

EAT  BIG!



Basil Pesto Muffins

WHISK:

- 2 ½ cups whole wheat flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt

COMBINE:

- 1 cup olive oil, divided
- ¾ cup skim milk
- 2 eggs

STIR IN:

- 1 ¾ cups packed, fresh basil, chopped
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese
- ⅓ cup sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil, chopped
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- ¼ cup chopped pine nuts
- Coarse sea salt

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Coat 12-cup muffin pan with nonstick spray; set aside.

Whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt in large bowl; form well in center.

Combine ¾ cup oil, milk, and eggs in glass measuring cup with pour spout until eggs are lightly beaten. Pour mixture into well of dry ingredients; stir only until dry ingredients are moistened.

Fold basil, Parmesan, sun-dried tomatoes, and garlic into batter just until evenly distributed.

Scoop batter into each muffin cup, filling two-thirds full (about ½ cup). Drizzle 1 teaspoon remaining olive oil over each muffin. Sprinkle pine nuts and sea salt on top of each muffin.

Bake muffins until a toothpick inserted in centers comes out clean; 20 – 22 minutes.

Heat broiler to high with rack 6 inches from element. Broil muffins until tops are golden, 2 – 3 minutes. Remove muffins from pan, and brush with a little bit of olive oil.

Submitted by Debra

Grandma Thomson's Biscuits

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 cups flour
- 6 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- Salt
- ¼ - ⅓ cup sugar
- 10 tablespoons butter
- 2 cups buttermilk (*we substitute vanilla yogurt*)


Combine dry ingredients. Cut in butter. Add buttermilk (yogurt). When mixture is dough like consistency, put dough on floured surface and roll out to a thickness of about ¾ to one inch. Use a small glass to cut out biscuits and place on a cookie sheet.

Bake at 425 degrees until lightly browned, about 10 minutes. I often double the recipe which makes approximately 48 biscuits filling one cookie sheet.

Submitted by Jack Petras

I highly recommend these with butter, honey, jelly, (condiments separate not all combined) or just plain. But be careful - don't eat too many and spoil your supper!





Julie's Rolls

INGREDIENTS:

- 3 ½ cups flour
- 1 package yeast
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ⅓ cup shortening
- ⅓ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup milk

Combine 1 ½ cups flour with yeast in a large bowl. Heat milk, shortening, salt and sugar in saucepan over medium heat until shortening just melts (stir to keep milk from scalding). Let the mixture cool to about 115 degrees (so it doesn't kill the yeast, but don't let it cool too long, or below 105, to ensure it still activates the yeast).

Pour the milk mixture over the flour/yeast. Add eggs and mix with electric/stand mixer 3 minutes.

Add remaining flour (2 cups). Stir by hand until well blended (or continue to use stand mixer).

Pour dough into greased bowl, turning to coat. Cover with a kitchen towel and let rise until double in size (about 1 hour, maybe a little longer).

Punch down dough and put on a floured surface. Shape into rolls and put into a greased 9x13 pan. Cover with towel and let rise (about 1 hour).

Bake at 400 degrees for 8 – 10 minutes.

Submitted by Lauren Stansell

Named after a dear family friend of my mother-in-law's, these rolls were a permanent holiday staple in my husband's home growing up! They are simple yet delicious, and I recommend that you make more rolls than you think your family will eat – they go fast!

Black Rice Salad with Sugar Snap Peas and Avocado

INGREDIENTS:

- 10.5 oz. (1 ½ cups) Chinese black rice
- 3 tablespoons peanut or olive oil
- ½ cup minced shallots
- 1 fresh cayenne or serrano chile with seeds, minced (*optional*)
- 3 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 tablespoons seasoned rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoons Thai fish sauce (*preferably Squid brand*)
- Kosher salt
- 4 oz. sugar snap peas, trimmed and sliced ½ inch thick on the diagonal (*1 cup*)
- 2 small firm-ripe avocados, halved, pitted, and peeled; 1 cut into ½ inch dice, and 1 thinly sliced
- ¼ cup chopped fresh mint
- 1 to 2 limes, cut into wedges

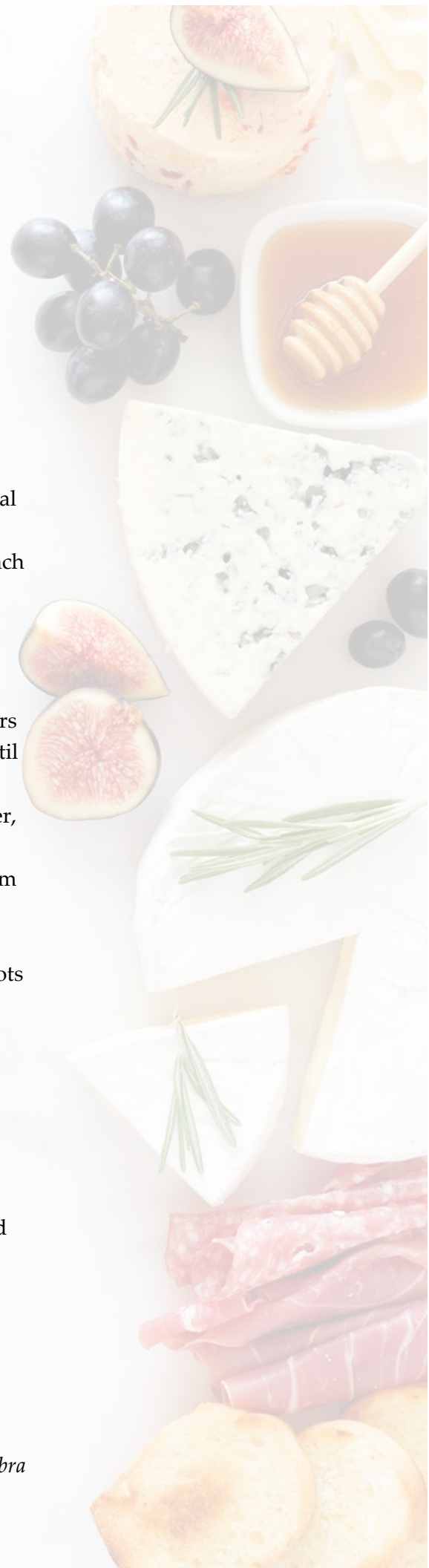
Put the rice in a bowl and fill with cold water. Swish the rice with your fingers to release excess starch, then pour off the water. Repeat 2 or 3 more times until the water is less cloudy. Drain the rice and transfer to a heavy-duty 3-quart saucepan. Add 2-¾ cups water, set over high heat, and bring to a boil. Cover, lower the heat to low, and cook until the rice is tender but intact, about 30 minutes. Remove from the heat and let stand, uncovered, until cooled to room temperature. (The rice can be made up to 2 hours ahead.)

Meanwhile, heat the oil in an 8-inch skillet over medium heat. Add the shallots and cook, stirring often, until translucent, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the chile, if using, and cook, stirring, for 1 minute. Remove from the heat.

Combine the lime juice, rice vinegar, fish sauce, and 1/2 tsp. salt in a large bowl.

Wet a large wooden spoon with water and use it to turn the rice gently to loosen it. Transfer to the bowl with the dressing, add the shallot mixture, and gently toss to combine. Let the salad sit at room temperature for at least 10 minutes and up to 1 hour to let the flavors blend. Stir in the sugar snap peas, diced avocado, and half of the mint; season to taste with salt. Transfer to a shallow serving dish and garnish with the sliced avocado and the remaining mint. Serve at room temperature with the lime wedges on the side.

Submitted by Debra





Avocado Egg Salad

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large avocado
- 1 lbs. Asparagus
- Avocado oil
- 4 eggs
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped dill
- 1 lemon
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- Sea salt
- Pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees and bring water to the boil in a small pot.

Trim dry ends of asparagus, add to a baking sheet in one layer and drizzle with a little bit of avocado oil and sprinkle with sea salt. Massage in oil and salt and then roast for 5-10 minutes depending on thickness.

Carefully add fridge cold eggs to boiling water and cook for 8 minutes.

In the meantime, half, pit, peel and cube avocado and add to a large mixing bowl. Wash, dry and chop dill and add to avocado. Cut up roasted asparagus into bite size pieces and add to other ingredients. Peel and cut eggs into wedges and add to mixing bowl.

In a small sealable container shake together juice of whole lemon, olive oil, sea salt and pepper, then drizzle over salad and toss well.

Serve immediately or store in an airtight container in the fridge for up to 12 hours.

Submitted by Debra

- 1 pound frozen peas, thawed
- 8 ounces sun-dried tomatoes, drained (about $\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 4 heads endive, ends trimmed and leaves separated

Serve as a dip with the endive spears alongside.

Submitted by Debra



Parmesan-Roasted Broccoli

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 to 5 pounds broccoli
- 4 garlic cloves, peeled and thinly sliced
- Good olive oil
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons freshly squeezed lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons pine nuts, toasted
- ⅓ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
- 2 tablespoons julienned fresh basil leaves (about 12 leaves)

Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

Cut the broccoli florets from the thick stalks, leaving an inch or two of stalk attached to the florets, discarding the rest of the stalks. Cut the larger pieces through the base of the head with a small knife, pulling the florets apart. You should have about 8 cups of florets. Place the broccoli florets on a sheet pan large enough to hold them in a single layer. Toss the garlic on the broccoli and drizzle with 5 tablespoons olive oil. Sprinkle with the salt and pepper. Roast for 20 to 25 minutes, until crisp-tender and the tips of some of the florets are browned.

Remove the broccoli from the oven and immediately toss with 1½ tablespoons olive oil, the lemon zest, lemon juice, pine nuts, Parmesan, and basil. Serve hot.

Submitted by Cristin Etheredge

This recipe was my foodie origin story - or how I became heralded as someone in the family who was more proficient at cooking than simply able to add seasonings to boxed macaroni and cheese. It's not traditional Thanksgiving fare (and is fantastic for any occasion, even a Monday night) - but I first made it for my family as my shared dish at the Thanksgiving table.



Shredded Brussels Sprouts with Bacon and Hazelnuts

INGREDIENTS:

- ½ cup chopped bacon (about 3 slices)
- ½ cup fat-free, less-sodium chicken broth
- 13 cups thinly sliced Brussels sprouts (about 2 pounds)
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons chopped hazelnuts, toasted

Cook bacon in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat 4 minutes or until crisp. Remove the bacon from pan, reserving 1 1/2 teaspoons drippings in pan; set bacon aside. Add chicken broth to pan; bring to a simmer. Add sliced Brussels sprouts; cook 4 minutes or until crisp-tender, stirring frequently. Sprinkle with salt and ground black pepper, tossing gently to combine. Sprinkle evenly with bacon and hazelnuts. Serve immediately.

Quick Tip: Use a food processor's thin slicing blade attachment to prepare the Brussels sprouts.

Submitted by Lauren Stansell

*A recipe my dad makes every year at my request (he's an amazing cook!).
Even brussels sprouts haters will love it (it does have bacon after all).*



Cauliflower Stuffing

For anyone who is low carb, Paleo, Keto or looking to lighten up a delicious traditional side dish.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large head cauliflower (*cut into small florets*)
- 1 large onion (*sliced*)
- ¼ cup celery (*chopped thinly*)
- 2 cloves garlic (*minced*)
- ¼ cup olive oil (*can also use butter or ghee*)
- ½ teaspoon poultry seasoning
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- ½ teaspoon ground sage
- 1 teaspoon sea salt (*or less if your poultry seasoning contains salt*)
- ¼ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 tablespoon fresh parsley (*chopped*)
- ¼ cup pecans (*chopped*)

Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, or line with foil and grease well.

In a large bowl, stir together the chopped cauliflower, onions, celery, and garlic. Toss with olive oil, poultry seasoning, sage, thyme, sea salt, and black pepper.

Spread the mixture in a single layer on the lined baking sheet. (You may need two sheets depending on the size. You want as many of the cauliflower florets and onions in contact with the pan as possible.) Roast in the oven for about 15 minutes, until the onions are soft and cauliflower is starting to brown a little.

Add the fresh parsley and pecans to the pan, and stir everything together. Roast for 10-15 more minutes, until the pecans are lightly toasted, cauliflower is well browned, and onions are starting to caramelize.

Submitted by Lauren Stansell

Mom's Cornbread Dressing

Make 1 recipe of your favorite cornbread. Crumble into a large bowl. Add 4 slices of bread, which you hold under faucet, wet, squeeze excess water out, and crumble into bowl. Set aside. Chop 4 blades of celery and 1 large onion. Sauté in skillet in margarine very slowly. Add to bread mixture. Add 1 teaspoon black pepper and 1 tablespoon sage. Mash until fine crumbs. Add about 6 cups of chicken broth until it's real watery. Bake at 400 degrees about 45 minutes.

Sweet Potato Souffle

SOUFFLE:

- 3 cups sweet potatoes
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ cup milk

TOPPING:

- 1 cup brown sugar
- ½ cup flour
- ½ stick butter
- 1 cup chopped pecans

Mash potatoes and add sugar, milk, eggs, and salt. Put into a greased casserole. Mix sugar and flour. Spread over potato mixture. Sprinkle nuts over this and pour melted butter over it. Cook at 400 degrees for 30 – 40 minutes.

Submitted by Ryan Kelly

Both of these recipes are long-time family traditions, and I am pretty dang proud to carry them on! The cornbread dressing is from my great-grandfather's mother and the sweet potato souffle (my favorite) was handed down from my grandmother's grandmother. As with most kids, my sister and I weren't huge fans of vegetables. But this recipe changed our relationship with sweet potatoes because it appealed to our sweet tooth!



Squash Bread Casserole

INGREDIENTS:

- 4 eggs
- 1 cup milk (*skim is fine*)
- 1 box jiffy corn muffin mix
- 3 cups yellow squash, shredded
- 1 cup cottage cheese (*low fat is fine*)
- ¼ cup butter, melted
- Sprinkle of salt

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Grease 9"x9" baking dish. (13"x9" dish if doubling.)

Beat eggs and milk. Add muffin mix, squash, cottage cheese and salt. Stir.

Pour in prepared dish, spread melted butter on top, do not mix in. Bake for 45 minutes or until fairly golden.

Submitted by Mary

This is a recipe from a friend of mine. It is easy and very delicious, sort of like spoon bread. Enjoy!



Cranberry Sauce

INGREDIENTS:

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
- 1 cup water
- 12 oz. package of fresh cranberries (4 cups)
- Optional:
 - Cointreau (orange liqueur)
 - Orange zest
 - Cinnamon stick

Boil water and sugar. Stir to dissolve. Add cranberries and lower heat. Simmer and stir until cranberries burst. Remove from heat and add 2 tablespoons of Cointreau (or orange juice), tablespoon of orange zest and a cinnamon stick.

Chill and serve.

Submitted by Howard Brown

When I was a kid, the cranberry sauce was what I prepared to “help” with the Thanksgiving meal. My family were not gourmands, and we just bought the cranberry sauce out of a can (not that good, really). It was the perfect job for a kid. Then in 6th grade, my family moved overseas, and for many years we did not have cranberry sauce at Thanksgiving. At age 16 when we moved back to the U.S., I thought I’d get the cranberry sauce like we used to have. Once I tried again, I realized how gross it was out of the can!

Not to worry, this recipe is for cranberry sauce from scratch. Its my Mother-in-law’s recipe and its actually very tasty.



White Bean Turkey Chili

INGREDIENTS:

- Olive oil spray
- 2 small onions, chopped
- 5 garlic cloves, chopped
- 3 pounds 93% lean ground turkey
- 1 4.5 ounce can diced green chilies
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ tablespoon cumin
- ½ tablespoon oregano
- 2 teaspoons chili powder, to your taste
- ½ to 2 teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes, to your taste
- 1 bay leaf
- 4 15.5 ounce cans of cannellini or navy beans, rinsed and drained
- 2 cups chicken broth
- ½ cup reduced-fat sour cream or Greek yogurt

Heat a large heavy pot or Dutch oven over medium flame. When hot, spray with oil. Add onions and garlic, sauté until soft, about 4 to 5 minutes. Add the meat and cook, breaking it up until white and cooked through, about 5 minutes. Add diced green chilies, salt, cumin, oregano, chili powder, red pepper flakes and cook for 2 minutes.

Puree 1 can of beans in the blender with 1 cup of the broth. Add to the pot with the remaining beans, broth and bay leaf and bring to a boil. Cover and reduce to a simmer, about 30 to 35 minutes mixing occasionally, until thickened and the flavors meld. Stir in sour cream and cook 4 to 5 minutes. Adjust seasoning and salt to taste.

To serve, topped with your favorite toppings.

Submitted by Cole DeLucas

My fiancée and I make this about every other month in the fall/winter. From scheduling time to go to the grocery store, to coming home and cooking and enjoying the food together, this recipe is truly is one of our favorite things about the cold winter months.

Mom's Mac and Cheese

INGREDIENTS:

- Kosher salt
- 6 ounces dry elbow macaroni (about 1 ¼ cups)
- 1 teaspoon neutral vegetable oil
- 2 ounces grana padano, shredded
- 2 ounces Jarlsberg, shredded
- 6 ounces white cheddar, shredded
- 2 cups heavy cream
- Sea salt

PREPARATION:

In a medium saucepan, bring 2 quarts water and 1 ½ tablespoons kosher salt to a boil. Add the macaroni and return to a boil; once boiling, cook until barely al dente (about 5 minutes), then drain the pasta well. Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet and mix in the oil to keep the noodles from sticking. Let cool completely. You should have about 3 cups.

Set a rack in the oven about 4 inches from the broiler and preheat the broiler. Combine the grana padano, Jarlsberg, and white cheddar in a large bowl; reserve 60 percent of the cheese for the top.

In a large deep saucepan, bring the cream and 1 teaspoon sea salt to a boil. Let simmer for about 2 minutes. The cream will foam up and then subside into a simmer. Add the noodles and cook, stirring occasionally, about 90 seconds. The cream will start to thicken just slightly and coat the noodles. Start adding 40 percent of the cheese in small handfuls, stirring and waiting for each addition to melt and incorporate into the sauce before adding more. Transfer the contents of the pan to a 2 ½-quart skillet or baking dish, mound the reserved cheese over the top, and place the dish on a baking sheet to catch any drips. Place the baking sheet under the broiler for 3 to 5 minutes, rotating throughout, until the cheese melts and caramelizes into a golden-brown crust.

Watch it carefully, as every broiler is different. Remove the gratin from the oven and let it rest 5 minutes. Serve immediately.

Submitted by Ryan Klemm

For Ryan, the smell of his mom's mac and cheese immediately puts him into the holiday spirit! Growing up in a house of four siblings and always hosting their extended family, you had to scrap to make sure you ended up with a scoop of this delicious dish!



Grandma Thomson's Lasagna

SAUCE:

- 2 lbs. sausage
- 2 large cans tomato puree
- 1 large can tomato paste
- Salt, pepper, oregano, garlic

Combine and simmer one hour.

CHEESE MIXTURE:

- 3 lbs. ricotta
- 1 cup Romano (parmesan okay)
- 1 egg
- Salt, pepper, parsley, milk

Combine.

LASAGNA:

- 1 lbs. lasagna noodles cooked and drained
- 1 lbs. mozzarella sliced thin

In lasagna pan, spoon small amount of sauce to cover bottom. Then layer in this order: 2 layers of noodles, cheese mixture, mozzarella, sauce, double noodles, cheese mixture, mozzarella, sauce, sprinkle with Romano or parmesan cheese.

Bake at 350 degrees for approximately one hour.

Submitted by Jack Petras

*This is our family's go to tradition for Christmas Eve dinner.
Carbo-load to make sure you have energy to open presents the next morning!*



Caramelized Black Pepper Chicken

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 lbs. skinless, boneless chicken thighs, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1 tablespoon canola oil, divided
- Kosher salt
- ½ cup dark brown sugar
- ¼ cup fish sauce (*nam pla*)
- ¼ cup water
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 shallot, thinly sliced
- 1 teaspoon one-inch piece of fresh ginger, julienned (*or more*)
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic
- 2 fresh Thai chiles, halved, or dried red chiles
- 1 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper
- 4 cilantro sprigs (*optional*)
- Steamed jasmine rice for serving

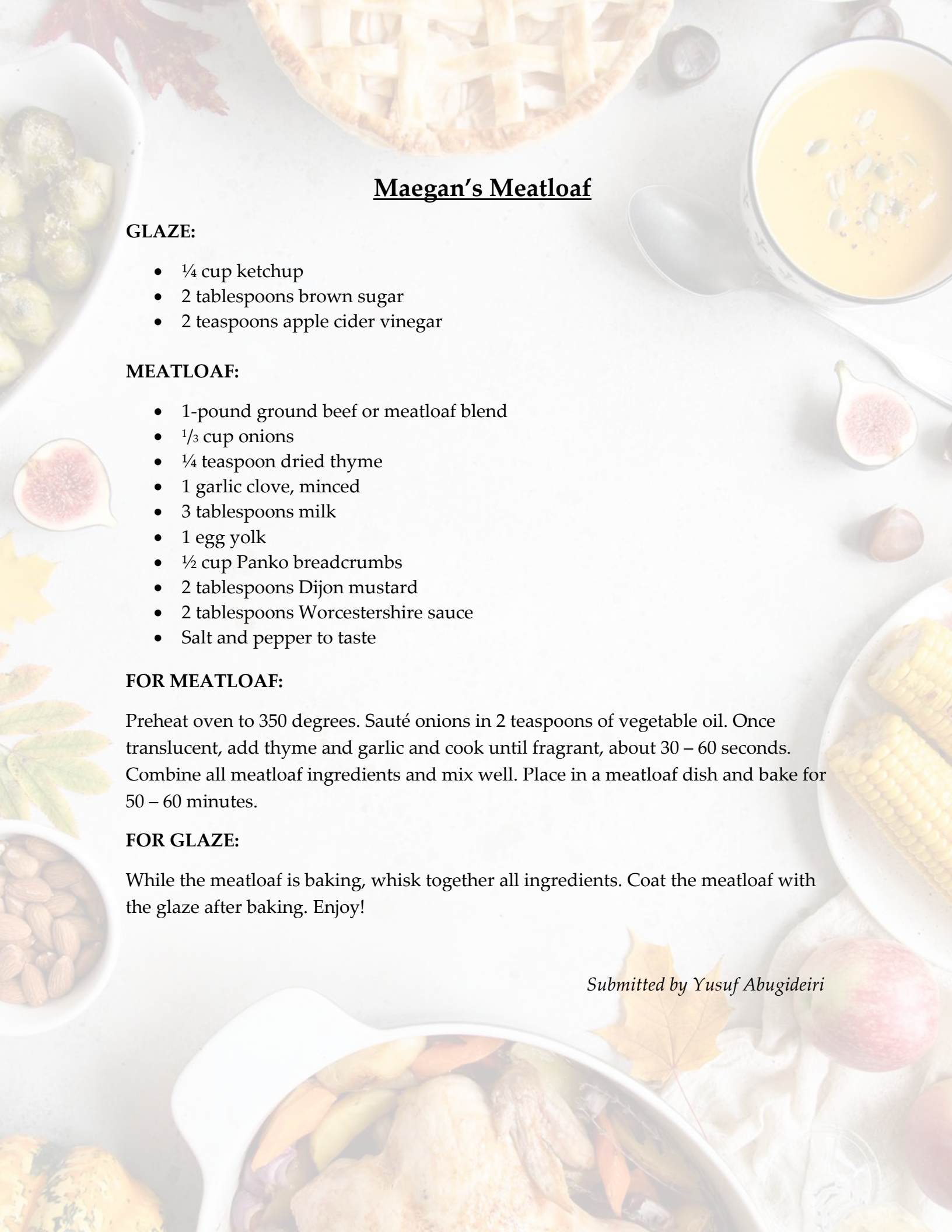
In a bowl, combine the chicken, 1 teaspoon of the oil and a good pinch of kosher salt. Stir to combine. In a small saucepan, combine the brown sugar, fish sauce, water, and rice vinegar. Heat on medium until the sugar dissolves, and then turn the heat down to low.

Heat the remaining oil in a large deep skillet over medium heat. Add the shallot and cook in the skillet for about one minute. Add the ginger and garlic and cook until softened, about 3 more minutes. Add the chicken and chiles and cook for about one minute.

Add about half of the fish sauce mixture to the chicken along with the black pepper. Simmer over medium-high heat, until the chicken is cooked through, about 10 minutes. Taste and decide if you'd like more sauce—if so, add it, then briefly simmer again.

Transfer to a serving bowl, garnish with the cilantro and serve with rice. Leftover sauce can be stored airtight in the refrigerator for more quick dinners.

Submitted by Debra



Maegan's Meatloaf

GLAZE:

- ¼ cup ketchup
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar

MEATLOAF:

- 1-pound ground beef or meatloaf blend
- ⅓ cup onions
- ¼ teaspoon dried thyme
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 1 egg yolk
- ½ cup Panko breadcrumbs
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- Salt and pepper to taste

FOR MEATLOAF:

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Sauté onions in 2 teaspoons of vegetable oil. Once translucent, add thyme and garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 – 60 seconds. Combine all meatloaf ingredients and mix well. Place in a meatloaf dish and bake for 50 – 60 minutes.

FOR GLAZE:

While the meatloaf is baking, whisk together all ingredients. Coat the meatloaf with the glaze after baking. Enjoy!

Submitted by Yusuf Abugideiri



Bailey's Irish Cream Cheesecake

CRUST:

- 10 whole Graham Crackers, broken into pieces
- 1 ¼ cups pecans (about 5 ounces)
- ¼ cup sugar
- 6 tablespoons (¾ stick) unsalted butter, melted

FILLING:

- 1 ½ pounds cream cheese, room temperature
- ¾ cup sugar
- 3 large eggs
- ⅓ cup Bailey's Original Irish Cream Liqueur
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 3 ounces imported white chocolate (such as Lindt), broken into pieces

TOPPING:

- 1 ½ cups sour cream
- ¼ cup powdered sugar
- 1 ½ ounces imported white chocolate, grated
- 24 pecan halves

FOR CRUST:

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Lightly butter 9-inch diameter spring-form pan with 2 ¾ inch high sides. Finely grind graham crackers, pecans, and sugar in processor. Add butter and blend, using on/off turns. Press crumbs onto bottom and 2 inches up the sides of the prepared pan. Refrigerate for 20 minutes.

FOR FILLING:

Using an electric mixer, beat cream cheese and sugar in a large bowl until smooth. Whisk eggs, Bailey's and vanilla in medium bowl until just blended. Beat egg mixture into cream cheese mixture. Finely chop white chocolate in processor using on/off turns. Add to cream cheese mixture.

Transfer filling to crust-lined pan. Bake until edges of filling are puffed and dry looking and center is just set, about 50 minutes. Cool on rack.

FOR TOPPING:

Mix sour cream and powdered sugar in small bowl. Spread topping onto cooled cake. Refrigerate until well chilled, about 6 hours. *(Can be prepared 1 day ahead)*

Sprinkle grated chocolate over cake. Place pecans around edge and serve.

Submitted by Karen Simons

Bibingka

Bibingka is a sweet glutinous rice cake made of coconut cream, sugar and ground rice baked in a clay pot lined with leaves. It's topped with shredded coconut, butter and brown sugar before serving.

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup rice flour
- 2 ½ teaspoon baking powder
- 1/8 teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 3 eggs
- 1 cup coconut milk
- ¼ cup fresh milk
- Pre-cut banana leaf
- 1 piece salted duck egg sliced - (salted egg)
- ½ cup grated cheddar cheese
- (optional cream cheese)

Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.

Combine rice flour, baking powder, and salt then mix well. Set aside. Cream butter then gradually put-in sugar while whisking. Add the eggs then whisk until every ingredient is well incorporated. Gradually add the rice flour, salt, and baking powder mixture then continue mixing. Pour-in coconut milk and fresh milk then whisk some more for 1 to 2 minutes.

Arrange the pre-cut banana leaf on a cake pan or baking pan. Pour the mixture on the pan. Bake for 15 minutes.

Remove from the oven then top with sliced salted egg and grated cheese (do not turn the oven off). Put back in the oven and bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until the color of the top turn medium brown. Remove from the oven and let cool. Brush with butter and sprinkle some sugar on top. You can also top this with grated coconut. Then serve.

Note: Do not skip the banana leaves! Not only do they keep the rice cake from sticking, but they also add incredible aroma. Inspect the leaves to make sure they're intact and free of rips and pass them quickly over a gas flame until soft and pliable.

Submitted by Dorothy Navales

The holiday atmosphere in the Philippines starts in September. It's commonly referred to as the "BER" months (the 4 months of the year that have "ber" at the end – September to December). Food and family gatherings are highlights during this period.

My grandmother was the main "chef" in the family. Every meal she would say we have a lot to be thankful for. Bibingka is one of the favorite dishes among the grandchildren. My grandma likes to add sliced cream cheese as a topping.

Bourbon Walnut Pie

CRUST:

- 2 cups all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup (1½ sticks) chilled unsalted butter, cut into ½ inch pieces
- 1 large egg
- 1 tablespoon milk

FILLING:

- 1 cup dark corn syrup
- ½ cup sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons (¼ stick) unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons bourbon
- 1 ½ tablespoons all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¾ cup chopped walnuts (about 3 ounces)
- ¾ cup walnut halves (about 3 ounces)

FOR CRUST:

Blend flour, sugar and salt in processor. Add butter and process using on/off turns until mixture resembles coarse meal. Whisk egg and milk in small bowl to blend, then add to processor. Blend until moist clumps form. Gather dough into ball and flatten into disk. Wrap dough in plastic and refrigerate 1 hour. (Dough can be prepared up to 2 days ahead. Keep refrigerated. Let dough soften slightly before rolling out.)

FOR FILLING:

Preheat oven to 350° F. Whisk syrup, sugar, eggs, butter, bourbon, flour, vanilla and salt in large bowl to blend. Mix in all walnuts.

Roll out dough on floured surface to 14-inch round. Transfer to 9-inch-diameter glass pie dish. Fold edge under; crimp decoratively. Pour filling into prepared crust. Bake until crust is golden and filling is set in center when pie is shaken slightly, about 55 minutes. Cool pie completely in pan on rack.

Submitted by Elaine

This is similar to pecan pie, but less sweet; made with walnuts, a shot of bourbon, and a surprise dark chocolate layer on the bottom crust. This is now our Thanksgiving Pie, Christmas Pie and occasionally, Birthday Pie. Also excellent for breakfast :)



Coconut Chai Chocolate Cake

INGREDIENTS:

- Olive oil cooking spray
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 ¼ cup whole-wheat flour, divided
- ½ cup unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ⅛ teaspoon ground ginger
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cardamom
- ⅛ teaspoon fresh grated nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon sea salt
- 1 egg
- 1 egg white
- ½ cup reduced-fat milk
- ⅓ cup unsweetened applesauce
- ¼ cup raw honey
- 2 tablespoons virgin coconut oil, melted
- 1 teaspoon finely grated orange zest
- ½ teaspoon pure coconut extract
- 10 pitted unsweetened dates, finely chopped
- ¼ cup unsweetened flaked coconut
- Toasted unsweetened flaked coconut for garnish, optional

Preheat oven to 350°F. Mist a 9-inch round baking pan with cooking spray then sprinkle with 1 tablespoon flour, discarding any excess that doesn't stick to the pan.

In a large bowl, combine remaining 1¼ cups flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, baking soda, spices and salt. Add egg, egg white, milk, applesauce, honey, oil, orange zest, and coconut extract. Using a whisk or electric handheld mixer, beat until combined.

In a small saucepan, bring 1 cup water and dates to a boil. Remove from heat and gently whisk date-water mixture into cake batter along with flaked coconut. (NOTE: Batter will be thin.)

Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes and remove from pan to wire rack. Slice cake into 12 pieces and top each with toasted coconut (if using).

Submitted by Debra



Leche Flan

INGREDIENTS:

- 10 eggs
- 1 can condensed milk (14 oz)
- 1 cup fresh milk or evaporated milk
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Using all the eggs, separate the yolk from the egg white (only egg yolks will be used). Place the egg yolks in a big bowl and beat them using a fork or an egg beater. Add the condensed milk and mix thoroughly. Pour-in the fresh milk and vanilla. Mix well.

Put the mold (llanera*) on top of the stove and heat using low fire. Put the granulated sugar in the mold and mix thoroughly until the solid sugar turns into liquid (caramel), having a light brown color.

Spread the caramel (liquid sugar) evenly on the flat side of the mold. Wait for 5 minutes then pour the egg yolk and milk mixture on the mold. Cover the top of the mold with aluminum foil. Steam the mold with egg and milk mixture for 30 to 35 minutes. After steaming, let the temperature cool down then refrigerate. Serve for dessert.

*Note: Sometimes it is hard to find a llanera (traditional flan mold) depending on your location. I find it more convenient to use individual round pans in making leche flan.

Submitted by Dorothy Navales

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My grandmother was the main "chef" in the family. Every meal she would say we have a lot to be thankful for.

As one of our family traditions, the kids try to cook flan.



Peanut Butter Pie

CRUST:

- 1 ½ cups finely ground graham cracker crumbs
- ⅓ cup white sugar
- 6 tablespoons butter, melted
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon

FILLING:

- 1 cup creamy peanut butter
- One 8-ounce package cream cheese, softened
- 1¼ cups powdered sugar
- One 8-ounce package whipped topping, such as Cool Whip, thawed

FOR CRUST:

Mix graham cracker crumbs, sugar, melted butter or margarine, and cinnamon until well blended. Press mixture into an 8- or 9-inch pie plate. Bake at 375 degrees for 7 minutes. Cool.

FOR FILLING:

For the filling: Beat the peanut butter with the cream cheese until smooth. Add the powdered sugar and beat until smooth. Add in the thawed whipped topping and beat until smooth, scraping the sides as needed.

Pour the filling into the crust, evening out the top with a knife or spatula. Chill for at least an hour before serving.

Submitted by Lauren Mireles

This recipe reminds me of so many good memories with my cousins. Each year, we'd try to sneak as many pieces of pie as we could – sometimes even hiding under the ping-pong table so our parents wouldn't see how much we had!



Pumpkin Fluff Dip

FOR THE DIP:

- 1 can (15 ounces) pumpkin puree (NOT pumpkin pie filling)
- 1 box (3.4 ounces) Fat Free, Sugar Free Instant Vanilla Pudding Mix
- 1 ½ teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
- 1 tub (8 ounces) Lite Cool Whip, thawed

FOR SERVING:

- Apple slices
- Grapes
- Nuts
- Graham crackers
- Vanilla wafers
- Marshmallows
- Pretzels

In a large mixing bowl combine pumpkin puree, pudding mix, pumpkin pie spice, nutmeg, and vanilla; mix until well combined. Fold in the whipped topping; continue to fold until thoroughly incorporated.

Spoon into a serving bowl; cover and chill for 1 to 2 hours, or until cold. Serve with apples, grapes, nuts, etc....

Quick Tip: Add Greek yogurt for creamier texture and more protein.

Submitted by Lauren Stansell

This is a new one to me! I love it because it's so easy and delicious with apples, grapes, graham crackers, cookies, pretzels and more!



Pumpkin Squares

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 large can of pumpkin
- 1 large can of evaporated milk
- 1 ½ cups sugar
- 3 eggs
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 package yellow cake mix
- 2 sticks melted butter

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Mix pumpkin, evaporated milk, sugar, eggs, and pumpkin pie spice together and spread into a greased 9 x 13 inch pan. Sprinkle the dry cake mix over the pumpkin mixture, and drizzle butter over top.

Bake for 80 minutes.

Submitted by Mila Lavoie

This recipe reminds Mila of when she first started nannying. It was a recipe that she frequently made with the two girls she watched, and they absolutely loved it. Now, every time she makes this recipe, she thinks about that family and how thankful she is to have been a part of their lives.



Scotcheroos

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 ½ cups peanut butter
- 6 cups crisp rice cereal
- ½ cup semisweet chocolate chips
- ½ cup butterscotch chips

Generously butter a 9x13 inch baking pan. Set aside.

In a large pot, mix together corn syrup, sugar, and peanut butter. Cook over medium heat, stirring until peanut butter melts. Bring mixture to a boil. Remove from heat, and stir in crisp rice cereal.

Transfer mixture into a well buttered 9x13 inch pan. With your hands well buttered, pat it down into pan.

In a medium saucepan, over medium low heat, melt chocolate chips and butterscotch chips until smooth. Spread over top of bars and let bars cool. Cut into squares.

Submitted by Alishia DuBois

I always look forward to making (and then devouring) endless batches of Scotcheroos with my family. This beloved tradition is one of my favorite things about the holidays. It started many years ago when we stumbled upon the recipe in an old, handwritten cookbook filled with my grandma's favorite recipes – and although she's no longer with us, perhaps the best part is knowing her memory will live on, spreading a little edible holiday cheer every year.



Crimson Spice Champagne Cocktail

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 quarts cranberry juice cocktail
- 8 slices (quarter size and about 1/8-inch-thick) peeled fresh ginger
- 2 cinnamon sticks (about 3 inches long)
- 2 whole star anise
- 1/3 cup cognac or brandy
- 8 cups Champagne or other sparkling wine (about 2 2/3 bottles, 750 ml. each), chilled
- 32 to 48 fresh cranberries, rinsed, or frozen cranberries (*optional*)

In a 3 1/2 - to 4-quart pan, combine cranberry juice, ginger, cinnamon sticks, and star anise. Boil over high heat until reduced to 2 cups, about 1 hour. Let cool about 30 minutes, then pour through a fine strainer into a small pitcher. Chill syrup until cold, at least 1 1/2 hours.

For each serving, pour 2 tablespoons of the cranberry syrup and 1 teaspoon cognac into a Champagne flute (6 to 8 oz.). Add 1/2 cup (4 oz.) Champagne. Garnish with 2 or 3 cranberries if desired.

Submitted by Dana

My family makes this cocktail every year for the Holidays. The syrup keeps for several weeks.

EAT  BIG!