Yields 1 cup.

Balsamic Vinaigrette Salad Dressing

3 Tbs balsamic vinegar

1 Tbs red wine vinegar

2 tsp Dijon mustard

2 gloves garlic (finely minced)

¾ cups extra virgin olive oil

sea salt to taste

black pepper, freshly cracked, to taste

In a blender, whisk balsamic vinegar, red wine vinegar and Dijon mustard together, till they are well blended. Then add garlic to the vinegar mixture and whisk well again. Gradually pour olive oil into vinegar mixture on low, as you constantly also whisk it. At last add salt and pepper to the vinegar and your balsamic vinaigrette is ready for use. If you want to make sweet balsamic vinaigrette, you can add a few drops of honey or few teaspoons of sugar.

Demi-Glace Sauce

1 bay leaf
1 tsp thyme (dried)
6-8 parsley stems (fresh)
8-10 peppercorns (whole)
2 Tbs clarified butter
½ cup onions (chopped)
¼ cup celery (chopped)
¼ cup carrots (chopped)
¼ cup all-purpose flour
5 cups beef stock

Place the bay leaf, thyme, parsley stems, and peppercorns onto a square of cheesecloth. Tie it up into a bundle with cooking twine.

Heat the butter in a heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat and add the chopped onions, celery, and carrots. Sauté them for a couple of minutes, until the onion is partially translucent.

Sprinkle in the flour and stir to form a paste. Cook for about 3 minutes, stirring frequently until the flour is lightly browned, but by no means burned.

Now, whisk in 3 cups of the beef stock. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Then lower heat to a simmer, add the sachet, and reduce for about 20 minutes or until the total volume has reduced by about one-third.

Remove pan from heat and retrieve the sachet (and set it aside). Carefully pour the sauce through a wire mesh strainer lined with a piece of cheesecloth. Now, return the sauce to the pan, stir in the remaining 2 cups of stock, and return the sachet to the pot. Bring the pot back to a boil and then lower the heat to a simmer. Simmer for about 50 minutes or until the sauce has reduced by half.

Discard the sachet. Strain the sauce through a fresh piece of cheesecloth. Season to taste with kosher salt. (But if you're using the demi-glace to make another sauce, season at the very end.)

Demi-glace will keep in the refrigerator for a couple of weeks, and in the freezer for months.

Demi-Glace Substitute

2 cups beef broth
1 Tbs clarified butter
1 tsp cornstarch dissolved in 3 Tbs water
⅛ tsp balsamic vinegar or sherry

Simmer broth and butter over med-low heat until reduced by half. Add cornstarch mixture stirring slowly. Simmer and reduce slightly again until smooth and rich. If too thick add vinegar and stir. Should not be gravy consistency.

Hari Cilantro Chutney

This is the green chutney you get at Indian restaurants

2 green chillies ends cut off, 2 Serrano or 1 Jalapeno pepper
juice of one lime
½-1" ginger
1½ tsp salt
1 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp oil
1 tsp sugar
1 Tbs honey (optional, but highly recommended)
⅛ tsp asafoetida (or equal amounts of garlic and onion powder)
1 large bunch of cilantro. about 2 cups, remove stems



Blend all ingredients, except the cilantro, into a paste. Add cilantro, a little at a time, and blend until smooth. Add water as needed.

Taste and adjust salt, green chilies, or lemon juice as desired.

Tips: Using a little oil and sugar keeps the color fresh.

When buying fresh cilantro, the bundle should look vibrant green and should be able to hold straight when held upright. If it droops, it's not fresh and will affect the taste of the chutney.

Remove the woody part of the cilantro stems as they give a bitter aftertaste to the chutney.

Always rinse your greens 3 times to clean them thoroughly. Pat dry.

Use fresh lime (or lemon) in this recipe, it doesn't taste the same with the concentrate.

To freeze this chutney, freeze it in ice-cube trays. After a day, transfer the frozen chutney cubes to a ziplock bag. That saves a ton of effort and time.

Or

1 cup = 1 small bunch cilantro (stems removed)
½ cup mint
3 cloves garlic
3" ginger
3 green chilies, long thin type or 1 jalapeno
2 Tbs roasted gram dal
½ tsp cumin powder
1 tsp chaat masala powder
½ tsp sugar
pinch hing powder (asafoetida)
½ cup water (to adjust viscosity)

Place in blender and process until smooth.

Balsamic Reduction

The balsamic vinegar to use for the reduction should not be the aged ones, but the commercial and much cheaper ones, which tend to be less sweet and colored using caramel rather than fermentation. They are excellent to use in salad dressings and are perfect for making a balsamic reduction.

1 cup balsamic vinegar
3 Tbs maple syrup, honey or brown sugar (optional)

Before you begin, turn the extractor fan on high or open all the windows as there are going to be quite substantial vinegar fumes.

Put the vinegar (and optional ingredient if you want to use it) into a non-reactive saucepan, preferably one with a thick bottom.

Gently heat the vinegar, ever so slowly, until it starts to simmer. Lower the heat to keep the vinegar simmering and patiently allow the vinegar to reduce. Do not try to rush this bit, it is a long process, and the vinegar is ready when it turns into a syrupy glaze; it will continue to thicken as it cools so remove from the heat a little ahead of it becoming too thick. You will know it is done if it coats the back of spoon. You can always pop it back on the heat again if you need it thicker.

Remove the pan from the heat and allow the vinegar to cool.

You can store your glaze in a glass jar or bottle, and it will keep for several weeks; the vinegar does not need refrigerating.

If the reduction hardens after being in refrigerator for too long just place container in a bowl filled with warm water to heat up the reduction.

Can be served with a caprese salad, grilled peaches, bread, or whatever you want.

Margarita

9 oz Cuervo gold tequila
5 oz Triple Sec (or Cointreau) (a clear orange flavored brandy)
2 6-oz cans of frozen limeade concentrate
crushed ice

Shake with ice and serve in a salt rimmed glass on the rocks or strained to serve up. Garnish with a lime wedge.

Add more ice and add to a blender. Blend vigorously for a frozen variation. I actually prefer this variation since your head freezes up if you try to drink this too quickly.

Stinger

1½ oz brandy
½ oz white creme de menthe

Shake ingredients with ice, strain into a cocktail glass or serve with the ice.

Grasshopper

¾ oz green creme de menthe
¾ oz white creme de cacao
¾ oz light cream

Shake all ingredients with ice, strain into a cocktail glass, and serve.

Screwdriver

6.0 oz orange juice
1.5 oz vodka

Fill a highball glass with ice. Add vodka, fill with orange juice, and stir.

Black Russian

1½ oz Smirnoff vodka
1 oz Kahlua coffee liqueur
ice cubes
1 squeeze fresh oranges

Stir briefly or until spoon disintegrates.

Mulled Apple Cider

2 qt apple cider
2 cinnamon sticks
2 whole allspice berries
2 whole cloves
1 orange, thinly sliced

Place all ingredients in a large saucepan and bring to a simmer on the grates of the grill or over a burner. Simmer for at least 15 minutes to let spices release their flavors.

Divide among individual mugs and serve hot.

Cider can simmer for some time at low heat.

Hot Mulled Wine

4 C sugar
2 C water
1Tbs ground cinnamon or 6 3"-long cinnamon sticks
1 tsp ground cloves or whole cloves
3 medium oranges, thinly sliced
1 medium lemon, thinly sliced
1 4L bottle dry red wine, I used Papio Cabernet

In 8 quart sauce pot capable of high heat, heat all ingredients except wine to boiling; boil 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat to medium; pour in wine and heat again, stirring occasionally, until hot but not boiling. Serve hot.

Yields about 22 cups.

Sour Cherry Liqueur

1 lb sour cherries
3 cups vodka
1½ cup sugar

Cherry liqueurs are among the easiest liqueurs to make at home, and it is also easy to obtain a flavor which is comparable with commercial cherry liqueurs. Homemade cherry liqueurs may be served with ice, and may also be used for making cocktails.

Wash and check the cherries and remove stems. Place them in a jar, add vodka, cap with tight lid and mix. Stir daily during the first days, later at least once a week for 3-4 weeks.

Add sugar, and stir until most of it has dissolved. Stir again at least once a week for 3-4 weeks. Filter the mixture of berries and alcohol and transfer the liquid to a bottle. After three months strain the liqueur through a cloth. Add some more sugar if necessary. The liqueur should mellow for at least 4 months before drinking, preferably for 8 months.

The color of the cherry liqueur is ruby-red and the flavor is delicious. This recipe can also be used with sweet cherries, but the flavor will then be slightly different.

If you wish to make a liqueur with a stronger hint of almond flavor you should pit ⅓ of the cherries, brake them with a hammer, and add the broken piths together with pitted cherries and whole cherries when making the liqueur.

Homemade Cough Syrup

1 Tbs cider vinegar
2 Tbs water
1 Tbs honey
¼ tsp ground ginger
¼ tsp cayenne pepper
1 tsp lemon juice (optional)

Mix all the ingredients together and store in the refrigerator. Take one tsp of the syrup at intervals as needed.

My Drink of Choice

Lipton's unsweetened, decaffeinated iced-tea powder
Sweet'N Low saccharine
prepared limeade (refrigerate)
cinnamon sticks

In a 1½ quart lidded container add 4 heaping Tbs of the iced-tea powder and ½ heaping Tbs of the Sweet'N Low. (I buy it by the box, not the little packets.) Add water to fill the container. Shake well to mix the contents. Add a 3" cinnamon stick. Refrigerate.

Mix ⅔ iced tea and ⅓ limeade with ice in any sized glass. Enjoy.

If you use lemonade instead of limeade it is called an Arnold Palmer.

Mulled Port

14 oz tawny, full-bodied port
12 whole cloves
1 stick cinnamon bark
8 whole peppercorns
2 Tbs thinly sliced fresh ginger
1 Tbs orange zest

Add port to medium, heavy-bottomed sauce pan, over medium-low heat. Add spices.

Bring to low simmer for 2-3 minutes, stirring constantly. Immediately remove from heat. Do not boil.

Allow to stand minimum of 4 hours, preferably overnight.

Can be served hot or cold, strain and serve in SIPPING glasses... NOT MUGS. This drink is sweet, but potent. The port is about 20% alcohol.

Eggnog

12 eggs, separated
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup bourbon
1 cup Cognac
½ tsp salt
3 pints heavy cream
Grated nutmeg
1 to 2 cups milk (optional)

In an electric mixer, beat the egg yolks with the sugar until thick. Slowly add the bourbon and Cognac while beating at slow speed. Chill for several hours.

Add the salt to the egg whites. Beat until almost stiff.

Whip the cream until stiff. Fold the whipped cream into the yolk mixture, then fold in the beaten egg whites. Chill 1 hour.

When ready to serve, sprinkle the top with freshly grated nutmeg. Serve in punch cups with a spoon.

If desired, add 1 to 2 cups of milk to the yolk mixture for a thinner eggnog.

Makes about 40 punch-cup servings.

Doug's Buttermilk Biscuits

1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
1 cup cake flour (or another cup of all purpose flour)
2 tsp double acting baking powder
½ tsp baking soda
1 tsp sugar
½ tsp salt
8 Tbs (1 stick) very cold unsalted butter cut into ½-¼" cubes
½-¾ cup cold low-fat cultured buttermilk (or plain Greek yogurt or cream)

Preheat the oven to 450°F.

Spray a baking sheet and cookie cutter lightly with non-stick cooking spray.



Put the flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, and sugar in a ceramic or plastic bowl. Sift to thoroughly mix and lighten the ingredients. Cut the butter into the flour with a dough blender (as shown), two knives, or a food processor until the mixture resembles course meal.

Add the buttermilk all at once and stir with a large fork just until the dough forms a ball around the fork. Turn the dough onto a lightly floured board. Gently, gently PAT (do NOT roll with a rolling pin) the dough out until it's about ½" thick. Fold the dough about 5 times, gently press the dough down to a 1" thick.

Cut into rounds with a 1½" cookie cutter. You can gently knead the scraps together and make a few more, but they will not be anywhere near as good as the first ones. You can glaze the tops of the biscuits with melted butter.

Bake for about 10-11 minutes. The biscuits will be a beautiful light golden brown on top and bottom. Do not overbake.

Note 1: The key to good biscuits is not in the ingredients, but in the handling of the dough. The dough must be handled as little as possible or you will have tough biscuits. A food processor produces superior biscuits, because the ingredients stay colder and there's less chance of overmixing. You also must pat the dough out with your hands, lightly. Rolling with a rolling pin is a guaranteed way to overstimulate the gluten, resulting in a tougher biscuit.

Note 2: You can make these biscuits, cut them, put them on cookie sheets and freeze them for up to a month. When you want fresh biscuits, simply place them frozen on the cookie sheet and bake at 450°F for about 20 minutes.

Chambered Nautilus Granola

6 cups rolled oats
½ cup chopped walnuts
1 cup chopped pecans
½ cup sesame seeds
¾ cup sunflower seeds, raw
1 cup dried coconut
½ cup dried date pieces
½ cup raisins and/or Craisins
½ cup light oil
½ cup brown sugar
½ cup honey
½ cup maple syrup
¼ cup molasses
1 Tbs vanilla extract
1-1½ tsp cinnamon
½ tsp salt

Preheat oven to 350°F.

In a pan with a raised edge, oven roast the oats, walnuts, pecans, sesame seeds, and sunflower seeds until lightly toasted; cool. In a large bowl, combine all the toasted ingredients with coconut, date and raisins. Set aside.

Combine the oil, brown sugar, honey, maple syrup, molasses, vanilla, cinnamon and salt in a saucepan. Stir over low heat until well-combined and warm to the touch. (Do not boil!)

Pour liquid mixture over dry mixture and mix well. Turn out and flatten onto a greased cookie sheet pan and roast at 350°F for about 20 minutes, stirring every five minutes. Remove from oven, cool and store in tightly sealed containers in a cool, dry place.

Makes: about 1 gallon of granola.

Quick Biscuits

2 cups unbleached all-purpose flour , plus extra for the counter

2 tsp granulated sugar

2 tsp baking powder

½ tsp table salt

1½ cups heavy cream

Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 450°F. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.

Whisk together flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in medium bowl. Stir in the cream with a wooden spoon until dough forms, about 30 seconds. Turn the dough out onto a lightly floured counter and gather into a ball. Knead the dough briefly until smooth, about 30 seconds.

Shape the dough into a ¾" thick circle and cut with a biscuit cutter. Place rounds on parchment-lined baking sheet. (The baking sheet can be wrapped in plastic wrap and refrigerated for up to 2 hours.) Bake until golden brown, about 15 minutes, rotating baking sheet halfway through baking.

Makes eight 2½" biscuits.

Naan Bread

1 ¼-oz package active dry yeast
1 cup warm water
¼ cup white sugar
3 Tbs milk
1 egg, beaten
2 tsp salt
4½ cups bread flour
2 tsp minced garlic (optional)
¼ cup butter, melted

In a large bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Let stand about 10 minutes, until frothy. Stir in sugar, milk, egg, salt, and enough flour to make a soft dough. Knead for 6 to 8 minutes on a lightly floured surface, or until smooth. Place dough in a well oiled bowl, cover with a damp cloth, and set aside to rise. Let it rise 1 hour, until the dough has doubled in volume.

Punch down dough, and knead in garlic. Pinch off small handfuls of dough about the size of a golf ball. Roll into balls, and place on a tray. Cover with a towel, and allow to rise until doubled in size, about 30 minutes.

During the second rising, preheat grill to high heat.

At grill side, roll out one ball of dough into a thin circle. Lightly oil grill. Place dough on grill, and cook for 2 to 3 minutes, or until puffy and lightly browned. Brush uncooked side with butter, and turn the bread over. Brush cooked side with butter, and cook until browned, another 2 to 4 minutes. Remove from grill and keep warm. Continue the process until all the naan has been prepared.

Focaccia Bread

Sponge

2½ tsp (1 package) active dry yeast

⅔ cup warm water

1 cup unbleached flour

Sprinkle the yeast over the warm water in a large mixing bowl, stir it in and set aside until creamy, about 10 minutes. Stir in the flour and beat until smooth. Cover tightly with plastic wrap and set aside to rise until puffy and bubbling, about 30 minutes to all night.

Dough and Assembly

½ cup water

⅓ cup dry white wine

⅓ cup extra-virgin olive oil, plus about 2 Tbs for drizzling

2½ cups plus 2 tsp flour plus 1 to 2 Tbs as needed

2 tsp coarse salt, plus ¾ to 1 tsp for sprinkling

To the sponge in the bowl, add the water, wine and olive oil, stir to combine.

Whisk in 1 cup of flour and 2 tsp salt, then beat in the rest of the flour until you have a dough that is very soft and very sticky. Knead on a lightly floured board with the help of a dough scraper and 1 to 2 additional Tbs of flour until the dough comes together nicely and is silky and shiny, 6 to 8 minutes; it should remain soft but not wet.

Place the dough in a large, lightly oiled container, cover it tightly with plastic wrap, and set aside until doubled, about 1 hour.

The dough should be soft and full of air bubbles and should stretch easily. Press it into a well-oiled 17"×12" jelly roll pan, dimple it well with your fingertips or knuckles, cover with a towel and let rise until puffy and doubled, about 45 minutes. If the dough springs back before it is completely stretched, set it aside to "relax" the dough for a few minutes, then stretch again; the dough will stretch more easily after it is rested.

At least 30 minutes before you plan to bake, heat the oven to 425°F with a baking stone inside on the lowest shelf. Once again, dimple the top of the dough with your fingertips or knuckles, drizzle the remaining 2 Tbs of olive oil so it pools in the little indentations and sprinkle with the remaining salt.

Place the pan directly on the stone and immediately reduce the temperature to 400°F. Place a shallow metal container of water on the floor of the oven to make steam.

Bake until the focaccia is golden (lift the bread to check underneath as well), 25 to 30 minutes. Immediately remove from the oven and cool briefly on a rack. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Jacques Pepin's Flatbread

1½ cups flour

1 cup water

¼ tsp baking powder

¼ tsp salt

2 Tbs olive oil

2 Tbs water

Dump everything (except the 2 Tbs water) into a bowl and "stir it into a gooey stuff" as Jacques says. The dough will indeed be very wet, gooey, sticky. Stir in any optional ingredients.

Heat a non-stick 10" skillet over medium to medium-high heat. Pour about a Tbs of olive oil into the pan and then pour in the dough.

Spread into one flat layer with a spoon or spatula. (A little oil on the spoon or spatula helps keep the dough from sticking to it.)

Add a Tbs or two of water around the outside of the dough where it meets the pan; the object is to create steam to help cook the bread. Cover the pan with a lid and cook 8-10 minutes. Peek at the bottom of the bread about half way through the first 8-10 minutes just to make sure the bottom isn't burning. You want good color, but not charcoal! Adjust the temperature accordingly.

After 8-10 minute flip the bread and re-cover the pan so that it cooks on the other side, 5 minutes.

It tastes best if eaten while warm.

Biscuits

2½ cups (325 grams) all-purpose flour
2½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp kosher salt
1 Tbs (14 grams) granulated white sugar (optional)
½ cup (113 grams) cold unsalted butter, cut into small pieces
¾ cup (180 ml) milk
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 large egg, lightly beaten with 1 Tbs milk

Preheat oven to 400°F and place rack in center of oven. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

In a large mixing bowl, sift or whisk together the flour, baking powder, salt and sugar. Cut the butter into the dry ingredients until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs (use pastry blender, two knives, or fingertips). Add the milk and slightly beaten egg and stir until just combined. (The texture should be sticky, moist and lumpy.)

Place mixture on a lightly floured surface. Knead the dough gently until it comes together and is a smooth dough.

Roll out dough to about a ½" thickness. Cut out biscuits with a lightly floured round cookie cutter. Place on prepared baking sheet and brush the tops with the beaten egg and milk mixture and bake for about 10 - 15 minutes or until the tops are golden brown and a toothpick inserted in the center of the biscuit comes out clean. Remove from oven and place on a wire rack. Serve warm with butter.

Makes about ten 2½" biscuits.

Biscuits and Mushroom Gravy

2 Tbs butter or olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
¼ cup diced white or yellow onion
1 cup thinly sliced mushrooms (chop finely for smoother texture)
pinch each salt and pepper + more to taste
½ tsp fresh sage or thyme, chopped, optional
1½ Tbs all purpose flour
½ cup vegetable or chicken broth
¾-1 cup unsweetened plain almond milk
2 Tbs finely chopped walnuts (optional)

Preheat oven to 450°F and prepare biscuits. Add to baking sheet. Place in the oven once you get to step 6 (when adding the walnuts to the gravy).

Add butter or olive oil to a cast iron skillet large saucepan over medium heat. Then add garlic, onion, mushrooms and season with a pinch each salt and pepper. Cook for 3-4 minutes or until the onions are translucent.

Add flour and whisk to coat. Cook for 1 minute.

Then slowly whisk in broth and almond milk, starting with ½ cup almond milk and building up. Season again with a pinch each salt and pepper.

Cook until thickened, stirring frequently, over low heat. Taste and adjust seasonings as needed. I go heavy on the pepper out of preference.

Add walnuts and stir to combine. Keep on low until you're ready to serve, adding more almond milk as needed if it gets too thick. (Bake biscuits for 10-15 minutes.)

To serve, split biscuits and top with gravy.

Store leftovers separately - store gravy covered in the fridge for up to 3-4 days, and store biscuits (once completely cooled) at room temperature in a tupperware or plastic bag. Reheat in a 350°F oven to keep flakiness intact.

Catherine's Granola
(this is a winner)

4 cups rolled oats
1 cup oat bran
2 cups chopped almonds or walnuts
1 cup milk or soy powder
½ tsp salt
¾ cup honey
¾ cup vegetable oil
1 Tbs vanilla extract

Mix the dry ingredients.

Mix the wet ingredients and add to the dry.

Spread over 2 cookie sheets

Bake at 350°F for 10-15 minutes, stir, and bake another 10-15 minutes.

Store the granola in a two-quart sealable jar. It looks like a lot of granola, but it manages to disappear very quickly if you are dealing with more than one person.

Parker House Rolls

2¼ tsp (1 envelope) active dry yeast

3 Tbs lukewarm water

1½ cups whole milk

3 Tbs butter, cut into chunks

3 Tbs sugar

2 tsp salt

4½ cups flour, plus more if needed

6 Tbs melted butter, for brushing the rolls

2½" plain round cutter

pastry brush

In a bowl large enough to hold all the dough, sprinkle the yeast over the water and let it dissolve, about 5 minutes.

In a saucepan over low heat, combine the milk, 3 Tbs cut-up butter, sugar, and salt. Heat just until the butter melts and the milk feels warm to the touch of a fingertip. If the milk gets too hot, remove from the heat and let it cool to lukewarm.

Stir the yeast mixture with a wooden spoon to mix the dissolved yeast and water. Tip in the milk mixture, still stirring, until smooth. Add 2 cups of the flour and stir again until the mixture is almost smooth, with just a few lumps. Continue stirring in flour, 1 cup at a time, until the mixture forms a dough. It will be very soft. Turn the dough out onto a floured counter and knead for a few minutes until the dough is smooth, adding more flour as needed if the dough is very sticky.

Clean and dry the bowl, then grease lightly with a little vegetable oil. Set the dough in the bowl and turn it all around so it is oiled all over. Cover with a clean, damp kitchen towel and set in a warm place to rise for 1 hour, or until it is puffy (it doesn't need to double in bulk). Note that the rolls do not rise a second time once shaped.

Preheat the oven to 425°F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

Punch the dough down in the bowl, then transfer it to a lightly floured counter or pastry board. Knead until all the air is out. Roll the dough to a ¼" thickness. If it springs back as you try to roll it, let it rest for 5 minutes and then try again.

Use a 2½" round biscuit or cookie cutter to stamp out rounds. Dip the cutter in flour often to avoid sticking, and stamp the rounds as close to each other as possible. Press the back of a butter knife down the center of each round to form a crease; this is where you will fold the rolls in half. Dip the knife in flour if it starts to stick to the dough.

Brush the rounds with melted butter. Fold each round in half to make half-moon shapes and press the edges together lightly to seal them. Gather and reroll the scraps to make more rolls.

Transfer the rolls to the baking sheets, leaving 2" between rolls. Brush with more melted butter. Transfer the baking sheets to the oven and bake for 15 to 18 minutes, rotating the sheets halfway

through baking, until the rolls are puffed and golden. They're best served warm and fresh, but leftovers will keep for a few days in an airtight container at room temperature.

Small Batch Focaccia

½ cup olive oil, divided ¼ and ¼
2 garlic cloves, finely minced
1 Tbs chopped fresh thyme or 1 tsp dried
1 Tbs chopped fresh rosemary or 1 tsp dried
¼ tsp fresh ground black pepper
¾ cup barely warm water (105-110°F is ideal)
1¼ tsp active dry yeast (1 pkg)
¼ tsp honey
1 tsp sugar
2½ cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp kosher salt, plus extra for sprinkling on top

In a cold medium skillet, combine olive oil, minced garlic, thyme, rosemary, and the black pepper. Place the pan over low heat and cook, stirring occasionally, 5 to 10 minutes or until aromatic, but before the garlic browns. Set aside.

In a large bowl, combine the warm water, yeast, and honey. Stir a few times then let sit for 5 minutes. Add 1 cup of the flour and a ¼ cup of the garlic-olive oil mixture. Stir 3 to 4 times until the flour has moistened. Let sit for another 5 minutes.

Stir in the remaining 1½ cups of flour and the salt. Once the dough comes together, transfer to a floured board and knead the dough 10 to 15 times until smooth. Transfer to a large oiled bowl, cover with a warm, damp towel and let rise for 1 hour. (It's best to let the dough rise in a warmer area of your kitchen).

After 1 hour, heat oven to 450°F. Use two Tbs of the remaining garlic-olive oil mixture to oil a 9"×13" rimmed baking sheet.

Transfer the dough to the baking sheet then press it down into the pan. Use your fingers to dimple the dough then drizzle the top with the remaining 2 Tbs of the garlic-olive oil mixture. Let the dough rise for 20 minutes until it puffs slightly. Bake until golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Cool baked focaccia bread on a wire rack.

Refrigerate or freeze leftover focaccia. Wrap it tightly in plastic wrap, then in foil. Keep in the refrigerator up to 2 days and in the freezer for about a month.

No-Bake Chocolate Peanut Butter Bars

½ cup salted butter, melted (or unsalted + ¼ tsp salt)

1 cup graham cracker crumbs (about 8 full sheet graham crackers)

2 cups confectioners' sugar

1 cup + 2 Tbs creamy peanut butter, divided (peanut butter such as Jif or Skippy)

1 cup semi-sweet chocolate chips

Line an 8"×8" or 9"×9" inch square baking pan with aluminum foil or parchment paper. Set aside.

Mix the melted butter, graham cracker crumbs, and confectioners' sugar together in a medium bowl. Stir in 1 cup of peanut butter, then spread evenly into prepared baking pan.

Melt remaining 2 Tbs of peanut butter with the chocolate chips in the microwave or on the stove. Stir until smooth. Spread over peanut butter layer.

Chill in the refrigerator until completely firm, at least 2 hours. Allow to sit at room temperature for 10 minutes before cutting. Serve chilled. Setting them out for a few hours at room temperature for serving is OK.

Cover leftover bars tightly and refrigerate for up to 1 week.



Chocolate Peanut Butter Candy

1 lb white candy coating, coarsely chopped

1½ cups creamy peanut butter

2 cups (12 oz) semisweet chocolate chips

In a large microwave-safe bowl, melt candy coating; stir until smooth. Stir in peanut butter; thinly spread onto a waxed paper-lined baking sheet.

In another microwave-safe bowl, melt chocolate chips; stir until smooth. Drizzle over candy coating mixture; cut through mixture with a knife to swirl the chocolate. Chill until firm.

Break into pieces. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator.

Apple Crisp

7-8 medium-size tart cooking apples

1-cup brown sugar, dark is best

½ tsp ground cinnamon

⅛ tsp nutmeg

1 Tbs lemon juice

grated rind of 1 orange

2 Tbs fresh orange juice

¾ cup flour

¼ tsp kosher salt

6 Tbs butter

This is addicting and who cares!

Preheat oven to 375°F.

Peel, core and slice apples into a greased 9" deep dish pie pan or a one-quart shallow casserole.

Mix ½ cup of the sugar with cinnamon and nutmeg and sprinkle over apples.

Add lemon juice, orange rind and orange juice.

In a small bowl, mix together flour, salt, and remaining sugar.

Cut in butter and sprinkle mixture over apples.

Bake for 45 minutes or until apples are tender and top is browned. For those even more adventurous, add 1-tsp fresh-pressed ginger juice to lemon juice mixture. First try the recipe without the ginger juice, then try with the ginger juice. You decide which is better.

Carole's Pineapple Angel Food Cake

- 1 box angel food cake mix**
- 1 large can crushed pineapple with juice**
- 1 tsp vanilla extract**

Mix thoroughly with mixer or by hand the box of angel food cake mix, the pineapple with juice, and vanilla. Put into an ungreased angel food cake tube pan, 9"×13" pan, or 2 loaf pans.

Bake at 350°F for 30 min. and then check. Baking time will vary by oven and what size pan you use.

This cake is good alone, or with vanilla yogurt drizzled over,
 or with cool whip,
 or real whipped cream,
 or ice cream,
 or frozen yogurt.

Crispix Mix

- 3 Tbs butter**
- ¼ tsp garlic salt**
- ¼ tsp onion salt**
- 2 Tbs lemon juice**
- 4 tsp Worcestershire sauce**
- 7 cups Kellogg's Crispix cereal**
- 1 cup salted mixed nuts**
- 1 cup small pretzels**

Melt butter in large thin aluminum pan. Stir in garlic salt, onion salt, lemon juice and Worcestershire sauce.

Add Kellogg's Crispix cereal, nuts and pretzels, stirring until coated.

Bake at 250° for 45 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes.

Spread on absorbent paper to cool.

Makes about 9 cups.

Doug's Waffles

2 cups good biscuit mix

1 egg

½ cup vegetable oil

1 cup club beer

Mix ingredients together and then ladle some onto a hot waffle iron.

You can't store this batter, so make only as much as you will use at one time, or cook extra waffles and freeze them for later. You can also use this recipe to make pancakes.

Elizabeth's Five Minute Fudge

2 Tbs butter

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup undiluted Carnation evaporated milk

$1\frac{2}{3}$ cup sugar

½ tsp salt

2 cups (4 oz) mini-marshmallows

1 tsp vanilla

½ cup chopped nuts

Combine butter, evaporated milk, sugar, and salt in saucepan and bring to medium heat. Cook 4 to 5 minutes, stirring constantly. Start timing when the mixture begins to "bubble" around the edges of the pan.

Remove from heat. Stir in marshmallows, chocolate, vanilla, and nuts. Stir vigorously for 1 minute until the marshmallows melt and blend.

Pour into an 8" square well-buttered pan.

Cut into squares once cool.

Makes about 2 lb.

Fluffy Pumpkin Pie

1 15 oz can cooked pumpkin
½ cup light brown sugar
½ cup white sugar
½ tsp salt
1½ Tbs light molasses
1½ Tbs bourbon or dark rum
1½ tsp cinnamon
1½ tsp ginger
⅛ tsp nutmeg
⅛ tsp cloves
2 egg yolks
½ cup heavy cream
⅞ cup milk (a few droplets more if the mixture is stiff)
3 egg whites
pinch salt
1 Tbs sugar

Preheat oven to 450°F.

Prepare a 9" pie bottom crust, Pillsbury will do. Line a 9" pan. A pie tin is probably better than glass.

Blend the first thirteen ingredients in a bowl.

Beat the egg whites until lightly foaming; beat in a pinch of salt and continue beating to form soft peaks. Beat in by sprinkles the sugar and continue beating to make stiff, shining peaks.

Beat ¼ of the whites into the pie mixture; delicately fold in the rest.

At once, ladle the mixture into the pie shell.

Immediately, bake the pie in the middle level of the preheated oven for 15 minutes. When the rim of the crust colors lightly, reduce the heat to 375°F and bake 15 minutes more – lower heat if pastry browns too much. Lower heat again, to 350°F, and continue baking another 15 minutes or so, until the filling 2" from the edge of the pie is done (when you insert a skewer, it will come out clean.) Turn off oven, leave door ajar and let the pie sit for 20 to 30 minutes more. NOTE: If the filling cooks too fast, it tends to turn watery – so keep your eye on things.

Sour Cherry Pie (zowie!)

3 cups pitted sour cherries
1 pair Pillsbury pie crusts
¾ cup sugar
¼ cup all-purpose flour
dash salt.
2 Tbs butter

This is the best tasting pie you will ever make. It is also as simple as 1, 2, 3.

Preheat the oven to 400°F. Place a baking sheet in the oven on the lowest rack.

Fit the bottom crust dough into a 9" pie plate.

Combine the sugar, salt, and flour first. Then add the fresh sour cherries and mix.

Fill the shell with the cherry mixture. Dot the top of the filling with the butter cut into small bits.

Cover the mixture with the top crust. Trim and fold the bottom crust over the top crust to form a tight seal. Crimp or flute the edge decoratively.

Bake in the hot oven for 50 to 55 minutes until you see the filling bubbling.

Serve with vanilla ice cream. I like it in a bowl so I don't lose any of the juice. Oink.

Crunchy Chick Peas

2 Tbs olive oil
1 Tbs ground cumin
1 tsp garlic powder
½ tsp chili powder
1 pinch sea salt
1 pinch ground black pepper
1 dash crushed red pepper
1 (15 oz) can chickpeas, rinsed and drained

Preheat an oven to 350°F.

Whisk the oil, cumin, garlic powder, chili powder, sea salt, black pepper, and red pepper together in a small bowl; add the chickpeas and toss to coat. Spread into a single layer on a baking sheet.

Roast in the preheated oven, stirring occasionally, until nicely browned and slightly crispy, about 45 minutes. Store in a closed container.

Marian's Oyster Cracker Mix

12 oz oyster crackers

$\frac{2}{8}$ cup salad oil

1 tsp dill weed

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp lemon pepper

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garlic powder

Mix salad oil, dill, lemon pepper, and garlic together. Pour over oyster crackers and toss to mix thoroughly. Keep in closed container.

Marian preferred “Sunshine” oyster crackers. Alas, they aren’t available everywhere. I found them at Walmart’s.

Kheer (Rice Pudding)

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup rice

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

5 cups whole milk

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup yellow raisins

1 cup sugar

1 tsp crushed, decorticated cardamom

2 tsp rose water

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup shredded blanched almonds

Soak the rice in the water for $\frac{1}{2}$ hour. Drain the water.

Add 4 cups of the milk, the rice, and the raisins to a large saucepan. Bring to a boil, add the sugar and stir well. Turn the heat back, then simmer for 30-40 minutes until the mixture is the consistency of cream of wheat and all the milk is absorbed. Be careful to watch the simmer so as not to let the mixture boil over, it gets over everything if you do.

Lower the heat. Add the cardamom, almonds, and rose water, and last cup of milk. Mix and simmer for another 10 minutes until all of the ingredients are blended.

You can serve this dessert hot or cold. I prefer it cold. Put the mixture in a plastic container in the refrigerator. There is a lot of it. When you are ready to serve transfer what you need to bowls. You can add additional milk to make the Kheer a slurry or just leave it plain and thick.

Julia Child's Chocolate Mousse

Among all the recipes for chocolate mousse this is one of the best, we think; it uses egg yolks, sugar, and butter instead of cream and beaten egg whites. The orange flavoring suggested here is delicious with chocolate.

3-quart porcelain or stainless steel mixing bowl

wire whip or electric beater

4 egg yolks

¾ cup instant sugar (very finely granulated)

¼ cup orange liqueur

pan of not-quite-simmering water

basin of cold water

Beat the egg yolks and sugar together until mixture is thick, pale yellow, and falls back upon itself forming a slowly dissolving ribbon. Beat in the orange liqueur. Then set mixing bowl over the not-quite-simmering water and continue beating for 3 to 4 minutes until the mixture is foamy and too hot for your finger. Then beat over cold water for 3 to 4 minutes until the mixture is cool and again forms the ribbon. It will have the consistency of mayonnaise.

6 oz or squares semi-sweet baking chocolate

4 Tbs strong coffee

small saucepan

6 oz or 1½ sticks softened unsalted butter

Melt chocolate with coffee over hot water. Remove from heat and beat in the butter a bit at a time, to make a smooth cream. Beat the chocolate into the egg yolks and sugar.

4 egg whites

pinch of salt

1 Tbs granulated sugar

Beat the egg whites and salt until soft peaks are formed. Sprinkle on the sugar and beat until stiff peaks are formed. Stir one fourth of the egg whites into the chocolate mixture. Fold in the rest.

Turn into serving dish or desert cups. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or overnight.

Serve with whipped cream.

This recipe takes some time to put together, but the result is delicious.

Pecan Pie

1/3 cup sugar

3 eggs beaten

2 Tbs melted butter

1 cup dark Karo syrup

1 tsp vanilla extract

1/8 tsp salt

1 unbaked pie shell - You may use a commercial shell from the store if you are in a hurry.

Mom used a Flako mix and rolls it out thinly.

1/2 to 3/4 cup pecans

Set oven at 450°F.

Chop nuts - not too finely - and place in the pie shell.

Cream together sugar and butter.

Add eggs (beaten lightly with a fork), the dark Karo syrup, the vanilla, and a pinch of salt.

Bake pie at 450°F for 10 minutes. Watch carefully. Turn down to 350°F and continue baking for 30 to 35 minutes. Check oven several times to watch crust. It should be brown but not too dark.

Cool the pie several hours before serving.

Note: Karo syrup or corn syrup is a food syrup which is made from the starch of and contains varying amounts of maltose and higher oligosaccharides, depending on the grade. Corn syrup, also known as glucose syrup to confectioners, is used in foods to soften texture, add volume, prevent crystallization of sugar, and enhance flavor. Corn syrup is distinct from high-fructose corn syrup (HFCS), which is manufactured from corn syrup by converting a large proportion of its glucose into fructose, thus producing a sweeter compound due to higher levels of fructose.

Julia Child's Chocolate Sponge Cake

Preheat the oven to 350°. Check with a thermometer for accuracy.

A round cake pan 8" in diameter and 1½" deep. Rub the entire inner surface with a thin film of softened butter. Then roll flour around in the pan to cover the sides and bottom; knock out excess flour by banging the pan, upside down, on a hard surface. A light dusting of flour should adhere all over the inner surface of the pan.

3½ oz or squares of semisweet baking chocolate

2 Tbs coffee

small saucepan set over almost simmering water

wooden spoon

3½ Tbs softened butter

Stir the chocolate and coffee in the saucepan over almost simmering water until chocolate is melted and smooth. Turn off heat; beat in the butter by spoonfuls to make a creamy mass. Let cool to tepid while proceeding with recipe.

wire whip or electric beater

3 egg yolks (save egg whites for next step)

3-quart mixing bowl

½ cup granulated sugar

Beat the egg yolks in the mixing bowl, gradually adding the sugar until mixture is thick, "pale yellow and forms the ribbon". This prepares the egg yolks so that they can be heated without turning granular. To accomplish it, add the sugar gradually to the egg yolks in a mixing bowl while beating with a wire whip or an electric beater; continue beating for 2 to 3 minutes. The mixture will turn a pale, creamy yellow, and thicken enough so that when a bit is lifted in the beater, it will fall back into the bowl forming a slowly dissolving ribbon on the surface of the mixture. Do not beat beyond this point or the egg yolks may become granular.

3 egg whites

pinch of salt

1 Tbs granulated sugar

Beat the egg whites and salt together in a separate bowl until soft peaks are formed. Sprinkle on the sugar and beat until stiff peaks are formed. With a hand held electric beater, use a slow beating speed for about a minute until the egg whites are foaming.

Gradually increase the speed to moderate while tilting the bowl and circulating the beater around its sides and up from the middle, to beat as much air as possible into the mixture.

rubber spatula

⅔ cup sifted cake flour returned to sifter

Fold the tepid chocolate and butter into the batter, and then fold in one fourth of the egg whites. When partially blended, sift in one fourth of the flour and continue folding, alternating rapidly with more egg whites and more flour until all egg whites and flour are incorporated.

Immediately turn into prepared cake pan and run the batter up to the rim all around. Bake in middle level of preheated oven for about 30 minutes. Cake will puff about ¼" above rim of pan

and top will crack. It is done when a needle or straw, plunged into the center of the cake, comes out clean.

Remove from oven and cool in pan for 5 minutes. Cake will sink slightly and top will wrinkle. Run a knife around inside of tin, and reverse cake on rack. Allow to cool for about 2 hours; it must be thoroughly cold if it is to be iced.

Chocolate Butter Cream Icing

For about 1½ cups for filling and icing an 8" cake.

2½ quart mixing bowl

2 egg yolks

¾ cup sifted powdered sugar

2 oz (2 squares) semi-sweet baking chocolate

6 oz (1½ sticks) softened, unsalted butter

electric beater

Rinse the bowl in hot water, dry it, and place in it all the ingredients listed. Beat at a moderate speed for about 5 minutes to obtain a smooth cream. Chill until the cream is cold but still malleable.

To fill the cake, cut a tiny vertical wedge up the edge of the cake for alignment purposes. Slice the cake in half horizontally. Fill the bottom half, and then rejoin the two halves. Ice the top and sides of the cake.

Amy's Lamb Cake (an Easter tradition)

1 pkg. white pudding cake
2 Tbs melted butter
1 Tbs all-purpose flour
1 bag coconut shreds
1 7-minute frosting mixture
plastic grass
two raisins
1 cherry
1 ribbon
candy to taste

Here's what the mold looks like and the finished cake. Be sure to get a mold with vent holes on the back side. I found it at chefdepot.net and bakery.com on the web for about \$40-\$45. Do not get the small cheap one. You can probably also find it in any number of catalogs.

Grease both interior sides of the mold with unsalted fat or oil. Use a pastry brush to get in all crevasses. Be rather lavish.



Then dust the greased surfaces with flour, reversing the mold halves to get rid of any excess.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Place a cookie sheet in the lower third of the oven.

Mix the cake mix according to the recipe on the box. Amy uses the pudding cake mix because the baked cake is dense enough to hold the icing and coconut shreds without having the head fall off. At the same time the cake is still flavorful.

Fill the solid section (face front) to just below the joint. Move a wooden spoon gently through the dough to release any air bubbles. Be careful not to disturb the greased and floured surface of the mold. This is an important step. Air gaps tend to weaken the cake and leave fault lines.

On baking the cake mix will expand into the upper cavity.

Put the top lid of the mold on the bottom mold, making sure it locks and fits tightly together. The two halves can be wired together. We don't do this.

To bake, put the filled mold on the cookie sheet in the oven. Bake for an hour. Toward the end of the hour, test as you would any cake by inserting a thin metal skewer or toothpick through the steam vent. When done, remove the mold from the oven and place it on a cooling rack for about 15 minutes.

Carefully remove the top of the mold. Before you separate the cake from the bottom, let it continue to cool for about 5 minutes more to let all the steam escape and to allow the dough to

firm up a little.

Gently place another rack on top of the cake and carefully flip the cake, supporting the rack with one hand. Place the rack on a solid surface. Gently lift off the bottom mold. Continue to cool on the rack. Do not try to let it sit upright until it is cold.

If the cake has cracks or flaws, reinforce it with wooden skewers.

Place the cake on a nice tray. Ice the cake generously. Use raisins for the eyes. A cherry for the nose. Make a little ribbon collar. Lay colored plastic grass around the iced cake. Put some candy in the grass. Chocolate works for me.

7 Minute Icing

4 egg white

1½ cups sugar

¼ cup plus 1 Tbs cold water

1 tsp cream of tartar

⅛ tsp salt

1 ½ tsp vanilla extract

Mix everything except the vanilla in the top of a large double boiler; it must have at least an 8- to 10-cup capacity. Place the top over hot water on moderate heat. Beat with an electric mixer at high speed for about 5 minutes until the mixture stands in peaks when the beaters are withdrawn. Immediately, in order to stop the cooking, transfer the mixture to a large bowl of the electric mixer. Add vanilla. Beat at high speed until the mixture is smooth and stiff. Use immediately.

Toll House Cookies

2¼ cups unsifted flour
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp salt
2 sticks softened butter
¾ cup sugar
¾ cup packed brown sugar
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 eggs
12 oz package semi-sweet chocolate morsels (2 cups)
1 cup chopped nuts

Preheat oven to 375°.

Mix the flour, baking soda, and salt in a small bowl thoroughly.

In another bowl cream butter, sugar, and vanilla extract thoroughly.

Beat the eggs into the sugar-butter mixture. Add the flour mixture gradually and mix well. Add the chocolate morsels and stir into the mixture. Add the chopped nuts and stir in.

Drop rounded teaspoonfuls on ungreased cookie sheet, approximately 16 per sheet. Bake 8-9 minutes per batch. Makes 100 cookies.

Tiramisu Trifle

4 ladyfingers halved
1 Tbs brandy (or more)
2 Tbs very strong coffee (or more)
1 packet BIRD'S CUSTARD MIX, made up according to instructions
2 Tbs chocolate syrup
1 cup heavy cream, whipped
½ tsp cocoa powder
¼ tsp cinnamon

Line the bottom of a 1½-quart soufflé dish with the ladyfinger halves. Sprinkle over the brandy and coffee until well moistened.

Make up the custard and carefully pour over the top. Cool uncovered in the refrigerator until a skin forms.

Dribble the chocolate syrup over the top. Use the back of a spoon to form a smooth sheet of syrup. Refrigerate until the custard is completely cold.

Whip the cream until very stiff and carefully spread over the top. Smooth with a spatula then sift the cocoa and cinnamon evenly over the top.

Use a skewer to draw decorative swirls in the dusted whipped cream. Top with cherries or chocolate curls. Serves 4.

Tiramisu

16 ladyfingers
¼ cup rum or amaretto
⅛ cup strong coffee
3 large eggs, separated
½+ cup powdered sugar
½ lb mascarpone cheese
1½ Tbs unsweetened cocoa or coarsely graded bittersweet chocolate

Arrange the ladyfingers on the bottom of a 7" diameter, 4" deep dish. Add rum and coffee to the dish until the ladyfingers absorb the fluid..

Whisk the yolks, add the sugar, plus an additional 1 Tbs rum and 1 Tbs coffee, and whisk until a pale yellow, approximately 3 minutes

Stir in the mascarpone and 1 Tbs cocoa. Beat an additional 3 minutes

Whip egg whites until stiff. Add ¼ to mixture to lighten. Fold in the rest.

Pour over ladyfingers. Sprinkle with ½ Tbs cocoa, refrigerate 1-2 hours.

Peppermint Bark

12 oz good-quality semisweet chocolate, chopped into ½" pieces

1½ tsp peppermint extract

1 lb good-quality white chocolate, chopped into ½" pieces

3 candy canes or 12 round hard peppermint candies, crushed

Line a 9"×13"-inch baking dish with aluminum foil, shiny-side up; smooth out any wrinkles.

Make sure that the chocolate you start with is in good temper, meaning it is shiny and hard with the correct crystal structure. When the chocolate is melted (to be reformed) it will lose its temper. Reheating to the proper temperature will restore the correct temper to the chocolate.

Chop your chocolate into small pieces. Separate out about ¼ of your chocolate, and set it aside for now. Place ¾ of the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl.

Microwave the bowl of chopped chocolate in 30-second increments. Stir after every 30 seconds, and heat and stir until the chocolate is entirely melted and smooth. Bring the chocolate to 115°F for dark chocolate or 110° for white chocolate. Once the chocolate is melted, take its temperature with the chocolate thermometer. If it is not at 115°F, heat it in short bursts until it reaches that temperature, but watch it carefully. Do not allow the chocolate to exceed its recommended temperature or it might thicken, become hard to work with, or even scorch. By controlling the temperature you are encouraging the chocolate to form a particular crystal structure.

Add the remaining chunks of chocolate to the bowl of melted chocolate, and stir gently to incorporate. Stir almost constantly to melt the chocolate. The warm chocolate will melt the chopped chocolate, and the newly added chocolate will bring down the temperature of the warm chocolate. This additional chocolate acts as a "seed" to promote the desired crystal structure.

Cool the chocolate to 90°F for dark chocolate or 87°F for milk or white chocolate. Continue to stir the chocolate while it cools, until you reach the prescribed temperature. Remove any chunks of chocolate in the melted chocolate. Your chocolate is tempered and ready! You do not want the mixture to cool further.

Wipe off any moisture from the bottom of the bowl. Stir ½ tsp of the peppermint extract into the chocolate, then quickly pour into the prepared baking dish and spread in an even layer with an offset icing spatula. Firmly tap the dish against the counter to remove any air bubbles. Set aside at room temperature until almost set, about 10 minutes.

Meanwhile, put all but 1 cup of the white chocolate in a large heatproof bowl and repeat the melting process over the steaming water; dry off the bottom of the bowl. Stir in the remaining ¾ tsp peppermint extract; pour over the semisweet chocolate and spread in an even layer. Sprinkle immediately with the crushed candy canes, gently pressing them into the white chocolate. Set aside at room temperature until firm, about 1 hour. Lift the bark out of the pan using the foil and break it into pieces. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks. The broken bark can be stored in an airtight container at cool room temperature for up to 10 days.

Wondra Cookie Dough

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup shortening
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup soft butter
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar
 $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups Gold Medal Wondra flour
2 tsp baking powder
1 tsp salt
2 eggs, well beaten
2 tsp vanilla extract

It is hard to find Wondra in bags. 1 lb canisters or 2 lb boxes are available. You might try cake flour or a substitute is 1 cup all-purpose flour + $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp cornstarch

Mix on low speed all of the ingredients until the beaters gather the dough together, about 2 minutes. Gather the dough into a ball. Divide the dough in half. Chill.

Sugar Cookies

$\frac{1}{2}$ cookie dough
4 to 6 Tbs various colored sugars

Preheat the oven to 375°.

Roll the dough into a $\frac{1}{8}$ " thick layer on a floured surface. Cut shapes with various cutters. Place the shapes on an ungreased baking sheet and sprinkle with sugar. Bake 4 to 6 minutes or until light brown. Makes about 6 dozen 2" cookies.

Chocolate Chip Cookies

$\frac{1}{2}$ cookie dough
 $\frac{2}{3}$ cup brown sugar (packed)
2 Tbs water
1 cup semisweet chocolate pieces
1 cup chopped nuts

Mix all the ingredients until blended. Drop dough by teaspoonfuls onto an ungreased baking sheet. Bake 8 to 10 minutes or until a delicate brown. Makes about 6 dozen 2" cookies.

Mom's Old Fashioned Sugar Cookies

½ cup butter

⅓ cup sugar

1 egg or 2 egg yolks

½ tsp vanilla

1 Tbs milk

1¼ cup flour

¼ tsp salt

¼ tsp baking powder

Preheat oven to 350 to 375°F.

In a bowl, cream the butter and sugar. Beat in the egg and vanilla, add the milk, and mix thoroughly.

Sift together the flour, salt, and baking powder.

Mix the flour mixture into the cream mixture.

Arrange by teaspoonful the mixture on a buttered cookie sheet, 1" apart. I press them to an even roundness with a small glass, dipped each time in sugar. Makes about 3 dozen.

Bake about 8 minutes.

Bob Bobba's Broomstick Cookies (aka French Almond Wafers)

4 oz blanched almonds (slightly generous $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
1 stick ($\frac{1}{4}$ lb) ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup) butter, at room temperature
1 Tbs (must be exactly level) sifted all-purpose flour
2 Tbs milk

Adjust the rack one-third down from the top of the oven. Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line the baking pan with unwrinkled aluminum foil.

Grind the almonds finely in a nut grinder or blender. Then need not be strained.

Place all the ingredients in a 10- to 12" heavy frying pan. Using a wooden spatula, stir over low heat until butter melts and ingredients are thoroughly mixed. Remove from the heat.

Drop, by slightly rounded $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonfuls about 4" apart, on the prepared cookie sheets, placing only 4 or 5 cookies to a sheet. Bake one sheet at a time for 8 to 10 minutes, reversing the position of the sheet midway through if the cookies are not browning evenly, until well-browned with no light spots left in the centers.

Remove the baking pan from the oven. Slide the cooking sheet onto a level surface. Let stand for a few seconds, only, until the cookies can be easily removed with a wide metal spatula.

Work quickly now - as you remove a cookie, immediately place it over a rolling pin to shape it. Use two rolling pins to process all cookies. As soon as the cookies set, remove them to make room for the remaining cookies.

Bake and shape the remaining cookies. As soon as the cookies are thoroughly cool, place them in an airtight container. They will become limp if exposed to the air too long. If they are not be served soon, they should be frozen. Package in a single layer in a shallow, firm container.

Final note: These cookies taste every bit as good if simply allowed to cool as flat wafers. The shape is just for presentation.

As the story has been told to me, Bob Bobba was of American birth, but Japanese heritage. He was a man with no discernible family who worked as a waiter at the Saint Louis Country Club for many years and was known to Rhodes and Ethel Cave, Amy's grandparents. At the beginning of World War II the country was rounding up all Americans of Japanese ancestry and placing them in what were, in effect, concentration camps. Considered to be harmless by the Cave's, Bob Bobba was asked to live with them at the Cave's home in St. Louis and farm outside St. Louis, in effect hiding him from the authorities. He lived with them as family cook, general factotum, and driver during the war years, and never left when the war ended. His ashes were spread at the farm.

Hard Sauce

1 stick (½ cup) softened (but not room temperature) butter
1½ cup powdered sugar
2 Tbs whiskey, rum, sherry, more or less to taste or
1 tsp vanilla

Beat butter in mixer with paddle attachment until fluffy. Add powdered sugar gradually until incorporated, scraping sides of the bowl twice during the process. Add whiskey and beat again, scraping the bowl to make sure everything gets mixed together.

Spoon into a bowl and serve, or keep in the fridge (it will last for days covered in plastic wrap) until you need it. NOTE: The hard sauce will harden in the fridge, so be sure to remove it at least a couple of hours before you want to serve. Hard sauce should be smooth and easily spooned onto desserts.

Debby's Lemon Pie

1 large lemon
1 stick butter
1 ½ cups sugar
4 large eggs
1 tsp vanilla
1 unbaked pie crust

Preheat oven to 350°F.

Leaving the rind on the lemon, cut the lemon in small chunks, removing the seeds.

In a blender or food processor, blend together the lemon chunks, eggs, butter, vanilla and sugar until the mixture is smooth and creamy. It should be fairly runny.

Pour into an unbaked pie crust. Bake for 40 minutes. If the crust becomes too brown, cover gently with foil and finish baking.

Let sit until the filling sets. Serve with a scoop of vanilla ice cream.

Doug's Lemon Pound Cake

1½ cups all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
2 sticks butter, softened at room temperature
1 + ⅓ cup sugar
4 eggs
2 tsp pure vanilla extract
¼ + ⅓ cup lemon juice

Preheat the oven to 35°F. Butter a 6-cup loaf pan and line it with waxed paper.

In a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, and salt.

In a mixer fitted with a whisk attachment (or hand mixer), cream the butter. Add 1 cup of the sugar and mix. With the mixer running at low speed, add the eggs one at a time. Add the vanilla.

Working in alternating batches, and mixing after each addition, add the dry ingredients and ¼ cup of the lemon juice to the butter mixture. Mix until just smooth.

Pour into the prepared pan and bake until raised in the center and a tester inserted into the center comes out dry and almost clean (a few crumbs are OK). 65 to 75 minutes.

Meanwhile, make the glaze. In a small bowl, stir together the remaining ⅓ cup sugar and the remaining ⅓ cup lemon juice until the sugar is dissolved.

When the cake is done, let cool in the pan 15 minutes (it will still be warm). Run a knife around the sides of the pan. Set a wire rack on a sheet pan with sides (to catch the glaze) and turn the cake out onto the rack. Peel off the waxed paper.

Using a turkey baster or pastry brush, spread the glaze all over the top and sides of the cake and let soak in. Repeat until the entire glaze is used up, including any glaze that has dripped through onto the sheet pan. Let cool at room temperature or, wrapped in plastic wrap, in the refrigerator. Well wrapped, the cake will last up to a week. Serve room temperature, in thin slice.

Tarte Tatin

1 frozen puff pastry sheet (from a 17¼-oz package), thawed
½ stick (¼ cup) unsalted butter, softened
½ cup sugar
7 to 9 gala apples (3-4 lb), peeled, quartered lengthwise, and cored
a well-seasoned 10" cast-iron

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Roll the pastry sheet into a 10½" square on a floured work surface with a floured rolling pin. Brush off the excess flour and cut out a 10" round with a sharp knife, using a plate as a guide. Transfer the pastry round to a baking sheet and chill in the refrigerator.

Spread the butter thickly on the bottom and sides of the skillet. Pour the sugar evenly over the bottom of the skillet. Arrange as many apples as will fit vertically on the sugar, packing them tightly in concentric circles. The apples will stick up above the rim of the skillet.

Cook the apples over moderately high heat, undisturbed, until juices are deep golden and bubbling, 18 to 25 minutes. (Don't worry if the juices color unevenly.) Now put the skillet in the middle of the oven over a piece of foil to catch any drippings. Bake for 20 minutes (apples will settle slightly).

Remove the skillet from the oven and lay the pastry round over the apples. Return the skillet to the oven and bake the tart until the pastry is browned, 20 to 25 minutes.

Transfer the skillet to a rack and cool at least 10 minutes.

Just before serving, invert a platter with a lip over the skillet and, using potholders to hold the skillet and plate tightly together, invert the tart onto the platter. Replace any apples that stick to skillet (Don't worry if there are black spots; they won't affect the flavor of the tart.) Brush any excess caramel from the skillet over the apples. Serve immediately.

Note: The tart can cool in the skillet up to 30 minutes. It can also stand, uncovered, up to 5 hours, then be heated over moderately low heat 1 to 2 minutes to loosen the caramel. Shake the skillet gently to loosen the tart before inverting.

Serves 8.

Chocolate Crackle Cookies

MAKE AHEAD: The dough needs to be refrigerated overnight. The cookies can be stored in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

3 cups semisweet chocolate morsels
3 cups packed light brown sugar
1 cup vegetable oil
6 large eggs, at room temperature
½ Tbs vanilla extract
3 cups flour
1 Tbs baking powder
1 Tbs salt
1½ cups walnut pieces, toasted
⅓ cup confectioners' sugar, for rolling

Place about 2" of water in a large saucepan over medium heat. Combine the chocolate, brown sugar and oil in a heat-proof bowl wide enough to sit over the opening of the saucepan. Melt the mixture, stirring occasionally, then remove from the heat. Stir in the eggs and vanilla extract, mixing until well incorporated.

Toast the walnuts in a dry skillet over medium heat for 4 to 5 minutes, until fragrant. Let cool before using.

Combine the flour, baking powder and salt on a piece of wax paper or parchment paper. Gradually add to the bowl, stirring, then add the walnut pieces. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

The next day, preheat the oven to 325°F. Line 2 baking sheets with silicone liners or parchment paper. Spread the confectioners' sugar in a wide, shallow bowl or in a resealable plastic food storage bag.

Remove the dough bowl from the refrigerator. The dough will be fairly solid. Scoop out the dough with a Tbs one at a time. Roll into small balls between your hands. Drop them into the confectioners' sugar and gently roll to coat evenly. Arrange on the baking sheet spaced about 2" apart. Use your hand or bottom of a jar to flatten them slightly. Bake one sheet at a time for 12 to 15 minutes; the cookies will be soft and appear slightly cracked. (Do not overbake, or the cookies will become too crunchy once they have cooled.) Allow the cookies to cool completely before serving or storing. Repeat to use all of the dough.

The recipe can be halved easily. Makes about 72-90 cookies

Candied Orange Peel

1 large navel orange

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup semisweet chocolate chips

Using a vegetable peeler, cut the orange part of the peel from the stem end of the orange down to the navel end, forming long $\frac{3}{4}$ -1"-wide strips. Bring a heavy small saucepan of water to a boil. Add the peels and cook for 1 minute. Drain and then rinse the peels under cold water. Repeat cooking the peels in the saucepan with fresh boiling water and rinsing under cold water.

Stir the sugar and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of fresh water in a heavy small saucepan over medium- high heat until the sugar dissolves. Bring to a boil. Add the orange peels and simmer over medium-low heat until tender, about 15 minutes. Using tongs, transfer the peels to a sheet of parchment paper to dry slightly, about 1 hour.

Line a small baking sheet with parchment paper. Stir the chocolate in a small bowl set over a saucepan of simmering water until melted and smooth. Dip $1\frac{1}{2}$ " of each candied orange peel into the chocolate then place them on the prepared baking sheet and refrigerate until the chocolate is set, about 15 minutes.

Serves about 12 candied peels.

Lemon Curd

8 egg yolks
1 cup plus 1 Tbs sugar
½ cup lemon juice
2 lemons, zested
12 Tbs butter, cut into pieces

Place the egg yolks into the top of a double boiler or a heat-proof bowl. Beat vigorously for a minute. Add sugar and beat for another minute. Add lemon juice and zest and give it another good stir.

Place bowl over a pot of simmering water (make sure the bowl isn't touching the water). Cook, stirring, until the mixture thickens. This can take anywhere from 10 to 20 minutes.

Stir in the butter a piece at a time, whisking until each piece is nearly completely melted before adding another one.

Strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve into a storage container. Cool for a bit. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours before serving. Will keep for about 5–7 days in the refrigerator.

Mini Cheesecake Bites

15 pre-baked mini fillo (or phyllo) shells
4 oz cream cheese at room temperature
2 Tbs lemon curd + additional lemon curd for topping

In a small bowl, combine the cream cheese and lemon curd, and blend until smooth. If you would like the mixture to be a little thinner, you can add a bit of milk, yogurt, sour cream – or more lemon curd.

Fill each shell with a spoon full of the mixture, then top with a small dollop of additional lemon curd. Garnish as desired.

Note: If you have leftover pie crust from pie-making, you can use the scraps to make your own small cups. Bake them in mini-muffin tins using a few pie weights to keep them from puffing. Let them cool completely before filling.

If you can't find pre-baked shells, you might find them frozen. Or use puff pastry shells. If you have a lot of shells to fill, a pastry bag or a small scoop might be easier and faster than using spoons.

Coconut Lemon Curd Scrolls

3 cups all purpose flour
2 tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
½ cup butter, cold and cut into pieces
1¼ cups milk, cold
½ cup lemon curd
¾ – 1 cup sweetened, shredded coconut

Preheat oven to 375°F. Line a baking tray with parchment paper.

In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt. Rub in butter using your fingertips, until the mixture resembles coarse crumbs. The largest should be about the size of a large pea. Alternatively, you can combine these ingredients in a food processor and pulse to achieve crumbs, then transfer to a large bowl.

Make a well in the center of the flour mixture and pour in cold milk, gradually stirring with a butter knife or a fork until a soft dough forms.

Sprinkle dough with flour and turn out onto a lightly-floured surface . Knead lightly until smooth, then roll out to a 12"×14" rectangle. If dough gets too soft or sticky, even with the extra flour, put in fridge to chill for 15 minutes.

Spread lemon curd over dough, leaving a 2cm border along the longer edges, but going all the way to the end of the short edges of the rectangle. Sprinkle coconut generously over the lemon curd.

Starting with a long end, roll up dough in a jelly-roll fashion . Using a sharp, serrated knife to gently cut the roll into 12 even slices. Use a damp paper towel in between slices to keep knife clean and press gently to avoid squishing the roll. Lay scrolls flat on prepared baking sheet, allowing about 1" or so between each.

Bake for about 20 minutes or until scroll are light gold. Stand for 5 minutes on tray before gently pulling apart. Serve warm.

Makes 12.

New York Times Plum Torte

¾-1 cup sugar
½ cup unsalted butter
1 cup unbleached flour, sifted
1 tsp baking powder
pinch of salt (optional)
2 eggs
24 halves pitted purple plums
sugar
lemon juice
cinnamon



Spring Form

Heat oven to 350°F.

Cream the sugar and butter in a bowl. Add the flour, baking powder, salt and eggs and beat well.

Spoon the batter into a spring form of 8, 9 or 10". Place the plum halves skin side up on top of the batter. Sprinkle lightly with sugar and lemon juice, depending on the sweetness of the fruit. Sprinkle with about 1 tsp of cinnamon, depending on how much you like cinnamon.

Bake 1 hour, approximately. Remove and cool; refrigerate or freeze if desired. Or cool to lukewarm and serve plain or with whipped cream. (To serve a torte that was frozen, defrost and reheat it briefly at 300°F.) Tip: To freeze, double-wrap the torte in foil, place in a plastic bag and seal.



Peanut Butter Fudge

This fudge recipe uses marshmallows as an easy cheat in place of more elaborate candy-making.

Have a parchment lined baking pan ready to go before you start and work fast once you remove the saucepan from the heat. As the fudge starts to cool, it can become difficult to work with.

Use smooth peanut butter in this fudge, but if you prefer a little texture, feel free to use the same amount of chunky peanut butter in its place.

½ cup whole milk

6 regular-sized marshmallows

¾ cup white granulated sugar

¾ cup packed light brown sugar

2 tsp vanilla extract

½ tsp kosher salt

1½ cups smooth peanut butter

Lightly spray an 8"×8" baking pan with cooking oil. Line with parchment paper.

Place the milk and the marshmallows in a medium pan. Turn the heat to medium low and gently heat the milk. Stir constantly until the marshmallows have melted. If the milk starts to foam up too much, reduce the heat.

Once the marshmallows are melted, add both sugars and continue to cook on medium low heat while stirring until the sugars have dissolved and the liquid is smooth. Add the vanilla, salt, and peanut butter. Stir until smooth and incorporated into the batter.

Once the fudge batter is smooth and uniform, immediately pour it into the prepared pan and smooth out with spatula or butter knife.

Let the fudge cool in the pan overnight. Lift from the pan using the parchment paper and cut into 1" squares. Store in an airtight container. The fudge keeps for about a week at room temperature or 2 to 3 weeks refrigerated.

Baklava

1 16-oz pkg phyllo dough; thawed by package instructions, total 40 sheets
2½ sticks (10 oz or 1¼ cups) unsalted butter, melted
1 lb (about 4 cups) walnuts, finely chopped
1 tsp ground cinnamon
1 cup granulated sugar
2 Tbs lemon juice (juice of ½ lemon)
¾ cup water
½ cup honey
melted chocolate chips & chopped walnuts for garnish, optional

Thaw phyllo dough by package instructions (this is best done overnight in the fridge, then place it on the counter for 1 hr before starting your recipe to bring it to room temperature).

Butter the bottom and sides of a 13"×9" non-stick baking pan. Trim phyllo dough to fit your baking pan. Cover with a damp towel to keep from drying out.

Start with your honey sauce (which needs time to cool as baklava bakes). In a medium saucepan, combine 1 cup sugar, ½ cup honey, 2 Tbs lemon juice, and ¾ cup water. Bring to a boil over med/high heat, stirring until sugar is dissolved, then reduce heat to med/low and boil additional 4 min without stirring. Remove from heat and let syrup cool while preparing baklava.

Preheat oven to 325°F.

Pulse walnuts 10 times in a food process or until coarsely ground/ finely chopped. In a medium bowl, combine 4 cups finely chopped walnuts and 1 tsp cinnamon.

Place 10 phyllo sheets into baking pan one at a time, brushing each sheet with butter once it's in the pan before adding the next. Keep remaining phyllo covered with a damp towel at all times.

Spread about ¾ cup of nut mixture (about) over phyllo dough.

Add 5 buttered sheets of phyllo, then another ¾ cup layer of nuts. Repeat 4 times. Finish off with 10 layers of buttered phyllo sheets. Brush the very top with butter.

Cut pastry into 1½" wide strips, then cut diagonally to form diamond shapes. Bake at 325°F for 1 hour and 15 min or until tops are golden brown.

Remove from oven and immediately spoon cooled syrup evenly over the hot baklava (you'll hear it sizzle). This will ensure that it stays crisp rather than soggy. Let baklava cool completely, uncovered and at room temperature. For best results, let baklava sit 4-6 hours or overnight at room temperature for the syrup to penetrate and soften the layers. Garnish baklava with finely chopped nuts or drizzle with melted chocolate. Store at room temperature, covered with a tea towel for 1 to 2 weeks.

Here's the order of the Baklava Layers: 10 buttered phyllo sheets, ¾ cup nut mixture,
 5 buttered phyllo sheets, ¾ cup nut mixture,
 5 buttered phyllo sheets, ¾ cup nut mixture,
 5 buttered phyllo sheets, ¾ cup nut mixture,
 5 buttered phyllo sheets, ¾ cup nut mixture
 10 buttered phyllo sheets and butter the top

Applets and Cotlets Candy

2 (¼ oz) package unflavored gelatin
1¼ cups applesauce or 1¼ cups pureed cooked dried apricots
2 cups sugar
½ cup finely chopped walnuts
1½ tsp vanilla
powdered sugar, to coat finished candy

Mix gelatin with ½ cup applesauce and let stand for 10 minutes.

Put sugar and remaining applesauce in a saucepan. Bring to a boil. Stir in gelatin-applesauce mixture and cook over low heat for 15 minutes, stirring frequently.

Add walnuts and vanilla; mix well.

Pour into greased 8"×8" pan. Let stand overnight.

Cut in squares and toss the squares in a paper bag of powdered sugar.

Banana Custard

3 Tbs of Bird's Custard Powder
2 Tbs of sugar
2 cups milk
1 banana (ripe, if possible)

Place the custard powder, sugar and milk in a small saucepan, with ½ the banana. Use an immersion blender to mash the banana into the mix and to thoroughly blend all the powdered and liquid ingredients together.

Quarter the rest of the banana both ways. (In other words, divide it in four pieces, slice each one, and then cut each slice into four pieces.) Hold that aside for the moment.

Over medium-high heat, and whisking constantly, heat the mix until it's at a rolling boil. Remove from the heat, and pour into four small dessert cups or ramekins. Evenly distribute the banana pieces among the four cups or ramekins, and use a butter knife or small spoon to mix it into the custard. Allow it to cool in the refrigerator until it's at a suitable eating temperature.

Top with whipped cream and serve. It's best the same day, but it's acceptable the next day (though the bananas will brown a bit).

Flan

2½ cups sugar

3 cups whole milk, or 2 cups whole milk and 1 cup heavy cream

2 strips lemon zest

⅛ tsp salt

6 large eggs

2 egg yolks

½ tsp pure vanilla extract

Make caramel: Pour 1 cup sugar and 2 Tbs water into a saucepan, preferably one that is white or light-colored inside. Place over medium heat and bring to a boil, swirling the pan to combine the sugar and water. Do not stir. Let boil until deep amber in color, swirling the pan occasionally to caramelize evenly, about 10 minutes total. Watch the pan carefully after the mixture starts turning golden; it will quickly become light brown, then amber, then dark amber. Immediately pour caramel into a 9"×5" loaf pan and swirl to coat the bottom evenly. Set aside to harden.

Heat oven to 325°F.

Make custard: In a saucepan or microwaveable bowl or pitcher, combine milk, lemon zest, salt and remaining 1½ cups sugar. Over low heat or in the microwave, heat through, stirring to melt the sugar. Set aside.

In a blender (or using a hand blender in a pitcher), combine eggs, egg yolks and vanilla. Blend until smooth.

Remove the lemon zest strips from the hot milk mixture. With the blender running, gradually pour the milk mixture into the eggs. Go very slowly at first so that the eggs don't cook from the heat of the milk. Blend just until smooth. Pour egg-milk mixture into the caramel-lined pan.

Place a 9"×13" baking dish in the lower third of oven. Carefully place the loaf pan in the baking dish. Pour hot tap water into the baking dish until it comes about halfway up the sides of the loaf pan. (Don't worry if the oven seems to be losing heat; the flan will adjust.)

Bake 55 to 65 minutes, until flan is set but still jiggly in the center. Remove flan from water bath and cool on a rack for 30 minutes. Refrigerate, uncovered, until cold and firm, at least 8 hours or up to 3 days. The caramel will soften as it sits.

To unmold, run a thin sharp knife around the edges. Center a flat-bottomed platter or serving dish with a rim on top of the pan and, holding both, carefully flip the pan and plate together. The flan will fall onto the plate with a squelch; lift off the pan and let the caramel run all over the top. (If the flan doesn't come out, flip it back over and rest the bottom of the pan on a hot wet kitchen towel for a few minutes, to melt the caramel.) Serve chilled, in slices.

Hot Fudge Sauce

2 Tbs unsalted butter

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup heavy or whipping cream

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup light corn syrup, golden syrup, or honey

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup packed dark-brown sugar

$\frac{1}{4}$ cup cocoa powder

$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp fine or table sea salt

6 oz semi- or bittersweet chocolate, chopped, or 1 cup semi- or bittersweet chocolate chips

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp vanilla extract

Combine the butter, cream, sweeteners, cocoa, and salt in a small saucepan over medium heat and bring to a simmer. Simmer on low, stirring, for 3 to 5 more minutes after everything has melted, then remove from heat and stir in chopped chocolate or chocolate chips. Stir in vanilla.

It's now ready to ladle over ice cream, although it thickens more as it begins to cool, so you could also wait for 15 to 20 minutes before doing so, if it's not too unbearable. Pour leftovers into a jar or jars and refrigerate. Hot fudge sauce keeps chilled in the fridge at least a month and often two, although it's rare it lasts that long.

Servings: Makes just about 2 cups

More ideas: You can add a little rum or bourbon at the end, or even a few flakes of sea salt, you could add some cinnamon or instant espresso during the cooking process, and one time I stirred in a couple Tbs of peanut butter at the end once the chocolate melted and I don't want to say everyone liked me more that week, that would be weird, but it also might be true.

Blueberry Slump

Dumplings:

1 cup all purpose flour
1½ tsp baking powder
½ tsp salt
2 Tbs sugar
2 Tbs butter
⅓ cup milk

Blueberries:

4 cups of fresh or frozen blueberries
½ cup sugar
1 tsp ground cinnamon
¼ tsp ground nutmeg
1½ tsp lemon juice
1 tsp lemon zest
⅓ cup water
vanilla ice cream or whipping cream for serving



Make the dumplings: In a medium bowl whisk together the flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt. Cut the butter into small cubes and use your clean hands to work the pieces of butter into the flour until the mixture resembles a coarse meal.

Make a well in the center and add the milk. Mix together with a fork or wooden spoon just until the dough comes together. Form it into a ball. It should be rather shaggy. Do not knead or over work it or the dumplings will be tough.

Heat the blueberries: Place the blueberries, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, lemon juice, lemon zest, and water into a medium (2 quart) saucepan. Stir so that the berries are well coated with everything. Heat on high heat until the berries start to boil.

Add the dumplings: When the blueberry mixture is boiling, pull off clumps of dumpling dough from the ball of dough and place on top of the berries. You should have enough dough for 6 dumplings, so portion accordingly.

Cover and cook: Cover the pan, and lower the heat to maintain a low simmer. Cook for 25 minutes.

Do not uncover to peek at the dumplings while cooking! The dumplings need the steady steam and pressure from being covered to cook properly so they are light and fluffy.

Serve: Portion into individual serving bowls and top with vanilla ice cream or whipping cream.

Vanilla Cupcakes from Scratch

1½ cups all-purpose flour
1½ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp fine salt
2 large eggs, at room temperature
⅔ cup sugar
1½ sticks (6 oz) unsalted butter, melted
2 tsp pure vanilla extract or bean paste
½ cup whole milk
12 cupcake liners

Preheat the oven to 350°F and position a rack in the middle of the oven. Line a 12-cup **standard** muffin tin with cupcake liners.

Whisk the flour, baking powder and salt together in a medium bowl.

In another medium bowl, beat the eggs and sugar with an electric mixer until light and foamy, about 2 minutes. While beating, gradually pour in the butter and then the vanilla.

While mixing slowly, add half the dry ingredients. Then add all the milk and follow with the rest of the dry ingredients. Take care not to overmix the batter. Divide the batter evenly in the prepared tin.

Bake until a tester inserted in the center of the cakes comes out clean, rotating the tin about halfway through, 18 to 20 minutes. Cool the cupcakes on a rack in the tin for 10 minutes, and then remove from the tin. Cool on the rack completely. Ice with frosting and shake on some festive sprinkles.

Vanilla Bean Frosting

1 cup unsalted butter, room temperature
5 cups powdered sugar, sifted
3 Tbs milk
2 tsp vanilla extract or bean paste
¼ tsp fine sea salt

In the bowl of an electric mixer, cream the butter for a couple of minutes until fluffy. On low speed, add in the sifted sugar in two additions. Beat until combined. Add in the milk, vanilla bean paste, and salt, mixing on low speed until incorporated, then increase the speed to medium and beat for a few minutes, until light and fluffy. Add more milk or sifted powdered sugar to adjust the consistency as needed.

American Flag Pie

Crust:

3½ cups flour
3½ tsp sugar
1½ tsp salt
14 oz butter (3½ sticks), cut into cubes
⅞ cup sour cream (that's ¾ cup plus 2 Tbs)

Strawberry filling:

3½ lb strawberries, hulled, quartered
½ cup sugar
2 tsp orange zest
4 Tbs minute tapioca or cornstarch

Blueberry filling:

1 pint blueberries (about 0.6 lb, 280 g)
3 Tbs sugar
¼ tsp cinnamon
1 tsp lemon zest
2 tsp lemon juice
2 Tbs minute tapioca or cornstarch

Egg wash:

1 egg white
1 tsp milk or cream

Make the pie dough: Cut the butter into cubes and let sit out for a 10 minutes to take the chill off. Whisk together the flour, sugar, and salt in a large mixing bowl. Add the butter and toss to coat with the flour. Using your (clean) hands, work the butter into the flour until the mixture resembles a coarse meal.

Add the sour cream and mix with a fork until well incorporated. Sour cream pie dough is wetter and more pliable than a standard butter crust dough. Don't worry, it will firm up when it chills.

Knead with your hands until the mixture comes together as a ball. Divide into 3 equal sized balls of dough (it helps to use a kitchen scale). Form the balls into rectangular discs. Sprinkle with a little flour and wrap individually with plastic wrap. Chill for 1 to 2 hours or overnight (can freeze this point if making several days ahead).

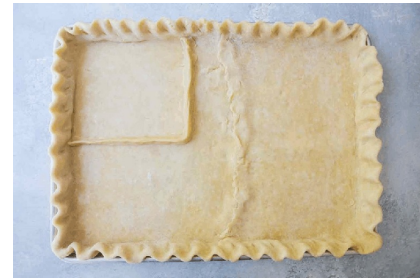


Make berry fillings: Put the quartered strawberries in a large bowl and toss with sugar, minute tapioca or cornstarch, and orange zest.

In a separate smaller bowl, put the blueberries, sugar, cinnamon, lemon zest, lemon juice, and minute tapioca or cornstarch, and toss to combine.

Roll out the dough for the bottom crust: Line the bottom of a 13"×18" rimmed sheet pan with parchment paper. Remove two dough discs from the refrigerator and let sit for 10 minutes to soften a bit. On a clean, lightly floured surface, roll out one disk to 8"× 11" and arrange on half of the sheet pan, with an inch of edge over the sides of the sheet pan. Roll out the second disc and cover the other half of the sheet pan. Fold the dough over along the edges and crimp.

Remove any excess dough from center. Form into a ball, then use your hands to roll into a long rope. Crimp that rope of dough and form a rectangle in one corner of the sheet pan. This is where your berries and stars will go. The dough will help keep the blueberries from running into the strawberries. (If you don't have excess dough at this point, no worries, you will later when you cut away the stars and stripes.) Put in the refrigerator to chill.



Roll out dough for stars and stripes: Remove third rectangular disc of dough from the fridge and let sit for 10 minutes to soften a bit. Roll out so that the longest point is 18". Use a dinner knife (blunt) or a pizza wheel to cut out stripes. You'll need 2 stripes that are about 18" long and 1½" wide, and 2 stripes that are about 10" long and 1½" wide. Use a star shaped cookie cutter to cut out stars. Place stars and stripes on a cookie sheet, sheet pan, or large plate. Make egg wash: In a small bowl, whisk together the egg white and milk or cream. Brush with egg wash. Chill.



Preheat oven to 450°F.

Fill the pie and top with stars and stripes: Spread the strawberries over the part of the sheet pan where the red and white stripes should be. Scoop the blueberries into the corner where the stars should be. Arrange the stars and strips of dough on top of the berries to form the flag. Chill for 10-15 minutes before baking.

Bake: Bake at 450°F for 15 minutes. Then tent with foil and lower the heat to 375°F and bake for another 45 to 55 minutes, until the filling is bubbling.

Remove from oven and let cool at least an hour before serving.

Blueberry Pie

1 top and bottom crust

6 cups (~2½ lb) of fresh (or frozen) blueberries, rinsed and stems removed

1 tsp lemon zest

1 Tbs lemon juice

¼ cup cornstarch, all-purpose flour, or quick cooking "minute" tapioca

½ cup white granulated sugar

½ tsp cinnamon

1 egg

1 Tbs milk

Prepare the bottom crust: Remove a dough disk from refrigerator and let sit for 5 to 10 minutes to take the chill off. Place it on a lightly floured clean, flat surface. Roll it out into a circle about 13 inches wide. Place the rolled out dough on to a 9" pie pan. Trim the edges to ½" over the edge of the pan. Place in the refrigerator to chill.

Make the blueberry filling: Place the blueberries, sugar, cornstarch (or flour or quick tapioca), cinnamon, lemon zest, and lemon juice in a large bowl. Gently stir them so that all of the blueberries are coated with some sugar and flour.

Fill the bottom crust with the berries: Remove the bottom crust from the refrigerator and place the sugar coated berries into the pan.

Roll out the second dough disk to the same size and thickness as the first. Place on top of the berry filling. Tuck the top dough over and under the edge of the bottom dough, and crimp the edges with your fingers. Place in refrigerator while you make the egg wash.

Preheat oven to 425°F.

Brush top of pie with egg wash: Whisk egg and milk together to make an egg wash. Brush the top crust with egg wash. Score the pie on the top with 4 cuts (so steam can escape while cooking).

Bake: Place the pie on the middle rack of the oven with a foil or Silpat lined baking pan positioned on the lower rack to catch any filling that may bubble over. Bake for 20 minutes at 425°F. Reduce heat to 350°F and bake for 30 to 40 minutes more or until juices are bubbling and have thickened.

Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Let cool completely before serving.

Chocolate Chip Cookies

2½ cups all-purpose flour
2 Tbs nonfat milk powder
1 tsp salt
1 tsp baking soda
¾ cup granulated sugar
¾ cup dark brown sugar
1 cup (2 sticks, or 8 oz) unsalted butter, very soft
2 large eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract
12 oz bag (about 2 cups) semisweet chocolate chips

Mix the dry ingredients: In a small mixing bowl, combine the flour, milk powder, salt, and baking soda and whisk to mix. Set aside.

Mix the sugars and the butter: With an electric mixer or in a stand mixer with a beater attachment, beat together the granulated sugar, brown sugar, and softened butter on medium speed until combined, 30 to 60 seconds. Pick out any large pebbles of hard brown sugar that you see. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and the beaters.

Mix in the eggs and vanilla: Add the two eggs and vanilla to the butter-sugar mixture and beat at medium speed until no clumps or streaks remain, 10 to 20 seconds. Scrape down the sides of the bowl and the beaters.

Mix in the flour mixture: Add the flour mixture all at once. Beat on low speed just until no more dry streaks of flour are visible, 20 to 40 seconds. You may still see some flecks of milk powder -- this is fine.

Mix in the chocolate chips: Add all of the chocolate chips and beat on low speed for just a few seconds until the chips are evenly incorporated.

Chill the dough: Scrape down the sides of the bowl and the beater. Cover the bowl and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to three days.

Heat the oven to 375°F: Place a rack in the middle of the oven. Line two baking sheet with silicon baking mats or parchment.

Scoop the dough: Use a medium cookie scoop (or a well-mounded Tbs measure) to scoop the dough out onto one of the baking sheet. Space the cookies about 2" apart.

Bake the cookies for 10 to 12 minutes: While the first batch bakes, scoop the cookies for the next batch. The cookies are done when they look slightly puffed in the middle and are starting to turn toasty at the edges.

Cool the cookies: Cool the cookies on the baking sheet for about 5 minutes, or until the puffed middle collapses down and the cookies have firmed a little. Transfer the cookies to a wire cooling rack to cool completely.

Continue baking cookies in batches until all the cookie dough has been used.

Enjoy! These cookies are at their crispiest best on the day they are made. Store leftovers in an airtight container; they will soften a little overnight but are still very delicious. They keep for about a week before becoming crumbly (at which point, I recommend crumbling them over ice cream!).

Brown Edged Wafer Cookies

3 large egg whites

¾ cup granulated sugar

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly

1½ cups all-purpose flour

¼ tsp baking soda

a pinch of kosher salt

½ tsp vanilla extract

Place the egg whites and sugar in a medium mixing bowl, and whisk until combined. Whisk in the melted butter. Add the flour and baking soda, and stir until just barely combined. Stir in the vanilla and allow the batter to sit (at room temperature) for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 350°F and line baking sheets with parchment paper. Transfer the batter to a pastry bag fitted with a 1A tip. Pipe 1½" diameter rounds onto the prepared pans, allowing 3" in between each, to allow for spreading.

Bake the cookies for 12 to 15 minutes, or until golden brown around the edges.

Yield: 45 cookies

5-Ingredient Triple Decker Chocolate Peanut Butter Bars.

½ cup salted butter (1stick), softened
1½ cups + 4 Tbs creamy peanut butter, divided
2 tsp vanilla extract
1-2 cups powdered sugar (I only used one)
3 cups semi sweet chocolate chips, divided

Line an 8"×8"square brownie pan with parchment paper.

Place 1½ cups semi-sweet chocolate chips and 2 Tbs peanut butter in a small sauce pan. Heat over low heat, stirring often until melted and smooth. Alternately, you can do this in the microwave on 30 second intervals, stirring after each interval until melted and smooth. Pour the chocolate mixture into the prepared pan and tap against the counter until the chocolate is in a smooth and even layer. Cover and place in the fridge for 30 minutes to harden.

Meanwhile, add the stick of softened butter, 1½ cups creamy peanut butter, 2 tsp vanilla and 1 cup powdered sugar to a large mixing bowl or the bowl of a stand mixer. Beat until smooth and creamy. Taste and add more powdered sugar to your liking.

Spoon the peanut butter mixture over the chocolate layer into a smooth layer. Place back in the fridge.

Place the remaining 1½ cups semi-sweet chocolate chips and remaining 2 Tbs peanut butter in a small sauce pan. Heat over low heat, stirring often until melted and smooth. Again, alternately, you can do this in the microwave on 30 second intervals, stirring after each interval until melted and smooth. Pour the chocolate mixture over the peanut butter layer, smooth the chocolate out into an even layer. Cover and place in the fridge for 1-2 hours or until ready to serve. Slice into bars and keep refrigerated.

Yields: 16 BARS

Fudgy Chocolate Brownies

¾ cup all-purpose flour
⅛ tsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
6 Tbs unsalted butter, cut up
2 oz unsweetened chocolate, broken into 1" pieces
1 cup granulated sugar
2 large eggs
1 tsp vanilla extract
1 cup (6 oz) mini bittersweet-chocolate chips

Heat the oven to 350°F and prepare the pan: Line an 8"×8" baking pan with parchment, long enough so that the parchment hangs over the sides of the pan. Coat the exposed sides of the pan with cooking spray (also, a little cooking spray under the parchment will help it stick in place, if needed).

Combine the dry ingredients: In a bowl, whisk together the flour, baking powder, and salt . Set aside.

Melt the chocolate and butter: In a medium saucepan over medium-low heat, melt the butter. It should not brown at the edges. Add the chocolate and let it melt, stirring occasionally with a heatproof spatula, until the mixture is smooth.

Set the pan on a cooling rack to cool until you can touch the bottom of with your hand comfortably.

Make the batter: Using a rubber spatula, stir the sugar into the chocolate mixture until it combined. The mixture may look crumbly or smooth after mixing; either is fine.

Add the eggs, one at a time, followed by the vanilla. Add the flour mixture, and stir until no more white patches show. Stir in the chips until well distributed.

Pour the batter into the pan. Use a spatula to spread it to the edges of the pan and smooth the top. Tap the pan once or twice hard on the counter to settle any air pockets; you can also poke the air pockets with the tip of a paring knife.

Bake the brownies: Transfer the pan to the oven and bake for 25 to 30 minutes, or until the top is slightly puffed and just set. If in doubt, it's better to under-bake these brownies a touch rather than over-bake. (The toothpick test doesn't work well for these brownies because the chocolate chips get melty!)

Cool the brownies completely: Set the pan on a wire rack until completely cooled.

Once cool, cover the pan and refrigerate for several hours or until firm and cold. This makes the brownies easier to slice cleanly.

If you're eager for brownies and can't wait for them to chill, skip this chilling step and serve them warm or just-cooled! They will be a little crumbly when you cut them.)

Cut the squares: Run a thin knife around the edge of the pan to make sure the block of brownies is loose, then lift from the pan using the parchment paper as a sling. On a cutting board, slice the brownies into a 4"×4" grid (to make 16 squares) or into a 5"×5" grid (to make 25 mini-brownies).

Brownies can be served right away. Leftovers can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for at least a week. (They will keep for longer, but may start getting dry and crumbly after a while.)

Lemon Bars

For the crust:

2 cups all-purpose flour
1 cup very cold unsalted butter (2 sticks), cut into small chunks
½ cup sweetened shredded coconut (see note)
¼ cup confectioners' sugar, more for sprinkling
pinch of salt

For the filling:

2 cups granulated sugar
4 eggs
½ cup freshly squeezed lemon juice
¼ cup all-purpose flour
1 tsp baking powder
pinch of salt

Make the crust: Heat oven to 350°F. Butter a 9"×13" or 9"×9" baking pan, preferably nonstick.

In a stand mixer or food processor, combine crust ingredients. Mix or pulse until well combined and moist clumps form. Using your hands, press evenly but gently into prepared pan.

Bake crust until edges and top are light golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Rotate once for even browning.

Meanwhile, make the filling: Whisk all the ingredients together until smooth.

Pour filling over hot parbaked crust and return to the oven. Bake until filling is almost set, about 20 minutes more (thicker squares, baked in the 9"×9" pan, will take longer). Start checking after 15 minutes; when you give the pan a gentle shake, filling should be lightly set all over and still quivery in the very center.

When baked, let cool completely in the pan on a wire rack. Sprinkle the top lightly and evenly with confectioners' sugar.

Cut into squares, diamonds or rectangles and remove from pan. Keep refrigerated until ready to serve. If desired, sprinkle again with confectioners' sugar just before serving.

Note: To make sweetened coconut, combine ½ cup water and ½ cup granulated sugar in a small pan and stir over low heat until sugar melts. Mix in ½ cup unsweetened coconut shreds or flakes and set aside at least 30 minutes to absorb. Drain off any extra syrup before adding to crust.

Soft and Chewy Sugar Cookies

1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter at room temperature

1 cup granulated white sugar

¼ cup packed light brown sugar

2 tsp vanilla extract

1 large egg

2¼ cups all-purpose flour

½ tsp baking powder

½ tsp kosher salt

½ cup granulated white sugar

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Line a baking sheet with a silicon baking mat or parchment paper.

Place butter, both sugars and vanilla extract in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment. Cream the ingredients together until the butter is light, fluffy and clings to the side of the bowl.

Add the egg and beat to incorporate. Scrape down the sides of the bowl with a spatula.

Add the flour, baking powder and salt. Mix on low speed until the dry ingredients are mostly absorbed, then increase the speed until fully incorporated.

Pinch off a lump of dough. Roll it between the palms of your hands to form a ball roughly 1½" in diameter, about the size of a pingpong ball. Roll the dough in the granulated white sugar and place on the baking sheet. Repeat, spacing the cookies about 2" apart.

Use the flat bottom of a glass to press down and form thick disks about 2" wide . Sprinkle some extra sugar on each disk

Bake 11 to 13 minutes, or until the edges of the cookies are starting to turn golden brown. Let cool for 10 minutes on the baking sheet before moving cookies to a wire rack to cool completely.

Store in an airtight container for up to 3 days at room temperature.

Lemon Sables

For the cookies

2½ cups flour
½ tsp fine sea salt
16 Tbs (2 sticks) unsalted butter, at room temperature
½ cup granulated sugar
¼ cup confectioners' sugar, sifted
finely grated zest of 1 lemon plus 1 tsp lemon juice
1 large egg, plus 1 large egg yolk
¼ tsp vanilla extract

For the optional glaze

2 Tbs fresh lemon juice
1 cup confectioners' sugar

Combine the flour and salt on a sheet of wax paper or parchment paper.

Combine the butter, both sugars and the lemon zest in the bowl of a stand mixer or hand-held electric mixer; beat on low speed until smooth. Stop to scrape down the bowl.

Add the whole egg; beat on medium speed until well incorporated, then add the yolk and beat until incorporated. Stop to scrape down the bowl.

Add the lemon juice and vanilla extract; beat on low speed until blended, then add the flour mixture; beat on low speed just until incorporated.

Divide the dough in half and transfer each portion to a large piece of plastic wrap. Use the wrap to help you shape the dough into logs that are about 10" long and 1½" wide. Refrigerate until firm, at least 30 minutes and up to 5 days.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line two or three baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone liners.

Unwrap the dough log. Cut into ¼"-thick rounds, being careful to roll the log as needed so the slices stay round. Arrange them on the baking sheets, spaced at least 1" apart. Bake one sheet at a time (middle rack) for about 15 to 20 minutes, or until the cookie edges are just golden. Transfer the cookies to a wire rack to cool completely.

Whisk together the lemon juice and confectioners' sugar in a bowl, until smooth. Dip the tops of the cooled cookies into the glaze and return them to the rack; let the glaze set before serving or storing. Makes 50 cookies.

No Fail, Sour Cream Pie Crust

2 cups all purpose flour
1 tsp of salt (skip if using salted butter)
2 tsp of sugar (for sweet recipes, otherwise skip)
2 sticks unsalted butter (1 cup, 8 oz) cubed
½ cup sour cream (full fat, NOT light sour cream)

Cut the butter into cubes and put in a warm spot to take the chill off (don't soften the butter, just let it sit out for couple minutes when you take it out of the fridge).

In a large bowl, vigorously whisk together the flour, salt (omit if using salted butter), and sugar (if using).

Sprinkle the cubes of butter over the flour. Use your clean hands to squish the flour and butter together with your thumbs and fingers. Work the butter into the dough until you have what resembles a coarse meal with some chunks of butter.

Add the sour cream to the flour butter mixture. Use a fork to incorporate into the mixture.

Use your hands to gather the pastry dough together into a large ball. Use a knife to cut the ball in half. Form into two disks. Wrap tightly with plastic wrap and chill in the refrigerator for an hour or up to a day ahead. If you want to freeze for future use, wrap again, this time with aluminum foil and freeze (leave in refrigerator overnight to thaw before using).

After the dough has been sitting in the fridge for an hour, remove it and let it sit for 5-10 minutes at room temperature to become more malleable before rolling out. If it still feels too stiff to roll out, hold your hands around the edges to soften.

To roll out, sprinkle a clean, flat surface with flour. As you roll the dough, check to make sure the bottom is not sticking. If it is, lift it up and sprinkle a little flour underneath. Roll out to 12" to 14" wide, to an even thickness.

You can use this pastry dough for unstructured rustic pies or galettes, or single or double crusted traditional pies. This recipe makes enough dough for a top and bottom crust for a 9" pie. It can also be used for a savory pot pie.

Whether you use the dough for a galette or a double crust pie, it will be prettier with a light egg wash. Just whisk one egg in a small bowl, add a tsp of water, and brush lightly over the exposed crust with a pastry brush, right before baking.

Do not use this recipe if you need to pre-bake the pie crust.

Baked Apples

"Rome Beauty" is the variety of apple that is best suited to baking, and is worth seeking out if you are making baked apples!

4 large good baking apples, such as Rome Beauty, Golden Delicious, or Jonagold

¼ cup brown sugar

1 tsp cinnamon

¼ cup chopped pecans (optional)

¼ cup currants or chopped raisins

1 Tbs butter

¾ cup boiling water

Preheat your oven to 375°F.

Rinse and dry the apples. Using a sharp paring knife or an apple corer, cut out the cores, leaving the bottom ½" of the apples intact. If using a paring knife, first cut out the stem area and then use a small metal spoon to scoop out the seeds. Cut the holes so that they are an inch or so wide.

Place the brown sugar, cinnamon, currants or chopped raisins, and chopped pecans (if using) in a small bowl and stir to combine.

Put the apples in a baking dish and stuff each apple with the sugar stuffing mixture. Place a dot of butter (a quarter of the Tbs called for in the ingredient list) on top of the sugar.

Pour the boiling water into the bottom of the baking dish. Bake at 375°F for 30 to 45 minutes, until the apples are cooked through and tender, but not overcooked and mushy.

When done, remove the apples from the oven and baste them with the juices from the pan.

Terrific with a side of vanilla ice cream.

Chocolate Pudding

3 Tbs cornstarch

¼ cup sugar

2½ cups low-fat milk

1 cup semisweet chocolate chips

½ Tbs unsalted butter

1 tsp vanilla extract

Mix cornstarch and sugar in a medium saucepan. Slowly drizzle in ½ cup milk, whisking until smooth, then whisk in remaining 2 cups milk. Turn heat to medium-high and bring to a boil. Lower heat to medium and whisk until thickened, 3 to 4 minutes.

Remove from heat and add chocolate chips, butter and vanilla. Whisk until smooth.

Divide pudding into 8 parfait glasses. Serve warm, or press plastic wrap onto surface of each pudding and chill.

HIPPO POT de MOUSSE

In the top of a double boiler, melt:

4 oz semisweet chocolate

2 oz bittersweet chocolate

Let the chocolate cool for 5 minutes. Meanwhile, whip together until stiff:

1 pint heavy cream, well-chilled

1 tsp almond extract

Gently fold the cooled chocolate into the whipped cream. (There will be many small flecks of chocolate in the mixture) Spoon the dessert into 6 large wine glasses. Chill one hour.



Sesame Seed Brittle

1½ cups sesame seed
1 cup sugar
½ cup light corn syrup
½ tsp kosher (coarse) salt
1 Tbs butter
1 tsp vanilla
1 tsp baking soda

Line 15"×10" baking sheet with waxed paper. Spray with vegetable oil.

Sprinkle sesame seed into ungreased heavy skillet. Cook over medium-low heat 5 to 7 minutes, stirring frequently until browning begins, then stirring constantly until golden brown. Remove from heat.

In 2-quart microwavable bowl, stir together sugar, corn syrup and salt. Microwave uncovered on High 4 minutes or until bubbling. Stir in butter and toasted sesame seed. Microwave uncovered on High 3 to 5 minutes, stirring every minute, until golden brown.

Stir in vanilla and baking soda (mixture will foam). Immediately pour mixture into pan with waxed paper. Cover with second sheet of waxed paper sprayed with vegetable oil. Use rolling pin to spread mixture in to ¼" thickness. Allow to cool slightly. Use rotary cutting tool or pizza cutter to cut sheet into rectangular 1"×1.5" pieces. Cool completely, about 30 minutes. Break pieces apart.

Store in a plastic bag.

Nut and Seed Brittle

1 Tbs unsalted butter, softened
2 cups granulated sugar
1 cup water
½ cup sliced almonds
½ cup pecans
½ cup coarsely chopped unsalted pistachios
2 Tbs raw sesame seeds
2 Tbs raw unsalted pumpkin seeds
2 Tbs raw unsalted sunflower seeds

Line a 10"×15" baking sheet with parchment paper. Grease pan with butter. Set aside.

Put the sugar in a large saucepan and slowly add the water, taking care not to splash. Stir just to dissolve the sugar, then bring to a simmer over medium-high heat. Let the liquified sugar simmer until it turns an amber or reddish-brown. Watch it very closely to prevent burning. It should take about 17 minutes. Remove immediately from heat and stir in the remaining ingredients.

Pour the mixture into the prepared baking sheet. Let cool. When brittle is cool, invert to remove from pan. Break into pieces and store in an airtight container.

Sesame Brittle

¾ cup sugar
¼ cup honey
pinch of salt
¼ tsp of ground nutmeg
1 Tbs water
1 cup raw sesame seeds
1 tsp of vanilla extract
2 tsp butter
¼ tsp of baking soda

Put the sugar, honey, salt, nutmeg, and water into a small (1½ quart), thick- bottomed saucepan. Heat on medium heat and stir until a smooth slurry is formed.

Stir in the raw sesame seeds.

Cook the sesame seed mixture, stirring often, until the mixture turns an amber caramel color, about 5 to 10 minutes.

If you have a candy thermometer, the temp should be 300°F. At this point, remove the pan from the heat. Stir in the vanilla extract and the butter.

Once the butter has completely melted into the mixture, stir in the baking soda. The mixture will foam up a bit after you stir in the baking soda, as the baking soda reacts with the acid from the caramelization of the sugar.

Pour the mixture out onto a Silpat-lined baking sheet. (If you don't have Silpat, no worries, pour directly onto a buttered metal baking sheet and use a metal spatula to separate brittle from the pan once cooled.)

Once completely cooled and hardened (about 15-20 minutes), break into pieces.

Chocolate Florentine Cookies

2½ cups slivered almonds
¼ cup all-purpose flour
2 Tbs natural cocoa powder (not Dutch-process)
¼ tsp ground nutmeg (optional but recommended)
¾ cup white granulated sugar
½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter
¼ cup heavy cream
2 Tbs honey
1 tsp vanilla extract
8-10 oz of dark chocolate, chopped

Place the slivered almonds in a food processor. Pulse until the almonds are broken down into smaller bits, about ¼" in size. They should be the size of the chopped nuts you would sprinkle over an ice cream sundae. If you don't have a food processor, you can chop the nuts by hand or place them in a ziplock bag and crush them with a wooden rolling pin until they are the right size.

Add the flour and cocoa powder to the food processor bowl. Pulse a couple of times to blend together.

In a medium-sized saucepan, place the sugar, butter, cream, and honey. Heat until the sugar is dissolved and the butter has melted. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla extract. Add the dry almond mixture and stir until incorporated. Set aside to cool for 20 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicon baking mat.

Once the batter has cooled (it will still be warm), use a teaspoon measure to spoon out the cookies onto the prepared baking sheet (1 tsp per cookie). Space the cookies about 3" apart; they will spread a lot during baking. (On a 12"x18" sheet, I found 6 cookies fit comfortably.) Dip your finger in some water, then use it to spread the batter into a round circle, with the nuts in a single layer on the pan. This will encourage the batter to spread evenly in a circle.

Bake the cookies in the oven for 6 to 8 minutes. If you are using parchment paper, the cookies will bake faster. If you are using a silicon baking sheet, the silicon insulates the heat and it takes a little long to bake (but they will bake more evenly). Remove the pan from the oven once the edges of the cookies start to darken and brown. Be careful as the cookies go from done to burnt fairly fast.

While the cookies are still warm from the oven, take a look at them and see if any of them are not quite round. If they are not as nicely shaped as you would like, use a spatula to carefully nudge the sides of the cookie into a round circle. You will have to work fairly quickly as the cookies firm up as they cool.

Let the cookies cool on the pan for 10 minutes before carefully moving them to a wire rack with a thin, flat spatula. If you have a wire rack that has crisscross wires, this is ideal for cookies like this since any under-baked cookie will slump a little bit on racks with more widely-spaced wires. Let the cookies cool completely.

Continue baking the cookies in batches until all the batter has been used. Making these cookies

goes more quickly if you have multiple baking sheets so that you can prep the next batch while the previous batch is in the oven.

Once the cookies have all been baked and cooled, melt dark chocolate by placing it in a microwave-safe bowl and cooking it in 30 second increments, stirring between each increment. (You can also melt the chocolate on a double boiler, if you prefer.) Once the chocolate has melted, pick two cookies that are roughly the same size and smear a thin layer of chocolate on the bottom of one of them. Place the matching cookie bottom on top and set the cookie sandwich on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper or a wire rack.

Repeat with the remaining cookies. Drizzle any remaining chocolate over the Florentines.

Wait for the chocolate to firm up and harden before serving or packaging. Stored in an airtight container, these cookies will keep at room temperature for 3 days, or in the fridge for about 2 weeks.

Cranberry Aplets

1 can jellied cranberry sauce

2-3 oz packages of cranberry jello (or raspberry or strawberry)

1 cup sugar

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup chopped pecans

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup powdered sugar

Heat jellied cranberry sauce in medium saucepan until melted. Remove from heat and slowly add jello until it is dissolved, then add sugar until it is dissolved. Heat to boiling for 2 minutes. Remove from heat and add pecans, stir well.

Spray an 8"×8" pan lightly with Pam - don't use a flavored Pam. Pour in cranberry mixture and let it set for 12 hours on the counter in a cool place. Cut in 1" squares and roll in powdered sugar - coating them well.

Let them ripen for 2 days before eating.

Christmas Crack

28 saltine crackers (4×7 array, about one sleeve, enough to line your tray)
1 cup packed dark brown sugar
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
¼ tsp kosher salt
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 cups (10-12 oz) chopped dark chocolate
jelly roll pan (10"×15")



Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Line a 10"×15" jelly roll pan with nonstick aluminum foil (preferred) or regular heavy duty foil, making sure that the foil completely covers the bottom and sides of the pan. If using regular foil, spray lightly with baking spray. Line the saltine crackers in a single 4×7 array on the bottom. Be very careful not to tear the foil lest the caramel seep through.

Place the brown sugar, butter and salt in a medium sized saucepan. Cook on medium heat, stirring frequently, until the butter melts. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, for another 3-5 minutes, just until the mixture comes to a boil and starts to darken. Remove from heat and stir in the vanilla extract. Do not overcook. (Note: You're not actually making true caramel here, so you don't need to be as precise or worry about the temperature of the caramel. Just make sure it comes to a boil and wait for it to darken slightly, then continue.)

Pour the hot brown sugar mixture over the saltine crackers. Spread to evenly coat the crackers. It helps to have an off-set spatula, as shown. Move the pan to the oven and bake for 5 minutes. The caramel will be hot and bubbly.



Place the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl. Cook it in the microwave in 30-second intervals at full power, stirring between each cook time, until the chocolate has melted. **Do not** do this over a flame.

Once the crackers are done baking, remove from the oven and allow to cool for 1 minute, until the caramel is no longer bubbling. Then pour the melted chocolate over the crackers. Use a spatula to spread the chocolate evenly over the top. Let the crackers cool to room temperature then move to the refrigerator and cool over night.

The crackers will form a single sheet once cool. Remove from the pan, invert, and gently peel the foil away, being careful not to tear the foil. (If any bits of foil tear and get stuck in the caramel, break those bits away and discard.) Invert again. Cut the candy into snack-sized pieces using a chefs knife (you can use your hands, too, but I find it easier with a knife). You do not have to cut the pieces to conform to the edges of the underlying crackers.

Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for about a week.

Feel free to add ½ cup of chopped nuts or coconut flakes on top of the melted chocolate.

Microwave Chocolate Pudding

For the pudding

½ cup sugar
3 Tbs cornstarch
2 Tbs Dutch-processed cocoa powder
⅛ tsp salt
2½ cups whole milk
3 egg yolks
4 oz (about ¾ cup) 60-70% chocolate baking chips
2 Tbs unsalted butter, cut into chunks
1 tsp vanilla extract

For the whipped cream (optional)

1 cup heavy cream
2 tsp sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract

In a medium, microwave-safe bowl, whisk together the sugar, cornstarch, cocoa powder, and salt until blended. Stir in ½ cup of the milk and whisk until smooth. Whisk in the egg yolks. Gradually stir in the remaining milk.

Partially cover the bowl with plastic wrap, leaving a gap in one side so steam can escape. If you prefer not to use plastic wrap, cover with a paper towel or a plate that is set slightly askew.

In the microwave, cook the mixture for 3 minutes. Remove from the microwave, remove the plastic, and whisk the pudding to distribute the heat.

Partially cover again and microwave for 1 more minute. Stir again. Continue to microwave in 30 second increments, stirring the pudding between each increment, until you see the mixture bubbling around the edges and the pudding has thickened enough for the whisk to leave a light trail, or ribbon, through the pudding. The pudding will thicken further as it cools.

With a whisk, stir the chocolate chips, butter and vanilla into the bowl. Stir constantly until the chocolate and butter have melted and the mixture is smooth.

Spoon the pudding into 4 small serving cups (5-6 oz ramekins or tea cups work great). Chill in the refrigerator until cold.

In the bowl of an electric mixer on medium-high speed, beat the cream, sugar, and vanilla together until the cream forms soft peaks. Dollop a spoonful on top of each serving cup and serve immediately.

Crème Brûlée

2 cups heavy cream
10 Tbs sugar, divided
1 vanilla bean (or 1 tsp vanilla extract)
4 egg yolks
½ tsp vanilla extract
¼ tsp kosher salt
4 Tbs sugar (2 tsp per ramekin)

Preheat oven to 325°F with a rack in the middle position. Arrange six 4-oz ramekins in a 9"×13" baking dish and set aside.

Split the vanilla bean in half and scrape out the seeds with the dull (non-cutting) side of a paring knife.

In a medium saucepan, combine heavy cream, 4 Tbs of the sugar, vanilla bean pod, vanilla bean seeds, and salt. Cook over medium heat, until it begins to simmer.

Once the cream begins to simmer, remove the pan from heat, cover, and let stand for 15 minutes to allow the vanilla bean to infuse into the cream. (If you're replacing the vanilla bean with vanilla extract, skip this step.)

When your cream is almost done infusing, separate your eggs. Place the yolks in a medium-sized mixing bowl; save the whites for another purpose.

While whisking the yolks continuously, slowly add one ladle (about ¼ or ⅓ cup) of hot cream in a thin stream. Do this two or three more times.

While whisking, slowly add the remaining cream to the egg mixture, followed by the vanilla extract.

Strain the mixture through a fine mesh sieve into a second mixing bowl and discard the vanilla bean pod (this also helps strain out any small bits of egg that may have curdled).

At this point, the custard can be cooled and stored for up to 5 days. If you choose to bake them right from the fridge, you will probably need to add a couple of extra minutes.

Divide the custard between the ramekins, filling each one just up to the inner rim, or about three-quarters of the way full.

Bring a kettle or pot of water to a boil. Fill the pan with the hot water until the water comes about two-thirds of the way up the side of the ramekins. Avoid splashing water into the custards.

Transfer the pan with the custards to the oven and bake for 38 to 40 minutes. When ready, the crème brûlée should have a uniform jiggle in the middle; when you touch the center, it should spring back just a bit. If the sides hold firm but the center sloshes, they aren't quite done yet.

If they are set like Jell-O, they've over-baked, although they will still be delicious! Chill them, brûlée them, eat them, love them and celebrate your efforts. If they have overbaked to the point that they look risen in the center, toss them, start again, and celebrate your efforts!

Remove the baking dish with the finished custards from the oven and set on a wire cooling rack. Let the custards cool in the water until you can safely pick up the ramekins by the rim with your fingers. This should take about 15 minutes, depending on how tender your fingers are. (Mine are like asbestos, so I tend to go in rather quickly.)

Once removed from the water bath, let each custard rest on the cooling rack for about 15 more minutes, then cover each ramekin with plastic wrap and store in the fridge. Chill for at least 4 hours, or up to 4 days, before serving.

When ready to serve, remove the custards from fridge. Sprinkle the surface of each custard evenly with about 1 tsp of granulated sugar. Rotate the custard as you sprinkle to make sure the sugar evenly coats the surface.

Ignite your torch. Hold the flame about 4" from the surface of the sugar. Using a circular motion, move the flame across the surface. The sugar will at first begin to bead up, and then will eventually solidify into a hard sugar crust.

You want to make sure all the sugar granules have melted, and the sugar has at least a tint of caramel color. The longer you torch the surface, the darker it will become and the more bitter the sugar crust will be.

Each of the custards with an additional tsp of sugar and brûlée the surface again.

Cool for at 2 minutes, and serve within 20 minutes.

After about 20 minutes, the sugar will begin to soften, but if it takes you longer to get them to the table, don't fret. You'll get less of a hard "crack!" when breaking up the surface of the crème brûlée, but it will still be good.

To eat, use the edge of your spoon to gently crack the hard sugar surface and scoop up some custard. Be sure to get both the brittle topping and the creamy custard in each bite.

Peanut Butter Blondies

½ cup unsalted butter (1 stick), melted

1 large egg

1 cup light brown sugar, packed

1 Tbs vanilla extract

1 cup all-purpose flour

1 cup Reese's Peanut Butter Chips (chocolate chips may be substituted)

about ⅓ cup Nutella or dark chocolate

Preheat oven to 350°F. Line an 8"×8" baking pan with aluminum foil, spray with cooking spray; set aside.

In a large, microwave-safe bowl melt the butter, about 1 minute on high power.

Wait momentarily before adding the egg so you don't scramble it. Add the egg, brown sugar, vanilla, and whisk until smooth.

Add the flour and stir until just combined, don't overmix.

Stir in the peanut butter chips.

Turn batter out into prepared pan, smoothing the top lightly with a spatula.

Evenly add and swirl the Nutella. To create the marbled pattern shown, drizzle Nutella over batter in 5 wide, evenly spaced, parallel lines, each spanning the length of the pan. Like 5 rows of long train tracks. Rotate pan 90°. With a toothpick, starting at the top of the pan, "draw" 4 or 5 evenly spaced lines through the Nutella. You're dragging the toothpick perpendicularly through the first set of lines to create the marbling.



Bake for about 20 to 25 minutes, or until done. A toothpick inserted in the center should come out clean, or with a few moist crumbs, but no batter. Allow bars to cool in pan for at least 30 minutes before slicing and serving. Bars will keep airtight at room temperature for up to 1 week, or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

Nanaimo Bars

For the base:

½ cup unsalted butter (1 stick), cut into pieces
¼ cup granulated sugar
1 large egg
3 Tbs cocoa powder
1 tsp vanilla extract
2 cups cracker crumbs
1 cup unsweetened shredded coconut
½ cup finely chopped walnuts, almonds or pecans
(or a mixture)



For the buttercream:

4-6 oz unsalted butter (½-¾ stick), at room temperature
3 Tbs heavy cream
2 Tbs custard powder, such as Bird's
2 cups confectioners' (icing) sugar

For the chocolate topping:

4 oz semisweet chocolate, broken into ½" pieces
2 Tbs unsalted butter
flaky sea salt, for sprinkling (optional)

Line an 8"×8" metal baking pan with parchment (or wax paper), allowing parchment to overhang by about 2" on two sides.

In a double boiler, or a heat-proof bowl placed over a saucepan of boiling water, whisk butter with granulated sugar, egg, cocoa powder and vanilla until melted. Continue whisking until mixture thickens slightly, 1-2 minutes. Remove from heat.

Stir in crumbs, coconut and nuts until the mixture is well combined and resembles wet sand. You can use your hands at this point to ensure a good mix.

Transfer mixture to the parchment-lined pan and use your fingers to press it into an even layer. Transfer pan to the refrigerator to chill until firm, at least 15 minutes.

Meanwhile, in a stand mixer fitted with a paddle attachment, or a hand mixer, cream butter on medium speed for about 1 minute. Add heavy cream and custard powder and mix until combined, scraping sides and bottom of the work bowl as needed. Add 1 cup confectioners' sugar and mix on low until incorporated. Add remaining confectioners' sugar and mix on low until combined, scraping the bottom of the bowl as needed, then mix on medium-high speed until smooth, light and fluffy, 2-3 minutes. [The original recipe calls for 4 oz of butter here, but this makes a fairly stiff cream. I think 6 oz works better.]

Remove pan from refrigerator. Dollop the buttercream on top of the base layer then gently spread it evenly on top using an offset spatula. Transfer pan to the refrigerator to chill until buttercream is set, about 30 minutes.

In a small, heavy saucepan or a double boiler, heat the chocolate and butter over low, stirring often, until melted and evenly combined, 2-3 minutes. Remove from heat. Take pan from refrigerator and pour chocolate on top of buttercream layer. Working quickly and carefully, spread the chocolate evenly over the buttercream using an offset spatula.

[With this method the chocolate melts on your fingers readily. If you know how to “temper” chocolate you can use that method instead. But chocolate is chocolate, so I just supply paper napkins if I don’t temper the chocolate.] Sprinkle with flaky sea salt, if using.

Return pan to refrigerator and chill until chocolate hardens, about 25 minutes.

Lift excess parchment to remove Nanaimo (na-NYE-mo) square from the pan. Cut into 16 2"×2" squares or 32 1"×2" squares. Store bars in the refrigerator until ready to serve. Bring to room temperature before serving. Store remaining bars in the refrigerator for a few days, or wrap well and freeze.

Almond Joy

2½ cups unsweetened flaked coconut
1 cup hickory-smoked almonds
1 cup confectioners’ sugar
½ tsp vanilla extract
5 Tbs sweetened condensed milk
1⅓ cups semisweet chocolate chips
2 Tbs shortening or unsalted butter
flaked salt, for decorating



Line a 9"×4½" loaf pan with aluminum foil, letting excess hang over the short sides; it will be used to lift the candies from the pan.

Use a food processor or a high-speed blender to whirl the coconut flakes until chopped but not pulverized. Work slowly, checking frequently. The chopped coconut should yield about 1¼ cups; transfer to a mixing bowl.

Grind the almonds until finely chopped. Reserve 1 Tbs for decorating, then add the rest to the coconut. Add the confectioners’ sugar and vanilla extract to the almond-and-coconut mixture, stirring to incorporate.

Pour the condensed milk into the coconut mixture and use your hands to combine the ingredients until stiff. If this filling mixture is not cohesive, very judiciously add more condensed milk, 1 tsp at a time. Knead and press firmly, pushing the mixture away from you, folding, and repeating until the ingredients are evenly distributed. Press the filling into the prepared pan, cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Place parchment paper on a wire rack. Lift the foil holding the block of filling and unmold it onto a cutting board, top side down. Score the block into 18 squares of equal size (3 across, 6 down). Use a sharp chef’s knife to cut the chilled filling; you might have a little trim, which is your cook’s snack. Place the filling squares on the parchment paper and let them dry out a bit while you melt the chocolate. (This drying step will help the chocolate adhere more readily.)

Fill a small saucepan with about 2" of water. Bring to a boil, then reduce the heat so the water is barely bubbling at the edges. Place half of the chocolate chips in a heat-proof bowl that fits over the pan without its bottom touching the water), creating a double boiler. Melt the chocolate, whisking until smooth. Whisk in 1 Tbs of the shortening or butter until melted; take the bowl off the heat.

Working with one piece at a time, dip a cold filling square into the chocolate, turning it over and over to coat completely, and then transfer it to the parchment-lined rack. (I use a table fork and a soup spoon, lifting with the fork while spooning the chocolate over the top.) Let the chocolate fall back into the bowl through the tines of the fork, and then gently slide the candy on to the parchment.

After coating 9 candies, repeat the process, melting the remaining chocolate with the remaining shortening or butter, and then coating the remaining candies. (There may be leftover chocolate; use it to coat pretzel rods, dried apricots or Saltines.)

Sprinkle the top of the candies with the reserved chopped almonds and a small pinch of flaked salt.

Before eating, refrigerate the candies, uncovered, for about 1 hour, until the chocolate is firm and cold.

Easy Lemon Pudding

2 cups heavy whipping cream

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup granulated sugar

finely grated zest of 1 lemon

6 Tbs lemon juice

1 cup blueberries, raspberries, sliced strawberries or blackberries, to garnish

In a medium saucepan over medium heat, stir together the cream, sugar and lemon zest. Bring to a boil. Adjust the heat to a gentle boil, and cook, stirring often, for 5 minutes. Watch carefully and stir frequently to keep the cream from boiling over.

Add the lemon juice and continue to simmer for 5 more minutes. Stir frequently.

Take the pan off the heat and let the cream cool for 5 minutes.

Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh strainer into a 4-cup liquid measuring cup or other container for easy pouring. Pour into 4 four-oz ramekins or pretty stemmed glasses.

Refrigerate, uncovered, for 2 to 3 hours, or until set. This pudding can also be prepared and refrigerated up to 2 days in advance. Top each glass with berries just before serving.

Candied Citrus Peel

It's crucial to blanch the peels 3 times to remove their bitterness.

1 pink grapefruit

2 oranges

2 lemons

3½ cups sugar, divided

Score grapefruit, oranges, and lemons through peel from top to bottom in 6 sections for grapefruit and 4 for oranges and lemons (don't cut into fruit). Pull off strips of peel with your fingers. Slide a small, sharp knife along inside of peels to remove excess membrane so peels are about ¼" thick. Cut peels lengthwise into strips about ½" wide in center and tapered on ends.

Put peels in a 3-4 qt. saucepan and add cold water to cover. Bring to a boil, then drain. Repeat twice more.

Refill pan with 2½ cups water and 2½ cups sugar; bring to a boil, making sure that sugar dissolves. Add peels and bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer gently, stirring occasionally, until peels turn translucent and syrup begins to form bigger bubbles, about 1½ hours.

Drain peels, saving syrup for other uses (such as topping pancakes) if you like. Spread peels on a non-reactive cooling rack set on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Allow peels to dry completely, about 2-3 hours.

Toss peels in remaining 1 cup sugar, shaking off excess. Store airtight at room temperature. Serve peels plain or dipped in chocolate*.

*Melt 10 oz chopped bittersweet or semisweet chocolate in a small pan over barely simmering water. Dip peels halfway into chocolate; set on baking sheets lined with waxed paper. Chill until set, about 30 minutes.

Tina's Cranberry Curry Chutney

Bring to a boil in a non-aluminum saucepan over high heat:

1½ cups sugar

1½ cups water

Lower heat and simmer for 5 minutes while you rinse **1 lb FRESH cranberries** in cold water, removing twigs or broken berries.

Add cranberries to pan and cook until skins begin to pop, about 5 minutes (still on a lower heat)

Add all the below to pan, and cook for 15 minutes over low heat, stirring OCCASIONALLY (NO smashing during this process).

1 cup golden raisins

1½ tsp curry powder (this is the item that got tripled accidentally)

2 Tbl dark molasses

2 Tbl fresh grated ginger root (or powdered ginger)

1 Tbl Worcestershire sauce

¼ tsp salt

½ tsp tabasco

½ cup red wine vinegar

When mixture begins to thicken, ladle into sterilized jars, refrigerate until ready to use. Will keep at least 2 months in refrigerator.

One of the most important things is about letting the cranberries cook without a whole lot of stirring. And do NOT smash the berries until the end of the entire cooking process. If the berry skins are not popping/splitting after 15 minutes, cook a bit longer instead. Right at the end I would just use the back of my big stirring spoon to lightly press some berries against the side of the pan. You don't want a whole berry chutney, nor a totally squashed berry chutney.

REMINDER: whole cranberries are now packaged in 12 oz bags instead of 1 lb. If you're going to make lots, just see if you can hit a multiple of 16 oz. Or come close.

OK, you can now never say I wouldn't share the recipe with you! Just behave and do it the way I say! hahahahaha hugs, Tina.

Note: This recipe was originally made while accidentally tripling the amount of curry powder. I have tried it with double the curry, or 1 Tbs, and the result is quite distinctive.

Dora's Crisp Pickle Slices

4 quarts sliced cucumbers
6 medium white onions sliced
3 cloves of minced garlic
1 green pepper, minced
1 sweet red pepper, minced
1/3 cup salt

Add salt to vegetables, mix and add to the bowl of cracked ice. Let stand for 3 hours. Drain.

3 cups distilled white vinegar
1½ tsp turmeric
5 cups sugar
2 tsp mustard seed
1½ tsp celery seed

Pour last five ingredients on drained vegetables and heat to boiling point. Place in 1-cup jars to within ¼" of top. Loosely seal in hot, sterile jars. Process in boiling water for 5 minutes, then tighten bands for good seal. Makes 8 pints.

Watermelon Rind Pickles

10 lb half watermelon, thick rind if possible
½ cup granulated pickling salt
2 quarts water
4 cups sugar
2 cups white vinegar
4 large cinnamon sticks broken into pieces
1 Tbs whole cloves
2 cups water
1 lemon, thinly sliced

Fill a pint canner two thirds full with water and place on high heat to boil the water. When the water boils, turn to simmer for later use.

Use a melon ball scoop to remove red fruit from the melon. Refrigerate the balls and use for dessert. Continue with the scoop or a spoon to remove any remaining red fruit from the rind. Slice the rind into 1" strips. Turn sideways and remove the dark green skin and some of the inner coat, which has a waxy appearance. The thicker the rind at this point the better, but you have to live with what you have at hand. Cut the slices into 1" square pieces. This should measure about 12 cups.

Prepare a brine solution of salt and water in a large bowl (if metal, it must be stainless steel). Place rind in the solution and hold the rind under the solution with a plate. Soak overnight in salt brine. Rind will diminish in volume as the brine leeches watermelon water out.

Drain; rinse rind; cover with cold water and cook for 25 minutes or so until just tender in a large stainless steel pot.

In a pot combine sugar, vinegar, water and spices. Simmer 10 minutes.

Drain rind and return to large pot with lemon. Place strainer on top of the pot and strain sugar/vinegar/spice solution into rind. Simmer covered for 25 minutes or so until rind is clear.

While the final solution is cooking, wash 8 1-cup jelly jars. Turn the canner to high heat and place the jars in the water open side up. Boil for 5 minutes. Remove with tongs upside-down to paper towels. Put jar tops in strainer and dip in hot water for a few minutes and remove to paper towels. Fill jars with rind and solution, leaving ½" air space. If you try to pack rind in, be sure to use a knife to release any trapped air and add more solution. Adjust lids; lightly tighten bands to hold lids in place. Process in boiling water for 5 minutes. Remove jars and tighten bands.

Pickled Beets

2 lbs beets
1½ cup wine vinegar
1 cup sugar
⅔ cup of the beet cooking water
4 whole cloves
3 in stick cinnamon
1 tsp mustard seed
2 springs celery leaves
¼ tsp peppercorns
2 medium onions

Wear an apron to make this recipe. Beet juice stains are hard to remove.

Cut the leaves to within 1" of the tops off the beets, no more. Place in a large saucepan with water to just cover the beets. Gently boil, covered, for 40 to 50 minutes. Remove the beets to a dish to cool for a few moments. Reserve ⅔ cup of the cooking fluid.

Wear gloves and an apron now. Slice the tops and bottoms off of the beets, then slip them out of their skins. Use gloves. Friction is usually enough to get the skins off. Failing that, use a paring knife.

Cut the beets into ¼" thick slices. If they are large cut the slices into fourths. Alternatively, cut thick slices and slice these to make small cubes.

Heat the vinegar, beet juice, and sugar to a boil and add the spices. Simmer for 15 minutes.

Chop up the onions into 1" pieces. Add onions and beets to the fluid. Simmer for a few minutes.

Ladle into clean jars, seal, and process in boiling water for 15 minutes.

This recipe should make about 3 pints. The recipe is easily doubled.

Ginger-Peach Marmalade

8 large peaches, pitted and peeled
½ cup finely chopped crystallized ginger
2 large oranges, unpeeled, cut into wedges, seeds removed
1 cup water
1¾ oz package powdered pectin
8 cups sugar

Combine the peaches and ginger in a large bowl. Working in small batches, place the mixture in a food processor and pulse until finely chopped. Transfer the mixture to a large nonreactive kettle.

Place the oranges in the bowl of a food processor and process until finely chopped. Transfer to the kettle and add the water. Bring to a boil, lower the heat and simmer 10 minutes.

Raise the heat and bring to a boil. Stir in the pectin. Bring to a boil again and slowly stir in the sugar. Adjust the heat and simmer, stirring constantly, for 10 minutes. Remove from heat, place a spoonful of jam on a cold plate and refrigerate 10 minutes. If it develops a skin it is ready. If not, return pot to the stove, cook 5 more minutes and test again.

Have ready 9 hot, sterilized 8 oz Jars and lids. Pour the hot marmalade into the jars, leaving ¼" at the top of the jar. Wipe the rims with a clean damp towel and screw the lids on loosely.

Process the jars in boiling water for 5 minutes in order to drive out any remaining air. Remove the jars one at a time, tightly seal, and invert the jars on a cooling rack. After five minutes turn right side up and cool. Invert from time to time over the next few hours.

Check for a good seal. Refrigerate any jars with a defective seal. Makes 9+ jars. Store in a cool, dark place.

SUREJELL Directions for Cooked Jams and Jellies

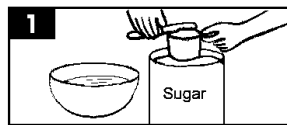
Important Tips Before You Start

- Use a liquid (glass or plastic) measuring cup with a pour spout to measure fruit. Use a dry (metal or plastic) measuring cup with a straight top edge to measure sugar.
- Buy new, flat jar lids for a good seal. Old rings are acceptable if not rusted.
- Use ripe fruit (not under- or over-ripe) for best flavor.
- Do not double recipes. Mixture may not set.
- Some jams and jellies will take up to 2 weeks to set due to the specific fruit used. This is indicated on recipes.

First, Prepare Jars and Fruit

- **Always use clean jars.** Wash thoroughly before you begin, invert on paper towels until the jam or jelly is ready to pour.
- Place flat lids in saucepan; add boiling water to cover lids. Let stand in hot water until ready to fill jars.
- Prepare fruit as directed in charts below. For berries, crush 1 cup at a time, using a potato masher for best results. If using food processor, pulse to chop. **DO NOT PUREE.** Jam has bits of fruit.
- Measure fruit or juice for jelly into saucepot along with lemon juice or water (if called for in recipe). The saucepot must be at least 3½ quart. The rolling boil stage is frothy and spills are common if your pot is too small.

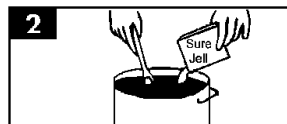
Second, Make Jam or Jelly



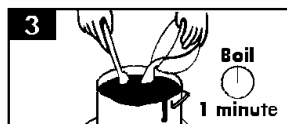
MEASURE sugar into a separate bowl. (Scrape excess sugar from cup with spatula to level for exact measure.)

DO NOT REDUCE SUGAR OR USE SUGAR SUBSTITUTES. THE EXACT AMOUNTS OF SUGAR,

FRUIT AND PECTIN ARE NECESSARY FOR A GOOD SET.



STIR 1 box SUREJELL Fruit Pectin into fruit or juice. Add ½ tsp margarine or butter (to prevent foaming during cooking). Bring mixture to full rolling boil (one that does not stop when stirred) on high heat, stirring constantly.



ADD sugar quickly to fruit or juice mixture. Return to full rolling boil and boil exactly 1 minute, stirring constantly. Remove from heat. Skim off any foam. Immediately fill and seal jars, one at a time, as directed below.

Quickly Seal Jars

- Fill each jar quickly to ¼" of top. Wipe the jar rim and threads. Cover quickly with a flat lid. Screw band loosely onto jar. Place in boiling water bath. When all jars are in the boiling water, process for 5 minutes to expel remaining air from each jar.

- Remove jars from boiling water and invert onto cooling rack. After 10 minutes turn upright. To distribute fruit evenly repeat this process until jars are cool and fruit suspended in jam emulsion. Check seals by pressing middle of lid with finger. If lid springs up when finger is released, lid is not sealed. Either reprocess or use immediately.
- Let stand at room temperature 24 hours (or time indicated on recipe). Store unopened jams and jellies in cool, dry, dark place up to 1 year. Store opened jams and jellies in refrigerator up to 3 weeks.

Jams

Jam to Buy	How to Prepare Fruit	Ingredients	cups
Black Raspberries 2 qt	Crush. Sieve $\frac{1}{2}$ of the pulp to remove some seeds, if desired.	5 cups crushed raspberries $6\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar	8
Blueberries 3 pt	Remove stems and crush.	4 cups crushed blueberries 4 cups sugar	6
Sour Cherries 3 lb	Remove stems, pit and finely chop.	4 cups chopped cherries $4\frac{3}{4}$ cups sugar	6
Grapes 4 lb	Remove stems. Slip skins from grapes; set aside. Place pulp in saucepan; add 1 cup water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover, simmer 5 minutes. Sieve to remove seeds. Finely chop skins; add to pulp.	6 cups cooked grape pulp $7\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar	10
Orange Marmalade 4 oranges 2 lemons (Takes 2 weeks to set.)	Remove rind from oranges and lemons using vegetable peeler; chop, set aside. Peel, discard remaining white part of peel from fruit. Chop fruit pulp, reserving any juice; set aside. Place peels and $\frac{1}{8}$ tsp baking soda in saucepan; add $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 20 minutes. Add fruit and juice; simmer 10 minutes.	4 cups cooked fruit $5\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar	7
Peaches 3 lb 1 lemon	Peel, pit and finely chop.	4 cups chopped peaches 2 Tbs fresh lemon juice $5\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar	7
Plums 4 lb	Remove pits (do not peel) and finely chop. Place in sauce pan; add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 5 min.	6 cups cooked plums 8 cups sugar	10

Red Raspberries 4 pt	Crush. Sieve ½ of the pulp to remove some seeds, if desired.	5 cups crushed berries 7 cups sugar	9
Strawberry 2 qt	Remove stems and crush.	5 cups crushed strawberries 7 cups sugar	8

Jellies

To Make Juice for Jelly

- **Prepare** fruit as directed below. **When cooking fruit, stir occasionally.**
- **Place** 3 layers of damp cheesecloth in large bowl. Pour prepared fruit into cheesecloth.
- **Tie** cheesecloth closed, hang and let drip into bowl until dripping stops. Press gently. Measure juice. If necessary, add up to ½ cup water for exact measure.

Fruit to Buy	How to Prepare Fruit to Make Juice	Ingredients	Cups
Apple Crab Apple 5 lb	Remove stems, blossoms. Cut into small pieces (do not peel or core). Place in large saucepan; add 5 cups water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover, simmer 10 min. Crush cooked apples; cover and simmer 5 min.	7 cups juice 9 cups sugar	10
Strawberry 2½ qt	Crush.	¾ cup juice ½ cup sugar	6
Black Raspberry 3½ qt	Crush.	½ cups juice ½ cups sugar	7
Sour Cherry 3½ lb	Remove stems, pit and finely chop. Place in saucepan; add ½ cup water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes.	½ cups juice 4 cups sugar	5
Currant 5 qt or 7 lb	Remove stems and crush. Place in saucepan; add 1½ cups water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes.	½ cups juice 7 cups sugar	9
Grape 3 ½ lb	Remove stems and crush. Place in saucepan; add 1½ cups water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes.	5 cups juice 7 cups sugar	8
Mint 2 cups firmly pack mint leaves	Wash mint leaves; finely chop. Place in saucepan; add ½ cups water. Bring to boil. Remove from heat; cover and let stand 10 minutes.	4 cups mint infusion 5 cups sugar 3 drops green food coloring	6

Peach 6 lb	Remove pit (do not peel) and finely chop. Place in saucepan; add 1½ cups water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes, stirring often.	3½ cups juice 4½ cups sugar	6
Plum 5 lb	Remove pits (do not peel) and finely chop. Place in saucepan; add 1½ cups water. Bring to boil. Reduce heat; cover and simmer 10 minutes, stirring often.	5½ cups juice 6½ cups sugar	9
Red Raspberry 5 pt	Crush.	4 cups juice 5½ cups sugar	7

Bittman's How to Make Jam (Out of any fruit)

1 lb fruit

¼ cup sugar

seasonings to taste

2 Tbs juice or vinegar

Put 1 lb fruit (pitted and chopped if necessary) in a medium saucepan over medium heat.

After a minute or so, add ¼ cup sugar (or to taste), seasonings to taste and 2 Tbs juice, vinegar or whatever liquid you prefer.

Adjust the heat so the mixture bubbles steadily, using higher heat if the mixture looks too soupy; lower the heat if it seems dry. Cook, stirring occasionally until the mixture is thick — 10 to 30 minutes. Cool completely and refrigerate; it will thicken more as it cools.

Store in the refrigerator, where it will keep for at least a week. If necessary, remove any seasonings (like lemon-grass stalks) before serving.

Beau Monde Dip

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup mayonnaise

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup sour cream

1 Tbs. chopped green onion

1 Tbs Spice Islands Parsley

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Spice Islands Beau Monde Seasoning

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp Spice Islands Dill Weed

Mix mayonnaise, sour cream, green onion, parsley, Beau Monde Seasoning, and dill weed in a small bowl. Cover and chill a minimum of 30 minutes to blend flavors.

Makes $1\frac{1}{2}$ cup dip.

Kalamata Olive Tapenade

2 cups pitted Kalamata olives

2 Tbs capers

3 anchovy fillets

juice of one lemon

2 cloves of garlic

1 Tbs fresh thyme

1 Tbs fresh oregano

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup of olive oil

Freshly ground black pepper

In a food processor, combine all the ingredients. Pulse until all ingredients are well combined. Season with freshly ground black pepper. Chill if you like. Serve on little pieces of toast or crackers.

Cranberry Relish

3 lbs cranberries
zest of 3 oranges
zest 1 lemon
3 cups sugar
1½ cups orange juice
juice from 1 lemon
2 tsp grated, fresh ginger

Wash and pick over the cranberries, discarding any withered berries, woody parts and stems. Place in a roomy saucepan.

Cut the zest (colored rind) of the oranges and lemon off the fruit and pulverize in a food processor with 1 cup of the sugar. Add this to the cranberries.

Stir in the orange and lemon juice plus two cups of additional sugar. If you have it include the freshly grated ginger.

Bring this mixture to a bubbling-over boil for 3 minutes, or until the berries burst. Set aside. After ½ hour, taste and stir in more sugar, if it is needed. Remember, this is a relish and should be somewhat tart to go with turkey, other fowl, or pork.

The mixture will gel slightly when it is cold. This relish has a long life in the refrigerator.

A note about cranberries, purchased fresh from the store they last well frozen in the freezer.

Plum Butter

6 lb Italian plums, halved and pits removed, do not peel
4 cups sugar (or combination of white and brown sugar)
1½ tsp ground cinnamon
½ tsp ground cloves

Place the plums in a slow cooker. Stir in the sugar, cinnamon and cloves. Cook either on LOW for at least 10 hours or on HIGH for at least 4 hours until the plums are very soft.

Use an immersion blender to puree the plum butter until smooth (or transfer to a blender, puree and return to the slow cooker). If you prefer it a little chunky, blend until the desired texture is achieved.

Continue to simmer the plum butter, this time with the lid opened, until the plum butter is reduced in volume to a spreadable texture, approximately 5-6 more hours on LOW or 3-4 hours on HIGH. (Note: The longer you simmer the plum butter the more deeply caramelized it will be. If you're going to simmer it for a much longer time, do so on LOW to prevent burning. I'll often simmer it with the lid closed for up to 20 hours and then open the lid, puree it, and simmer for another 5-6 hours until thickened.)

Spread this on toast, bagels, muffins or add it to a savory glaze for chicken or incorporated in your favorite BBQ sauce.

Butter will keep opened in the fridge for up to 2 months. Butter will keep 6 months in the freezer.

For canning, pour the hot plum butter into sterilized jars leaving ¼" headspace. Wipe the rim and secure the lids. Boil in a water bath canner for 10 minutes. Remove the jars and let them sit undisturbed for 24 hours before transferring them to a cool, dark place for long-term storage.

Serves: 5-6 half pints

Mint Jelly

2 cups fresh mint, firmly packed
2 cups water
3 Tbs freshly squeezed lemon juice
3½ cups sugar
3 oz liquid pectin
2 drops green food coloring

Wash jelly glasses and rinse with boiling water.

Blend mint and the water in the jar of a blender until mint is finely chopped. Transfer to a saucepan; bring to a boil. Remove from heat; let steep 45 minutes. Strain mixture through a fine mesh sieve into bowl; reserve liquid (1¾-2 cups). Discard mint.

Return liquid to saucepan; add lemon juice and sugar. Bring to a boil; cook 1 minute. Add pectin, and return to a boil; cook 1 minute. Remove from heat; stir in food coloring. Skim surface. Pour into sterilized jelly glasses and seal.

Process in the steam canner for 10 minutes to insure a good seal.

Olive Tapenade

Basic Black Olive Tapenade

¾ cup mixed green and kalamata olives

¼ cup olive oil

½ tsp pepper

Mix ingredients in a food processor.

Serve with pita slices or crackers.

Green Olive Tapenade

10 oil-packed anchovy fillets, finely chopped

1 cup Castelvetrano olives, pitted, crushed

1 cup Cerignola olives (large green), pitted, crushed

1 cup coarsely chopped parsley

1 cup olive oil

¼ cup coarsely chopped, drained capers

2 Tbs finely grated lemon zest

¼ cup fresh lemon juice

kosher salt

freshly ground pepper

Mix anchovies, both olives, parsley, oil, capers, lemon zest, and lemon juice in a large jar or medium bowl; season with salt and pepper.

Tapenade can be made 1 week ahead. Cover and chill.

Serve with pita slices or crackers. This can be served without hummus on toasted bread slices.

Italian Seasoning

3 Tbs dried basil
3 Tbs oregano
3 Tbs parsley
1 Tbs garlic powder
1 tsp onion powder
1 tsp dried thyme
1 tsp dried sage
1 tsp rosemary
¼ tsp black pepper
¼ tsp red pepper flakes

Mix ingredients together and store in a sealed jar.

Quick Variation

2 tsp dried basil
2 tsp dried marjoram
2 tsp dried oregano
1 tsp dried sage

Another Variation

1 tsp dried basil
½ tsp fennel seeds
1 tsp dried mint
2 tsp dried oregano
½ tsp dried rosemary
1 tsp dried rubbed sage

Place all ingredients in a clean spice or coffee grinder; process until finely ground. Store in an airtight container.

Quick Chili Powder

⅛ tsp cayenne
1 tsp paprika
1 tsp oregano
1 tsp cumin
½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp salt

Mix together. Store in the refrigerator.

Beau Monde

1 Tbs ground cloves
1 Tbs salt
1 Tbs ground bay leaf
1 Tbs ground allspice
2 Tbs white ground pepper
2 Tbs black ground pepper
1¼ tsp ground cinnamon
1 tsp ground nutmeg
1 tsp ground mace
1 tsp celery seed

Measure all spices into a small mixing bowl. Stir well with wooden spoon. Then, use a fork to stir again, blending the spices.

Turn mixture into a jar with tight fitting lid, such as a canning jar.

Cover tightly and store in a cool, dry place for up to 3 months.

Beau monde seasoning is a seasoning salt made from a blend of spices. It gives a hearty flavor of celery and onion to any dish.

Bouquet Garni for Soups

1 tsp dried parsley
1½ tsp dried thyme
1¼ tsp dried marjoram
½ tsp sage
½ tsp dried savory
¼ tsp crumbled dry bay leaf
1½ tsp celery seed
5 peppercorns

Crush together the herbs and spices. Place into a small bag made from several layers of cheesecloth. Tightly tie the bag shut with string.

Add the garni while simmering the ingredients for any soup. Take out before serving and discard.

Makes 1 bouquet garni. Note: In bouquet garni, the amount of any ingredient can be decreased or increased as desired according to personal tastes.

Garam Masala

2 3"-cinnamon sticks
¼ cup coriander seeds
2 Tbs cumin seeds
2 Tbs black peppercorns
2 tsp cardamom seeds
2 tsp whole cloves
12 tsp fennel seeds = ¼ cup

Garam (hot) masala is a northern Indian specialty that traditionally includes cardamom, cinnamon, cloves, coriander, cumin, and black peppercorns, but in greatly varying proportions depending on the recipe. The most common optional ingredients include nutmeg, mace, fennel seeds, and saffron.

Garam masala is used to enhance the other seasonings of the dish. Because the spices are roasted before they're ground, garam masala is not "harsh" and is usually added near the end of cooking time. Often it is first briefly heated in ghee, then stirred into an uncooked or previously cooked dish, such as raita or dal. Because garam masala doesn't need long cooking, it is very useful for adding pizzazz at the last minute to any dish.

While it is available prepared commercially, garam masala is easily and better prepared at home. By making your own you are assured of freshness, you have control over the hotness of the mix, and your home is filled with the aroma of roasting spices.

This recipe has some "bite", if you find it too hot, reduce the number of peppercorns.

Using a rolling pin or wire cutter, crush the cinnamon sticks into small pieces. Place all of the spices on a baking tray and heat in a 200°F oven for 30 minutes. Stir the spices once or twice while they are baking.

Remove the spices from the oven, let them cool briefly, then pulverize them in batches in a spice or coffee grinder, or all at once in a blender. This process may take longer in a blender, but it will still work fine. Repeatedly stop the blender and push down the spices with a rubber spatula. Blend until all the spices are well ground.

Store garam masala in a tightly sealed container in a cool, dark place. It is best if used within three months.

Yields ¾ cup = 12 Tbs = 36 tsp 1 spice jar = 5-6 Tbs mixture

Dick's Curry Powder

- 1 tsp cayenne pepper**
- 1 tsp turmeric**
- 1 tsp paprika**
- 1 heaping tsp garam masala**

Mirepoix

- 2 parts onion, diced**
- 1 part carrot, diced**
- 1 part celery, diced**

Mirepoix is used in many stews and soups. It is the basis for much French cuisine. Try to make the diced pieces small and of uniform size.

The Holy Trinity

- 1 part onion, diced**
- 1 part green bell pepper, diced**
- 1 part celery, diced**

The Holy Trinity is used in typical Cajun cooking as a base for soups, stews, and sauces.

Emeril's Essence (or Creole Seasoning or Bayou Blast)

- 2½ Tbs paprika**
- 2 Tbs salt**
- 2 Tbs garlic powder**
- 1 Tbs black pepper**
- 1 Tbs onion powder**
- 1 Tbs cayenne pepper**
- 1 Tbs dried oregano**
- 1 Tbs dried thyme**

Combine all ingredients thoroughly. Yield: ⅔ cup

To make three tsp of seasoning, replace the Tbs measure with ¼ tsp for all ingredients. You end up throwing some away, but you don't end up with too much.

Aioli Sauce

2 egg yolks*
3 gloves of garlic, puréed
1 pinch of salt
½ cup extra virgin olive oil**
¼ tsp lemon juice
1 pinch of cayenne pepper

All ingredients must be at room temperature.

In a bowl, mix the egg yolks with the garlic and salt, pour the olive oil in a steady trickle until the oil is absorbed and thickens. Whisk in lemon juice, cayenne pepper. Taste and correct seasoning. This sauce goes well with fish, applied after the fish is cooked.

There are lots of variations of aioli sauce. Add lemon juice and capers for a fish sauce. Fine herbs like summer savory, chervil, chive and tarragon can be added individually or all together for a delicious herbed aioli.

*Egg yolks contains a protein called lecithin which will emulsify and absorb the droplets of oil making it a firm and smooth sauce. If your sauce is too stiff, add a bit of warm water to thin it down. If the sauce starts to separate, pour in a little bit of hot water down the side of the bowl and whisk it in, this will bind the sauce.

**It is now the time to use your best extra virgin olive oil to get the best flavor from your sauce. If you find the olive oil too strong, replace some of it with a neutral oil such as rapeseed, canola, or sunflower. It is interesting to know that extra virgin olive oil (not refined) can kill bacteria and salmonella.

Aioli is a sauce made of garlic and olive oil. Normally egg is also added for ease of mixing. There are many variations, such as the addition of mustard. In France, aioli is traditionally served with seafood, fish soup, and croutons. In Malta, arjoli or ajjoli is commonly made with the addition of either crushed galletti or tomato. In Australia it is commonly eaten with hot chips. In the Occitan Valleys of Italy it is served with potatoes boiled with salt and bay laurel. It is usually served at room temperature.

Aioli is, like mayonnaise, an emulsion or a suspension of small globules of oil and oil soluble compounds in water and water soluble compounds. Egg yolk is a commonly used emulsifier but mustard and garlic both have emulsion-producing properties. Classic aioli is made without egg, though many aioli recipes use it.

Quick Cajun Spice Mix

1 tsp (or less) cayenne pepper
1 Tbs paprika
1½ tsp black pepper
½ tsp garlic powder
½ tsp onion powder
1 tsp thyme
1 tsp oregano
1 tsp sage
1½ tsp cumin

Herbs de Provence

2 Tbs dried savory
2 Tbs dried rosemary
2 Tbs dried thyme
2 Tbs dried oregano
2 Tbs dried basil
2 Tbs dried marjoram
2 Tbs dried fennel seed

Mix these herbs together well. Place a few Tbs in a sachet tied with a string and a long tail for pulling the herbs out of whatever sauce you are preparing.

Store unused sachets in a cool, dry place.

Faux Old Bay Seasoning

1 Tbs celery salt
1 Tbs ground bay leaves
2 tsp fresh ground black pepper
1 tsp paprika
½ tsp dry mustard
pinch nutmeg - fresh ground if possible
pinch cinnamon powder
pinch ground cloves

Creole Seafood Seasoning

⅓ cup table salt
¼ cup granulated or powdered garlic
¼ cup freshly ground black pepper
2 Tbs cayenne pepper, or to taste
2 Tbs dried thyme
2 Tbs dried basil
2 Tbs dried oregano
⅓ cup paprika
3 Tbs granulated or powdered onion

Makes about 2 cups

Seafood Seasoning

6⅓ Tbs salt
3⅔ Tbs ground celery seed
2½ tsp dry mustard powder
2½ tsp red pepper flakes, ground
1½ tsp ground black pepper
1½ tsp ground bay leaves
1½ tsp paprika
1 tsp ground cloves
1 tsp ground allspice
1 tsp ground ginger
¾ tsp ground cardamom
½ tsp ground cinnamon

Mix the salt, celery seed, dry mustard powder, red pepper, black pepper, bay leaves, paprika, cloves, allspice, ginger, cardamom, and cinnamon together in a bowl until thoroughly combined. Store in an airtight container.

Mexican Spice Blend

- 1 Tbs smoked paprika**
- 1 Tbs dried Mexican oregano**
- 1 Tbs ancho chile powder**
- 1 Tbs garlic powder**
- 1 Tbs ground cumin**

Mix all ingredients. Store in an air-tight container.

Mrs. Dash's Seasoning **no salt savory seasoning**

- ½ tsp cayenne pepper**
- 1 Tbs garlic powder**
- 1 tsp basil**
- 1 tsp marjoram**
- 1 tsp thyme**
- 1 tsp parsley**
- 1 tsp savory**
- 1 tsp mace**
- 1 tsp onion powder**
- 1 tsp sage**
- 1 tsp black pepper**

Mix all ingredients in a small bowl. Store in an air-tight container.

Making a Roux

Roux (pronounced "roo") is a thickening agent for soups and sauces with roots dating back more than 300 years in French cuisine. Made by cooking a flour and oil paste until the raw flavor of the flour cooks out and the roux has achieved the desired color, a properly cooked roux imparts silky-smooth body and a nutty flavor while thickening soups and sauces.

Roux can be made with a variety of oils and animal fats. It is commonly made with vegetable oil, olive oil, or clarified butter, but can also be prepared with bacon grease or other rendered fats. Its distinction from other thickeners is that the starch, in this case flour, is cooked before use. Cooking removes the flour's raw taste but maintains its excellent thickening properties. This enables roux to be a stable, smooth, and delicate thickener. When cooked to a golden or brown stage, roux takes on a rich, toasted flavor, adding color to a soup, stew, sauce, or other dish.

Roux can be made in small quantities as part of a recipe, but its best made in larger amounts and kept on hand for use when needed. Larger quantities cook slowly and evenly, allowing the flour to achieve its maximum potential, while small amounts cook quickly, unevenly, and are easier to burn.

Whether you make a little or a lot, the proportions of ingredients are the same: 1 part oil or fat and 1 part all-purpose flour, by weight. If you have a kitchen scale, this is easy to measure. If you do not have a kitchen scale, use measuring cups or spoons to measure 1 part oil or fat and 1¾ parts all-purpose flour.

To make a quantity of roux, begin by heating 1 cup of oil or fat in a saucepan over medium heat until a pinch of flour sprinkled into the oil will just begin to bubble. Then, whisk in 1¾ cups of flour to form a thick paste the consistency of cake frosting. Continue whisking as the roux gently bubbles and cooks to the shade desired. Do not allow the roux to bubble too vigorously, or it will burn rather than brown. Be very careful while cooking roux, it becomes quite hot and can cause a bad burn if it touches the skin.

When the roux has finished cooking, pour it into a metal or heat proof container and allow it to cool. As it sits, the flour will begin to settle to the bottom, and the oil will rise to the surface. Stir the oil back into the flour before using as this will make the roux dissolve smoothly. If you decide to pour off the oil, the roux will still work, but will require more whisking into a sauce in order to fully dissolve.

After the roux has cooled, transfer it to an airtight container and refrigerate. Roux will keep indefinitely in the refrigerator or freezer until ready for use. Roux made with vegetable oil can be stored at room temperature for several weeks, but roux made with butter or fat should always be refrigerated.

To ensure lump-free thickening, cold ingredients must always be added to hot. When making roux as part of a recipe, the liquid ingredient must be cold or room temperature, and slowly whisked into the hot roux. Do this by adding the liquid a little at a time, whisking until smooth between each addition, until the roux forms a thin paste, then whisk in the remaining liquid and bring the mixture to a simmer. Cold or room temperature roux is simply whisked into a simmering soup or sauce until it dissolves. These methods ensure the roux is incorporated slowly and the mixture will not form lumps.

Roux begins to thicken soon after it is combined with a liquid, but it must be simmered for 10 to 20 minutes in order to reach its full flavor and thickening potential. This additional cooking time allows the flour to soften and absorb the liquid, resulting in a silky smooth soup or sauce. If the simmering time is too short, the flour in the roux will remain grainy.

There are four varieties of roux denoted by their colors: white, blond, brown, and dark brown. Brown and dark brown roux have more flavor, but less thickening power than white or blond roux. They are primarily used in Cajun and Creole dishes, most notably, gumbo and jambalaya.

White roux is cooked for about 5 minutes, just until the flour has lost its raw smell, but before any golden color or toasted aroma develops. This roux is used to thicken chowders and milk-based sauces such as the classic white sauce, also known as Bechamel. Macaroni and cheese, tuna noodle casserole, and New England clam chowder are all based on milk thickened with a white roux.

Blond, or golden roux, is cooked approximately 20 minutes to a light, golden-brown shade with an aroma resembling popcorn or toasted bread. This is the most commonly used roux, desired for the richness and a slight nuttiness it provides along with its excellent thickening power. Blond roux is a good, general-purpose roux to keep for thickening stock-based sauces, soups, and stews.

Brown roux is cooked about 35 minutes until it reaches to a peanut butter-brown color. Its aroma is more pronounced and sharper than the nutty smell of blond roux. Cooked to this stage, flour begins to lose its thickening power, requiring more roux to thicken a given amount of liquid.

Even darker than the preceding brown roux, dark brown roux is cooked approximately 45 minutes until it is the color of melted milk chocolate. Its aroma is mellower than the strong, roasted flavor of brown roux, and will actually smell a little like chocolate. This stage has the least thickening power of all four; its main purpose is as a flavoring agent with thickening secondary.

Brining

A brining solution is little more than sugar and salt dissolved in water. To brine meat you submerge the meat in the solution and let it sit for 30 minutes to 30 hours depending on the size and intensity of flavor you desire. The reason this works is because meat is composed of cells covered by permeable membranes. The membranes seek to balance salinity across the membrane. So, if there is more salt on one side of the membrane than the other, salt solution, including other flavors, can migrate across the membrane by diffusion. Diffusion of a liquid across a membrane is called osmosis. Osmosis is the key to brining.

The brine diffuses into the meat resulting in more liquid in the meat and more flavor. At the same time the salt denatures proteins present in the meat. The dissolved salt causes some of the proteins in muscle fibers to unwind and swell. As they unwind, the bonds that had held the protein unit together as a bundle break. Water from the brine binds directly to these proteins, but even more important, water gets trapped between these proteins when the meat cooks and the proteins bind together. Thus, these denatured proteins are suddenly very effective at hanging on to water, which means that brined meats are juicier when cooked and they are more forgiving to accidental overcooking. These are the main reasons why brining meat has become so popular. Typically poultry and pork are the most popular target meats for brining. But a marinade is another form of a brine. So you have been brining meat for years and you never knew it.

Brining Pork Chops

The base of brine is sugar, salt, and water, but you can add any flavor to it that you want. Combine the first seven ingredients in a saucepan and heat on low just until the sugar and salt dissolve, stirring with the whisk.

<p>2 cups chicken stock ¼ cup kosher salt ¼ cup brown cane sugar ½ tsp black peppercorns 2 bay leaves ½ Tbs apple cider vinegar 2 cups ice water</p>

Once the sugar and salt are dissolved, remove the saucepan from the heat to a hot pad. Stir in the ice water to cool the brine to under 90°F. Use a thermometer to make sure the brine is cool. You don't want to put your meat into hot brine, as it will cook the meat a little. You also want to cool the brine for safety reasons. The chance of food-borne illness is pretty low in a mixture this salty, but it pays to be extra careful. You can taste the brine if you want, but it will be really salty.

You need a reliable storage device for the pork chops as they brine in the fridge. Use a large zipping storage bag inside of a bowl.

How long you brine your pork chops is entirely up to you. The longer they sit in the brine the stronger the flavor will become. But remember these chops are already chopped up, and unlike a whole roast, it will not take 24 hours for the flavors to penetrate the center. There will be noticeable flavor change after just 30 minutes of soaking. I would not leave them for longer than 8 hours. After 8 hours the flavors are almost peaked out. Take the meat out of the brine and pat it dry with paper towels. Cook the brined meat just as you would unbrined meat. Recognize that larger cuts of pork require much longer to brine thoroughly.

The brining process is pretty standard, but you can adapt it to suit your needs and or palate. There are a lot of options for flavor introduction using the brining process. Just keep the basic recipe the

same but replace sources of sugar and liquid as you wish. Sugar substitutes like honey, molasses, fruit juices, and sugared soda are popular. If you use a salty stock, you won't need to add as much salt. Brining is pretty fool-proof, and it makes cooking a lot easier, too.

Brining Chicken Breasts

There are a few options when deciding what chicken breasts to buy. There are boneless and skinless, boneless with skin, cutlets, and on the bone with the skin intact. The last is recommended. For roasting purposes it's always better to have a bone.

Whisk together sugar, salt and water. This brine recipe should be enough to brine six to eight chicken breasts. Heat the water to a low simmer so that the sugar and salt melt. Then, once the water goes from cloudy to clear, add the spices and remove it from the heat. You can get more flavor from the herbs and spices by chopping and/or smashing them a little. The heat will also help to release oil and flavor from the spices.

1 cup salt
½ cup sugar
1 tsp mustard seed
1 tsp coriander
1 tsp black pepper
1 tsp caraway
1 bay leaf
2 Tbs lime juice
6 cups water
3 trays ice cubes

Cool the brine down with ice. Mix the brine and ice in a secondary container, so you don't have to deal with the residual heat of the pan. This is three to four trays of ice cubes from the freezer, which should be enough to cool down six to eight cups of hot brine.

Pour the brine over the chicken breasts. Once the brine is cool to the touch you may place your chicken breasts in it. Ziploc bags, a large plastic tote, or a cooler work well, but for two to six chicken breasts, the large bowl is sufficient. Brine the chicken breasts for only four to six hours; any longer than that and the flavors will become too strong and overpowering. Also, make sure to keep the chicken breasts between 33 and 40°F while they brine.

Typical Brining Times

	cold water	table salt	sugar	time
1 whole chicken (3½ to 4 lb)	2 qt	½ cup	½ cup	½-1 hr
4 lb bone-in chicken pieces	2 qt	½ cup	½ cup	½-1 hr
4 boneless, skinless ch. breasts 6-8 oz	2 qt	¼ cup	¼ cup	½-1 hr
1 turkey 12-17 lb	2 gal	1 cup		6-12 hr
1 bone-in turkey breast (6 to 8 lb)	1 gal	½ cup		3-6 hr
4 bone-in rib loin pork chops 1½ " thick	1½ qt	3 Tbs	3 Tbs	1 hr
1 pork roast (3 to 6 lb)	2 qt	¼ cup	¼ cup	1½-2 hr

Apple Guide

Braeburn

Varies from gold with red streaks, to a deep, dark red. The insides are firm and juicy, with a slight tart taste. Good for snacking, savory cooking, baking. Season is October to November. Its sweet, complex flavor is perfect for applesauce.

Cortland

Good for eating raw and baking in pies. The Cortland apple is sweeter than its McIntosh parent, with only a hint of tartness. When cut, its skin resists browning, making it a great addition to salads. Available September through April.

Crabapple

Small, rosy red, hard tart flesh, too sour for hand-eating, makes great jellies, jams and good with pork and poultry, available during the fall months.

Empire

A cross between the Red Delicious and the McIntosh apple. Good all-purpose apple, but ideal for eating fresh. Crisp and juicy with a sweet-tart flavor. Available September through July.

Fuji

Large sized, and can last a long time without refrigeration. Dark red with small light colored dots. The flesh is crunchy, sweet and firm. During September it ripens, but will taste better if left until October and November to fully mature.

Gala

Light reddish in color, with a lot of yellow streaks on the skin. It is juicy and aromatic, although it isn't very crunchy. They become ripe in late July. Not for cooking, they are considered more of a "snacking" type of apple.

Ginger Gold (green)

Good for snacking, savory cooking. Season is early August to September. It's a little more crisp and tart than its relative Golden Delicious.

Golden Delicious

Colored golden to yellow all over, sweeter and easier to bruise, than many other types of apples. Great for cooking and salads, because it retains its great taste and shape, even though the skin is thin and soft. Harvested in late September.

Granny Smith

This one tastes more towards the sour side, and its flesh is quite hard, thus it is favored for salads and your classic apple pie. Harvested around October.

Honeycrisp

Crisp, juicy, with low acidity. Good for snacking. September to November.

Ida Red

Medium to large, bright red, and has creamy white flesh that is very firm, crisp, and juicy. All-purpose apples, the sweetly tart, deliciously spicy are especially good for snacks and desserts, and particularly desirable for baking.

Jonagold

Good for savory cooking, baking, applesauce. Season is September to November. This is a cross between a Jonathan and a Golden Delicious. It tends to be large, with a firm texture well suited to baking.

Jonathan

Used for eating. These types of apples are not a good choice for baking whole because they lose their shape. Season is September though Spring

Macoun (red) and Mutsu (green)

Medium red apple that sometimes has an unattractive gray bloom. However, its snow-white flesh is supercrisp and juicy, and its honey sweetness makes up for its mild flavor. This is most desirable for eating fresh, for snacks, salads, and fruit cups. It also makes good applesauce. Macoun is a poor keeper.

McIntosh

McIntosh apples have a tart flavor. They have a red and green mixed color and are small to medium in size. McIntosh apples are good raw, for applesauce and cider and good for pies.

Northern Spy

Large, sweet-tart apple, red skin with yellow streaking, all-purpose, available October through March.

Red Delicious

Have a large size, and are dark red in color with 5 knobs on the bottom. They become ripe in mid to late September.

Rome

Sometimes called "Rome Beauty," are a round, plump apple with an appealing red color. The flesh has a greenish cast, and it tastes crisp and lightly tart. They have a thick skin that makes them less than perfect for snacking, but they're great for cider-making and for baking as well.

Winesap

They are tart, even spicy, with a distinctive flavor and aroma of wine. Flavor is a bit strong for eating. They tend to be smaller than most and are not as often found in typical grocery stores. Small and round and colored a deep, dark red. Often used as cider apples as well as in baking and sauces.

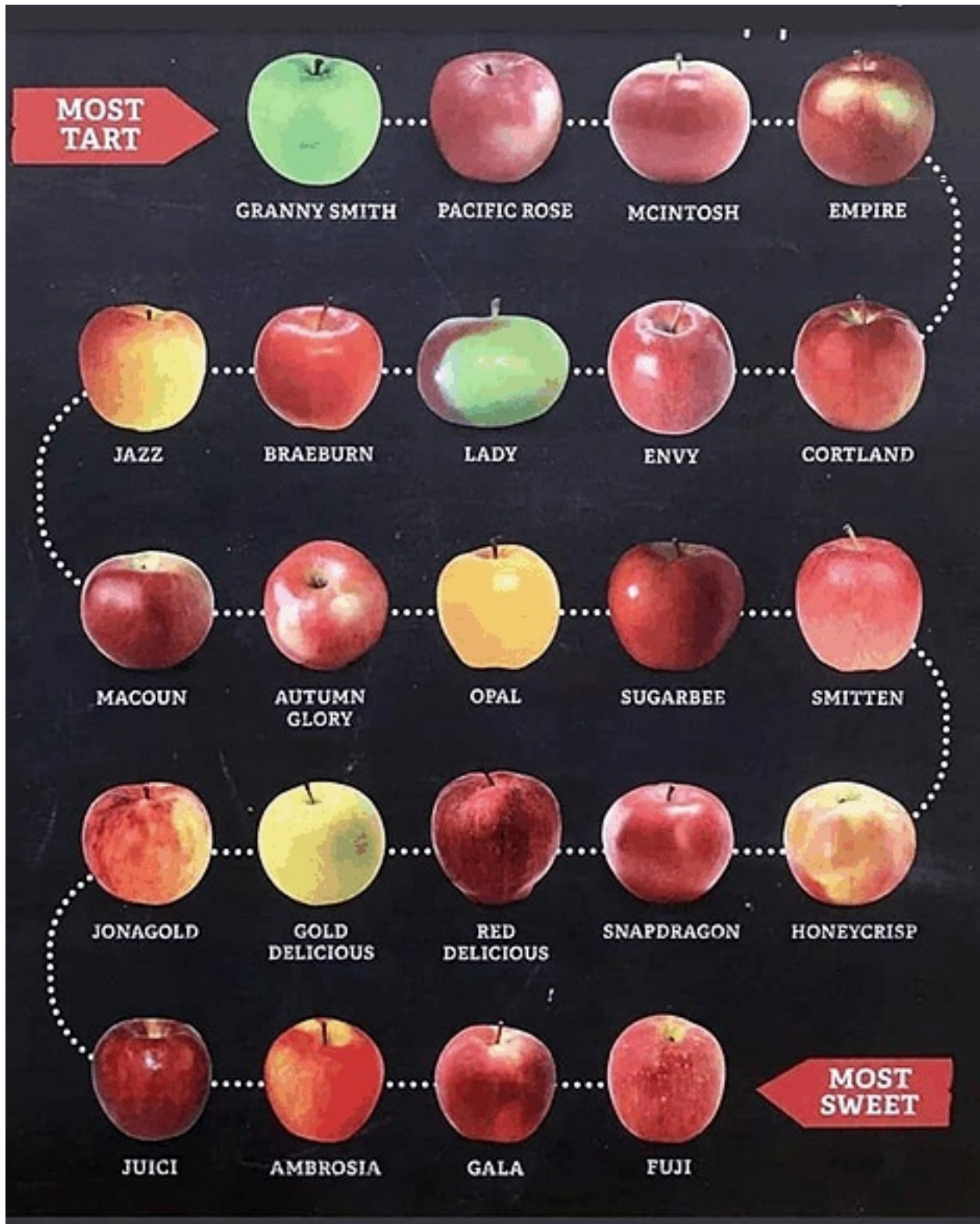
York Imperial

Medium to large in size, firm flesh, tartly sweet, red with yellowish streaks, off-white flesh, excellent for cooking whole as it keeps its shape, available October through April.

Zestar

Good for snacking. Season is Mid-August to September. It's a relatively new hybrid that, despite appearing early in the season, has a crisp, firm texture.

Sweet To Tart



Tenderizing Meat

Tough cuts of meat, typically beef, may be physically pounded to soften or tenderize the muscle and make it easier to cut and eat. Another technique is the jacquard tenderizer, as shown.

Pounding can be done with a mallet, shown on page 21. My mother used the edge of a thick saucer (brave). The jacquard meat tenderizer has many small pointy blades or needles to penetrate the meat: They are used to create many, many small cuts in the meat, physically severing the connective tissue and making it more tender. The most frequent home use is to make cube steak. They are also often employed in making chicken fried steak. The many small holes may also help the steak absorb some seasoning from a marinade.



Tender cuts like chicken breasts, beef filet, pork loin, and so on don't need any tenderization. They may be pounded to reshape them, but there is no real requirement.

If you over-pound or over-slice a cut of meat you eventually will reduce it to shreds, or make it too thin and unattractive.

Does manual tenderizing conflict with other types of tenderization (e.g. braising, enzymatic, brining, marinating etc.)?

First, neither brining nor marinating tenderize unless there is an acid or an active enzymatic ingredient in the marinade to do it.

Braising (and other low and slow methods) work by converting the connective tissue protein collagen into gelatin, thus making the cut succulent and tender, despite being very well done. If you are going to do this, there simply is no point in mechanical tenderization.

Enzymatic tenderization works by denaturing the proteins in the meat, and if over done will turn them to mush. It also works only at the surface, unless left long enough to penetrate--but then the surface will be mushy. Using a jacquard might be helpful in getting an enzymatic marinade to penetrate and act on some of the interior of the cut.

Tips on Braising

There are few more alluring -- and satisfying -- dishes than. Inevitably, they're fork-tender and flavorful, glossy with rich, aromatic sauces of stock and wine. Anyone who can brown a piece of meat and add some liquid can make a great braise.

As a technique, braising couldn't be simpler. You just brown whatever it is you're going to braise (in oil or butter), add liquids -- wine, stock or even cider or Armagnac -- cover, and cook slowly until it's tender. Add aromatics to the liquid -- onion, carrots, herbs, spices -- and the flavors will suffuse whatever you're braising. The simmering can happen on top of the stove or in the oven. The bonus? The marvelous aromas that fill the house. The secret to achieving superlative braised meat dishes is twofold.

First, make sure to brown the meat really well. Use olive oil or butter, depending on the flavor you're looking for. Use a heavy pan, but preferably not a nonstick one so you can deglaze the pan and release all the caramelized flavor that was cooked into the braising liquid, which will become the sauce. To deglaze the pan, turn the heat to high and pour in a small amount of wine or stock. Stir to loosen all the small bits of caramelized meat that have stuck to the pan. Then add braising liquid and meat.

Second, use flavorful liquids to braise. Red or white wine and homemade stocks ensure delicious results.

Braising is forgiving. You can easily overcook a lamb chop, but when you braise, you can't really make any mistakes. Although the process takes a couple of hours, it's not at all labor-intensive: Once the pot is simmering on top of the stove or in the oven, the braise cooks itself.

As the braising progresses, the flavors of the meat, seasonings and aromatic vegetables infuse the cooking liquid, which can then easily be turned into a sauce. Fennel seeds, garlic and sliced fresh fennel work gorgeously with pork; thyme or rosemary are naturals with lamb. Adding tomato to just about any meat takes a sauce into a different dimension. Bay leaves, mirepoix (diced onion, carrot and celery), dried fruit -- the possibilities are endless.

Making the sauce can be as simple as skimming the fat from the braising liquid, then reducing it a little (as with our cider-braised pork with fennel). Or, if it wants body, you might whisk in a little *beurre manie*, a bit of flour blended into softened butter with a fork. Flouring the meat before browning it achieves a similar effect, though sometimes it's nice to brown meat without flouring it.

Braising is ideal for do-ahead cooking -- in fact, most braises are even better the next day. They're the perfect thing to make on a weekend, when you can take your time and bask in the aromas. The next day (or a couple of days later) the flavors will have deepened, and you can breeze in after a long work day, lift off any solidified fat, reheat the dish and enjoy an amazing, warming dinner.

Many different meats respond well to braising. You can use a large cut such as a bottom round roast. For this dish, the beef is larded, then marinated in wine, garlic, onions and herbs, then braised. Or you can braise small pieces, as in stew meat. Or try lamb or veal shanks or cut-up chicken or duck.

Where larger cuts of meat are concerned, tough or fatty ones work best. The fat in the meat is a natural baster in the long, slow cooking process that tenderizes tough cuts and melds all the flavors. For stew, using meat with enough fat is essential for ensuring tenderness.

To braise meats, choose a covered, heavy pan that isn't too much larger than whatever you're braising; that way you won't need too much liquid and the flavors will concentrate. Dutch ovens work well.

Braising is the ideal treatment for lamb shanks, which are wonderfully rich, meaty and inexpensive; they're terrific braised in red wine. For our version, we chose Merlot, but Cabernet, Zinfandel or Syrah would work just as well. Chicken and beef broth are combined with the wine (though straight beef broth would be fine, too).

When preparing lamb shanks for braising, remove any tough silver skin from the outside of the shanks. Use the tip of a small sharp knife to loosen and pull it off. Once the shanks are seasoned and coated with flour, brown them in oil. Try to get a good even browning over the shanks; the browning will give the sauce a rich color and seal the juices in the meat.

Pork pot roasts are wonderful braised, and hard cider is a natural medium. Pork butt (actually part of the shoulder) has enough fat and flavor to yield very rich, tender, delicious slices of meat when prepared this way.

Our osso buco is a fairly classic version of everyone's favorite veal shank dish. Pancetta and cipollini (an onion-like bulb) are sauteed, along with colorful mirepoix, and added to the shanks braising in chicken stock.

When preparing osso buco for braising, be sure to tie a string tightly around each veal shank to hold the meat on the bone as it cooks. When turning the veal, do so gently, so the precious marrow doesn't fall out of the bone. You want it intact, so you can scoop it out with a spoon and savor every last bit.

Homemade Eyeglass Cleaner

1 part water

3 parts isopropyl alcohol (or witch hazel)

1-2 drop soap (your choice)

microfiber cloth

Mix liquid ingredients in a spray bottle. Spray on glasses. Wipe clean with microfiber cloth.

Choose the Right Potato

Potatoes are composed mostly of starch and water. The starch is in the form of granules, which in turn are contained in starch cells. The higher the starch content of the potato, the fuller the cells. Choosing the right potato for the job is tantamount to a dish's success. The fact that dozens of potato varieties are grown in this country makes the question of which potato is best for a specific recipe even more confusing, not to mention that some potatoes are sold by varietal name (such as Red Bliss or Yukon Gold), others by generic name (all-purpose, baking, etc.).

To make sense of this confusion, it is helpful to group potatoes into three major categories based on their ratio of solids (mostly starch) to water. The categories are high-starch/low-moisture potatoes, medium-starch potatoes, and low-starch/high-moisture potatoes. In high-starch potatoes, the cells are completely full—they look like plump little beach balls. In medium-starch and low-starch potatoes, the cells are more like under-inflated beach balls. The space between these less-than-full cells is taken up mostly by water.

High-Starch/Low-Moisture Potatoes

Earthy flavored russets and Idahos are the best choice for fluffy French fries, roasted potatoes, and archetypical creamy mashed potatoes. They, however, lose their shape when simmered in soups or stews. Because they have so little moisture, they tend to soak up liquid as they cook and eventually implode. In some cases, as when you want the potatoes to thicken a soup, this can be desirable.

Medium-Starch Potatoes

Buttery Yukon Golds, Yellow Finns, Purple Peruvians, and all-purpose potatoes do a better job of holding their shape but share many traits in common with high-starch potatoes.

Low-Starch/High-Moisture Potatoes

Sometimes called boiling or “waxy” potatoes, this variety holds their shape better than other potatoes when simmered. This category includes all red-skinned potatoes, such as Red Bliss and Red Creamer, as well as freshly dug potatoes, which are often labeled "new" potatoes. Low-starch potatoes should be selected when potatoes are to hold their shape, like in a soup or salad. That being said, the test kitchen can favor russets for a particular salad because of their unique ability to absorb the flavorings.

The Baker's Percentage

Baker's percentage is a baker's notation method indicating the relative proportion of ingredients to flour used when making breads, cakes, muffins, and other pastries. It is also referred to as baker's math, or otherwise contextually indicated by a phrase such as based on flour weight. It is sometimes called formula percentage. Baker's percentage expresses each ingredient in parts per hundred as a ratio of the ingredient's mass to the total flour mass (that is, the unit mass).

$$\text{ingredient}\% = 100 \times \frac{\text{ingredient mass}}{\text{flour mass}} \%$$

For example, if a recipe calls for 10 lb of flour and 5 lb of water, the corresponding bakers' percentages will be 100% and 50%. Because of the way these percentages are stated, as a percent of flour mass rather than of all ingredients, the total will always exceed 100%.

Flour-based recipes are more precisely conceived as baker's percentage, and more accurately measured using mass instead of volume. The uncertainty in using volume measurements follows from the fact that flour settles in storage and therefore does not have a constant density.

Common Breads

Flour 100 %			
Liquid	Salt	Fat	Bread Type
59 %	1.5 %	X	Neapolitan Pizza
60 %	2 %	X	Baguette
66 %	2 %	X	French Bread
75 %	2-3 %	X	High Hydration
80 %	2 %	2.5 %	Ciabatta
80 %	2-3 %	2-5 %	Focaccia
54 %	1.5-2 %	17 %	White Bread
52 %	2 %	25 %	Challah
22 %	2 %	133 %	Brioche

Homemade Yogurt

2 quarts whole milk, the fresher the better

¼ cup heavy cream (optional)

3 to 4 Tbs plain whole milk yogurt with live and active cultures

Rub an ice cube over the inside bottom of a heavy pot to prevent scorching. Add milk and cream, if using, and bring to a bare simmer, until bubbles form around the edges, 190 to 200°F. Stir the milk occasionally as it heats.

Remove pot from heat and let cool until it feels pleasantly warm when you stick your pinkie in the milk for 10 seconds, 110 to 115°F. (If you think you'll need to use the pot for something else, transfer the milk to a glass or ceramic bowl, or else you can let it sit in the pot.) If you're in a hurry, you can fill your sink with ice water and let the pot of milk cool in the ice bath, stirring the milk frequently so it cools evenly.

Transfer ½ cup of warm milk to a small bowl and whisk in yogurt until smooth. Stir yogurt-milk mixture back into remaining pot of warm milk. Cover pot with a large lid. Keep pot warm by wrapping it in a large towel, or setting it on a heating pad, or moving to a warm place, such as your oven with the oven light turned on. Or just set it on top of your refrigerator, which tends to be both warm and out of the way.

Let yogurt sit for 6 to 12 hours, until the yogurt is thick and tangy; the longer it sits, the thicker and tangier it will become. (I usually let it sit for the full 12 hours.) Transfer the pot to the refrigerator and chill for at least another 4 hours; it will continue to thicken as it chills.

Tip: If you want to make Greek yogurt, set a colander or sieve over a bowl and line the colander with cheesecloth. Take your finished yogurt, either before or after you've chilled it, pour the yogurt into the colander, and let it sit in the refrigerator for 2 to 6 hours to drain. (Keep an eye on it, and when it looks thick enough to your liking, transfer it to a jar; if it becomes too thick, stir some of the whey back in.) Reserve remaining whey for smoothies, soups or lemonade, or for marinating poultry.

Baking Powder and Baking Soda (Bicarbonate)

Both baking powder and baking soda are chemical leavening agents that cause batters to rise when baked. The leavener enlarges the bubbles which are already present in the batter produced through creaming of ingredients. When a recipe contains baking powder and baking soda, the baking powder does most of the leavening. The baking soda is added to neutralize the acids in the recipe plus to add tenderness and some leavening. When using baking powder or baking soda in a recipe, make sure to sift or whisk with the other dry ingredients before adding to the batter to ensure uniformity. Otherwise the baked good can have large holes.

Baking powder consists of baking soda, one or more acid salts (cream of tartar and sodium aluminum sulfate) plus cornstarch to absorb any moisture so a reaction does not take place until a liquid is added to the batter. Most baking powder used today is double-acting which means it reacts to liquid and heat and happens in two stages. The first reaction takes place when you add the baking powder to the batter and it is moistened. One of the acid salts reacts with the baking soda and produces carbon dioxide gas. The second reaction takes place when the batter is placed in the oven. The gas cells expand causing the batter to rise. Because of the two stages, baking of the batter can be delayed for about 15-20 minutes without it losing its leavening power.

Too much baking powder can cause the batter to be bitter tasting. It can also cause the batter to rise rapidly and then collapse. (i.e. The air bubbles in the batter grow too large and break causing the batter to fall.) Cakes will have a coarse, fragile crumb with a fallen center. Too little baking powder results in a tough cake that has poor volume and a compact crumb.

Baking soda, also known as sodium bicarbonate or bicarbonate of soda (alkali) is about four times as strong as baking powder. It is used in recipes that contain an acidic ingredient (e.g. vinegar, citrus juice, sour cream, yogurt, buttermilk, chocolate, cocoa (not Dutch-processed), honey, molasses (also brown sugar), fruits and maple syrup). Baking soda starts to react and release carbon dioxide gas as soon as it is added to the batter and moistened. Make sure to bake the batter immediately.

Baking soda has an indefinite shelf life if stored in a sealed container in a cool dry place. Too much baking soda will result in a soapy taste with a coarse, open crumb. Baking soda causes reddening of cocoa powder when baked, hence the name Devil's Food Cake.

To test baking powder's effectiveness: mix 1 tsp (5 grams) baking powder with ½ cup (120 ml) hot water and the mixture should bubble immediately. Store in a cool dry place and it should be replaced every 6-12 months.

To test baking soda's effectiveness: mix ¼ tsp baking soda with 2 tsp of vinegar and the mixture should bubble immediately.

Note: The general rule of thumb for amount of baking powder in recipes: 1 to 2 tsp (5-10 grams) of baking powder leavens 1 cup (140 grams) of flour. The amount will depend on the ingredients and how they are mixed.

Substitution for 1 tsp commercial baking powder: ¼ tsp (1¼ grams) baking soda, ½ tsp cream of tartar plus ¼ tsp of cornstarch or ¼ tsp (1.25 grams) baking soda plus ½ cup (120 ml) of an acidic ingredient (buttermilk, sour milk or yogurt). Since homemade baking powder immediately releases its carbon dioxide gas when it is added and then moistened by the batter, it is important to bake the batter right away.

Note: Cream of Tartar - Lining the inside of wine caskets after fermentation is a white sediment (tartaric acid). This sediment is removed, purified and then ground to produce a fine white powder which we call cream of tartar. Cream of tartar can be found in the spice section of most grocery stores and should be stored in a cool dry place.

A Few Interesting Factoids

Masala is a spicy Indian sauce
Marsala is a cooking wine

Indian Menu Names

Aloo Gobhi - Gobhi (cauliflower) and Aloo (potatoes) cooked with ginger, chopped onion, tomatoes and spices.

Aloo Mattar - Aloo (Potatoes) with Peas, Spices and Spice Flavor Sauce

Aloo Baigan - Aloo (potatoes) cooked with baigan (eggplant) in delicately spiced sauce

Aloo Palak - Aloo (Potatoes) with Palak (Spinach), Spices and Spice Flavor Sauce

Aloo Pattagobhi - Aloo (potatoes) and Pattagobhi (cabbage) cooked with peas and mild spice.

Matar Paneer - Homemade Cheese and Mattar (Peas) with Curry Flavor Sauce

Palak Paneer - Cubes of cottage cheese cooked in a freshly made spinach gravy

Bhindi (Okra) - Okra cooked with Tomatoes, Onion, Ginger and Spices .

Masoor Daal - A brown lentil preparation.

Toor Daal - A yellow lentil preparation.

Buying Olive Oil

Don't trust most labels: Be wary of words like "pure," "natural," "virgin olive oil," "premium," "light," "made in Italy," and just "olive oil." They suggest a low-quality substance, and one potentially made from refining the remainders of the skin and pits of olives rather than the olives themselves. "First cold pressed," while sounding legit, doesn't actually mean much these days since extra-virgin olive oil is typically spun out of olives with centrifuges rather than pressed. Even the term "extra-virgin olive oil" gets slapped on bottles of low-grade oil illegally - and enforcement is very sparse - so terminology isn't necessarily your safeguard.

Stamp of approval: Here in the United States, look for the seal denoting approval by the California Olive Oil Council: "COOC Certified Extra Virgin." (And here's its list of 2015 certified oils). Olmsted also recommends Extra Virgin Alliance (EVA) and UNAPROL, the respected Italian olive growers' association. Concern over olive oil fraud in the United States sparked the Department of Agriculture to add olive oil to its voluntary quality monitoring program in 2012, but so far only two companies participate. (Look for the label "USDA Quality Monitored.")

Judge the country of origin: "If you have to purchase blindly with no other clue besides where it was made, choose Chile or Australia," writes Olmsted. The two countries received the highest marks from the US International Trade Commission's report on average quality of extra-virgin olive oil.

Buy in season and in the dark: Look for bottles with dates listed on them, and buy the oil that was bottled most recently. The end of the year is the worst time to buy oils from the Northern Hemisphere, because they will likely be leftovers from last season; likewise, avoid oils from Chile, Australia, and South Africa during our spring and summer. Olive oil's quality degrades in the light, so don't purchase clear bottles that have been sitting by a window; opt for dark glass bottles or cans instead.

The brands that failed to meet the extra virgin olive oil standards, according to this study: Bertolli, Carapelli, Colavita, Star, Pompeian. Eat Grown Local also reports: Filippo Berio, Mazzola, Mezzetta, Newman's Own, Safeway, and Whole Foods in this list; the data may be from the earlier 2010 study when more brands were evaluated.

The real deal: California Olive Ranch, Cobram Estate, Lucini. Kirkland Organic, Lucero (Ascolano), McEvoy Ranch Organic are also noted by Eat Grown Local.

Buttermilk Substitute

1 cup whole milk
1 Tbs lemon juice

Mix and let stand for about 10 minutes. This milk will be similar to buttermilk in sourness and acid content, but it will not be as thick.

Phyllo Dough

Phyllo dough and puff pastry are both wonders of the frozen food world. Both doughs are flaky and delicious, but how are they different?, and can they be used interchangeably?

Phyllo (also spelled filo), which means "leaf" in Greek, is tissue-thin sheets of dough that have very little fat. Many popular Greek dishes, such as baklava and spanakopita, are made with phyllo dough. Phyllo dough can also make great edible serving cups for appetizers or desserts.

Phyllo is found in the freezer section in flat squares or rolls, although you may be able to find fresh phyllo in Greek markets. Defrost in the refrigerator and not on the counter since it can get gummy. Because phyllo dough doesn't have much fat, the sheets are usually brushed with melted butter or oil and then layered together. When it bakes up, the layers get airy, crisp, and flaky.

The main thing to know about working with phyllo dough is to *keep it from drying out*. Keep the sheets covered with plastic wrap or a damp towel while you're working, and don't be discouraged if a sheet rips — just patch it back together and move on, it'll bake up just fine! Don't refreeze phyllo, as it will get brittle.

Have all your ingredients prepped. We've found that phyllo dough dries out faster than we expect, so it's worth it to have our fillings prepped and our knives or pizza rollers already on hand for cutting out shapes.

Place unwrapped phyllo dough on a damp kitchen towel and cover with another damp towel. The towels shouldn't be completely sodden, but just wet enough to give the phyllo dough some moisture. After taking a sheet or two to work with, re-cover the remaining phyllo. Again, the goal is to keep the dough hydrated and prevent it from drying out.

Melted butter works well to fuse sheets of phyllo together. You can use other oils as well, of course, but when we're making up a dish without following a recipe, we tend to fall back on simple melted butter.

On the plus side, once you've made and shaped your phyllo, it keeps very well! You can keep baked phyllo in an airtight container for a week or so at room temperature or for several months in the freezer. If you're planning a big dinner party, this is one step that can be done well ahead of time!

Puff Pastry

Puff pastry, called *pâte feuilletée* in French, is a type of laminated dough, which means chilled fat, usually butter, has been folded multiple times into the dough to create many alternating layers of butter and dough. When made and baked properly, it puffs up into lots of very flaky, airy layers.

Puff pastry is usually sold frozen in folded sheets that are about the same thickness as rolled-out pie dough. The best commercial puff pastries are the ones made with *pure butter* — always check the

label, as some puff pastries are made with oil or other fats that just don't taste as good as butter. Defrost in the refrigerator to make sure those butter layers stay nice and cold.

When working with puff pastry, you want to work quickly while it's still cold and you want to handle it as little as possible to keep the layers from getting squished down together and producing a dense final result. Use sharp knives to cut straight down without sawing back and forth too if you need to cut or trim the dough.

Puff pastry can be used in both sweet and savory applications — use it for tarts, croissants, pastry pockets, or shaped into little appetizer cups. It's definitely denser but sturdier than baked phyllo dough.

Store-bought frozen puff pastry is a lifesaver any time of year, but especially as we move into the busy holiday season. If you've never used frozen puff pastry before, let me assure you that it couldn't be easier. This is definitely a time where taking some help from the freezer aisle is the smart move.

You might not get to pick the exact kind of butter used in your store-bought puff, but you can — and should — seek out brands that use only butter in their ingredients. Puff made partially or entirely with shortening or any other fat will have a far inferior taste to those made with butter alone. Read the labels and ingredient lists carefully.

The only potentially tricky moment when working with store-bought puff is that it needs to completely thaw before you use it. If you can, take the package of puff out of the freezer and let it thaw in the fridge overnight.

If you're baking at the last minute and don't have time for this long thaw, set the pastry on the counter, but keep an eye on it — you want to catch it right at the moment when the pastry is pliable enough to be rolled and shaped, but isn't so warm that the dough is too limp to shape or the butter starts melting.

Puff pastry is yours to play with. You can use it as a crust for a free-form tart, fold it into breakfast turnovers, bake it into cups for easy appetizers, or cut it into bite-sized shapes for appetizers.

Scoville Heatness Scale

Naga Jolokia (1,000,000) - The hottest pepper in the world. Believe it or not, there's a demand for this small fiery chile, it's cultivated in northeastern India.

Habanero (200,000 - 300,000) - This is the hottest chile that you can find in your grocery store, almost 100 times hotter than a jalapeno. Don't forget to wash your hands after handling

Rocoto (100,000 - 250,000) - Looks similar to the bell pepper, yet tastes nothing like it. A popular pepper in Peruvian cuisine, you'll want to use this one sparingly.

Thai Bird (50,000 - 100,000) - If you've ever made Thai food at home, then you've most likely searched for this little pepper. As spicy as it is, it's often shorter than an inch.

Arbol (25,000) - These long red chiles are often used in Mexican dishes and are easily found in Latin American Markets. Though little in size, they pack quite a bit of heat

Serrano (7,000 - 25,000) - Don't mistake the serrano for a jalapeno your mouth will be on fire. Though they look similar in appearance the serrano is twice as spicy.

Jalapeno (3,500 - 4,500) - The most common chile in the U.S. Jalapenos are common because when used sparingly they add a nice amount of heat yet don't have an overwhelming taste.

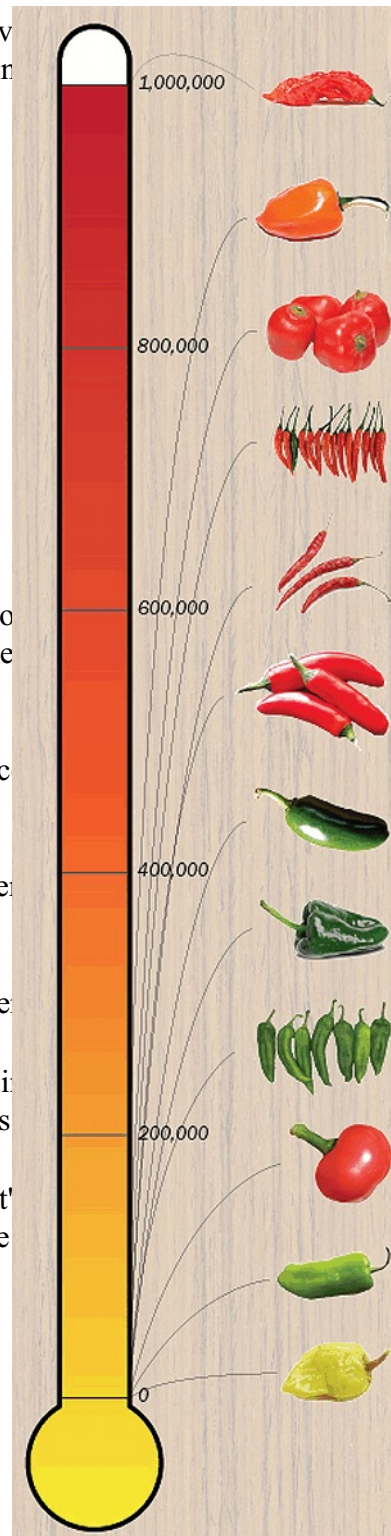
Poblano (1,000 - 1,500) - Poblano peppers are often used in Mexican cuisine. They're mild in flavor and are only slightly spicier than a bell pepper.

Anaheim (1,000 - 1,400) - These mild chiles are long and skinny and have just a little more heat than the cherry pepper. They're often stuffed or added to salsas.

Cherry Pepper (500) - Cherry peppers are small in size and mild in spice. They make a great pickling pepper and are often the peppers found inside stuffed olives.

Banana (500) - This pepper often times appears on top of pizzas. It's a pretty mild one that can be eaten raw - its hotness depends on the maturity of the pepper.

Pepperoncini (100 - 500) - These peppers, popular in Italian and Greek cuisine, are a little bit sweet and a little bit spicy.



Cooking Fats

Olive oil is best bought in dark bottles and labeled by a trade association such as the California Olive Oil Council. Olive oil is the main cooking oil in countries around the Mediterranean. Great on salads and for dipping crusty bread.

Corn oil (maize oil) is oil extracted from the germ of corn (maize). Its main use is in cooking, where its high smoke point makes refined

corn oil a valuable frying oil. It is also a key ingredient in some margarines. Corn oil is generally less expensive than most other types of vegetable oils.

Comparative properties of common cooking fats (per 100 g)					
Type of fat	Total fat (g)	Saturated fat (g)	Mono-unsaturated fat (g)	Poly-unsaturated fat (g)	Smoke point
Olive oil	100	14	73	11	374 °F
Corn oil	100	15	30	55	446 °F
Crisco	71	23	8	37	329 °F
Lard	100	39	45	11	374 °F
Suet	94	52	32	3	392 °F
Butter	81	51	21	3	302 °F

Crisco, shortening, is produced by hydrogenating cottonseed oil and used to make crumbly pastry. Although butter is solid at room temperature and is frequently used in making pastry, the term "shortening" seldom refers to butter, but is more closely related to margarine. In the early 21st century, vegetable shortening became the subject of some health concerns due to its traditional formulation from partially hydrogenated vegetable oils that contain trans-fatty acids, or "trans fats", as these have been linked to a number of adverse health effects. In January 2007, all Crisco products were reformulated to contain less than one gram of trans fat per serving,

Lard is fatty tissue from a pig. Lard is commonly used as a cooking fat or shortening in baking, or as a spread similar to butter. It is an ingredient in various savory dishes such as sausages, pâtés, and fillings, and it is particularly favored for the preparation of pastry because of the "flakiness" it brings to the product. By the late 20th century lard began to be considered less healthy than vegetable oils because of its high content of saturated fatty acids and cholesterol. That said, it has less saturated fat than butter. In its natural form lard has no trans fats. Commercially produced lard is, in part, hydrogenated, which does produce trans fats. Thus, it is wise to stick with artisanal sources and refrigeration.

Suet is the raw, hard fat found around the loins and kidneys of beef. Its high smoke point makes it ideal for deep frying and pastry production. Suet is essential in several traditional British dishes. Suet must be refrigerated.

Butter is a dairy product containing up to 80% butterfat (in commercial products) which is solid when chilled and at room temperature in some regions and liquid when warmed. It is made by churning fresh or fermented cream or milk to separate the butterfat from the buttermilk. It is generally used as a spread on plain or toasted bread products and a condiment on cooked vegetables, as well as in cooking, such as baking, sauce making, and pan frying. Butter consists of butterfat, milk proteins and water, and in some types, added salt. Butter may also be sold with added flavorings, such as garlic butter.

How to Make Ghee

1 lb unsalted butter

When butter is clarified the milk solids like proteins, carbohydrates, vitamins, and minerals are removed, except for the fat-soluble vitamins. Butter is composed of milk fat (at least 80%), milk solids (about 1%), and water (16 to 18%).

To successfully make ghee, the process starts with simmering butter between 221 to 244°F to evaporate the water. The temperature is then elevated to above 266 °F so the lactose, casein and whey proteins experience the Maillard reaction. Browning the milk solids adds wonderfully toasted flavors that become infused with the butter oil. To prevent burning of the milk solids, the butter should not reach its smoke point of 350°F. You can use an instant-read thermometer for more accuracy to check the temperatures.

Use a heavy bottomed pan, Dutch oven, or All-Clad stainless steel pan so that the milk solids do not rapidly burn. It's best to cut the butter into smaller pieces so it melts evenly and the solids brown consistently. Apply medium heat to melt the butter, then reduce to medium-low to simmer.

Once the butter has completely melted, it will bubble and begin to separate. As the butter simmers, some of the milk proteins rise and sit on the surface as it separates from the fat and water. Use a spoon to skim the white solids on the surface and discard. This process takes time for the butter oil to turn clear, so continually remove the solids.

Once most of the milk solids have been removed from the surface of the butter, there will be some white solids lingering on the bottom. Leave those so that they can be additionally heated and deepen in color through the Maillard browning reaction, creating butterscotch-like flavors.

Continue to simmer the butter over medium-low heat . Make sure not to take your eyes off the butter. It will quickly begin to change a golden color with amber brown solids formed at the bottom of the pan. When you see this change and smell toffee flavors, it's time to turn off the heat and remove the pan from the stove.

Allow the ghee to cool slightly for about 3 to 5 minutes. Line a fine-mesh strainer with at least a triple layer of cheesecloth. Place the lined strainer over a heat-proof container like a glass measuring cup. Carefully pour the butter oil through the sieve, the browned solids should get collected on the cheesecloth.

Transfer the ghee to a clean and dry glass jar which can be stored at room temperature for up to 3 months, or refrigerated for 1 year. The butterfat will naturally solidify at room temperature and below, creating an oil that needs to be scooped out of the container.

Sugar Concentrations

Thread Stage

230° F – 235° F, sugar concentration: 80%

At this relatively low temperature, there is still a lot of water left in the syrup. When you drop a little of this syrup into cold water to cool, it forms a liquid thread that will not ball up. Cooking sugar syrup to this stage gives you not candy, but syrup - something you might make to pour over ice cream.

Soft-Ball Stage

235° F – 240° F, sugar concentration: 85%

At this temperature, sugar syrup dropped into cold water will form a soft, flexible ball. If you remove the ball from water, it will flatten like a pancake after a few moments in your hand. Fudge, pralines, and fondant are made by cooking ingredients to the soft-ball stage.

Firm-Ball Stage

245° F – 250° F, sugar concentration: 87%

Drop a little of this syrup in cold water and it will form a firm ball, one that won't flatten when you take it out of the water, but remains malleable and will flatten when squeezed. Caramels are cooked to the firm-ball stage.

Hard-Ball Stage

250° F – 265° F, sugar concentration: 92%

At this stage, the syrup will form thick, "ropy" threads as it drips from the spoon. The sugar concentration is rather high now, which means there's less and less moisture in the sugar syrup. A little of this syrup dropped into cold water will form a hard ball. If you take the ball out of the water, it won't flatten. The ball will be hard, but you can still change its shape by squashing it. Nougat, marshmallows, gummies, divinity, and rock candy are cooked to the hard-ball stage.

Soft-Crack Stage

270° F – 290° F, sugar concentration: 95%

As the syrup reached soft-crack stage, the bubbles on top will become smaller, thicker, and closer together. At this stage, the moisture content is low. When you drop a bit of this syrup into cold water, it will solidify into threads that, when removed from the water, are flexible, not brittle. They will bend slightly before breaking. Saltwater taffy and butterscotch are cooked to the soft-crack stage.

Hard-Crack Stage

300° F – 310° F, Sugar concentration: 99%

The hard-crack stage is the highest temperature you are likely to see specified in a candy recipe. At these temperatures, there is almost no water left in the syrup. Drop a little of the molten syrup in cold water and it will form hard, brittle threads that break when bent. CAUTION: To avoid burns, allow the syrup to cool in the cold water for a few moments before touching it! Toffee, nut brittles, and lollipops are all cooked to the hard-crack stage.

Caramelizing Sugar

If you heat a sugar syrup to temperatures higher than any of the candy stages, you will be on your way to creating caramelized sugar (the brown liquid stage) - a rich addition to many desserts.

Clear-Liquid Stage

320° F, sugar concentration: 100%

At this temperature all the water has boiled away. The remaining sugar is liquid and light amber in color.

Brown-Liquid Stage

338° F, sugar concentration: 100%

Now the liquefied sugar turns brown in color due to caramelization. The sugar is beginning to break down and form many complex compounds that contribute to a richer flavor. Caramelized sugar is used for dessert decorations and can also be used to give a candy coating to nuts.

Burnt-Sugar Stage

350° F, sugar concentration: 100%

How to Temper Chocolate

Select your chocolate. It is best to use at least 1 lb of chocolate, as it is easier to temper (and retain the temper) of larger amounts of chocolate. If this is more than you need, you can always save the extra for later use. Choose a chocolate that you enjoy eating, and that does not contain any solid mix-ins like fruit or nuts. It's easiest to temper dark chocolate without any milk solids. Once you get the hang of it, you can experiment with milk chocolate or white chocolate. Make sure that the chocolate you start with is in good temper, meaning it is shiny and hard. If it has white or gray streaks or is crumbly, it is not a good chocolate to use with this method of tempering. Also avoid chocolate chips, which have additives.

Chop your chocolate into small pieces. Separate out about $\frac{1}{4}$ of your chocolate, and set it aside for now. Place $\frac{3}{4}$ of the chocolate in a microwave-safe bowl.

Microwave the bowl of chopped chocolate in 30-second increments. Stir after every 30 seconds, and heat and stir until the chocolate is entirely melted and smooth. Bring the chocolate to 115°F for dark chocolate or 110° for milk or white chocolate. Once the chocolate is melted, take its temperature with the chocolate thermometer. If it is not at 115°F , heat it in short bursts until it reaches that temperature, but watch it carefully. Do not allow the chocolate to exceed its recommended temperature or it might thicken, become hard to work with, or even scorch. By controlling the temperature you are allowing the chocolate to form a particular crystal structure.

Add the remaining chunks of chocolate to the bowl of melted chocolate, and stir gently to incorporate. *Stir almost constantly* to melt the chocolate. The warm chocolate will melt the chopped chocolate, and the newly added chocolate will bring down the temperature of the warm chocolate. This additional chocolate acts as a “seed” to promote the desired crystal structure.

Cool the chocolate to 90°F for dark chocolate or 87°F for milk or white chocolate. Continue to stir the chocolate while it cools, until you reach the prescribed temperature.

Test the chocolate's temper. Smear a small spoonful of chocolate on a piece of parchment paper or waxed paper, and watch it to see if it sets. Properly tempered chocolate should begin to set in just a few minutes. You will first see it lose its shine and take on a slightly more matte look, then it will start to set around the edges. At cool room temperature, a streak of tempered chocolate should set within four to six minutes. If it doesn't appear to be tempered, continue to stir and cool the chocolate for another one to two degrees, then test it again. Different brands of chocolate and different environmental conditions sometimes require slightly different tempering temperatures.

Remove any chunks of chocolate in the melted chocolate. Your chocolate is tempered and ready! You do not want the mixture to cool further.

To use tempered chocolate, you must keep it warm but not hot, ideally in the $85\text{-}88^{\circ}\text{F}$ degree range for dark chocolate (86°F for milk and white chocolate). You can either keep it over a pan of warm (but not simmering) water, stirring occasionally or try placing it on an electric heating pad set to “low,” with a towel between the pad and the bowl. Whichever method you choose, it's important to stir often so that the chocolate remains a uniform temperature throughout and to keep an eye on the temperature.

Roasting Time and Temperature Chart

Roast meat at constant oven temperature of 325°F unless otherwise indicated.

Cut	Approximate Weight (lb)	Internal Temp on Removal	Cooking Time(hrs)
Beef			
Standing Rib	4 to 6	140°F (rare)	2¼ - 2¾
		160°F (medium)	2¾ - 3¼
		170°F (well done)	3¼ - 3½
Standing Rib	6 to 8	140°F (rare)	2¾ - 3
		160°F (medium)	3 - 3½
		170°F (well done)	3¾ - 4
Rolled Rib	5 to 7	140°F (rare)	3¼ - 3½
		160°F (medium)	3¾ - 4
		170°F (well done)	4½ - 4¾
Rolled Rump	4 to 6	150°F-170°F	2 - 2½
Sirloin Tip	3½ to 4	150°F-170°F	2 - 2¾
Rib Eye or Delmonico (Roast at 350°F)	4 to 6	140°F (rare)	1½ - 1¾
		160°F (medium)	
		170°F (well done)	
Tenderloin, whole (Roast at 425°F)	4 to 6	140°F (rare)	45 min to 1 hr
Tenderloin, half (Roast at 425°F)	2 to 3	140°F (rare)	45 to 50 min
Veal			
Leg	5 to 8	170°F	2¾ - 3¾
Loin	4 to 6	170°F	1½ - 3
Rolled Shoulder	4 to 6	170°F	3½ - 3¾
Fresh Pork			
Loin, center	3 to 5	170°F	2½ - 3
Loin, half	5 to 7	170°F	3½ - 4¼
Loin blade	3 to 4	170°F	2¼ - 2¾
Loin, center; rolled	3 to 4	170°F	2½ - 3
Boston Shoulder	4 to 6	170°F	3 - 4
Picnic Shoulder	5 to 8	170°F	3 - 4
Leg (fresh ham)	10 to 16	170°F	4½ - 6
Leg, half (fresh ham)	5 to 7	170°F	3½ - 4½

Smoked Pork			
Ham (cook-before-eat)			
whole	10 to 14	160°F	3½ - 4
half	5 to 7	160°F	2½ - 3
shank or butt	3 to 4	160°F	2 - 2¼
Ham (fully cooked)			
whole	10 to 14	135°F - 140°F	2½ - 3
half	5 to 7	135°F - 140°F	1¾ - 2¼
whole, boneless	8 to 10	135°F - 140°F	2 - 2¼
half, boneless	4 to 5	135°F - 140°F	1½ - 2
Picnic Shoulder (Cook-before-eating)	5 to 8	170°F	3 - 4
Lamb			
Leg, whole	5 to 8	175°F - 180°F	3½ - 3¾
Leg, half	3 to 4	175°F - 180°F	3 - 3½
Square Cut Shoulder	4 to 6	175°F - 180°F	2¾ - 3
Rolled Shoulder	3 to 5	175°F - 180°F	2½ - 3

Conversions of Weights and Measures

A dash = ⅛ teaspoon

A pinch = 1/16 teaspoon

A smidgen = 1/32 teaspoon

60 drops = 1 teaspoon

3 teaspoons = 1 tablespoon

2 tablespoons = 1 fluid oz

4 tablespoons = ¼ cup

5⅓ tablespoons = ⅓ cup

8 tablespoons = ½ cup

10 ⅔ tablespoons = ⅔ cup

16 tablespoons = 1 cup = 8 oz

1 oz = 28.35 grams

16 oz = 1 lb

1 gram = 0.035 oz

1 cup = 8 fluid oz = ½ pint 1 pint = 2 qt

1 cup = 16 fluid oz

1 quart = 2 pints = 4 cups

1 gallon = 4 quarts = 8 pints

1 peck = 2 gallons = 8 quarts

1 bushel = 4 pecks = 8 gallons

1 quart = 946.4 milliliters

1 liter = 1.06 quarts

Units Conversion Factors - For those of you who are serious about these things and don't have your math tables handy.

LENGTH

1 m = 100 cm = 1000 mm = 10^9 nm
 1 km = 1000 m = 0.6214 mi
 1 m = 3.281 ft = 39.37 in.
 1 cm = 0.3937 in.
 1 in. = 2.540 cm
 1 ft = 5280 ft = 1.609 km
 1 Å = 10^{-10} m = 10^{-8} cm = 10^{-1} nm
 1 nautical mile = 6080 ft
 1 light year = 9.461×10^{15} m

AREA

1 cm² = 0.155 in²
 1 m² = 144 in² = 0.0929 m²

VOLUME

1 liter = 1000 cm³ = 10^3 m³
 1 liter = 0.03531 ft³ = 61.02 in³
 1 ft³ = 0.02832 m³ = 28.32 liters
 1 ft³ = 7.477 gallons
 1 gallon = 3.788 liters

TIME

1 mm = 60 s
 1 h = 3600 s
 1 d = 86,400 s
 1 y = 365.24 d = 3.156×10^7 s

ANGLE

1 rad = 57.30° = $180^{\circ}/\pi$
 1° = 0.01745 rad = $\pi/180$ rad
 1 revolution = 360° = 2π rad
 1 rev/min (rpm) = 0.1047 rad/s

POWER

1 W = 1 J/s
 1 hp = 746 W = 550 ft·lb/s
 1 Btu/h = 0.293 W

FORCE

1 N = 10^5 dyne = 0.2248 lb
 1 lb = 4.448 N = 4.448×10^5 dyne

MASS

1 kg = 10^3 g
 1 slug = 14.59 kg

SPEED

1 m/s = 3.281 ft/s
 1 ft/s = 0.3048 m/s
 1 mi/min = 60 mi/h = 88 ft/s
 1 km/h = 0.2778 m/s = 0.6214 mi/h
 1 mi/h = 1.466 ft/s = 0.4470 m/s
 1 mi/hr = 1.609 km/h
 1 furlong/fortnight = 1.662×10^{-4} m/s

ACCELERATION

1 m/s² = 100 cm/s² = 3.281 ft/s²
 1 cm/s² = 0.01 m/s² = 0.03281 ft/s²
 1 ft/s² = 0.3048 m/s² = 30.48 cm/s²
 1 mi/h·s = 1.467 ft/s²

PRESSURE

1 Pascal = 1 Pa = 0.209 lb/ft²
 1 Pa = 1 N/m = 1.45×10^{-4} lb/in²
 1 bar = 10 Pa
 1 lb/in² = 6895 Pa
 1 lb/ft² = 47.88 Pa
 1 atm = 1.013×10^5 Pa = 1.013 bar
 1 atm = 14.7 lb/in² = 2117 lb/ft²
 1 mm Hg = 1 torr = 133.3 Pa

ENERGY

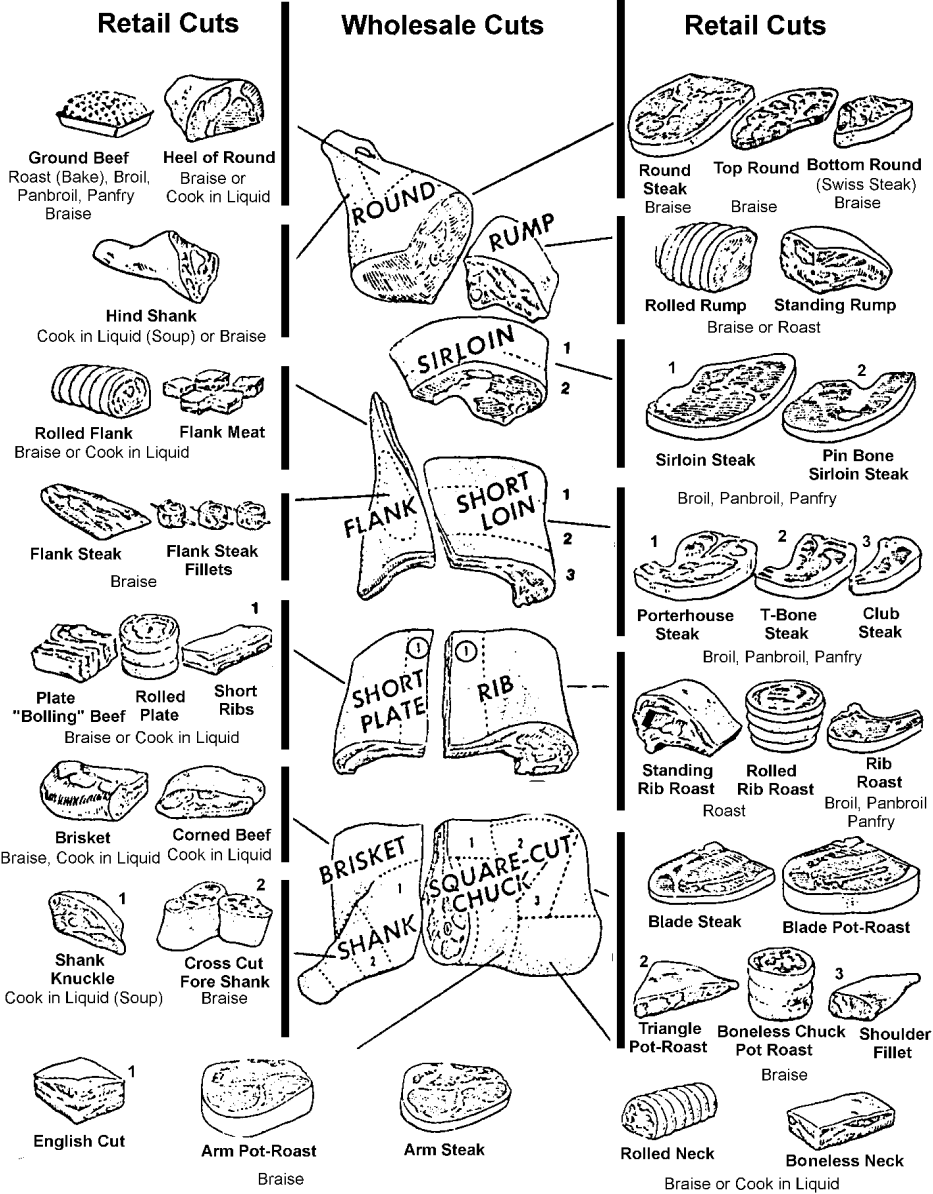
1 J = 10^7 ergs = 0.239 cal
 1 cal = 4.186 J
 1 ft·lb = 1.356 J
 1 Btu = 1055 J = 252 cal = 778 ft·lb
 1 eV = 1.602×10^{-19} J
 1 kW·h = 3.600×10^6 J

MASS-ENERGY EQUIVALENC

1 kg = 8.988×10^{16} J
 1 amu = 931.5 MeV
 1 eV = 1.074×10^{-9} amu

Avogadro's Number = 6.022×10^{23}
 Planck's constant = $h = 6.626 \times 10^{-34}$ m²kg/s
 speed of light = $c = 3 \times 10^8$ m/s

BEEF



PORK

Retail Cuts



2 Boneless Loin Roast
Roast

1 Tenderloin
Frenched and Whole Roast, Braise, Panfry



2 to 5 Canadian Style Bacon
Roast, Broil, Panbroil, Panfry

3 Loin Chop



4 Rib Chop

4 Frenched Rib Chop
Braise or Panfry

2 to 5 Butterfly Chop



1, 2 Sirloin Roast

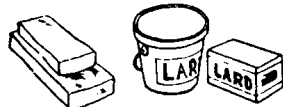
3, 4 Loin Roast Center Cut



5 Blade Loin Roast

4 Crown Roast

Roast



Fat Back
Lard - Salt Pork

Lard
Shortening



Blade Steaks
Braise, Panfry

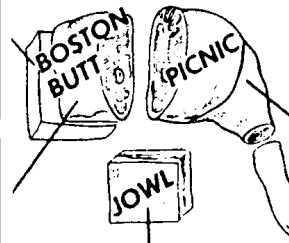
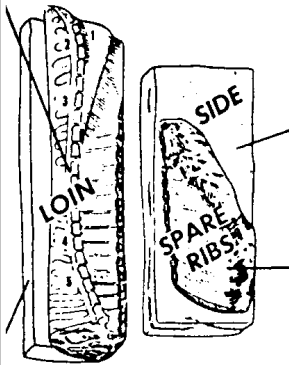
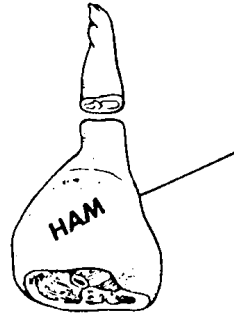
Smoked Shoulder Butt
Roast (Bake), Cook in Liquid, Broil, Panbroil, Panfry



Boston Butt

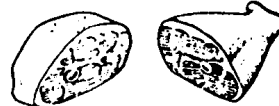
Rolled Sonton Butt
Roast

Wholesale Cuts



Jowl Bacon Square
Cook in Liquid, Broil, Panbroil, Panfry

Retail Cuts



Ham (Butt Half)

Ham (Shank Half)
Roast (Bake); Cook in Liquid



Ham Butt Slice

Center Ham Slice
Broil, Panbroil, Panfry



Fresh Ham Roast

Rolled Fresh Ham Roast
Roast



Bacon

Salt Pork
Broil, Panbroil, Panfry, Cook in Liquid



Spare Ribs
Roast (Bake), Braise, Cook in Liquid



Fresh Picnic Shoulder Roast

Smoked Picnic Shoulder Roast (Bake)
Cook in Liquid



Cushion Picnic Shoulder

Rolled Fresh Picnic Shoulder Roast



Fresh Shoulder Hock
Braise, Cook in Liquid

Arm Steak
Braise, Panfry

