



GET OUT OF THE BOX!

By
Elif Savas

GET OUT OF THE BOX!

Recipes and Illustrations by ELIF SAVAS

e-book design by Brian Felsen

You have permission to post this, email this, print this and pass it along for free to anyone you like, as long as you make no changes or edits to its contents or digital format. In fact, we'd love it if you'd make lots and lots of copies. The right to bind this and sell it as a book, however, is strictly reserved.

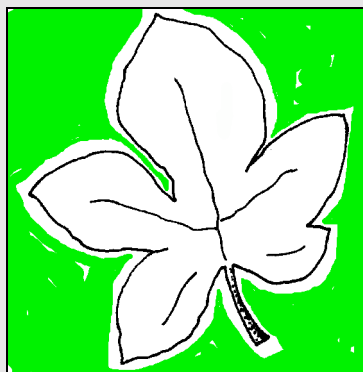
You can find this entire book, along with other good stuff, at
www.thelword.com.

© MM Productions/www.thelword.com 2001

HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE:

This book was written and illustrated by Elif Savas. Ms. Savas is a unique and independent artist who creates a wide variety of offbeat and informative projects - from an award-winning film about Turkish military coups d'etat (*COUP*) to a CD of art songs by 19th and 20th-century gay composers (*Songs from the Age of the Closet*).

Many hours were put into creating this cookbook. If you like, admire, or use it, please donate \$5 by connecting to the internet and then clicking on the fig leaf below:



If you are connected to the internet, then clicking on the fig leaf will take you to a secure server at CCNow for instant payment.



Alternately, you can go to www.thelword.com/order1.htm, or mail payment to: Elif Savas, RR1 Box 2150, Athens, NY 12015.

Your small contribution will be very much appreciated and will be used to create more cookbooks and interesting projects that are different from the typical fare.

Spread The Word!

To spread the word about *Get Out Of The Box*:

1. Send this file to a friend (it's a little big, so ask first).
2. Send them a link to www.thelword.com so they can download it themselves and get more information about arts, cooking, and politics.
3. Send \$5 by clicking on this link www.thelword.com/order1.htm if you like the book.
4. Print out as many copies of the book as you like.

If you or a friend would like to receive more information about our upcoming projects (including future cookbooks, films, CD's, cooking shows, etc.), please enter your email here (you may enter more than one address):

Please connect to the internet and click here to send your address:

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

Get Out Of The Box!

The Philosophy Of This Cookbook

How To Begin

Salsa, Sauce, Pesto & Chutney

Soups

Sandwiches and Wraps

Salads

Pasta

Pizzas and Breads

Beef, Lamb and Pork

Chicken

Fish and Seafood

Vegetarian Main Dishes

Rice

Side Dishes

Pies and Cakes

Muffins, Cookies and Scones

Sweet Treats

Appendix

Brief Glossary Of Cooking Techniques

Pantry List

Troubleshooting and Substitutions

Index

Get Out Of The Box!

One of life's most immediate and fundamental pleasures is eating delicious food that you've cooked yourself. If you're living in a country that grows and imports a huge variety of the gifts of the earth, then there's no reason to eat foods from a box and deprive yourself of such a joyful daily experience. Let's face it: prepared foods just aren't the same as a real meal. And they don't give you the satisfaction you feel from making something well. The vegetables inside the sealed bag are often wilted, cooked into a pulp, chemically treated, and then machine-stuffed with other side dishes. And that fancy box has likely remained in the supermarket freezer cabinet longer than you have existed on this earth!

Sure, it can be intimidating to stand in the vegetable aisle, being sneered at by a large bunch of kale. You know that somewhere, in somebody's kitchen, some magical witch will be able to turn that big, dark bundle of greens into a yummy, heartwarming dish.

The good news is that you can, too. The powers necessary to make magic out of that kale are not so special, nor do they require a great deal of work. All that's necessary to get started is a friendly hand to open the door to one of the most fascinating skills: the art of cooking well!

This book will be that friendly hand. This selection of simple recipes was chosen to use a wide variety of affordable, healthy, and readily available ingredients. Its cuisine is a good mix of American and International delights. And it requires a nice range of basic techniques that will enable you to make endless variations – and to go on to create many of your own.

The Philosophy Of This Cookbook

What I look for in a cookbook is that it be practical, fun, and easy to use. It's a turnoff for me to see recipes that require techniques which are not immediately comprehensible; recipes that don't allow for freedom of experimentation; or dishes that require five hours of baking in a low-heat oven. (Even if I *had* the time, I couldn't afford to keep the oven running for that long!)

The recipes in this book are meant to be comfort foods – they're not “fu-fu” or delicate foods. And none are truly “authentic” – they have been adopted to fit ingredients that are commonly available in supermarkets, and are a play on traditional world and continental cuisines. The great advantage of this is that the recipes are hard to mess up, and they welcome further improvisation! So do not fear – for cooking is not an exact science.

After cooking a recipe and becoming familiar with it, feel free to change it and make it your own. By experimenting with the variations provided, you'll soon be able to survive without a cookbook. If something works different for you, write in notes over the recipe. The best thing this book can do is to give you ideas and to give you courage.

While creating this cookbook, I've kept the following principles in mind:

Time. We're not going to replicate our grandmothers' hefty work in the kitchen, for today, people are *busy*. (Although what we're busy doing may not always be worth all that effort...) But in only around thirty minutes – the time it would take to watch a sitcom episode on TV – you can make food that's more delicious and nutritious than anything in the frozen or boxed-food aisle.

Ease. Nothing in your daily cooking should require intricate technical knowledge or a degree from a culinary institute. With these recipes, you can achieve delicious results from only few basic techniques with which you'll soon become familiar (if you are not already).

Readily-available materials. Most ingredients can be found at your local supermarket. If a recipe calls for a spice you don't have or haven't tried, don't be shy about buying it – many of the ingredients are used throughout the cookbook, so it probably won't be the only time you'll use it.

Variety. There's nothing here that's terribly exotic that would frighten off people with timid palates, but this book contains a nice mix of continental flavors and faraway cuisines, traditional plates with a continental spin.

Cost. While I would hope that you can spoil yourself with expensive food every once in a while, this book focuses on delicious eating on a modest bank account. If you treat your potato like a king and cook it with respect, it will treat you likewise.

Variations. There are no unbreakable rules in cooking – therefore, I've listed many variation ideas for each recipe. These are provided so that you can try the recipes from different angles depending on your mood, taste, or ingredients at hand, and they're meant to tickle your imagination – feel free to come up variations of your own!

How To Begin

For those of you who are just starting, it may at first feel a little like a mystery, but soon, even after just seeing ingredients and recipes, you'll instinctively know how much of an ingredient to use; what you'll have to do to prepare something; and even how to change a recipe to your liking. My hope is that this book will serve as a springboard to becoming creative and confident in improvising a life.

To gain confidence in your first efforts, try to keep the following principles in mind when planning a meal:

1. Make sure you have what you need before starting. Read through the recipe first, choose the variation you want to make, and be sure you have all of the ingredients.

2. Think about your audience. If any food in the book looks new or strange to you, give it a chance – but you may want to try it first yourself so that you feel more comfortable introducing it to others. Although the recipes are basic enough to please most palates, if you're making something like dried curried beef, be sure to plan a side dish that is sure to satisfy the taste buds of more conservative family members.

3. Once you've chosen a recipe to work with, become familiar with the cooking techniques used in it. Look at the ingredients to see if any need prior preparation. (Check for things like “butter, cubed” or “cookies, crushed.”) If you don't know what a term means, look it up in the brief Glossary of Cooking Techniques included with this book.

4. Become familiar with the look of various food measurements. If a recipe calls for 1-2 tablespoons of something, put it on your palm and try to feel what it looks like so you can instantly gauge it in the future. Or try to see how much space a half-cup of liquid takes up in your favorite glass. Or study what two teaspoonfuls of olive oil look like in a pan. This way you may find that you often won't need multiple measuring cups when cooking a simple recipe for a quick dinner, and you'll have much less to wash!

Salsa, Sauce, Pesto and Chutney



Use these recipes on broiled or grilled meat, chicken, fish, soup, pasta, bread, and pizza; in potato salads and sandwiches; or as dips on the side. Pesto is an easy topping for pastas and toasted baguettes and will make pizza more interesting if you just dollop some over the pizza sauce. Chutney is a wonderful accompaniment and an excellent way to lighten up a spicy meal. Salsa and sauces have so many uses that I can only say this: Just try it on whatever you like!

Almond Dip, Turkish

Servings: 4

1 cup almond, slivered
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1/2 cup water
2 cups stale bread
3 tablespoons lemon juice
salt, to taste

Soak the bread in a bowl with just enough water to cover for a few minutes and squeeze them dry in your palm.

Put almonds into a non-stick pan over medium heat, constantly shaking the pan or stirring with a spoon, until they get a light golden color.

Combine all the ingredients and blend in a food processor until smooth.

Let it rest for a few hours for the best taste.

Serve with grilled or broiled meats and fried seafood.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit almonds; use walnuts instead.

-Omit almonds; use pine nuts instead.

-Omit lemon juice; use white vine vinegar instead.

Basil Pesto, Italian

Servings: 6

Serve on pastas, bread, salads, pizzas and soups.

2 cups basil leaves, coarsely chopped

1/2 cup olive oil

4 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

10 tablespoons pine nuts

1/2 cup parmesan cheese, grated

Place the pine nuts on a non-stick pan over moderate heat and, shaking the pan constantly, toast them until they are light golden brown.

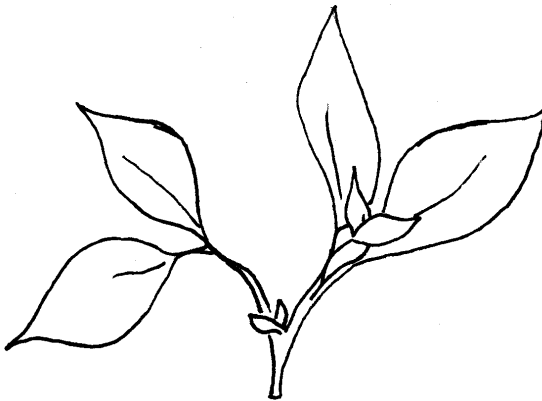
Put all the ingredients except for the oil into a food processor; blend for a minute.

Adding the oil slowly, keep processing until the mixture turns into a paste.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit pine nuts; use walnuts or almonds instead.

-Use 1/2 cup parsley and 1 1/2 cups basil leaves.



Béchamel Sauce, French

Servings: 4

Serve on boiled vegetables, egg dishes, fish, veal and chicken.

3 tablespoons butter

5 tablespoons flour

2 cups milk

a pinch of nutmeg

salt and pepper, to taste

Melt the butter and add the flour, whisking constantly for 2 minutes over medium heat.

Whisk in the milk, bringing it to a boil without stopping whisking.

Season with nutmeg, salt and pepper. Simmer for 8 minutes, whisking constantly to prevent the sauce from sticking to the saucepan. Serve immediately.

Variation Ideas:

-Whisk 2 egg yolks, adding a tablespoon of Béchamel to temper the eggs, and then mix with the rest of the Béchamel Sauce. Bring to a boil over medium heat and cook for 1 minute, constantly mixing. Remove from heat and stir in 4 ounces grated Gruyere cheese.

-Omit milk and use chicken broth. Add 1 cup heavy cream or crème fraîche and simmer for 10 minutes longer.

Beer and Mustard Sauce, British

Servings: 4

Serve with broiled or grilled beef.

1 cup broth
1 can (12 ounces) beer
1 tablespoon molasses
1 1/2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons cornstarch
salt and pepper, to taste

Whisk 1/2 can beer with cornstarch.

Combine broth, the rest of the beer, and garlic powder and bring to a boil.

Simmer for 8 minutes or until it evaporates to half.

Add mustard and mix well.

Add the beer-starch mixture and thicken over low-to-medium heat.

Season with salt and pepper.

Serve immediately, drizzling over meat.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit molasses and use honey instead.

-Omit molasses and use maple syrup instead.

Black Bean Dip, Mexican

Servings: 6

Serve with corn chips, on tortillas, in sandwiches.

Serve cold as a dip or serve warm as refried beans in tortillas or wraps.

1 can black beans, drained and washed
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 jalapeno chili pepper, seeded and chopped
1/4 cup water
1/4 cup olive oil
a pinch of paprika
a pinch of oregano
a pinch of cumin
2 teaspoons vinegar
a dash of Tabasco sauce
salt and pepper, to taste

Set 2 tablespoons of beans aside.

Combine all the other ingredients and process in a food processor until the mixture is smooth.

Mix with the 2 tablespoons of beans.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the black beans and use any other kind instead.

-Microwave it with 1/4 cup cheddar cheese until the cheese is melted, and stir.

Blue Cheese Dressing

Servings: 6

Serve on mixed greens; use as a vegetable dip; or add a splash of Tabasco sauce and serve with chicken wings.

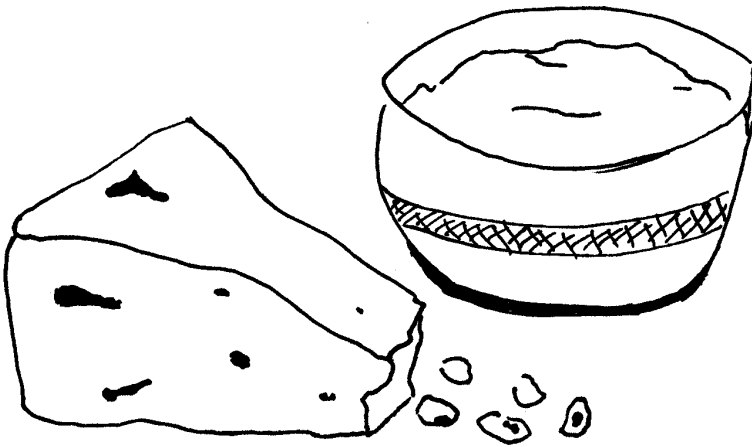
1/2 cup blue cheese, crumbled

1/2 cup sour cream

1/2 cup mayonnaise

1/4 teaspoon garlic powder

Combine all ingredients in a food processor and process until almost smooth.



Chili Sauce and Vegetables Folded in Mayonnaise

Yield: 2 cups

1 cup mayonnaise
2 tablespoons Tabasco sauce
1/2 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 stalk celery, chopped
1 egg, hard boiled and chopped
3 scallions, chopped
1/4 cup heavy cream
1 slice pickle

Combine all the ingredients in a food processor and process until smooth.

Serve in sandwiches and with salads.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit heavy cream and use evaporated milk instead.

-Add 1 teaspoon of dried herbs.

-Omit mayonnaise and use 1/2 cup plain yogurt and 1/2 cup sour cream instead.

Deglaze Sauce, French

After sautéing a meat or chicken in butter, remove the food, add a little more butter to the pan if necessary, and melt.

Add ¼ cup of broth or wine (or more, depending how many servings you need) into the pan.

Stir and scrape up to dissolve the brown bits from the bottom of the pan and heat until it has thickened a little. Pour over the food.

If you like to thicken the sauce, mix a spoonful of the sauce with 1 teaspoon of cornstarch in a cup; pour the contents of the cup back in the pan and heat until thickened.



Eggplant Caviar, Russian

Servings: 4

Beautiful on crusty bread; also works well on wraps and sandwiches.

1 large eggplant
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 plum tomatoes, chopped
1 1/2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice, or to taste
salt and pepper, to taste

Roast the eggplant over a gas burner or under the broiler, turning it occasionally, until soft and the skin is blistered.

Scoop out the meat, or peel the skin under running water and discard the skin. (If you use running water, squeeze the eggplant meat to remove any soaked water.) Chop coarsely.

Sauté the onion in oil for 3 minutes.

Add the garlic and cook for 1 minute.

Add the eggplant, tomatoes, salt and pepper, and cook for 3 minutes.

Mix in the lemon juice.

Cool in the refrigerator until serving time.

Eggplant Sauce, Turkish

Servings: 4

Serve with kebabs or with grilled or broiled meats in place of the mashed potatoes.

2 pounds eggplants.2 tablespoons lemon juice

1/2 cup butter

1/2 cup flour

1 1/2 cups milk

1 cup cheddar cheese, grated

salt and pepper, to taste

Pierce the eggplants with a fork or knife and set them over a gas burner or place under broiler. Roast, turning occasionally until the eggplants collapse, about 20 minutes.

Cut them in half and scoop out the meat or peel the skin under running water. (If you use running water, squeeze the eggplant meat to remove any soaked water.) Chop it coarsely, and process it with lemon juice in a food processor until smooth.

Make a Béchamel Sauce with the butter, flour and milk.

Stir in the eggplant mix. Cook over low heat for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add the cheese and beat until smooth.

Season with salt and pepper and serve warm.

Eggplant Tahini Dip, Eastern Mediterranean

Servings: 4

Serve as a dip for ripped pita bread, or in sandwiches and wraps with grilled or broiled meats.

1 large eggplant
4 tablespoons tahini
2 cloves garlic, chopped
4 tablespoons water
a pinch of cumin
1 tablespoon lemon juice
salt and pepper, to taste

Pierce the eggplant with a fork or knife and set them over a gas burner or place under broiler. Roast, turning occasionally until the eggplants collapse, about 20 minutes.

Cut them in half and scoop out the meat or peel the skin under running water. (If you use running water, squeeze the eggplant meat to remove any soaked water.) Chop the eggplant meat coarsely, and place it in a food processor with all the other ingredients.

Process the mix well. Serve cold.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the eggplant; instead, put 1 1/2 cups canned chickpeas and 1 small coarsely-chopped onion in the food processor.

-Add 1 teaspoon paprika.

-Omit eggplant; use 1 cup tahini and 1/2 cup water.

Fish Sauce Dressing, Thai

Servings: 6

Serve with Papaya Salad or with mixed greens.

2 tablespoons fish sauce
2 tablespoons brown sugar
3 tablespoons lime juice
2 tablespoons tamarind sauce
4 scallions, chopped fine
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, grated
2 teaspoons red pepper flakes

Whisk all the ingredients and serve.



Garlic Mayonnaise, French (Sauce Rouille)

Servings: 4

Serve on fish soups and stews.

1 1/2 cups white bread, cubed
5 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1 large egg yolks
1 cup olive oil
a pinch of saffron or turmeric
2 tablespoons lemon juice
salt and pepper, to taste

Soak the bread cubes for 10 minutes in just enough water to cover it. Squeeze dry.

Combine bread, garlic, salt, peppers, egg yolk, lemon juice, and saffron in a food processor and blend for 30 seconds.

Without stopping the machine, add oil very slowly through the feeding tube and continue to process for about 1 minute until the mayonnaise thickens.

Refrigerate for 1 hour before using.

Garlic Mayonnaise, Spanish (Aioli)

Servings: 6

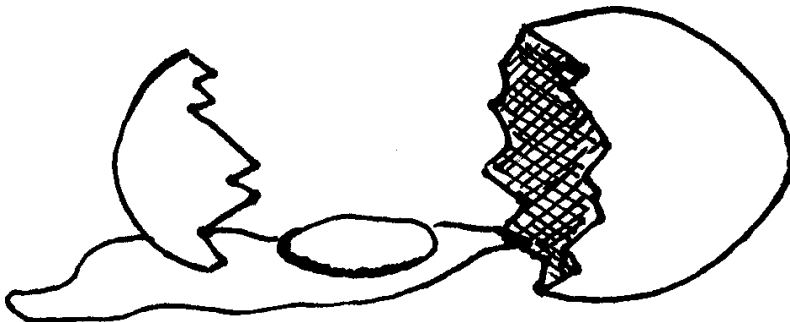
Serve on fish, chicken, rice dishes or in the place of regular mayonnaise.

5 cloves garlic, crushed
2 large egg yolks
1 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
a pinch of salt

Combine garlic, salt, egg, and lemon juice in a food processor and process for 30 seconds.

Without stopping the machine, add oil very slowly through the feeding tube and continue to process for about 1 minute until the mayonnaise thickens.

Refrigerate for 1 hour before using.



Garlic Tomato Sauce

Servings: 4

1 cup crushed tomatoes
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
a pinch of sugar
salt and pepper, to taste

Heat the olive oil in a pan for a few seconds. Add the garlic and sauté for 5 seconds.

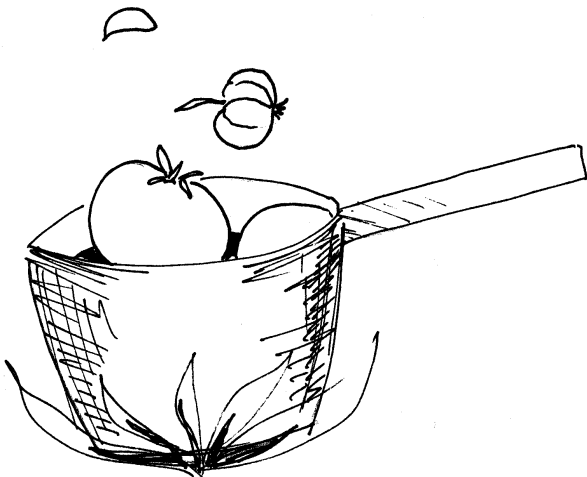
Add the crushed tomatoes and stir; heat thoroughly.

Season with sugar, salt and pepper and serve.

Serve with Swiss Chard Frittata or with fried vegetables.

Variation Ideas:

- Add a splash of balsamic vinegar.
- Add a pinch of red pepper flakes.
- Add a pinch of oregano.



Goat Cheese Pesto, Italian

Servings: 4

Serve on pastas or bread.

1 1/2 cups basil leaves, coarsely chopped

2 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

3 tablespoons pine nuts

1/3 cup olive oil

4 tablespoons creamy goat cheese

black pepper, to taste

Put pine nuts into a non-stick pan. Roast over medium heat, constantly shaking the pan or stirring with a spoon, until they get a light golden color.

Put all ingredients except the oil and pepper into a food processor. Blend for 1 minute.

Add oil slowly while continuing to process. Process until the mixture turns to a creamy consistency.

Sprinkle with pepper.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit pine nuts; use walnuts instead.

-Omit basil; use parsley instead.

Gorgonzola Dressing

Servings: 4

So creamy, so cheesy...

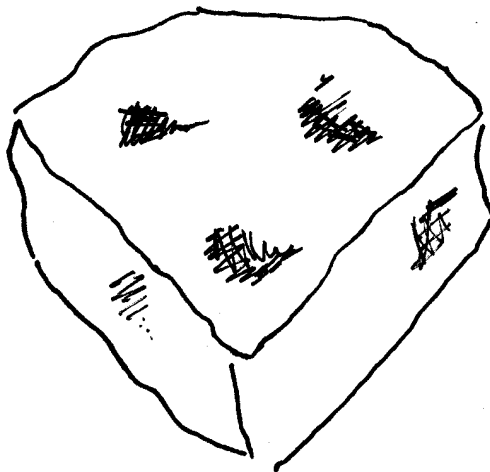
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup sour cream
5 ounces Gorgonzola cheese

Combine all ingredients, and cream them in a food processor.

Great with the Spinach Salad With Portobello Mushrooms or with grilled chicken wings.

Variation Ideas:

- Omit Gorgonzola and use blue cheese instead.*
- Add 1/4 cup buttermilk to get a more liquidy texture.*
- Use low-fat sour cream and mayonnaise.*



Gravy

Servings: 4

Serve with mashed potatoes or over roasted, grilled or broiled meat.

1/4 cup butter
1 cup milk
1 1/4 cups broth
1/4 cup flour
1 small onion, chopped fine
1 clove garlic, chopped fine
a pinch of thyme
a pinch of oregano
a pinch of rosemary
salt and pepper, to taste

Sauté the onion and garlic in butter for 3 minutes.

Add flour, whisking constantly, and cook for about 2 more minutes, until it forms pale brown paste.

Add milk, broth and herbs and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer. Let it thicken to your liking, about 10 minutes.

Add salt and pepper.

The gravy can be served as it is; alternately, you can strain the onion, garlic and herbs and then serve it. (Another option is to process in a food processor until smooth, return it to the pan and bring it back up to heat, and serve.)

Variation Ideas:

-Use any kind of herbs you like.

Guacamole Salsa with Tomato, Mexican

Servings: 6

Serve with corn chips, or on tortillas, or with soups.

2 black-skinned avocados, ripe
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1/2 small Vidalia onion, chopped fine
2 small plum tomatoes, chopped
1 lime juice
1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped fine
1 small jalapeno chili pepper, seeded and chopped fine
a pinch of cumin
a pinch of chili powder
salt and pepper, to taste

Cut the avocados in half, scoop out and mash the flesh.

Put all of the ingredients except the tomatoes in a bowl. Mix well and fold the tomatoes into the mix.

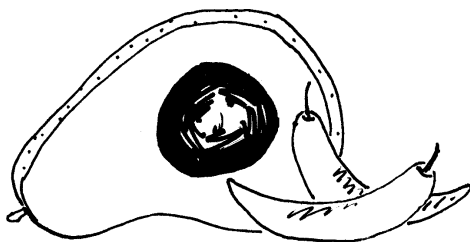
Serve cold.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the tomatoes.

-Omit the cilantro.

-Puree the ingredients into a food processor.



Hollandaise Sauce, Fast and Easy, French

Servings: 5

Serve on grilled or broiled meats and steamed vegetables.

4 egg yolks
1 stick of butter, melted and kept hot
1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
a pinch of dry mustard
salt, to taste

Put all ingredients except the butter in a food processor and blend well.

Keep the processor running and pour the butter slowly into the mix. It will thicken.

Serve immediately.

Variation Ideas:

-Use vinegar in place of the lemon juice, and sauté 1/4 cup of chopped onion lightly in the butter before adding it to the food processor.



Japanese Dipping Sauce

Servings: 2

3 tablespoons soy sauce

3 tablespoons mirin

3 tablespoons sesame oil

1 clove garlic, crushed

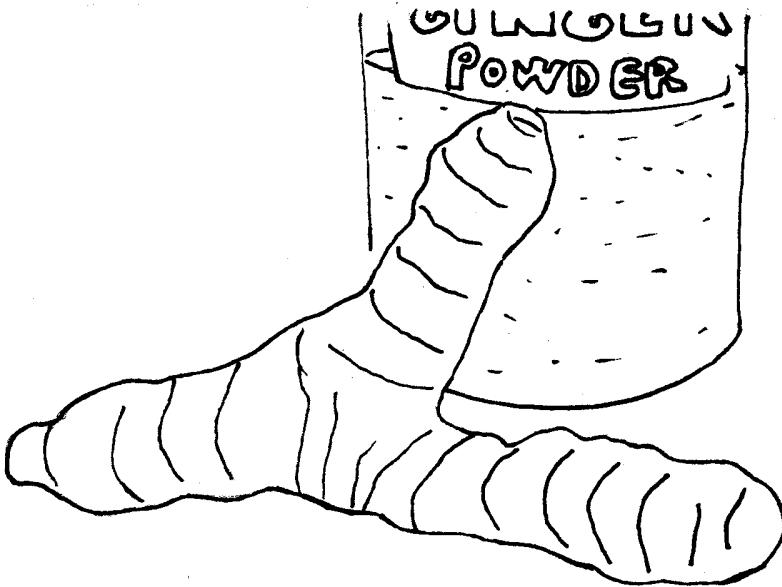
1 teaspoon fresh ginger root, minced

Mix all ingredients and let sit for 15 minutes before serving.

Serve with Tuna Steaks or with any fish or boiled vegetables.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit mirin; add 3 more tablespoons of sesame oil and 2 teaspoons sugar.



Mango Chutney, Indian

Servings: 4

Serve with broiled or grilled pork or as an accompaniment to spicy vegetarian food.

1 mango, peeled and sliced into 1/2-inch thick pieces

1/2 cup sugar

1/4 cup red onion, finely chopped

2 tablespoons white wine vinegar

2 tablespoons green bell pepper, finely chopped

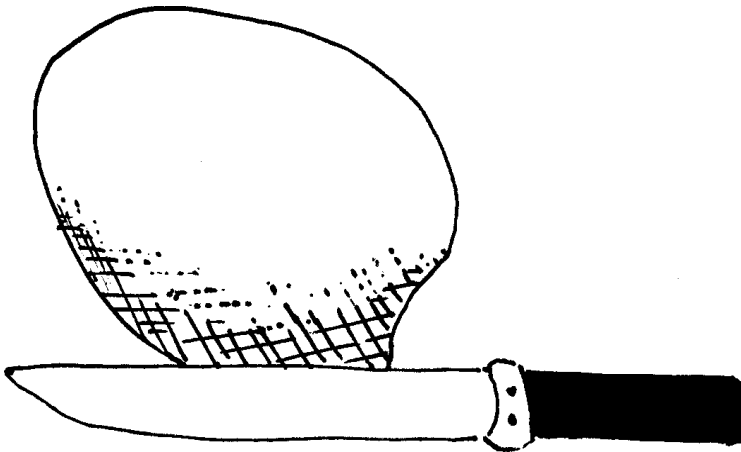
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, minced

a pinch of turmeric

a pinch of cloves, ground

black pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients and simmer for 15 minutes in a saucepan. Serve chilled.



Mint-Cilantro Chutney, Indian

Servings: 4

Serve as dip for flat bread, or with broiled or grilled meat or chicken.

1/4 cup fresh mint leaves, coarsely chopped

3/4 cup cilantro, coarsely chopped

1 tablespoon fresh ginger, chopped

8 scallions, chopped. 1 1/2 jalapeno chili peppers, chopped

2 tablespoons lemon juice

2 tablespoons water

salt, to taste

Combine all ingredients and process until smooth.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit mint; use more cilantro instead.

-Omit cilantro; use more mint instead.

-Omit lemon juice; use orange juice instead.

-Add 1 tablespoon honey or sugar.

-Add 1/4 cup yogurt.

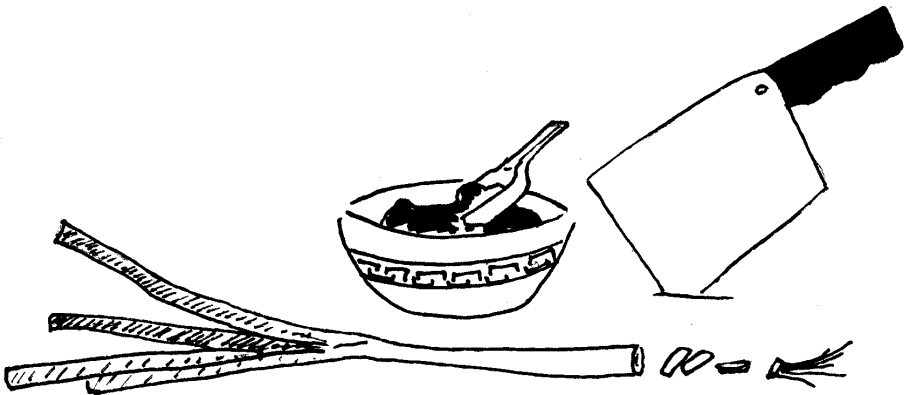
Miso Dressing

Servings: 5

Use on spinach, tofu, or cold noodle salads.

1/4 cup rice wine vinegar
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 tablespoons miso paste
1 tablespoon chili sauce
1/2 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons pickled ginger, chopped
1 teaspoon sesame oil
1/2 cup oil
1/2 cup scallions, chopped

Mix all of the ingredients and keep in refrigerator until needed.



Peanut-Sesame Dressing, Chinese

Servings: 6

2 teaspoons peanut butter
2 teaspoons tahini
2 tablespoons sugar
1/3 cup soy sauce
1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
2 tablespoons oil
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
1/4 cup scallion, chopped
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/4 cup peanuts, chopped

In a food processor, combine all of the ingredients except for the chopped peanuts and process until smooth.

Mix with the peanuts and serve.

Serve over greens, egg salad, chicken salad, or meat salads.

Variation Ideas:

-Sauté the onions and garlic in oil until the onions are soft and transparent, and mix with the other ingredients by hand. Simmer for 1 minute and let cool.

-Omit either the peanut butter or the tahini and double the other ingredient.

Pumpkin Seed Salsa, Mexican

Servings: 4

The recipe may sound strange, but it is actually quite traditional and very, very delicious.

**1/2 cup pumpkin seeds
2 tablespoons lime juice, or to taste
1 teaspoon chili powder, or to taste
1 clove garlic, chopped
1/2 tablespoon cilantro, chopped fine
1/2 cup broth, hot
a pinch of cumin
salt, to taste**

Roast pumpkin seeds in a non-stick pan over medium heat, constantly shaking the pan or stirring with a spoon, until they get a light golden color.

Place the seeds in a coffee grinder or food processor and grind until smooth. Pour the ground seeds into a food processor and add all of the ingredients and except the broth.

Process for 10 seconds to combine.

Add the broth very slowly and process until it has a puree texture. (You might need more or less broth depending on your own taste and how thick or chunky you like your salsa.)

Use over meat in tortillas or tacos; mix in with boiled vegetables; or add to soups.

Raspberry Dressing

Yield: 2 cups

Although I prefer my greens with a very basic lemon juice-olive oil dressing, this recipe is so delicious that I make it whenever I find fresh raspberries!

1 cup fresh raspberries
2 ounces balsamic vinegar
1 ounce water
4 ounces olive oil
8 leaves mint
1/2 ounce sugar

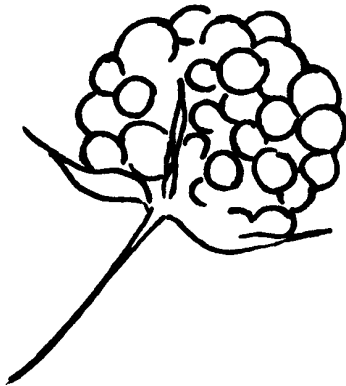
Put all the ingredients into a blender or food chopper and process until smooth.

Serve over mixed greens.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit mint and use tarragon instead.

-Add 1 tablespoon of poppy seeds.



Red Bell Pepper Dip, Eastern Mediterranean

Servings: 6

Serve in sandwiches and wraps; as a sauce for grilled or broiled chicken; or as a dip for ripped pita bread.

1 1/4 pounds red bell peppers, seeded and halved
2 teaspoons red pepper flakes
3/4 cup walnuts
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tablespoon vinegar
1/4 cup bread crumbs, stale
1 teaspoon cumin
a pinch of sugar
salt and pepper, to taste

Roast the peppers directly over a gas burner at medium heat or under a broiler, for 14 minutes or until the skin is blackened.

Put the peppers into a plastic bag and seal. Let sit for a couple of minutes. Open the bag and peel off as much of the skin as you can.

Chop the peppers coarsely.

Place all the ingredients except the peppers into a food processor and process until smooth.

Add the peppers and keep processing to make a creamy dip. If it feels too thick, add a couple of tablespoons of water or oil.

Let it rest in the refrigerator overnight.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the vinegar; use lemon juice instead.

-Use mixed nuts like pecans, hazelnuts, and pine nuts.

-Don't add olive oil to the food processor; instead drizzle it over the dip on the serving plate.

Roasted Onion and Tomato Salsa

Servings: 4

Serve on soups or with chips, tacos, or tortillas.

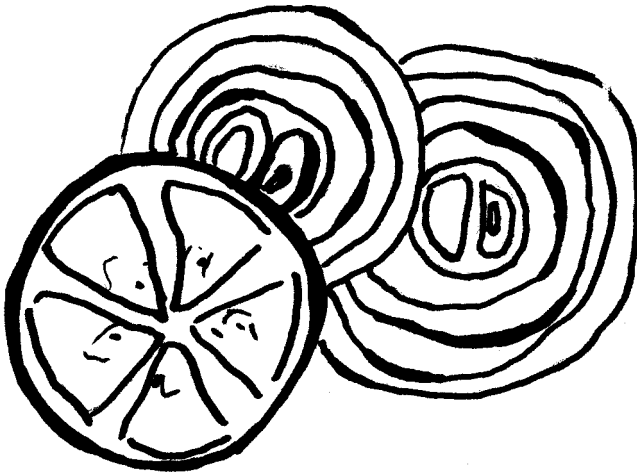
1 large tomato
1 medium red onion, peeled
1/4 cup cilantro, minced
4 tablespoons lime juice, or more if needed
1 small jalapeno chili pepper, halved and seeded
salt, to taste

Cut the tomato and onion into 4 wedges.

Place them with the jalapeno under a broiler or on gas burner, and cook until the skin of the tomatoes and the edges of the onions blister. Let them cool.

Mince the jalapeno and cut the onion and tomato into small pieces.

Add the rest of the ingredients and chill in the refrigerator before serving.



Sesame Dressing, Far East Asian

Servings: 4

Serve on greens; works especially well on spinach!

1/2 cup oil
3 tablespoons white wine vinegar
2 tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons sesame seeds
a pinch of sugar
black pepper, to taste

Put sesame seeds into a non-stick pan over medium heat, constantly shaking the pan or stirring with a spoon, until they get a light golden color.

Pour the toasted seeds into a bowl. Add all ingredients and whisk them together.



Sherry Vinegar Dressing, French

Servings: 6

This is like a jumping board to most vinegar-oil based dressings: it is wide open to try new combinations.

3 tablespoons sherry vinegar
a pinch of salt, or to taste
a pinch of black pepper, or to taste
6 tablespoons olive oil

Combine and whisk all the ingredients.

Tastes great over shredded cabbage.

Variation Ideas:

- Omit any different kind of flavored vinegar instead of the sherry vinegar.*
- Add 1 teaspoon of any dried herb, such as oregano, basil, tarragon, etc.*
- Add 1 teaspoon of poppy seeds.*
- Add 1 teaspoon of sesame seeds.*
- Omit vinegar and use lemon juice instead.*

Sun-Dried Tomatoes and Basil Pesto, Italian

Servings: 6

Serve on pastas, bread and pizzas.

8 ounces sun-dried tomatoes, chopped , soaked in hot water for 15 minutes and drained

1 cup olives, pitted

1 cup basil leaves, coarsely chopped

1/4 cup lemon zest

2 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

12 ounces brie cheese, shredded

1/2 cup olive oil

pepper, to taste

Put all the ingredients except the oil and cheese into a food processor; blend until it turns into a coarse paste.

Add the oil slowly and process for a minute more.

Scoop it out into a bowl, fold it with the cheese, and sprinkle with pepper.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit Brie; use any kind of shredded semi-soft cheese instead.

-Omit basil; use parsley instead.

-Add 5 anchovy fillets.

Tomatillo Salsa, Mexican

Servings: 4

Serve with corn chips, on tortillas, and on top of soups.

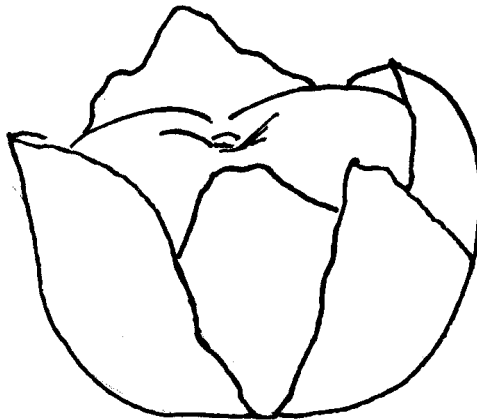
1 pound fresh tomatillos
2 jalapeno chili peppers, seeded and chopped fine
1/2 small Vidalia onion, chopped fine
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons cilantro, chopped fine
a pinch of cumin
salt and pepper, to taste

Skin and quarter the tomatillos. Put in a saucepan with just enough water to cover; simmer for 10 minutes.

Drain the tomatillos and mash them. Mix well with the rest of the ingredients. Serve chilled.

Variation Ideas:

-Put all the ingredients into a food processor and puree.



Tomato Chutney, Indian

Serve as accompaniment to vegetarian dishes and rices.

2 tablespoons butter
2 teaspoons red pepper flakes
1 teaspoon cumin
1 1/2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 2/3 cups tomatoes, coarsely chopped
3 tablespoons brown sugar
salt, to taste

In a saucepan over medium-to-high heat, heat the butter, add the spices, and cook for 30 seconds, stirring constantly.

Add tomatoes, sugar and salt; stir and cook for 10 minutes or until the mixture looks almost dry.

Serve at any temperature you like.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1/3 cup raisins, fennel seeds, and turmeric with the spices.

-Omit butter; use oil instead.

-Omit sugar and cinnamon; add fresh ginger and garlic, both minced, with the spices.

SOURS



Asparagus With Brie, French

Servings: 4

When you feel like spoiling yourself, try this!

1/4 cup butter

1/2 pound asparagus plus 4 additional asparagus tips, blanched

1/4 cup flour

3 cups chicken broth

1/2 cup white wine

1/2 cup Brie, rind discarded; cubed

1 cup heavy cream

Sauté the asparagus (except the four tips) in butter in a saucepan for a couple of minutes.

Sprinkle the flour onto the asparagus and sauté for two more minutes.

Stir in the broth, wine and cream. Simmer for 10 minutes. Remove from heat.

Process in a food processor until the soup is smooth. Put it back in the saucepan and heat.

Heat and stir in the cheese to melt. Garnish with asparagus tips. Serve warm.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit Brie and use 2 cups grated cheddar cheese.

-Omit asparagus and use 1 1/2 cups of blanched broccoli florets.

-Omit cream and use milk instead.

Coconut Chicken Soup, Thai

Servings: 4

1 can coconut milk

1 jalapeno chili pepper, chopped coarsely

1/2 chicken breasts, no skin, no bone, cubed into bite size pieces

1/2 cup canned or fresh mushrooms, sliced

1/4 cup bamboo shoots, sliced

2 1/2 tablespoons canned baby corn

1/2 teaspoon dried lemongrass

1 tablespoon of lime juice, or more to taste

10 ounces Chinese noodles, cooked according to the package instructions

Combine the lemongrass, coconut milk, ginger, stock and chilies.

Bring to a boil; reduce the heat to low and simmer for 10 minutes.

Discard the rind and chilies.

Add chicken, mushrooms, bamboo shoots, baby corn, and noodles and cook until the meat is cooked, about 4 minutes.

Stir in the lime juice and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Add ground turmeric and coriander with the lemongrass.

-Omit chicken and instead use 4 ounces shrimp, uncooked and shelled.

-Omit noodles and use fried potato pancakes instead.

-Add 5 ounces of tofu, cut into small cubes, to the chicken.

-Add 1 cup of bean sprouts (canned is fine) to the chicken.

Corn and Bean Soup, British

Servings: 3

The best corn chowder I've ever tasted! And it can't get any faster than this...

1 can (15 oz.) cannellini beans, drained
2/3 can (10 oz.) sweet corn, drained
1 medium onion, chopped
2 stalks celery, chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped
1 cup milk
1 cup chicken stock
1 tablespoon butter
3 ounces cheddar cheese, grated
1 teaspoon black pepper, or more to taste
1 teaspoon thyme

Sauté the onion, celery and garlic in butter over low heat for 8 minutes.

Add all ingredients except cheese; bring to a boil and lower heat to simmer for 10 minutes.

Put 2/3 of the soup into a food processor and process for 40 seconds. Combine with the rest of the soup.

Add the cheese and heat until the cheese is melted. Serve hot.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the cannellini and use butter beans instead.

-Omit chicken stock and use water instead.

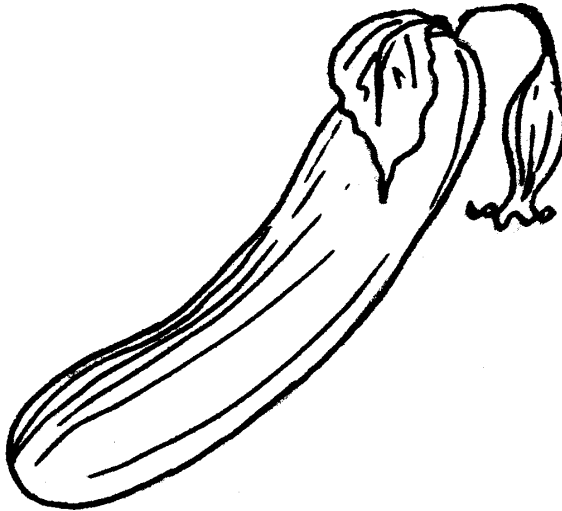
Cucumber Gazpacho

Servings: 4

5 cucumbers, peeled and grated
1 teaspoon coriander
1 teaspoon cumin
2 red bell peppers, diced
1 red onion, diced
2 jalapeno chili peppers, chopped fine
1/4 cup cilantro, chopped fine
1/2 pound plain yogurt
2 cloves garlic, crushed
4 scallions, chopped fine
2 lemon juice
salt and pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients and serve chilled.

Serve before a summer dinner or with Indian, Arabic or Pakistani dishes.



Egg Drop Soup, Chinese

Servings: 4

2 eggs
2 teaspoons water
3 scallions, chopped
1 tablespoon cornstarch, blended with 3 tablespoons of water to a paste
6 cups chicken stock
1/2 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon sherry
1 tablespoon soy sauce
salt, to taste

Beat the eggs and stir in water.

Mix the cornstarch paste with sugar, salt, sherry and soy sauce.

Bring the stock to a boil. Reduce heat to medium and add the cornstarch paste.

Cook, stirring until the soup thickens.

Reduce the heat to low. Pour the eggs slowly, stirring constantly, until they turn into cloudy shreds.

Serve immediately with chopped scallions.

Variation Ideas:

-Soak two dried mushrooms in boiling water for 10 minutes; squeeze out the water and slice very thin. Add after thickening the soup; cook together for one minute.

- Shred 1/4 cup canned bamboo shoots; add as directed above.

-Cut 1/2 cake of firm tofu to bite-sized pieces; use like the dried mushrooms.

-Add 1/4 pound shredded chicken meat with dried mushrooms.

Gazpacho, Spanish

Servings: 4

Gazpacho could be described as a tomato salad passed through a food processor! You really need to try this one.

2 1/2-inch length of bread, cut from a long narrow loaf, crusts removed
1 pound very ripe tomatoes, coarsely chopped
2 green frying peppers, coarsely chopped
1/2 cucumber, coarsely chopped
1/2 Vidalia onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1/2 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons wine vinegar
3 tablespoons lemon juice
1 cup water, cold
a pinch of sugar
2 teaspoons salt, or to taste

Soak the bread in some water and squeeze dry. Tear into pieces.

Combine all ingredients except water in a food processor and process until quite smooth. Stir in the water, a little at a time, until the consistency resembles a thick soup.

Correct the salt and vinegar with tasting.

Pour some soup into 4 to 8 ice cubes and freeze.

Serve the gazpacho chilled with the frozen cubes.

Serve with grilled food in the summer.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1/2 cup chopped cilantro with the tomatoes.

-Add 1/2 cup chopped fresh dill with the tomatoes.

-Omit lemon juice and use more vinegar.

Lentil Soup, Indian

Servings: 4

Many original Indian recipes call for a pale yellow oval bean called mung dal. Because it is sometimes hard to find this ingredient in regular stores, you can use any kind of lentils instead. If you can find mung dal, use the split variety without skins called moong dal.

1 cup red lentils
6 cups water
1 teaspoon turmeric
2 teaspoons coriander
1 1/2 teaspoons fresh ginger root, grated
1/2 jalapeno chili pepper, seeded and minced
2 tablespoons oil
1 teaspoon cumin seeds
1 tablespoon cilantro, minced
salt, to taste

In a pot, combine turmeric, coriander and ginger root with 1 tablespoon of oil and heat for 20 seconds. Add lentils, water, chili pepper, and salt.

Cook until lentils are soft, about 30 minutes.

Press the soup through a fine sieve or process in a food processor until smooth.

Heat the rest of the oil in a small saucepan with the cumin seeds for 10 seconds. Add the oil into the soup.

Salt and let rest for a couple of minutes. Garnish with cilantro and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-After processing the soup, add 5 ounces of coarsely-chopped fresh spinach. Return to the pot and cook for 5 minutes more before adding the cumin seeds.

-15 minutes after adding the lentils, add 1 cup of thinly-sliced red salad radishes.

-Omit cumin seeds. Add a pinch of ground cinnamon and a whole clove to the lentils. Fry 2 medium tomatoes in 1 tablespoon oil for 4 minutes and pour into the soup. Let sit for a couple of minutes before serving.

-Cube 1 green or yellow zucchini and add 15 minutes into the cooking of the lentils. Do not process or press through a sieve.

-Omit chili pepper. Instead, cube 1/2 cup pumpkin and add with the lentils. In a pan, heat 1 tablespoon of oil with cumin seeds, mustard seeds, 2 teaspoons dried red pepper and 1/2 tablespoon sugar, stirring quickly. Remove the pan from the heat when the mixture turns a reddish-brown. Pour into the soup; let it rest for couple of minutes and serve.



Onion Soup, French

Servings: 4

Serve this winter soup in bowls made out of clay just like they do in the bistros of France.

4 onions, sliced thin
2 tablespoons butter
4 cups water or broth
1/2 cup white wine
1 bay leaf
1/2 teaspoon thyme
4 slices baguette or any crusty bread, 1-inch thick
2 1/2 ounces Gruyere cheese, grated or sliced thin
2 1/2 tablespoons flour
salt and pepper, to taste

Lightly toast the bread slices and set aside.

In a saucepan, sauté the onions with the butter over medium heat for 20 minutes.

Sprinkle the flour and cook for 2 more minutes, stirring constantly.

Add wine and gradually whisk in the water. Add the herbs, salt and pepper; bring to a boil and simmer for 25 minutes.

Ladle the soup into 4 oven-safe soup bowls.

Place the breads on the bowls and top with the cheese.

Broil on the top rack until the cheese is melted.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit Gruyere cheese; use Swiss or Parmesan instead.

Pumpkin Soup, Spiced-Up

Servings: 4

This is a livelier version of pumpkin soup that is served around the autumn and winter seasons in the United States.

1 1/2 cups pumpkin, cubed
1 small onion, chopped
1 small potato, cubed
1 small carrot, chopped
1/2 stalk celery, chopped
1 1/2 teaspoons ground ginger
1 1/2 teaspoons coriander
a pinch of nutmeg
1 1/2 tablespoons oil
salt and pepper, to taste

In a saucepan, sauté the onion, celery stalk, and carrot until the onion becomes transparent, around 5 minutes.

Add the rest of the ingredients and bring to a boil. Lower the heat; simmer for 40 minutes or until the pumpkin falls apart when you stick it with a knife.

Mash with a fork; keep the texture a little coarse.

Serve with grated Parmesan cheese and croutons.

Variation Ideas:

- Use canned pumpkin and cook for 20 minutes.*
- Serve with a dollop of sour cream and a pinch of dried chives in each bowl.*
- Omit the pumpkin and use winter squash instead.*
- Serve with crème Fraiche.*

Scotch Broth

Servings: 4.

16 ounces boned lamb (leg or shoulder)

4 ounces barley

4 cups water

1 turnip, diced

1 onion, diced

1/2 carrot, diced

1/2 cup celery, diced

1 tablespoon butter

1 tablespoon flour

2 tablespoons parsley, chopped fine

salt and pepper

Broil lamb until rare. Cool and cut into bite-sized pieces.

Add the meat and water to a saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.

Add the vegetables, barley, salt, and a generous amount of pepper. Turn the heat up to high and bring to a boil.

Lower the heat and simmer until the meat and vegetables are cooked, about 30 minutes.

With a fork, blend the butter with the flour in a small bowl. Stir it into the soup. Cook the soup until it thickens slightly.

Garnish with parsley; serve hot.

Variation Ideas:

-To cook this soup the Italian way, use 3 1/2 cups of water with 1/2 cups of red wine; add 1 teaspoon each of dried basil, oregano, and rosemary; add 1 bay leaf, 1 chopped tomato, and a little bit of lemon peel; 2 cloves of garlic, minced, with the vegetables. Serve with Parmesan or Romano cheese.

-Use only half of an onion and add 1/2 cup chopped leeks.

-Use left over cooked meat of any kind, cubed, with the veggies and omit the first 30 minutes of cooking time.

-Add 1/2 cup chopped tomatoes, 1/2 cup canned lima beans and 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms with the vegetables. Omit the parsley and use fresh dill instead.

Squash And Chickpea Soup

Servings: 4

1 pound butternut squash or acorn squash
2 tablespoons oil
1 large onion, diced fine
3 cups vegetable broth
1 can garbanzo beans, drained (reserve the liquid)
2 tablespoons tomato puree
1/4 cup cilantro leaves (optional), minced
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste
salt and pepper

Heat the oven to 375 F.

Place the squash in an oven-proof dish and cover tightly with aluminum foil.

Bake until tender, 50 minutes to 1 hour.

Let cool. Peel and seed the squash, and scoop the pulp from the shell. Set it aside.

In a pan, heat the oil and sauté the onion over low-to-medium heat, stirring occasionally, until tender, 6 to 8 minutes. Let cool.

In a blender or food processor, puree (in batches if necessary) the squash, onion, broth, half of the garbanzo beans, and all of the reserved liquid from the garbanzo beans.

Return the puree to the pan.

Stir in the tomato paste, cayenne, and salt and pepper.

Add the remaining whole garbanzo beans and heat the soup thoroughly.

Sprinkle with the minced cilantro and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-To speed up the cooking, use canned pumpkin and skip to the part where you sauté the onions.

Vegetarian Borscht, Russian

Servings: 4

2 large beets, peeled and sliced
1/2 cup beet greens, chopped
1 onion, sliced
1 carrot, sliced
1/4 small red or green cabbage, shredded
1 tablespoon cider vinegar
2 tablespoons oil
water, to cover

Put all the ingredients except vinegar into a soup pot and fill with water to about 1 1/2 to 2 inches above the vegetables. Simmer until beets are cooked, about 30 minutes.

Mash the vegetables with a fork coarsely. Add vinegar; serve warm.

Serve with a kasha dish and with pumpernickel or Russian black bread.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1 tablespoon raisins after mashing the vegetables, and cook 5 more minutes.

-Add 1 sliced potato with the beets to get a heartier soup.

Sandwiches and Wraps



It's hard to go wrong with a sandwich if you use good ingredients, but the importance of the bread cannot be overstated: the sandwich you make is as good as the bread you choose. To keep the bread from becoming soggy, try to put the sandwich together as close to serving time as possible.

Vegetarian Sandwich and Wrap Ideas:

- Hummus mixed with canned black beans, roasted red bell peppers and green leaves on focaccia bread coated with little olive oil. (Heat the focaccia bread in oven briefly before filling.)
- Sautéed Portobello mushrooms, sautéed ring onions, Gorgonzola cheese on toasted rye bread coated with a little oil and mustard.
- Sautéed eggplants, roasted bell peppers and crumbled blue cheese with olive bread or focaccia bread coated with a little oil-based salad dressing. (Heat the focaccia bread in the oven briefly before filling.)
- Sliced fresh purple figs, Gorgonzola cheese and fresh mint on lightly toasted white bread coated with a little olive oil.
- Sliced avocado, tomato, cucumber and bean sprouts on toasted multigrain bread coated with mayonnaise.
- Refried beans, shredded lettuce, grated cheddar cheese, tomato salsa and sour cream on a heated flour tortilla.
- Raisins and cashews folded in cottage cheese sprinkled with a little cinnamon in toasted multigrain bread.
- Coarsely-crushed chickpeas and garlic with avocado sprinkled with lime juice on toasted bread, with mayonnaise.
- Grated carrot, chopped scallions and a little lemon juice folded into cream cheese on toasted multigrain bread.
- Diced hardboiled egg, sliced tomato and onions, pitted olives, mayonnaise, and little cream cheese with herbs on pumpernickel bread
- Paprika, red pepper, oregano, olive oil, balsamic vinegar, sliced mozzarella, tomato, olive, basil, and arugula in bread.

Non-Vegetarian Sandwich and Wrap Ideas:

- Corned beef slices with sauerkraut and Swiss cheese, drizzled with Chili Sauce and a mayonnaise-based salad dressing. (Grill the sandwich in a little butter in a non-stick pan until browned before serving.)
- Salami, Prosciutto, Mortadella and Provolone slices in focaccia, with a spread made out of olives, artichokes and anchovies processed in a food processor.
- Canned crab, Tabasco sauce, crushed garlic and chopped red onion, folded in mayonnaise topped with avocado and American Cheese slices between multigrain bread grilled in a little butter.
- Crumbled sausages cooked in a little olive oil, with sautéed onions, tomato puree, dried herbs and pepper, sprinkled with cheddar cheese in warm hoagie rolls.
- Boiled chicken breast torn to little pieces on toasted whole grain bread, topped with cheddar cheese (Put the whole thing in the microwave until the cheese is melted), and then topped with Roasted Onion and Tomato Salsa recipe.

Black Bean Burgers

Yield: 4 patties

This will really surprise people for not being "beef" - it is that good!

1/4 cup dried bread crumbs
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 15-ounce can black beans, drained
1/4 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
1 medium onion, chopped
1 teaspoon Tabasco sauce
1 1/2 tablespoons vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
dried bread crumbs, to coat the patties
oil, to fry
4 slices Swiss cheese
1 avocado, peeled and sliced thin
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
8 slices multi grain bread, toasted

Saute onions in oil until lightly brown. Add peppers and saute for 3 more minutes.

Set aside 2 tablespoons of beans and mash the rest.

Add the onions, peppers, whole beans, 1/4 cup bread crumbs and sauce to the mashed beans. Knead for 3 minutes to combine well. Divide into 4 pieces and shape into patties. Coat with bread crumbs.

Fry the patties in a little oil until browned.

Place the patties on the bread; top with cheese, avocado, and mayonnaise.

Variation Ideas:

-Serve with bean sprouts.

-Serve with sliced onions and tomatoes.

Chickpea-Oat Patties

Servings: 8

2 cans chickpeas
1 1/2 cups oats
1 clove garlic, crushed
salt and pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon oil

Drain the chickpeas; set the liquid aside.

In a food processor or blender, process chickpeas with about 1/2 cup of the liquid from the can, adding more liquid if needed to make a smooth, thick paste.

In a medium mixing bowl, combine bean paste, oats, garlic, salt and pepper; mix well. (It should hold together. If the mixture is too watery, add more oats; if it is too dry, add some water.)

Shape mixture into 8 patties about 1/2-inch thick each.

Heat the oil and cook the patties until both sides are golden brown.

Serve patties as sandwiches in whole-grain buns with lettuce, tomato and mayonnaise.

Lentil Patties

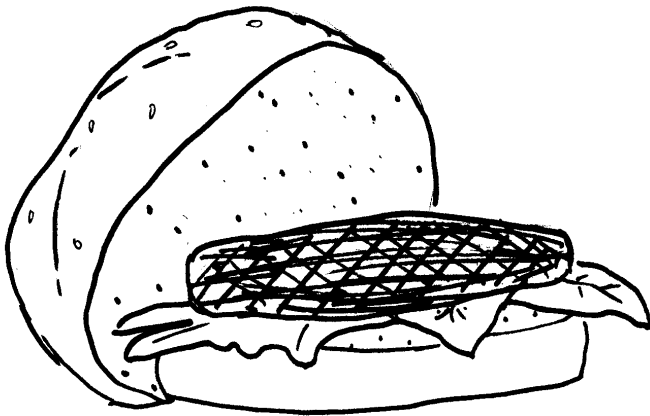
Servings: 6

1 cup green lentils
1 large potato, grated fine
1 onion, minced fine
3 cloves garlic, crushed
1/4 cup crushed tomatoes
1 small jalapeno chili pepper, minced
1/4 cup bread crumbs
salt, to taste
2 tablespoons oil

Cook lentils for 1/2 hour in about 2 cups of water. Drain and let cool.

Mix all the ingredients, except the oil, with the lentils. Form into patties. (The mixture should be slightly moist. If too dry, add a little water; if too liquidy, add a little bread crumbs.) Heat the oil in a non-stick pan and cook the patties over medium heat until both sides are golden brown.

Serve on buns like a hamburger.



Mashed Chickpea Salad Sandwich

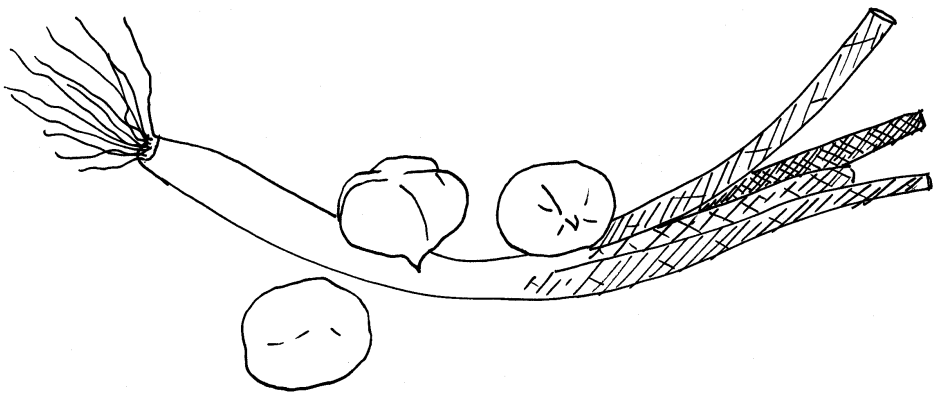
Servings: 3

1 can chickpeas, drained
1 stalk celery, chopped fine
1 small carrot, grated
1 scallion, chopped fine
1 tablespoon mayonnaise
1 tablespoon pickles, chopped fine
salt, to taste

Mash the chickpeas coarsely.

Add all of the rest of the ingredients and mix.

Serve on whole wheat bread or in pita bread with lettuce and sliced tomatoes.



Salads



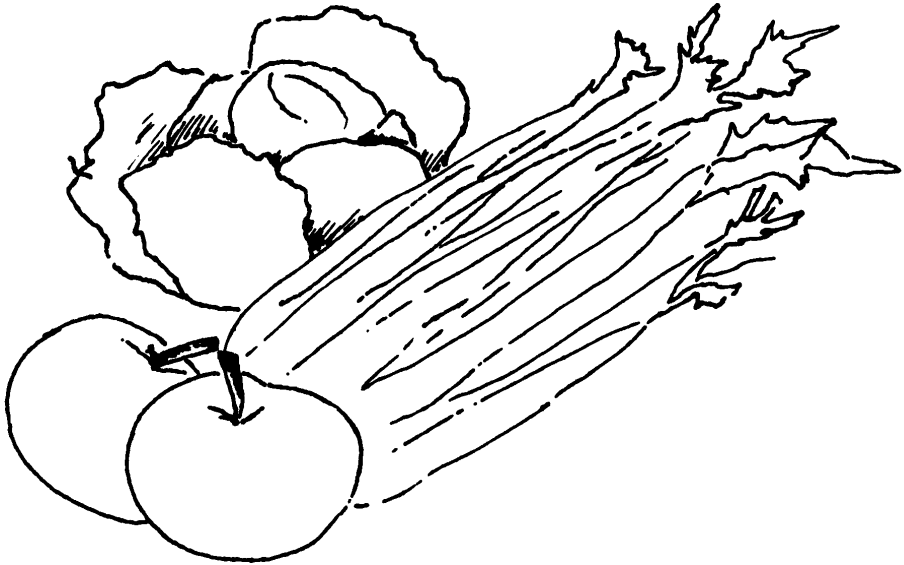
Apple and Cabbage Salad

Servings: 3

1/2 apple, chopped
1/2 stalk celery, chopped
1/4 red cabbage, sliced thin
1 tablespoon raisins
1 tablespoon mayonnaise
1 tablespoon sour cream

Soak the red cabbage in lightly-salted water for 15 minutes, squeeze dry.

Mix all the ingredients and serve.



Baby Beets and Beet Greens

Servings: 6

3 bunches baby beets, with the leaves
4 tablespoons olive oil
4 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, or more if needed
salt and pepper, to taste

Chop the leaves off the beets and set aside.

Boil the beets until tender when a knife is inserted. Peel and slice thin.

Chop the leaves coarsely and sauté in olive oil until wilted.

Place the leaves on a serving dish, top with the beets, and drizzle with a little more olive oil and vinegar.

Season with salt and pepper.

Let it rest at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Serve cold or at room temperature.

Variation Ideas:

-Sautee 3 crushed garlic cloves in the olive oil before adding the leaves.

-Top with ground walnuts.

Beet And Apple Salad

Servings: 4

3 medium beets

1 green apple, peeled, cored and diced

2 cups red and white cabbages, shredded, soaked in salted water and squeezed dry

2 tablespoons scallions, chopped

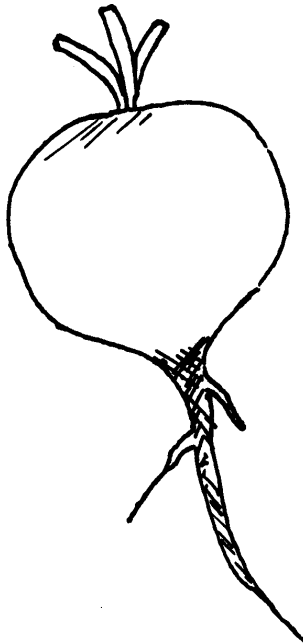
2 tablespoons orange juice

3 tablespoons white wine vinegar

3 tablespoons olive oil

Boil the beets in water until it is soft when a knife is inserted. Let it cool. Peel and dice.

Mix all the ingredients. Let rest in refrigerator for at least 1 hour and serve.



Black-eyed Pea Salad with Walnuts

Servings: 4

1 can black-eyed peas, drained and washed
1/2 red onion, chopped
1 tomato, chopped
1 green bell pepper, chopped
3 tablespoons walnuts, chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
a pinch of oregano
a pinch of red pepper flakes
salt and pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients except for the walnuts.

Let it sit in the refrigerator for 1 hour, or overnight.

Mix the walnuts into the salad just before serving.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1/2 cup sweet corn, canned.

-To bring out a more nutty flavor, roast the walnuts on moderate heat on a non-stick pan for a couple of minutes. (Watch carefully not to burn them, or else the nuts will be unpleasantly bitter.)

-Omit onions; use 3 chopped scallions instead..-Add 2 tablespoons fresh herbs (any kind you like).

-Add 1/2 carrot, chopped.

-Add 1 hard-boiled egg, chopped coarsely right before serving.

Cabbage-free Coleslaw, North European

Servings: 3

An uncommon but quite delicious salad. It might easily take the place of common coleslaw!

1 kohlrabi, peeled
1 small carrot, scraped
1 medium apple, peeled and cored
2 tablespoons mayonnaise
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons yogurt
2 tablespoons lemon juice

Grate the kohlrabi, cut the carrots into thin crosswise slices, and mince the apple.

Combine all ingredients and mix. Let rest for 30 minutes in refrigerator and serve.

Serve with barbequed or grilled meats.

Variation ideas:

-Add 1/2 cup chopped walnuts.

-Omit either yogurt or mayonnaise and use sour cream instead.



Celery Root Salad, Turkish

Servings: 4

1 pound celeriac (celery root), peeled and grated
5 tablespoons plain yogurt
2 tablespoons sour cream. 4 tablespoons walnuts, ground coarsely
2 cloves garlic, crushed
salt, to taste

Mix all of the ingredients well and serve cold.

Variation Ideas:

- Omit either the yogurt or sour cream and use more of the other ingredient.*
- Omit sour cream and use 2 tablespoons of water instead.*
- Omit either sour cream or yogurt and use mayonnaise instead.*



Chicken-Broccoli Salad with Cottage Cheese Dressing

Servings: 2

If you serve this salad to 2 people, it is a very filling main dish. Serves 4 as a side dish.

3/4 pound broccoli florets, blanched

1 chicken breast, no skin, no bone, cooked and cubed into bite-sized pieces

4 cherry tomatoes, halved

1/4 medium Vidalia onion, chopped

2 ounces cottage cheese, crumbled

2 tablespoons mayonnaise

1/2 tablespoon olive oil

1 tablespoon lemon juice

a pinch of sugar

salt and pepper, to taste

Put the cottage cheese, mayonnaise, oil, lemon juice, sugar, salt and pepper in a bowl; beat for a couple of minutes with a fork until well-combined.

Refrigerate for at least 15 minutes. Add the rest of the ingredients and combine.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit broccoli and use blanched green beans instead.

-Omit broccoli and use canned peas instead.

-Add 2 tablespoons of diced fresh parsley.

-Omit lemon juice and use vinegar instead.

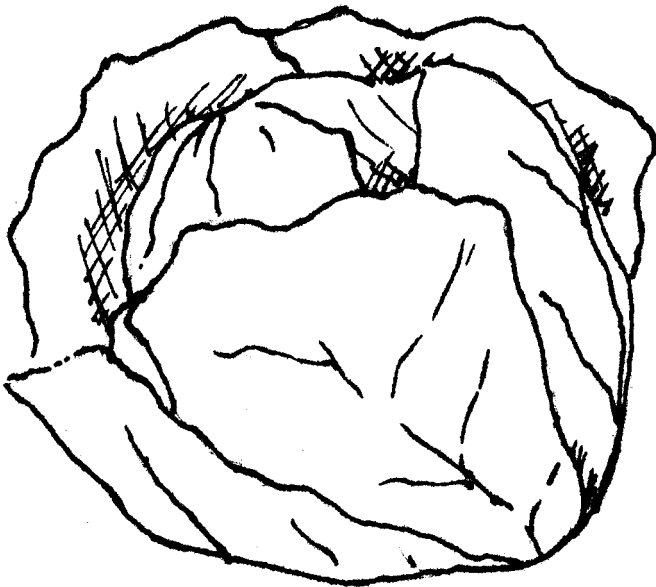
-Omit cottage cheese dressing and use blue cheese dressing instead.

Coleslaw with Cumin-Lime Vinaigrette

Servings: 8

1 medium green cabbage, shredded
3 carrots, grated
1 red bell pepper, julienned
1 Vidalia onion, sliced thin
1/2 cup cilantro, minced
1/3 cup lime juice
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1/2 teaspoon cumin
salt and pepper, to taste
1/2 cup olive oil

Combine all ingredients. Refrigerate for a couple of hours and serve.



Corn and Artichoke Salad

Servings: 3

This salad becomes tastier if you eat it 1 or 2 hours after combining the ingredients.

1 can corn, drained
1/2 small onion, sliced thin
1 tablespoon capers
3 artichoke hearts, sliced
2 sun-dried tomatoes
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar, or to taste
1 tablespoon lemon juice, or to taste
salt and pepper, to taste

Soak the sun-dried tomatoes in warm water for 15 minutes. Squeeze and slice thin.

Soak the onions in salted water for 15 minutes and drain.

Combine all ingredients and serve.

Cucumber and Carrot Salad, Indian

Servings: 4

1 1/2 cups plain yogurt
3 medium carrots, grated
1 cucumber, grated
1 tablespoon cilantro, minced, or more to taste
salt and pepper, to taste

Mix all ingredients and serve.

Will accompany any Indian dish. Also good with Arabic dishes or very spicy dishes.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1 crushed garlic clove.



Farmer's Cheese, Pears and Walnuts in Bed of Greens

Servings: 2

So refreshing and classy, it deserves to be served to guests!

2 slices farmer's cheese
1 pear, cored and cubed
4 ounces mixed greens
4 ounces arugula leaves
2 tablespoons walnuts
oil and lemon juice, to taste

Arrange the mixed greens on individual serving plates, placing the cheese on the top.

Mix pears, arugula leaves, walnuts, oil and lemon juice in a bowl and place on the top of the cheese.

Makes for a light dinner if used as the main dish and served with a soup.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit farmer's cheese and use goat's cheese instead.

-Omit arugula and use watercress instead.

Mediterranean-Style Cannellini Bean (White Kidney Bean) Salad

Servings: 4

1 can cannellini beans, drained and washed
1/2 onion, sliced thin
1 tablespoon salt
1 large tomato, sliced
1 tablespoon fresh herbs, chopped, or 1/2 tablespoon dried herbs, such as
mint, basil, oregano
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice, or more if needed
salt, to taste

Rub the onion slices vigorously with 1 tablespoon of salt for 30 seconds, or until the onions feel a little soft. Put in a colander and wash the salt away under running water.

Combine all ingredients. If you have time, let the salad rest in the refrigerator for 1 hour; this will improve the taste.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit lemon juice; use any vinegar like raspberry, cider or wine vinegar.

-Add 2 tablespoons of olives (pitted if you like).

-Add 8 oz. feta cheese or blue cheese, crumbled.

-Add 1 red bell pepper, roasted and chopped coarsely. (To roast the pepper, if you have a gas burner:

Put the pepper over moderate-to-high heat, and turn it around as the skin blisters to black evenly. Put into a small plastic bag or zip-lock until cool. Peel the skin with fingers or nail under running water; dry fine. If you have an electric burner, cut the pepper to two lengthwise, put on the highest rack, and use the broiler to blister. Follow the rest of the instructions for the gas burner above.)

-Add 1 teaspoon garlic, chopped.

-Add 1 can (7 ounces) tuna fish in oil (in water, if you want to keep the calories down), broken into chunks.

Papaya Salad, Thai

Servings: 4

Delightful salad to accompany many Far East dishes!

2 medium ripe papayas, peeled, seeded and thinly sliced
8 medium shrimps, cooked
2 cups cabbage, shredded
2 cups baby spinach leaves
1 large tomato, sliced
3 tablespoons peanuts, chopped fine
1 recipe Fish Sauce Dressing

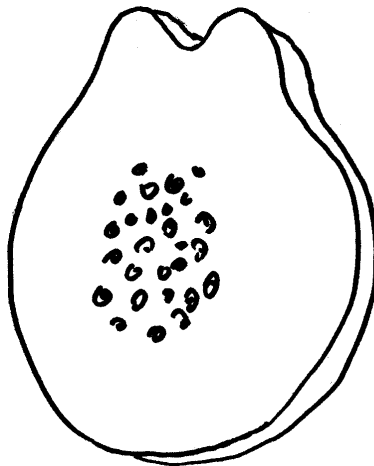
Mix all of the ingredients together except the spinach. Chill in refrigerator until serving.

On a plate, make a bed with spinach. Place the mixture on top and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit spinach; use iceberg lettuce instead.

-Omit shrimp; use cooked and cubed ham or chicken instead.



Peanut Dressing, African

Servings: 5

Serve on mixed greens or vegetable salads.

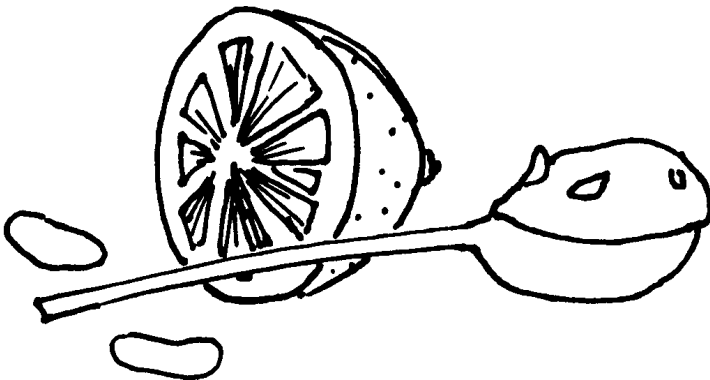
1/3 cup chunky peanut butter
juice of 1 lemon
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1/4 teaspoon red pepper flakes
1/4 cup water
salt and pepper, to taste

Mix all the ingredients well. The texture should be quite creamy; if it looks too dry, add a little more water.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit water; use 1/2 cup oil instead.

-Add soy sauce instead of salt.



Quinoa Salad

Servings: 6

1 cup quinoa
1 3/4 cups water
1/4 pound carrot, grated
3 scallions, chopped
3 tablespoons parsley, minced
1/4 cup sesame seeds
1/4 cup sunflower seeds
6 tablespoons oil
2 tablespoons cider vinegar
1 tablespoon lemon juice
1/2 teaspoon tamarind sauce
salt and pepper, to taste

In a saucepan, simmer quinoa in water until all the liquid is absorbed and the quinoa is cooked, about 20 minutes.

Add all the ingredients; combine and serve.

May be served at room temperature or cold.



Sardine Salad, Northwest Mediterranean

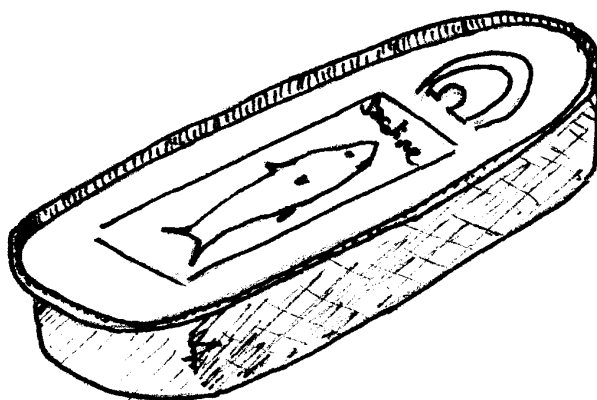
Servings: 2

1 tomato, sliced
1 slice Vidalia onion
1/2 red bell pepper, sliced
1 can (5 ounces) sardines, broken up into chunks. 1/4 pound baby spinach
2 teaspoons capers
2 tablespoons feta cheese, crumbled
2 small fresh figs, cut into wedges
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice, or to taste
croutons

Combine all the dry ingredients on serving plates. Drizzle oil and lemon juice on the salad just before serving.

Variation Ideas:

- Mix baby spinach with arugula leaves.*
- Omit feta cheese and use blue cheese or goat cheese instead.*
- Omit sardines and use anchovies instead.*



Spinach Salad with Portobello Mushrooms, Mediterranean

Servings: 2

This is so fancy and delicious that it can be served to guests as a salad, or even as a main dish with some soup on the side.

6 ounces baby spinach leaves, washed and drained well
2 large Portobello mushrooms, stemmed
6 cherry tomatoes, whole
6 dried apricots
1/2 cup bread cubes
1/4 cup Gorgonzola cheese, crumbled
14 cups walnuts, chopped
1/2 cup cheese-based salad dressing (e.g. bleu, cream, feta)
a little olive oil

Put bread cubes into a non-stick pan and cook over medium heat, constantly shaking the pan or stirring with a spoon, until they get a light golden color. Set aside. Toast the chopped walnuts in the same way and also set aside.

Brush the mushrooms, tomatoes and apricots with a little olive oil. Pan-grill them over low-to-medium heat until the mushrooms are soft and tomato and apricot skins are blistered. Slice the mushrooms and apricots thin. Let cool.

Arrange the spinach leaves on individual serving plates. Pour some salad dressing on and fold in gently.

Put the tomatoes, mushroom slices, bread cubes, walnuts and apricot slices over the spinach. Sprinkle with the crumbled Gorgonzola, drizzle on some more dressing, and serve immediately.

Serve with Gorgonzola Dressing recipe.

Variation Ideas:

- Omit spinach and use mixed greens instead.*
- Omit apricots and use dried figs instead.*
- Add thin slices of Spanish onions.*
- Omit Portobello and use button mushrooms instead.*
- Omit walnuts and use any other kind of nuts instead.*

Tomato Salad, Western Mediterranean

Servings: 4

4 medium tomatoes, cut into 1/4 slices
1/2 Vidalia onion, sliced thin
1/4 pound fresh mozzarella, sliced thin
1/4 cup fresh basil, chopped coarsely
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
salt and pepper, to taste

Arrange the tomatoes, onion, mozzarella, and basil in a serving plate.

Drizzle olive oil and vinegar over the salad and sprinkle salt and pepper on top. Let sit for 30 minutes and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the cheese; add 1 pound roasted eggplants. (To roast the eggplants:

If you have a gas burner, place the eggplants over the burner, on high heat. Turn them around once in a while and roast for about 10 minutes. If you have an electric burner, roast the eggplants under a broiler.

When done, they should feel soft when pressed.) Peel off the skin, and cut the flesh into lengthwise strips approximately 1/2 inch wide. Place the eggplants on the serving plate and arrange onion, mozzarella, and basil on top. If you have time, let it rest overnight in the refrigerator before adding the rest of the ingredients.

-Omit the cheese; dice the tomatoes, and add 2 ounces of canned tuna, broken into chunks, and a pinch of ground pepper.

Warm Potato Salad

Servings: 4

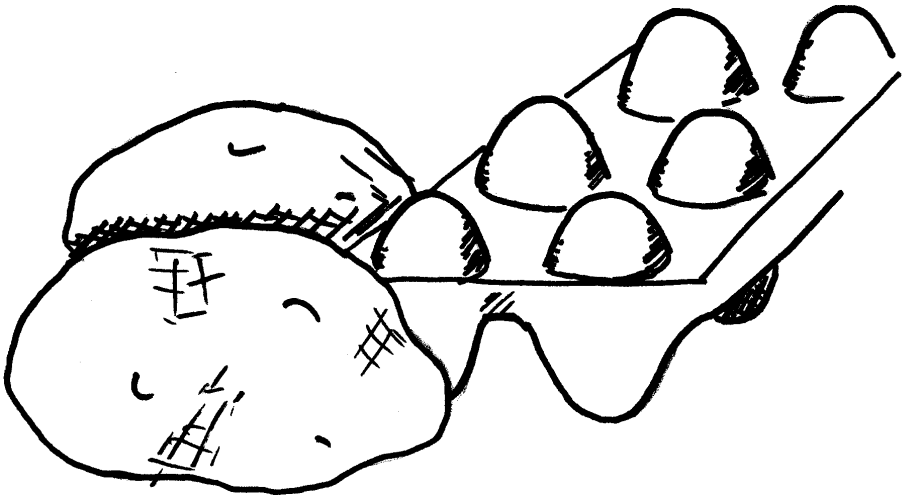
3 potatoes, boiled and cubed
2 eggs, hard boiled, shelled and chopped
4 slices bacon, chopped
1 small onion, chopped fine
1/4 cup cider vinegar
a pinch of paprika
a pinch of sugar
salt and pepper, to taste

Fry the bacon and onion in the bacon's own fat in a non-stick pan.

Gently mix all of the ingredients including the bacon fat. Serve warm.

Variation Ideas:

-Reserve the bacon fat and beat 1 egg into it. Put all the ingredients back into the pan, including the bacon fat-egg mixture; heat it very slowly, stirring gently.



Watercress Salad Topped With Feta

Servings: 2

Incredible with grilled, fried or sautéed fish! Endless possibilities for variation, but avoid using sweet ingredients like fruits.

1 bunch watercress, torn coarsely
6 cherry tomatoes, halved
2 scallions, chopped
2 ounces feta cheese
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice, or more to taste
salt, to taste

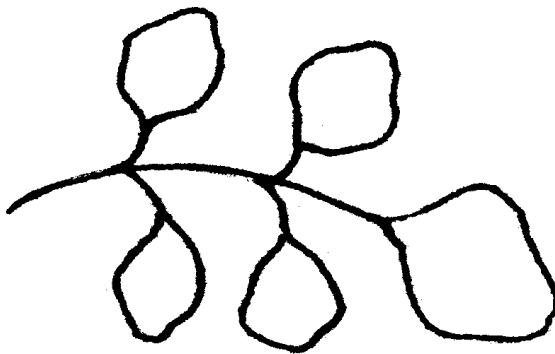
Combine all ingredients and gently toss together.

Variation Ideas:

-Add olives.

-Add 4 anchovy fillets.

-Top with walnuts.





PASTAS AND SAUCES

What kind of pasta should you use?

You don't want your pasta to swim in its sauce, but you also don't want the sauce to get lost in the noodles. So how can you decide which pasta shape is most suitable for which sauce? As a very general guide:

- **Thin, small, long shapes like angel hair, spaghetti or tagliatelle tend to go well with light vegetable, light cream sauces, light tomato sauces, light seafood sauces;**
- **Flat, long shapes like fettuccine or pappardelle go well with rich cream, butter, cheese or smooth meat sauces; and**
- **Thick, large, short shapes like penne, rigatoni or macaroni go good with chunky meat, seafood, heavier vegetable, heavier cream.**

Two notes on pasta:

- 12 ounces of dried pasta is enough for 4 people as main course.
- Cooked pasta can be reheated in the microwave.

3 KINDS OF EASY SAUCES

You can make a wide variety of simple pasta sauces which fall into one of three categories. Just follow the simple instructions below and you're on your way to making a wonderful Italian meal!

1. Olive Oil Sauces

Heat some olive oil; add chopped onion and chopped garlic. Sauté for 5 minutes or until lightly browned. Then add any of the following:

- Coarsely chopped mussels. Sauté for 1 minute; add a little white wine, salt and pepper, and heat thoroughly.
- Chopped fresh tomatoes, sliced black and green olives and chopped fresh basil.
- Chopped sun-dried tomatoes and broccoli florets.
- Chopped anchovy fillets, walnut pieces, rosemary and cayenne.
- Roasted red bell peppers, processed to a paste with little oil.
- Potatoes, cooked and cubed to bite-sized pieces; and green string beans, cooked and halved; and basil pesto.
- Dried mushrooms, soaked in warm water for 30 minutes and sliced.
- Fried eggplants, chopped; canned plum tomatoes, coarsely chopped; and fresh basil.

- Italian sausage, crumbled and sautéed, and raisins, soaked in warm water for 10 minutes.
- Capers, and zucchinis, cubed.
- Goat Cheese Pesto recipe
- Sun-Dried Tomato Pesto recipe.

2. Cream Sauces

Heat some heavy cream. Then add any of the following:

- Cooked ham, cut into thin slices, and maybe a tiny pinch of nutmeg.
- Canned peas, and a pinch of dill or mint.
- Grilled and sliced chicken breast, and a pinch of tarragon.
- Uncooked spinach, torn into pieces, and a pinch of nutmeg. (The piping-hot pasta will wilt the spinach.)
- Salmon fillet, sliced diagonally and paper-thin; simmer until the fish is cooked for 30 minutes and add a pinch of dill.

3. Butter Sauces

Heat some butter. Then add any of the following:

- Eggs, beaten and mixed with grated cheese with the cooked pasta. Stir until the egg mixture is cooked for 1 minute.
- Chopped onion, cooked until brown; add mushrooms and thin strips of prosciutto, and sauté for a couple of minutes.
- Chicken breasts, cut into thin strips, and crushed garlic.
- Smoked salmon, cut into strips, as well as a little heavy cream and grated cheese.
- 1/4 cup of heavy cream, 2 tablespoons of lemon juice, and peel of 1 lemon (for 4 servings). Cook until the sauce reduces to half.

TOPPINGS

After adding the sauce, a topping gives the pasta a nice added touch. You can add:

- Finely-chopped nuts.
- Bread crumbs, toasted with olive oil on medium heat until they achieve a golden color.
- Cheese: grated (Pecorino, Parmesan, Emmenthaler, Gruyere, Asiago, Romano); cubed or sliced (fresh mozzarella, Fontina); or crumbled or chopped (Gorgonzola, Brie).

Note: Pasta isn't traditionally served with cheese if it has seafood sauce.

Broccoli Rabe and Ziti

Servings: 4

1 pound broccoli rabe, cut into 1" pieces
8 ounces ziti pasta, cooked and drained
6 tablespoons raisins
3 tablespoons capers, drained
8 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 teaspoon red pepper flakes
2 teaspoons lemon juice
salt and pepper, to taste
3 tablespoons olive oil

Bring a large pot of lightly-salted water to a boil.

Add the broccoli rabe; blanch for 1 minute and remove.

Add the pasta and cook to your preferred tenderness.

Strain the pasta, making sure the water runs into a separate pot. Drizzle 1 tablespoon of olive oil over the pasta and cover to keep it warm.

Soak the raisins in the saved water for 5 minutes and then discard that water.

In a sauté pan, heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil; add the garlic, broccoli, raisins and capers and sauté for 4 minutes.

Add lemon juice, salt and pepper to taste.

Toss with the pasta to combine.

Broccoli-Peanut Noodles

Servings: 2

1/2 cup turnip, sliced thin
1 carrot, cut into matchsticks
4 ounces firm tofu, cut in 1 1/2" cubes
3 scallions, chopped
2 tablespoons peanuts
4 tablespoons chunky peanut butter
1/2 teaspoon ginger powder
2 tablespoons miso paste
1 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon chili sauce, or to taste
1/4 cup water
6 ounces oriental noodles

Prepare the noodles according to the package directions.

Lightly steam or blanch the vegetables.

In a small bowl, whisk together the peanut butter, ginger, miso, lemon juice, chili sauce and water.

Fold the vegetables, scallions, peanuts and tofu into the sauce.

Pour the sauce over the noodles and serve.

Variation Ideas:

- Omit peanuts and peanut butter, and use almonds and almond butter instead.*
- Use different vegetables like mushrooms and bamboo shoots.*
- Fry the tofu in a little oil until lightly browned before adding it to the sauce.*

Chinese Noodle Pancakes with Asparagus

Servings: 4

Looks complicated? Gather up some courage and try this recipe. It is worth it!

1 pound fresh Chinese noodles
1/2 pound asparagus
2 tablespoons oil
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
1 cup water
1 tablespoon cornstarch

2 tablespoons sherry
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon black bean sauce
8 ounces spinach, chopped
coarsely
salt and pepper, to taste

In a large pot of water, boil noodles until al dente. Drain well and rinse with cool water until the noodles are cool. Set aside. Cut off the tough end of the asparagus and discard. Chop the rest into 2-inch lengths.

In a sauté pan, heat 1 tablespoon of the oil over medium heat. Add the garlic and ginger and sauté for 1 minute.

Add the asparagus and 1/2 cup water and simmer for 2 minutes.

Put the cornstarch into a small mixing bowl; stir in the remaining 1/2 cup of water and the sherry.

Add this mixture, the soy sauce, and the black bean sauce to the pan with the asparagus.

Add the spinach. Cook until the leaves wilt and then set aside, keeping in warm.

Divide the noodles into four portions.

In a large pan, heat 1 tablespoon of oil. Add one portion of the noodles, flatten with a spatula and fry until the bottom becomes crusty, about 5 minutes.

Flip it over and fry until the other side is crusty, around 3 minutes.

Repeat this with each portion, adding a little oil if necessary.

Place the noodles on individual serving plates. Top with the sauce and sprinkle with sesame oil and serve immediately.

Farfalle in Brie Sauce

Servings: 6

If this doesn't make you lick your fingers, I don't know what will...

1 pound farfalle pasta, cooked
12 ounces brie cheese
2 1/2 tablespoons pine nuts
1 cup olive oil
2 cups crushed tomatoes
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons parsley, minced
6 basil leaves, chopped
a pinch of chili powder
a pinch of paprika
a pinch of cumin
a pinch of coriander
salt and pepper, to taste

Put pine nuts into a non-stick pan over medium heat, constantly shaking the pan or stirring with a spoon, until they get a light golden color.

Discard the rind of the brie and chop the cheese coarsely.

Sauté garlic in oil for 10 seconds.

Add tomatoes, parsley, basil and all the spices and cook for 3 minutes.

Add the brie and pine nuts; cook for 2 minutes over low heat and pour over the warm pasta.

Groats and Mushrooms with Pasta, Jewish

Servings: 2

An old dish gets the first-class treatment! Also great for using up leftover groats.

2 tablespoons olive oil

1/2 onion, sliced

1/2 pound mixed wild mushrooms, stems removed, and cut into a few pieces if too large

1/2 cup groats

1 1/2 ounces farfalle pasta

1/2 cup broth

1 teaspoon cornstarch

Cook farfalle and the groats according to package directions.

Heat the broth in a saucepan.

Pour a spoonful of broth into a cup, add the cornstarch and mix very well.

Bring the broth-cornstarch mixture back to the rest of the broth and simmer until it reaches desired thickness.

In a separate pan, sauté wild mushrooms with sliced onion in olive oil for 5 minutes.

Mix the sautéed mushrooms and onions with the groats and the farfalle.

Top with the thickened broth and serve immediately.

Mushroom and Spinach with Truffle Oil

Servings: 4

If you have never smelled truffle oil and are convinced that nothing can surprise your senses anymore, you'll be overjoyed with this experience!

2 cups mixed mushrooms, sliced. 1/2 onion, sliced

1 clove garlic, minced

1 tablespoon butter

1 cup red wine

1 cup vegetable broth

1 teaspoon thyme

1 tablespoon truffle oil

4 cups spinach, sliced very thin

Sauté onion and garlic in oil until onion becomes transparent.

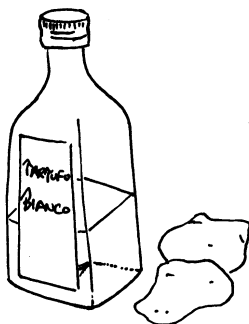
Add mushrooms and sauté until the liquid that will leak out from the mushrooms has evaporated.

Add red wine and vegetable broth and cook for 20 minutes.

Add thyme and spinach and cook until the spinach is wilted.

Drizzle with truffle oil and serve.

Serve over pasta or with crusty bread.



Pasta in Tahini Sauce

Servings: 4

Very uncommon but extremely tasty. The sauce is so creamy, and so different!

12 ounces wide egg noodles, cooked and warm
3 tablespoons tahini
1 cup plain yogurt
2 large red bell peppers, sliced thin
4 cloves garlic, crushed
1 lemon juice
1/4 cup olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste

Combine tahini, lemon juice, garlic, and yogurt. Mix well.

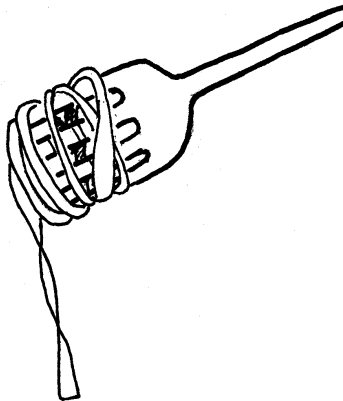
In a small pan, sauté the garlic in oil for 10 seconds.

Add the peppers and sauté for 3 more minutes.

Turn off the heat and add the tahini mixture to the pan.

Add salt and pepper and pour over the pasta.

Serve immediately.



Stir-Fried Bell Peppers With Ginger, Basil And Olives.

Servings: 4

2 red bell peppers, sliced thin
2 green bell peppers, sliced thin
2 small onions, sliced thin
1/2 cup black and green olives, pitted
1 teaspoon soy sauce
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
4 basil leaves, chopped
chili sauce, to taste
1 tablespoon oil

In a wok, heat the oil for a few seconds. Stir-fry the ginger in the oil for 10 seconds.

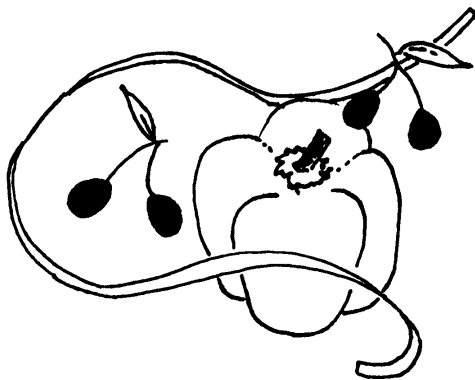
Add the onion and stir-fry for 1 minute.

Add peppers and stir-fry for 4 minutes.

Add basil, soy sauce and olives and cook for 1 more minute.

Mix with chili sauce and serve immediately.

Serve over pasta.



Tomato Sauce for Pasta

Servings: 4

1/2 cup olive oil
2 cloves garlic, sliced thin
2 cups diced or canned crushed tomatoes
2 onions, chopped
4 tablespoons chopped fresh basil leaves or 1/2 teaspoon dried basil
a pinch of nutmeg
a pinch of cayenne pepper
a pinch of sugar
salt and pepper, to taste

Heat the oil in a saucepan, and sauté the onion on very low heat for 10 minutes or until lightly browned.

Add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute. Add the rest of the ingredients; simmer for 10 more minutes or until the oil floats free on top of the tomatoes.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit basil; use parsley instead.

-Add a pinch of oregano.

-Coarsely chop 3 bacon strips and cook in a non-stick pan in their own fat until almost crisp. Remove the bacon and set aside. sauté the onion in the bacon fat over low heat for 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Add the rest of the ingredients, including the bacon, and follow the rest of the recipe.

-Chop 1 stalk of celery and sauté with the onion.

-Add 2/3 cup red wine with the tomatoes and simmer for 20 minutes.

-Add 1 tablespoon of sun-dried tomato paste with the tomatoes.

-Coarsely chop 2 Italian sausages and fry in the 1/4 cup olive oil. Remove the sausages and set aside; sauté the onion in the same pan over low heat for 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Add the rest of the ingredients including the sausages and 2/3 cup red wine; simmer for 20 minutes.

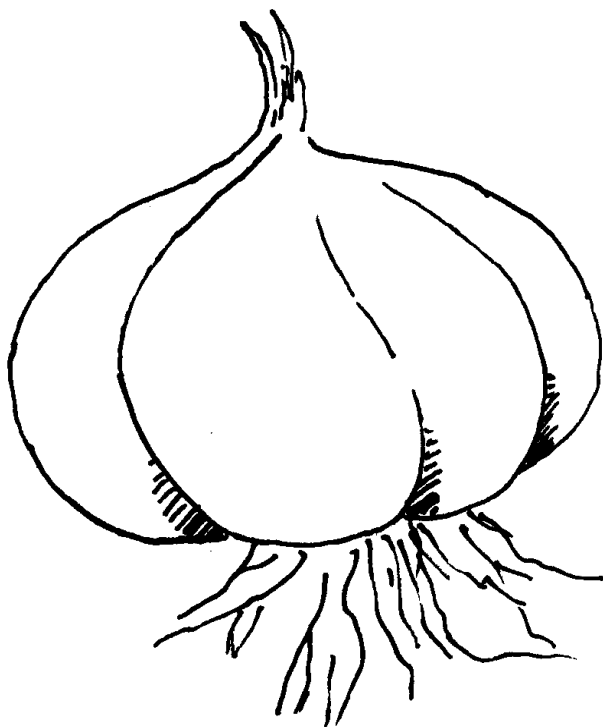
-Sauté 1/2 pound ground beef or chicken in 1/4 cup olive oil. Remove the meat and set aside. sauté the onion over very low heat for 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Add the rest of the ingredients including the meat and 2/3 cup red wine; simmer for 20 minutes.

-Add 1 1/2 cups of a combination of broccoli florets and sliced carrots, both blanched with the garlic.

-Sauté 2 chopped medium eggplants in oil. Remove the eggplants and set aside; sauté the onion over very low heat for 10 minutes or until lightly browned. Add the rest of the ingredients including the eggplant; simmer for 10 minutes.

-Add 2/3 cup heavy cream with the tomatoes.

-Add 1/2 tablespoon balsamic vinegar into the sauce right before serving.



Tuna Cream Sauce

Servings: 4

1 7-ounce can tuna in oil, crumbled
1 clove garlic, chopped
2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
1 egg, beaten
2 tablespoons butter
1/2 cup heavy cream
salt and pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients except the tuna in a food processor. Process into a paste.

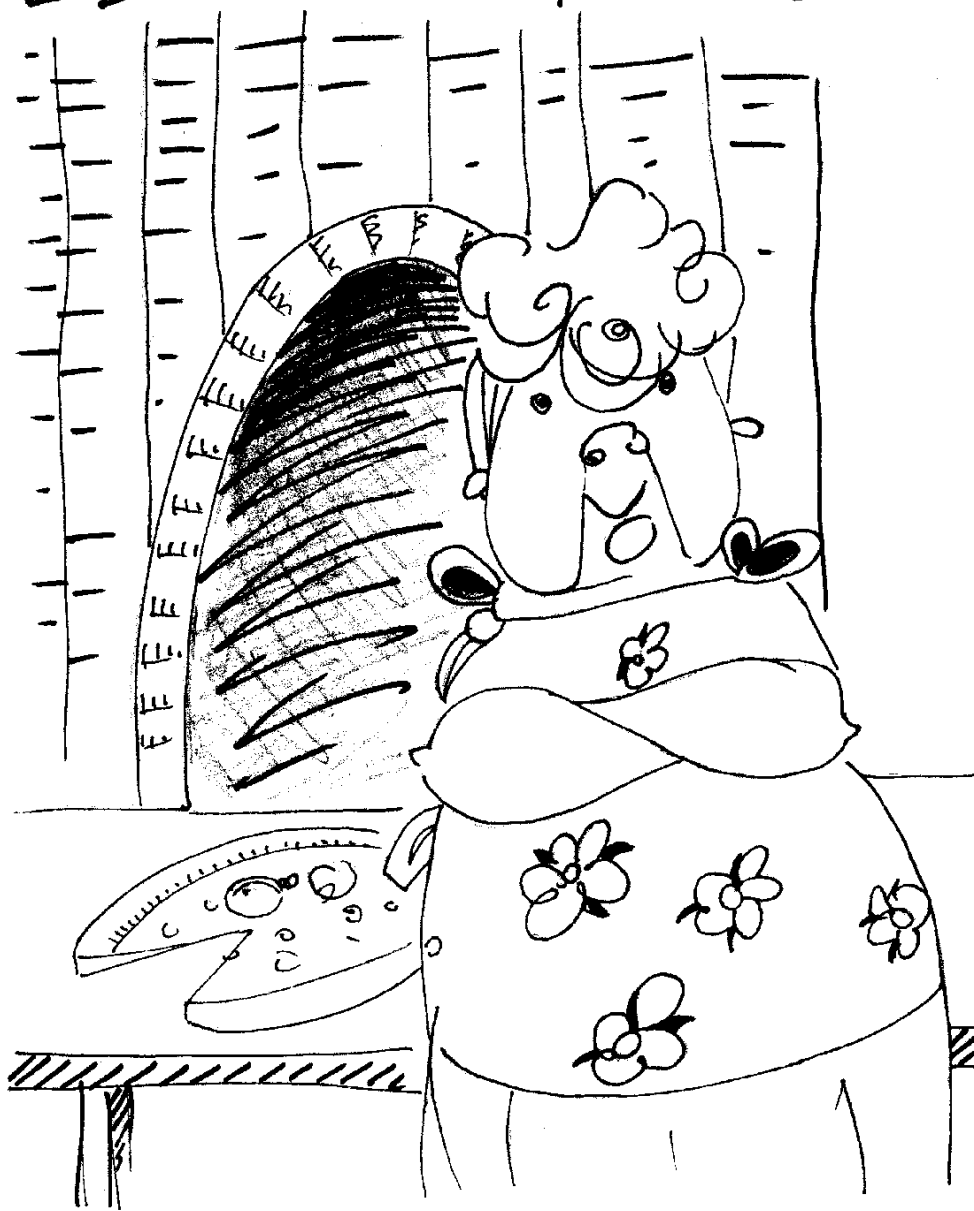
Scoop it into a small pan; add the tuna and cook for 2 minutes over very low heat.

Toss with hot pasta and serve.

Variation Ideas:

- You can process the tuna with other the ingredients to make a smooth sauce.*
- You can mix all of the ingredients by hand to get a chunkier texture.*
- Garnish with 1 tablespoon of capers.*

Pizzas and Breads



PIZZAS AND BREADS

Good pizza can be made at home; it's not that difficult to make an incredible concoction, even without the luxury of a real brick oven! A pizza stone is a great and inexpensive tool, well worth the money. A pizza pan will also work, although not quite as well; you can even bake pizza on cookie sheets (if you can settle for a slightly softer crust). Spill a little bit of semolina flour (around 1/4 cup to cover lightly) on the stone before placing your dough on it.

Your oven must be pre-heated and *well*-heated; cook on the lowest rack. To check if the pizza is cooked, pull a corner of the dough up slightly to see the color underneath. It should be lightly darkened. Imagine what you'd like to see on your plate in a restaurant, and try to reach that goal.

You can also use all of the pizza dough recipes in this book (especially the deep-dish one) to make *focaccia*, a round, flat Italian bread to serve with soups and salads or to use as sandwich bread. Brush the dough with olive oil and sprinkle with herbs or crushed garlic instead of putting sauce and toppings on it. Bake like pizza until it is light brown in color; cut into sandwich squares when cooled.

PIZZA TOPPING IDEAS

You can try almost anything on a pizza; some ingredients like fresh sausage, chicken, and fresh mushrooms are best lightly sautéed, while others such as green bell peppers are best roasted. Cured or smoked meats don't need pre-cooking. The reason you're roasting or sautéing some toppings is that certain vegetables will never cook on time and will release so much of their own juices that your pizza will become soaked and mushy.

The following toppings are scaled to top one 14-inch pizza. They are only suggestions; feel free to change the portions or to omit or add ingredients. Be creative - you can even break a couple of eggs on your pizza!

CHEESE TOPPINGS

- 1/2 cup ricotta and 4 ounces Fontina, sliced.
- 1 cup mozzarella, diced.
- 1/4 pound Gruyere, 1/4 cup Parmesan, 1/4 cup Romano, all grated.
- 2/3 cup mozzarella, 2/3 cup cheddar, 1/2 cup Parmesan and 1/2 cup Provolone, all grated.
- 2/3 cup Provolone.
- 1 1/2 cup Monterey Jack, grated.
- 2/3 cup cheddar and 3/2 cup Monterey Jack, all grated.
- 1/2 cup mozzarella, grated and 1/2 cup Gorgonzola, crumbled.
- 1/2 cup Gorgonzola and 1/2 cup feta, crumbled.

MEAT, CHICKEN AND FISH TOPPINGS

- 10 anchovy fillets and 1 cup black olive slices.
- 3/4 pound chicken meat, diced and cooked; 2 cups shrimp, cooked; and 1 avocado, diced.
- 1/2 pound chicken meat, diced; 1/4 pound sausage, diced; and 2 cups shrimp; all sautéed in very little oil.
- 12 thin slices of smoked salmon.
- 16 ounces fresh tuna, cubed; 2 tomatoes; 1 tablespoon of capers; 1 cup of black olive slices. (Do not put cheese on this one.)
- 1/4 pound bacon, lightly sautéed and coarsely chopped; and 1 cup Prosciutto, shredded.

VEGETABLE TOPPINGS

- 3 cups mushrooms, sliced; 2 garlic cloves, sliced; all sautéed in a little olive oil.
- 8 artichoke hearts, preserved in oil, cut in half; 4 ounces mushrooms, sliced and sautéed in a little olive oil.
- 2 small Italian eggplants or one small regular eggplant, cut into thin lengthwise slices and sautéed in a little olive oil; 1/2 bunch of broccoli florets, blanched; 1 red bell pepper, roasted and sliced.

Corn Bread

Servings: 6

1 1/4 cups cornmeal
1/2 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt.2 tablespoons sugar
1 cup milk
2 eggs, lightly beaten
3 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled

Heat the oven to 425 F.

Lightly grease an iron skillet (or an 8-inch pan if you don't have one) and put into the oven on the middle rack to warm it.

Mix milk, eggs and butter in a bowl, and beat lightly until the eggs are incorporated.

Mix all dry ingredients together in another bowl.

Add the butter mix and stir just until blended.

Pour the mixture into the skillet or pan. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until a nice golden color.

Let cool; cut into wedges.

Serve with chili or soup.

Variation Ideas:

-Instead of milk, use 1 1/2 cups plain yogurt, 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese, and an extra 1/4 cup of cornmeal (1 1/2 cups cornmeal total).

-Add minced onion or sliced jalapenos.

-Add cumin or cayenne pepper.

-Use 2 cups of cornmeal, 2 teaspoons baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon baking soda, 1 cup buttermilk, 1 tablespoon sugar and add 1 cup creamed corn.

Cornbread Pizza

Servings: 6

1/2 cup green bell pepper, chopped
1/2 cup red bell pepper, chopped
1 small onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, chopped
4 ounces mushrooms, sliced
1 1/2 cups mozzarella cheese, shredded
1/2 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon paprika
red pepper flakes, to taste
salt and pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon oil
1 recipe cornbread dough

Sauté peppers, onion, garlic and mushrooms in oil, until the onion pieces become soft and the mushrooms' own juice evaporates from the pan. Add all of the spices. Let cool.

Heat the oven to 400 F.

Put a greased skillet (or greased 8-inch pie pan) onto the middle rack to warm.

Pour cornbread dough into the skillet and flatten with a spoon.

Sprinkle the shredded cheese on the bread mixture and top with the mushroom topping.

Bake for 20 -25 minutes or until the top begins to achieve a golden color.

Pizza Crust, Deep-Dish

Yield: two 8-inch pizzas

1 1/3 cups water, warm
1 package active dry yeast
1 tablespoon butter, melted and cooled
4 cups flour
1 egg, beaten
a pinch of salt
a pinch of sugar

In a bowl, dissolve the sugar in the water. Add the yeast and let stand until foamy, about 10 minutes.

Stir in the butter; add the egg, salt, and half of the flour, and stir again.

Add enough of the leftover flour to make a slightly sticky ball. (Add the flour gradually to avoid using more than necessary.) Remove the dough from the bowl and knead it on a lightly-floured surface for 5 minutes.

Clean and grease the bowl, and place the dough back into it. Let it rest for 15 minutes.

Punch the dough down and cut it in half.

Heat the oven to 450 F.

Roll out each piece into a 5 1/2" circle. Let them rise for 15 minutes and then place them onto two greased 8" pizza pans. (If you don't have 2 pizza pans, just keep one of the doughs covered, bake one pizza, remove, and place the second one on it and follow the rest of the instructions. The pan will be warm but the pizza will still work just fine.)

Press dough with your fingertips to expand it to 6 1/2", starting from the center.

Let it rest for 10 minutes; then press until dough covers pan entirely.

Put the toppings on and cook on the lowest rack for 15-20 minutes.

Variation Ideas:

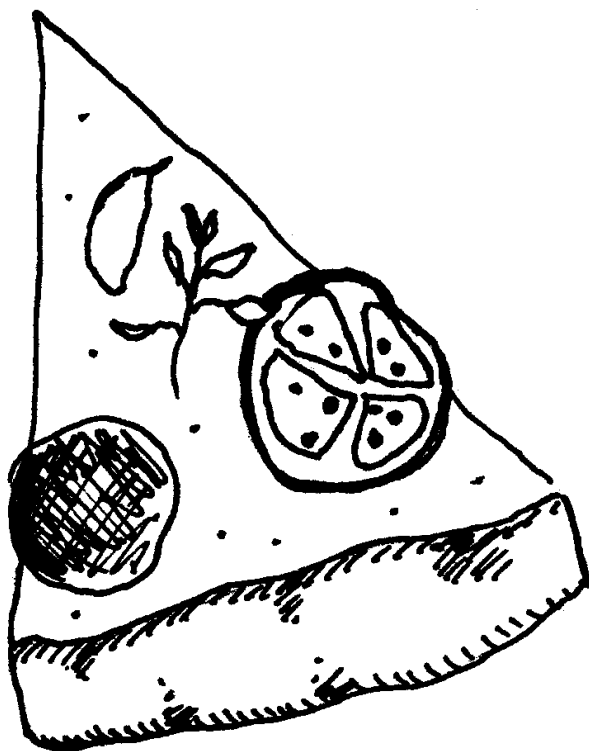
-Omit butter; use 1 tablespoon olive oil instead.

-Add 1/4 teaspoon each of dried basil, thyme, oregano, crushed or powdered garlic, chervil, and black pepper with the second addition of the flour.

-Use only 1/8 cup warm water, and add 1/2 cup of milk.

-Omit butter; use 1 tablespoon oil instead. Add 2 minced garlic cloves and 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese with the second addition of the flour.

-Use 1 cup of flour and 1/4 cup of whole-wheat flour.



Pizza Crust, Latin

Servings: 4

3 packages active dry yeast
1 1/2 cups water, warm
1/2 tablespoon sugar
2 tablespoons olive oil
2 1/4 cups flour
3/4 cup cornmeal
1/2 cup semolina flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 tablespoon black pepper
1 clove garlic, minced

In a bowl, dissolve the sugar in the water. Add the yeast and let it stand until foamy, about 10 minutes.

Add the remaining ingredients and mix. Remove the dough from the bowl and knead it on a lightly-floured surface for 10 minutes.

Clean and grease the bowl, and place the dough back into it. Let it rise for 1 hour.

Heat the oven to 500 F.

Punch the dough down, knead it a couple of times, and let rest for 10 more minutes. Divide it to four pieces to make individual pizzas, or, if you like, make one big pizza.

Roll the dough into a circle and stretch it with your fingertips on a 9" pizza stone or pan.

Put on the toppings; cook for 12-15 minutes on the lowest rack.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1/4 teaspoon of each dried oregano, cumin, and cilantro.

Pizza Crust, Thin

Yield: Two 14-inch pizzas

1 package active dry yeast
1 cup water, warm
3 1/2 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
a pinch of sugar

In a bowl, combine yeast, sugar and ¼ cup of the water. Let it rest for 10 minutes, until it is foamy.

Add the rest of the ingredients, sprinkling the water slowly. Only use just enough water for the dough to come together.

Knead for 10 minutes on a lightly-floured surface.

Clean and grease the bowl and place the dough back into it. Cover and let rise for 2 hours, or until its size doubles.

Heat the oven to 500 F.

Punch down the dough and let it rest for 3 minutes, covered.

Divide the dough into two, roll it out, and place each on a pan or pizza stone. (If you don't have 2 pizza stones, just keep one of the doughs covered, bake one pizza, remove, and place the second one on it and follow the rest of the instructions. The pan will be warm but the pizza will still work just fine.)

Push it out with your fingertips to cover the pan, or try it the real way: flatten it by pressing with the heel of your hand, until the dough is ½ inch thick. Pick it up, and stretch it by using your fists underneath slowly and patiently, letting the heaviness of the dough do the job. Place it back on the stone when it is full-size.

Put on the toppings and cook on the lowest rack, about 12 minutes.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 2 tablespoons olive oil with flour.

Tex-Mex Sauce for Pizza

Yield: 2 8-inch pizzas

2 pounds tomatillos, cut into quarters

1/3 cup water

1 onion, chopped fine

4 cloves garlic, minced. 1/2 teaspoon Tabasco sauce, or to taste

1 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1 teaspoon cumin

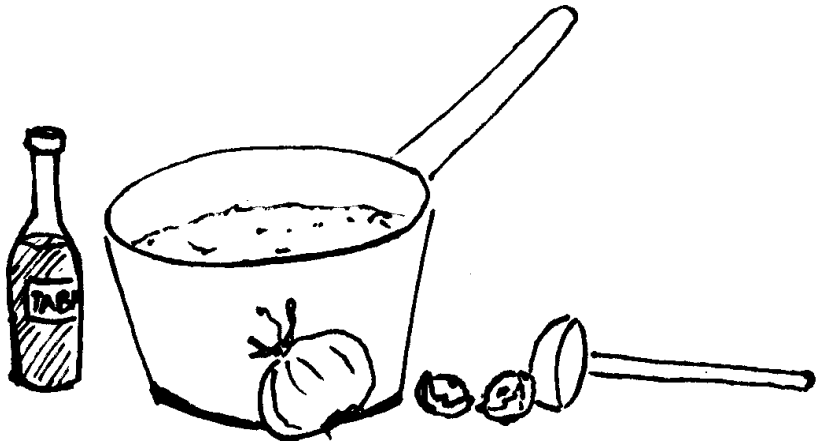
4 tablespoons cilantro, chopped

salt and pepper, to taste

In a saucepan, combine tomatillos, water, garlic, cumin, salt, pepper, Tabasco and Worcestershire sauce; bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 30 minutes.

Add the onion and cilantro; simmer until the sauce is thick, about 40 minutes.

Cool completely before using.



Tomato Sauce for Pizza

Yield: Two 12-inch pizzas

1 can (28 ounces) tomato puree or tomato sauce
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 teaspoon oregano
1 teaspoon basil (or 4 fresh basil leaves, chopped)
1 bay leaf
2 teaspoons red pepper flakes
salt and pepper, to taste

Combine all ingredients in a saucepan and bring to a boil.

Lower the heat and simmer for 30 minutes, stirring occasionally. Let it cool completely before using.

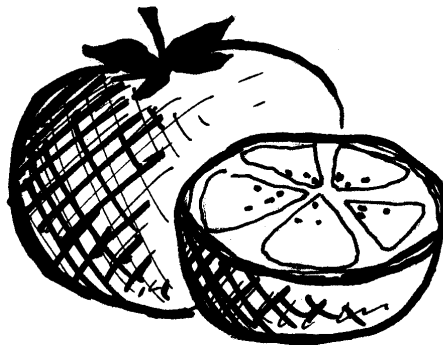
Variation Ideas:

-Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil. sauté 1 ½ chopped onions until transparent. Follow the main recipe.

-Heat 3 tablespoons olive oil. Dice 1 celery stalk and 1 green bell pepper sauté 1 ½ chopped onions with the celery and green bell pepper. Follow the main recipe.

-Add 1 ½ tablespoons Worcestershire sauce.

-Add 1 ½ tablespoons of barbeque sauce.



BEEF, LAMB AND PORK



Beef and Apricot Barbeque, South African

Servings: 4

The meat really will need overnight to soak all the flavor. So if you plan a day ahead, these awesome meat bits and wine-soaked apricots will taste their best.

1 pound beef, cubed	1 1/2 tablespoons apricot jam
1/2 cup red wine	1 tablespoon sugar
1/4 pound dried apricots	3 tablespoons oil
4 cloves garlic, diced	1 tablespoon corn starch
1 tablespoon curry powder	1 tablespoon water
2 medium onions, chopped	1 teaspoon salt, or more if needed
1/2 cup white wine vinegar	1 teaspoon black pepper

Combine wine and apricots and set aside overnight.

Mix starch and water in a small cup.

Sauté onions, garlic, and curry in oil in a pan for 2 minutes. Add jam, vinegar, sugar, salt and pepper and cook, stirring for a minute. Add in the starch mix and continue to cook, stirring until the mixture thickens. Let cool.

Combine the meat and the jam mixture and mix well. Refrigerate overnight.

Take the meat out of the refrigerator 1/2 hour before cooking time. Push the meat and the apricots alternately through skewers. (Don't squeeze them too close to each other.) Cook over medium to high heat on the barbeque, or broil it, or cook it on the pan.

Serve with boiled rice and plain yogurt.

Variation Ideas:

-Use any kind of jam instead of apricot jam.

-Omit beef and use lamb.

Beef Kebab, Southeast Asian

Servings: 4

1 pound round or flank steak, cut in 1" cubes
2 teaspoons coriander, ground
1 teaspoon cumin
1 1/2 tablespoons tamarind sauce
1 small onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 1/2 tablespoons soy sauce
Oil

Process the tamarind sauce, onion, garlic, sugar and soy sauce in a food processor.

Mix with coriander and cumin.

Pour the mixture over the meat and marinate for 1 hour.

Soak 18 or so satay sticks in water to prevent burning. (You can use any kind of thin skewers.) Thread meat onto skewers, pushing the meat close together. Brush with oil.

Broil or barbecue under moderate to high heat or pan broil in a non-stick frying pan.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1 teaspoon ginger.

-Omit brown sugar and tamarind sauce. Add 1 tablespoon curry powder and a pinch of sugar.

-Omit beef; use chicken breast instead.

-Omit beef; use shrimp instead.

-Omit beef; use pork instead.

Dry Curry Beef, Indonesian

Servings: 4

2 pounds beef chuck, cut into 1 1/2 inch cubes
1 teaspoon coriander seeds
2 teaspoons cumin powder
3 teaspoons red pepper flakes
1 lemon zest
3 tablespoons fresh ginger, minced
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1/2 onion, chopped
3 tablespoons water
3 tablespoons coconut flakes, unsweetened. 2 tablespoons oil
2 teaspoons cinnamon
2 teaspoons cardamom
2 teaspoons anise seed
1 1/2 tablespoons tamarind sauce
1 can (13 1/2 oz.) coconut milk
1 teaspoon sugar
salt, to taste

Combine coriander, cumin, red pepper, lemon zest, ginger, garlic, onion and water in a food processor and process to a paste.

Heat the oil in a wok; add the paste and fry for 7 minutes.

Add cinnamon, cardamom, anise, ground coconut, tamarind sauce and beef to the wok.

Stir for a couple of minutes. Add coconut milk, bring to a boil, and simmer for 40 minutes or until the beef is cooked, stirring occasionally.

Add the sugar and keep simmering until the oil separates and the sauce doesn't look milky anymore, about 20 minutes.

Add salt and serve.

Serve over boiled rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit beef; use chicken meat instead. (This will reduce the cooking time in a big way

- so be careful not to overcook it.)

Lamb Kebab In Walnut Sauce, Middle Eastern

Servings: 4

You can also use the walnut sauce with the East Mediterranean Style Ground Beef Kebab recipe.

Juice of two lemons

1/4 cup walnuts, chopped fine

1/4 cup flat parsley, chopped fine

1 clove garlic, chopped fine

3 tablespoons fresh mint, chopped (or 1/2 tablespoon dried)

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 tablespoons water

1 pound lamb, from the leg, boned or the loin, cubed

3 tablespoons olive oil

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 onion, grated

1 teaspoon cumin

Salt, black pepper and cayenne pepper, to taste

3 tablespoons oil

To make the walnut sauce, puree the walnuts, parsley, chopped garlic, mint, salt, pepper, cayenne, olive oil, water, and half of the lemon juice in a food processor. Refrigerate.

In a bowl, combine the rest of the lemon juice with the rest of the ingredients except for the oil and refrigerate overnight.

Remove the meat from the refrigerator 1 hour before cooking and drain.

Brush the meat with 3 tablespoons of oil.

Thread onto skewers and grill over hot barbecue (or pan-broil in a nonstick pan over moderate-to-high heat) until the meat is cooked to your liking.

Drizzle the walnut sauce over the meat.

Variation Ideas:

-Add two green bell peppers, cut into quarters, and 3 small onions, cut into the wedges on the skewers. Also grill 4 medium tomatoes, halved on separate skewers for their cooking time will be different, and you don't want to damp your meat with the tomato juice. Brush all the vegetables with oil.

-Omit the lamb and use chicken breast or pork instead.

-Omit the walnut mixture.

-Omit the meat and the walnut mixture. Use 4 chicken wings, 4 chicken thighs and 4 chicken drum sticks instead. Grill for 15 minutes or until done.

-Omit the meat and the walnut mixture; use 2 Cornish hens, cut into 4 pieces each instead.



Lamb Stew, Moorish-Spanish

Servings: 4

1 tablespoon olive oil
2 pounds boneless lamb, cut into 1 1/2 inch cubes
1 onion, chopped
15 dried apricots
2 tablespoons raisins
a pinch of cinnamon
1 teaspoon coriander
1 1/2 cups chicken broth
salt and pepper, to taste

Brown the meat in oil; add the onions and sauté until the onions are soft. Add apricots, raisins, cinnamon and coriander. Sauté for 2 minutes, stirring.

Add the broth and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 1 1/2 hours or until the meat is tender. If the sauce becomes too dry before the meat is cooked, add a little water or white wine.

Add the pepper and salt. Serve.

Serve over rice, bulgur rice, couscous, or mashed potatoes.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit apricots, raisins, cinnamon and coriander. Chop 1 tomato and 1 apple and add them 1 hour into simmering.

-Omit apricots, raisins, cinnamon and coriander. Use 3 pounds of lamb instead of 2. Add 1/2 cup green bell pepper, finely chopped, 1 teaspoon paprika, 1 teaspoon turmeric, 1 tablespoon brandy, 1 cup white wine, and 1/2 cup chicken broth before starting to simmer. Add 2 tablespoons white vinegar and 1 1/2 tablespoons honey 1 hour into cooking.

Meat Patties in Creamy Yogurt Sauce, Indian

Servings: 4

The soaked patties become very moist and soft, and the yogurt sauce gives it a perfect texture and fragrance.

1 pound ground beef
2 teaspoons cumin powder
2 teaspoons turmeric
2 teaspoons ground coriander
1 1/2 teaspoons garlic powder
1 1/2 teaspoons ginger powder
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper,
or more to taste
salt, to taste

3/4 cup dried bread crumbs
1 1/2 tablespoons butter
2 cups buttermilk
2 cups plain yogurt
a pinch of sugar
a pinch of salt
1 teaspoon cumin powder
1 tablespoon dried mint flakes
2 tablespoons water

In a bowl, mix the yogurt, sugar, salt, cumin, mint and water. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, combine the ground beef, turmeric, coriander, garlic, ginger, cayenne, salt, breadcrumbs, and 2 teaspoons of cumin. Knead well until pasty. (Add a little water if the mixture is too dry to combine.) Divide into pieces and shape into hamburger patties.

In a pan, heat the butter and fry the patties until both sides are browned.

Remove the patties from the pan; soak them in buttermilk for 5 minutes. Drain and discard the buttermilk.

Return the patties to the pan. Pour in the yogurt sauce and heat over low-to-medium heat for a couple of minutes.

Serve with boiled rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit buttermilk; use regular milk instead.

-Omit beef; use ground chicken or turkey instead.

Pork Chops With Orange And Rosemary

Servings: 4

1 orange, squeezed
2 tablespoons butter
4 medium pork chops
2 teaspoons dried rosemary
salt, to taste

Heat the butter in a pan and fry the chops until nicely browned on both sides.

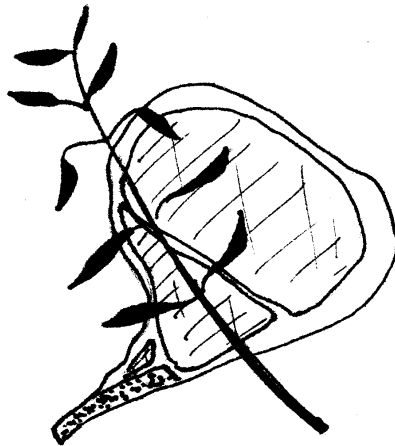
Sprinkle with rosemary and pour the orange juice over the meat.

Reduce the heat and simmer for 2 minutes.

Season with salt and serve.

Variation Ideas:

- Peel and slice another orange, add with the orange juice and rosemary.*
- Omit the chops and use boneless pork steaks instead.*
- Omit the chops and use chicken breasts instead.*



Pork Curry, Southeast Asian

Servings: 4

The next day it will be even tastier!

1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
1 teaspoon dried red chili pepper
1 tablespoon soy sauce
2 teaspoons turmeric
2 tablespoons brown sugar
1 pound pork loin, cut into bite-sized chunks
2 1/2 cups water
1 onion, chopped fine
2 cloves garlic, chopped
3 tablespoons tamarind sauce
1/2 lime peel, sliced thin
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon fish sauce

In a bowl, combine ginger, dried chili peppers, brown sugar and meat. Coat the meat thoroughly.

Heat the butter in a pan over low heat. Add the meat and cook, stirring constantly until the meat is no longer pink and the liquid has evaporated, around 5 minutes.

Stir in the water, turmeric, soy sauce, garlic and onion. Simmer for 40 minutes or until the meat is tender.

Add tamarind juice and fish sauce.

Variation Ideas:

- Instead of fish sauce, use 1/2 tablespoon anchovy paste mixed with a little water.

Sausage Stew, Spanish

Servings: 4

1 tablespoon olive oil
1 onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
4 fresh pork sausage
1 carrot, chopped
2/3 cup crushed tomatoes
2 tablespoons red wine

a pinch of sugar
a pinch of marjoram
a pinch of fennel seeds
a pinch of oregano
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped fine
salt and pepper, to taste

Heat the oil in a saucepan. Add the onion, garlic, carrot and sausages and sauté for 10 minutes, stirring constantly.

Stir in the tomato, wine, peppers, and sugar. Lower the heat and simmer for 25 minutes until sausages are cooked.

Variation Ideas:

-Cube 3 sausages and add a 14-ounce can of cannellini beans with 2/3 cup chicken stock at the last 25 minutes of cooking.

-Garnish with 3 tablespoons of fresh bread crumbs fried in ½ tablespoon butter until lightly browned.



Steak Kebab, African

Servings: 4

1 pound round or flank steak
a pinch of sugar
2 teaspoons garlic powder
2 teaspoons ginger, ground
2 teaspoons paprika
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon chili powder, or to taste
1/2 cup peanuts, coarsely ground
salt and pepper, to taste
oil

Cut the steak into 1-inch strips.

In a bowl, mix the rest of the ingredients except the oil. Add the meat and mix well, pushing the meat lightly into the spices with a spoon.

If you have time, let it marinate in a cool place for a few hours.

Soak four or more satay sticks (you can use any kind of thin skewers) in water to prevent burning while cooking.

Thread the steak onto the sticks, pushing the meat close together.

Heat a broiler or barbecue grill. (You can use a non-stick frying pan instead.) Brush the meat lightly with the oil.

Cook over moderate-to-high heat for 7 minutes on each side.

Variation ideas:

-Use chicken breast instead of steak.

Stir-Fried Pork, Chinese

Servings: 4

1/2 pound lean pork, sliced thin against the grain
1 tablespoon cornstarch
4 tablespoons soy sauce
1 pound mixed vegetables
4 scallions, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tablespoon fresh ginger, minced
a pinch of dried red pepper
1/4 cup broth or water
1 tablespoon sherry or red wine
3 tablespoons oil

Combine the cornstarch and one tablespoon of soy sauce; add the pork and toss to coat. Let it sit for 15 minutes.

In a small cup, combine the broth or water with 3 tablespoons of soy sauce and 1 tablespoon of sherry.

In a pan or wok, heat 1 ½ tablespoons of oil; add garlic and brown very lightly.

Add pork mixture and the dried red pepper and stir-fry for 3 minutes. Remove from the pan.

In the pan, heat 1 ½ tablespoons of oil; add ginger and fry for 5 seconds. Add vegetables and stir-fry for 2 minutes.

Stir in the broth or water mixture, cook for a couple of minutes and return the pork to the pan; heat thoroughly.

Garnish with scallions and serve immediately.

Ideas for the mixed vegetables to use in this recipe:

Celery (matchstick-size cut), dried mushrooms (soaked in warm water and sliced), bamboo shoots, water chestnuts, green peppers (seeded and matchstick-size cut), onions (sliced), bean sprouts, tofu, baby corn, cabbage (thinly shredded), snow peas, carrots (matchstick-size cut and lightly blanched), broccoli florets (lightly blanched).

Sweet Pork, Thai

Servings: 3

The meat comes out tender, filled with sweet and spicy moistness.

1 pound pork center loin
1/4 cup brown sugar
1/4 cup molasses
1/2 cup fish sauce
1 1/2 cups water
1/2 tablespoon garlic powder
1/2 tablespoon ginger powder
1 teaspoon chili powder, or more to taste
1 teaspoon cornstarch
2 teaspoons water

In a small cup, mix the cornstarch and 2 teaspoons of water. Set aside.

Combine rest of the ingredients, bring to a boil and simmer for 30 minutes.

Take out the meat; discard all the sauce but 1/2 cup.

Slice the meat thinly against the grain.

Add cornstarch mix with the sauce and cook until the sauce is slightly thickened.

Serve the meat drizzled with the sauce.

Serve over boiled Chinese noodles or rice or dice and use for fried rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Cut up some vegetables Chinese style, stir-fry them in little oil and combine with the meat and sauce.

-Use boneless country style pork ribs instead of loin.

Chicken



Almond Crust Chicken, Pakistani

Servings: 2

Easy to cook; very moist and crunchy! Will lose its crunchiness if reheated.

1/2 cup almond, slivered
1 clove garlic, crushed. 2 teaspoons ginger, ground
2 teaspoons paprika, ground
1 teaspoon cumin, ground
1 teaspoon salt, or to taste
1 teaspoon black pepper, or to taste
2 tablespoons butter, at room temperature
1 pound chicken (thighs, breasts, etc.), skin on

Melt the butter in a saucepan or in the microwave and let it cool to room temperature.

Preheat the oven to 375 F.

Ground the almonds and garlic in a food processor until it looks crumbly.

Combine the almond mix with ginger, salt, paprika, cumin, and pepper.

Dip the chicken in the butter.

Coat the chicken with the almond mixture.

Place the chicken skin-side up on a baking pan and bake for 35 minutes or until done. (If you prick the meat with a knife the juice should run out clear.)

Serve with rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit chicken and use pork chops instead.

-Use fresh ginger.

Chicken Balls in Mascarpone Sauce, Italian

Servings: 2

I'm sure you've paid over \$15.00 for a dish similar to this one in a fancy restaurant...

1/2 pound boneless chicken breast, cubed
1/2 cup dried bread crumbs
1/4 cup parmesan cheese, grated
1 egg
1 clove garlic, crushed
2 ounces mascarpone cheese
1/2 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons butter
salt and pepper, to taste
a pinch of nutmeg
parmesan cheese, on the side

Place the chicken in a food processor and process for a couple of minutes until it has the texture of ground meat.

Scoop the chicken into a bowl. Add the breadcrumbs, egg, Parmesan cheese and garlic, and knead for 1 minute or until combined well. Make balls in the size of medium walnuts and refrigerate for 1/2 hour.

Boil some water in a pot and cook the balls for a couple of minutes until the balls start floating on the surface. Drain.

Melt the butter in a saucepan; add the balls and cook over medium heat until lightly browned all sides.

Add cream, mascarpone, nutmeg, salt and pepper. Heat thoroughly, sprinkle with additional Parmesan cheese, and serve.

Serve over spaghetti or fettuccine.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit chicken; use ground beef instead.

Chicken in Grape Juice, Italian

Servings: 4

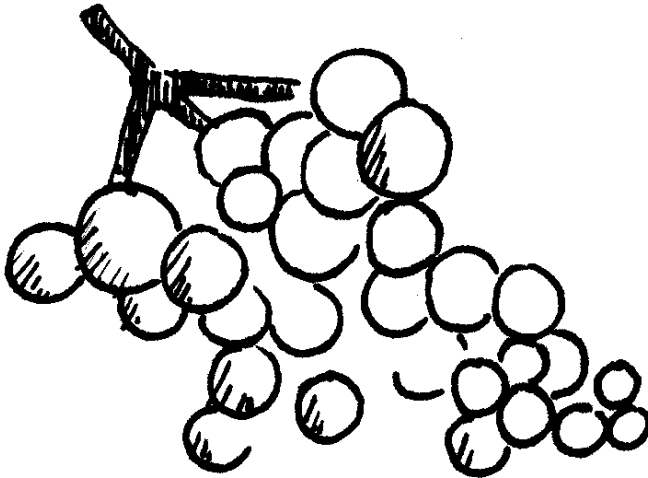
The sweet juice adds much taste to this very easy recipe.

2 pounds chicken pieces like whole legs or thigh
1 cup parsley, minced
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 pound green grapes, seedless
16 grapes, for garnish
3 tablespoons olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste

Process 1 pound of grapes until smooth and push through the strainer. Discard the pulp.

Brown the chicken pieces in olive oil for about 10 minutes. Discard the oil.

Add the garlic, parsley, salt, pepper and grape juice to the chicken. Simmer until cooked, about 40 minutes. (If the pan gets too dry before the meat is cooked, add a little water.) Garnish with grapes.



Chicken Kebab, Japanese

Servings: 4

6 boneless chicken thighs, cut into bite-sized pieces

5 scallions, cut into 1 1/2-inch long pieces

8 button mushrooms

1 cup soy sauce

2/3 cup sugar

2 tablespoons sake

2 tablespoons flour

Combine soy sauce, sugar and sake.

Mix into the flour.

Bring to a boil; reduce the heat and simmer for 10 minutes.

Thread the chicken and scallions onto thin skewers.

Heat a broiler or barbecue to medium heat. (You can use a non-stick frying pan if you like.) Cook the chicken pieces for 5 minutes on each side, generously brushing with the sauce.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit sake; use white wine instead.

-Use 1 green and 1 red bell pepper, sliced.

-Use 1 red onion, cut into wedges.

-Use 1 small zucchini, sliced.

-Skin the chicken. Brush it lightly with oil before cooking.

-Omit chicken; use 1 tuna steak instead, cut into bite-sized cubes.

-Omit the chicken; use shrimp instead.

Chicken Stew in Coconut Milk, Southeast Asian

Servings: 4

3 1/2 pounds chicken, cut into 4 or 8 pieces
4 cloves garlic, chopped
1 onion, chopped
4 macadamia nuts or 8 almonds or any kind of nuts
1 teaspoon coriander, ground
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 small jalapeno pepper, sliced
1 lime zest
1 teaspoon sugar. 2 1/2 cups coconut milk
1 tablespoon oil
salt, to taste

In a food processor, grind the garlic, onion, nuts, coriander, turmeric, chili to a fine paste.

Fry the paste in oil briefly to bring out the flavor.

Add the rest of the ingredients to the pan; stir well to coat the chicken.

Bring to a boil. Lower the heat and let simmer, stirring occasionally for 35 minutes or until the chicken is cooked and the sauce is thickened.

Serve over boiled Jasmine rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Coat the chicken with flour and brown it beforehand in separate oil; then add into the pan with the paste and coconut milk to reduce the overall cooking time. (Do not fry the paste, just use as it is.)

Chicken Stew, French

Servings: 4

3 1/2 pounds chicken, cut into 4 to 5 pieces	1/2 cup white wine
2 tablespoons oil	2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons butter	1 bay leaf
1 large onion, sliced thin	a pinch of thyme, dried
1 large carrot, sliced thin	1/2 stalk celery, chopped fine
1 1/2 tablespoons tomato puree	1 cup mushrooms, quartered
2 tablespoons flour	1 1/2 cups tomatoes, chopped
1 cup chicken broth	salt and pepper, to taste

Coat the chicken with flour; brown in 1 tablespoon oil and 1 tablespoon butter.

Add the rest of the ingredients except the mushrooms and tomatoes (including the rest of the oil and butter).

Bring to a boil; lower the heat and simmer for 1 hour or until the chicken is cooked.

Add the mushrooms and tomatoes 1/2 hour into the cooking. If the pan gets too dry before the chicken is cooked, add a little more wine. If it is too watery, then turn the heat up to high, uncover the pan, and evaporate for a few minutes, being careful not to burn. Serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the rest of the oil and butter from the broth. Instead, chop 3 bacon strips and fry with the chicken.

-Serve with croutons made out of 4 slices of bread. (You can either brown them lightly without any oil on a non-stick pan over moderate heat, or you can brush them with melted butter and bake them in a 425 F oven for about 8 minutes.)

-Omit the chicken; instead use 2 pounds of boneless veal, cut into 2-inch cubes.

-Add 1/2 tablespoon of rosemary.

Chicken with Pineapple, Caribbean

Servings: 2

The juices and rum give a complex flavor to this otherwise basic food.

3/4 pound chicken breast halves, no skin, no bone
3 tablespoons flour
2 tablespoons oil
2 scallions, chopped
1 large garlic, crushed
1/4 cup rum
1/2 cup canned pineapple chunks in juice, drained and sliced into matchstick-sized pieces
3 tablespoons pineapple juice
1/2 cup canned mushrooms, drained
1 ounce canned water chestnuts, drained and sliced into matchstick-sized pieces
1/2 small jalapeno chili pepper, sliced very thin
1 plum tomato, sliced lengthwise
1/4 cup orange juice
2 tablespoons soy sauce

Cut the chicken into thin strips. Coat in the flour and lightly brown in heated oil. Set aside.

Add garlic and scallions to the oil and fry until the garlic is a light golden color.

Add rum and bring to a boil.

Add all remaining ingredients except the meat and bring to a boil.

Add chicken; stir well and cook for 5 minutes.

Serve over boiled rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit chicken and use pork instead.

-Omit water chestnuts and use kohlrabi instead.

-Omit rum and use brandy instead.

Chicken with Spicy Pineapple Chutney, Balinese

Servings: 4

4 chicken breast halves, no skin, no bone, cut 1/2" thick
dried bread crumbs
oil, to fry
1 can (8 ounces) pineapple chunks in juice, drained
3 tablespoons soy sauce
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1/4 cup white wine vinegar
a pinch of cinnamon
a pinch of ground cloves
2 teaspoons Dijon mustard
2 teaspoons red pepper flakes, or more to taste
2 tablespoons fresh basil leaves, chopped
1 tablespoon oil

Coat the chicken cubes in breadcrumbs and let sit in the refrigerator until the chutney is ready.

To make the chutney, sauté the onions and garlic in oil in a saucepan for a couple of minutes until the onions are transparent. Add the pineapple chunks, soy sauce, white wine vinegar, cinnamon, cloves, mustard, basil, and red pepper flakes. Cook for 1 minute. Pour contents of the pan into a food processor and process for about 30 seconds until almost creamy. Keep the chutney warm.

Heat some oil in a skillet and fry the chicken until brown.

Drizzle some chutney on individual plates; place the chicken on it, and top with more chutney.

Serve with boiled rice. Goes great with fried fish!

Variation Ideas:

-Omit red pepper flakes. Remove the seeds from a green chili, chop the pepper, and saute with the onion.

-Bake the chicken in 350 F for 20 minutes instead of frying.

Grilled Chicken, Balinese

Servings: 4

Grilled chicken in this style will attract large number of fans, from exotic food lovers to those with more conservative tastes. A must for a barbeque party!

3 pounds chicken pieces (thighs, drums, breast etc.)

1 large onion, chopped

2 large cloves of garlic, chopped

1 tablespoon fresh ginger, chopped

3 teaspoons red pepper flakes, or to taste

3 tablespoons cashew nuts, chopped

2 1/2 tablespoons ketchup

1 1/2 tablespoons brown sugar

3 tablespoons soy sauce

4 tablespoons oil

Combine onion, garlic, nuts, ginger and pepper in a food processor and process into a coarse paste.

Fry the chicken pieces in oil until golden brown. Remove the chicken.

Discard all of the oil except 1 tablespoon. Fry the processed paste in the oil for 2 minutes. Add the soy sauce and sugar and cook for 1 minute more, stirring constantly.

Brush the chicken pieces with the paste. Grill, pan-grill, or barbeque over moderate heat until the meat is cooked, about 10 minutes per side, brushing with the paste often.

Serve with boiled rice and salad.

Variation Ideas:

-After frying the chicken and paste, combine and let it sit for 1 hour before grilling.

-Omit the cashews and use macadamia nuts instead.

Shredded Chicken in Lettuce, Chinese

Servings: 4

Aromatic chicken bits in crispy and cool lettuce will wake up your senses!

2 whole chicken breasts, skinned and boned
1 tablespoon cornstarch
5 tablespoons soy sauce, 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes, or more to taste
2 teaspoons fresh ginger, grated
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 egg whites
2 tablespoons white wine
a pinch of sugar
1/2 cup pine nuts (pignolia)
3 tablespoons oil

Put pine nuts into a non-stick pan over medium heat, constantly shaking the pan or stirring with a spoon, until they get a light golden color.

Slice the breasts paper-thin and cut the slices into thin shreds.

Put the meat in a bowl; sprinkle it with cornstarch and mix well.

Add the soy sauce, pepper, egg whites, wine and sugar and mix well. Let it rest for 15 minutes.

Sauté the ginger and garlic in oil for 30 seconds in a wok.

Add the chicken mixture to the wok and stir-fry 6 minutes or until chicken is thoroughly cooked.

Sprinkle with pine nuts and serve with the lettuce, so that people can put some meat into the lettuce, roll them loosely and eat.

Variation Ideas:

-Shred the lettuce, spread it over the meat, and serve with boiled rice.

-Omit pine nuts and use cashews instead.

-Use shredded pork meat.

-Use cubed chicken.

Stir-Fried Sweet Chicken, Chinese

Servings: 4

One of the classic combinations of salty and sweet in Chinese cuisine.

1 1/2 pounds chicken breast, no skin, no bone, cut into 1/2" cubes
2 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons fresh ginger, minced fine
5 tablespoons oil
1/3 cup honey
1/4 cup soy sauce
2 tablespoons red wine
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

In a bowl, mix chicken, garlic, ginger, soy sauce, pepper, wine, and 1 tablespoon of oil. Let it marinate for at least 30 minutes.

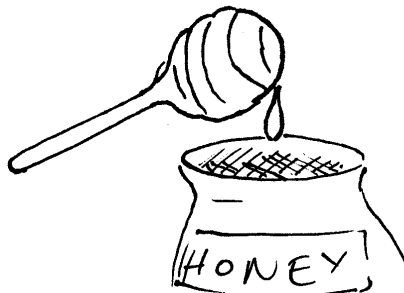
Heat the rest of the oil in a wok. Drain the chicken, setting the marinade sauce aside. Stir-fry the chicken until cooked, about 4 minutes. Add the marinade sauce and cook until the liquid is absorbed, about 1 minute.

Serve with boiled rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit chicken; use pork tenderloin instead.

-Add 1 teaspoon orange zest.



Fish and seafood



Grilled Salmon, Alaskan

Servings: 4

4 tablespoons butter, melted
1/3 cup honey
1/3 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon liquid smoke flavoring
1 teaspoon dried hot red pepper flakes
4 salmon steaks
a pinch of salt

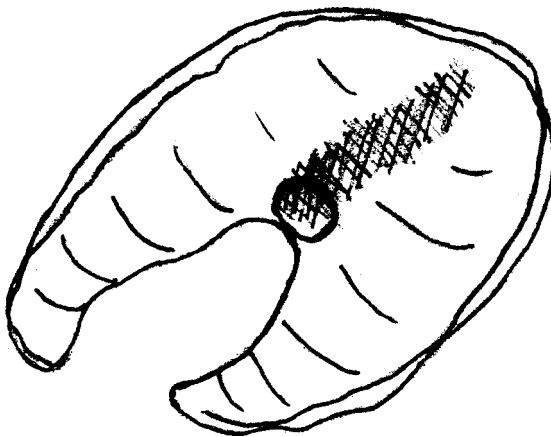
Combine butter, honey, brown sugar, juice, smoke flavoring, red pepper, and salt. Mix well.

Pour the butter mixture over the fish and marinade for 30 minutes.

Grill or pan-grill over medium heat for 7 minutes on each side or until cooked.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the steaks and use 2 pounds of salmon fillet instead.



Orange-Ginger Marinated Shrimp, Australian

Servings: 4

You wouldn't know shrimps could be this flavorful before eating these!

24 medium shrimps, cleaned
2 tablespoons butter
1 clove garlic, crushed
3/4 cup orange juice
3 tablespoons soy sauce
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
2 teaspoons fresh ginger, minced
2 tablespoons red wine

In a saucepan, mix all of the ingredients except the shrimps. Heat until butter is melted, stirring to combine. Let cool.

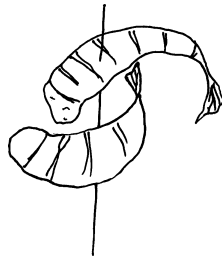
Add the shrimps and marinate for 15 minutes.

Take the shrimps out of the marinade. Push through skewers and cook over hot barbeque or on non-stick pan until the shrimps are pink both sides, about 1 minute.

Heat the leftover marinade and serve as a dipping sauce with the shrimp.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit soy sauce.



Pollock in Batter with Sauce, German

Servings: 4

The sauce is almost like an egg salad; it can also even be used as a sandwich spread.

4 pollock fillets
lemon juice
4 egg yolks, beaten slightly
flour
dried bread crumbs
oil, to fry
salt, to taste
4 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled, and cooled
1/2 cup mayonnaise
4 tablespoons capers
1 small onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, crushed
3 tablespoons anchovy paste
2 teaspoons prepared mustard
2 dill pickle slices, minced
2 tablespoons fresh parsley, minced
2 tablespoons fresh chives, minced
1 tablespoon fresh chervil, minced
a pinch of sugar

Chop or mash the hard-boiled eggs. Mix with all the ingredients coming after it. Refrigerate.

Rub the fish with lemon juice and salt.

Coat the fish in flour. Dip the fish in the yolks; then coat with breadcrumbs. Refrigerate for 15 minutes.

Fry the fish in hot oil until lightly browned on both sides. Serve warm with the egg sauce on the side.

Variation Ideas:

- Use any kind of white fish fillet.*
- Omit egg yolks; use 2 whole eggs instead.*
- Omit breadcrumbs; use oatmeal instead.*

Tuna Steak, Japanese

Servings: 2

Very fast and very tasty!

2 tuna steaks
2 scallions, chopped
1 tablespoon sesame seeds
2 tablespoons oil
black pepper, to taste

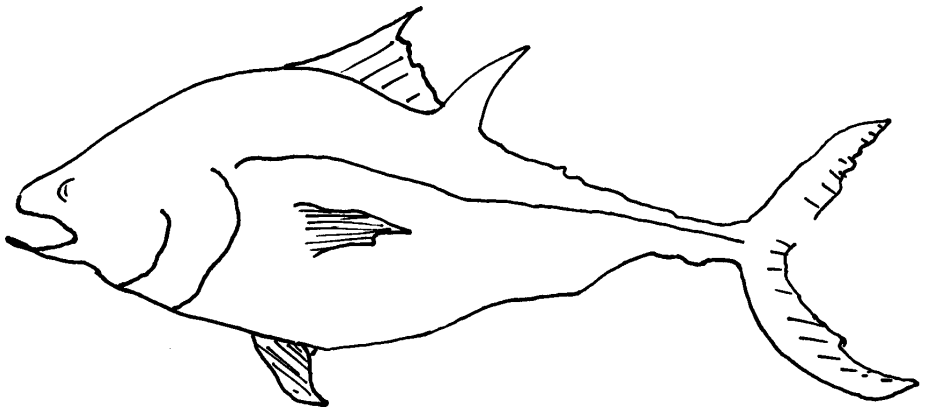
Sprinkle a generous amount of black pepper over the tuna.

Heat the oil until it just starts to smoke. Fry the fish on both sides until brown. (The fish should remain raw in the middle.) Slice the meat thinly; sprinkle with scallions and sesame seeds and serve.

Serve with Japanese Dipping Sauce and boiled rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit tuna; use salmon instead.



VEGETARIAN MAIN DISHES



Baked Bean Burritos

Servings: 2

2 burrito-size tortillas
1 can black beans, drained
3/4 cup sharp cheddar cheese, grated
3/4 cup tomato puree
1 small jalapeno chili pepper, seeded and minced
1 tablespoon burrito or taco seasoning

Heat the oven to 375 F.

Mash 1/4 can of beans and mix with half of the minced jalapeno and half of the seasoning.

Divide the mixture into two; place them onto the tortillas and roll into burritos.

Place the burritos, fold-side down, onto a baking pan.

Mix the rest of the ingredients, pour over the burritos, and bake for 20 minutes.

Serve with tomatillo salsa and sour cream.

Beans with Grilled Onions and Balsamic Vinegar

Servings: 4

2 cans white beans, drained
1 large red onion, peeled and sliced
1 scallion, chopped
2 tablespoons olive oil
4 tablespoons red wine
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped fine
salt and pepper, to taste

Grill the onion slices in a non-stick pan without any oil until both sides are brown.

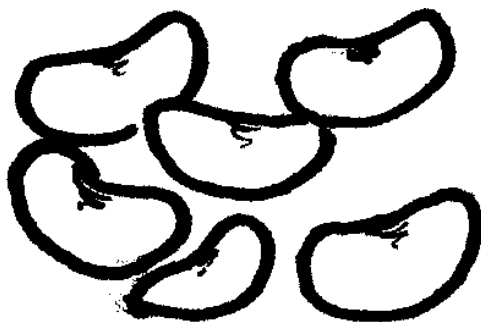
Add oil and sauté for 10 seconds.

Add wine and vinegar and cook for a minute.

Add the beans and scallions and cook until heated.

Season with salt and pepper and sprinkle with parsley. Serve immediately.

Serve with crusty bread.



Bread Crust Zucchini Quiche

Servings: 6

3 slices bread
1 tablespoon butter, at room temperature
2 cups zucchini, sliced
1 large tomato, chopped
1 teaspoon oregano, dried
1 cup cottage cheese
2 eggs, beaten
3/4 cup plain yogurt
1/3 cup Parmesan cheese, grated
2 tablespoons whole wheat flour

In a medium skillet, melt the butter and sauté the zucchini until tender, about 3-5 minutes.

Add tomatoes and oregano and sauté for 3 minutes.

Preheat oven to 375 F.

Cut bread slices in half diagonally and arrange them in a lightly-greased 9-inch pie plate.

Stir flour into zucchini mixture and spoon mixture into bread-covered pie plate.

In a separate bowl, mix together cottage cheese, eggs, yogurt, and half of the Parmesan cheese.

Spoon this mixture over the zucchini-tomato mixture and sprinkle with the remaining cheese.

Bake for 30 minutes or until firm in center.

Broccoli Stir-Fry

Servings: 2

1 1/2 pounds broccoli florets
2 tablespoons oil
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 teaspoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon honey
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, grated
1 teaspoon chili sauce, or to taste
1/4 cup walnuts

Mix the cornstarch, soy sauce, and honey.

Heat the oil in a wok or sauté pan and stir-fry the broccoli for 5 minutes.

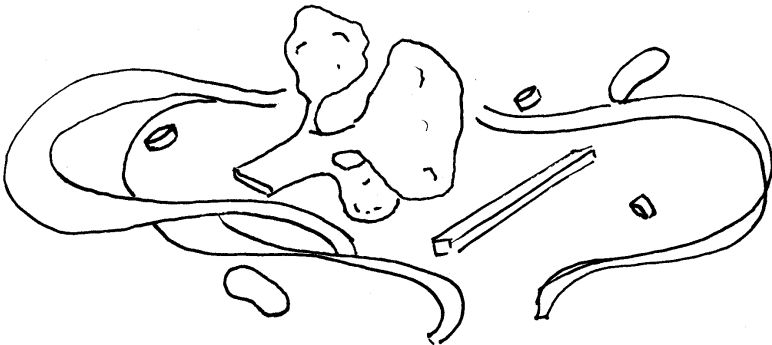
Add ginger and stir-fry for 30 seconds.

Add the cornstarch mixture and cook until the sauce is slightly thickened.

Add chili sauce and walnuts and serve immediately.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit walnuts and use almonds instead.



Cheese, Spinach and Noodle Casserole

Servings: 6

4 tablespoons butter
4 tablespoons flour
1 teaspoon salt
black pepper, to taste
2 cups 1% low-fat milk
1/2 pound cheddar cheese, grated
2 cups egg noodles, cooked
2 cups spinach, cooked and chopped

Heat the oven to 350 F.

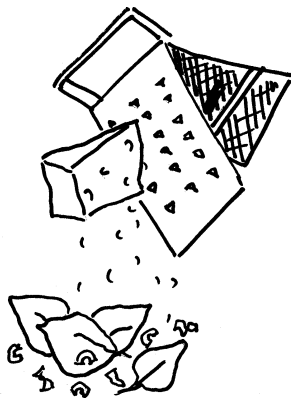
Melt the butter and add the flour, salt and pepper, stirring constantly to avoid lumps.

Add milk and cook until slightly thickened, stirring constantly.

Add 3/4 of the cheese and mix until melted.

Combine the noodles and spinach in a casserole dish. Pour in the cheese sauce and mix.

Sprinkle with the remaining cheese and bake for 40 minutes or until golden in color.



Chickpea Stew with Tomatoes and Swiss Chard

Servings: 2

1 can chickpeas, drained
1/2 cup crushed tomatoes
1/2 bunch Swiss chard, chopped coarsely
1/4 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tablespoon oil
3 ounces spaghetti, broken into 1 1/2 inch pieces
1/2 teaspoon paprika
1/2 teaspoon thyme
salt and pepper, to taste
1/2 cup Gruyere cheese or cheddar cheese, grated
1/2 cup water

Heat the oven to 350 F.

Sauté onion and garlic in oil for 1 minute.

Add spaghetti and sauté until the spaghetti is golden in color.

Add Swiss chard and sauté until the leaves are wilted.

Add the rest of the ingredients except the cheese and cook for 1 minute.

Pour the chickpea mixture into a casserole dish; top with cheese and bake for 15 minutes.

Corn and Zucchini Stew

Servings: 2

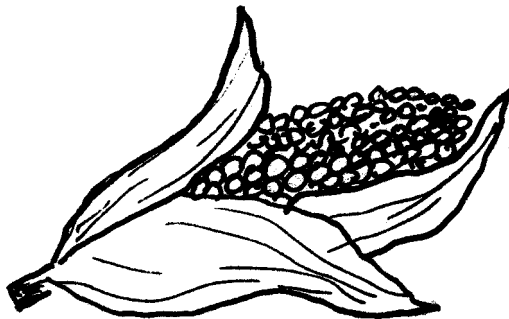
1 1/4 pounds zucchini, cut into bite-sized chunks
1/2 can corn, drained
1/2 onion, peeled and sliced thin
1 tomato, cut into chunks
1 tablespoon cilantro, chopped fine
1/2 cup 2% low-fat milk
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 small jalapeno chili pepper, seeded and sliced
a pinch of dried basil
a pinch of dried mint flakes
a pinch of cinnamon
a pinch of coriander
a pinch of clove, ground
salt and pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon oil

Sauté the onion until lightly browned.

Add zucchini and sauté for 3 minutes.

Add the corn, tomato, and jalapeno, and sauté for 5 minutes.

Add the rest of the ingredients and simmer until the zucchini is cooked.



Green Beans and Potatoes in Mint Sauce

Servings: 4

Very hearty with good bread and pickled vegetables on the side.

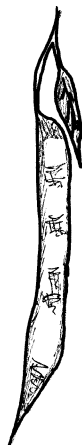
1 pound green beans, trimmed and cut into 2-inch pieces
2 potatoes, peeled and sliced
1 cup tomato sauce
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped fine
1 tablespoon fresh mint, chopped or 1 teaspoon dried mint
salt and pepper, to taste
water

Place green beans and potatoes in a deep pan, alternating them if possible.

Sprinkle with parsley, mint, salt and pepper, oil, tomato sauce. Add just enough water to cover.

Simmer for 20 minutes or until the vegetables are cooked. (If there is still too much liquid left, pour the liquid out into a saucepan, cook the liquid until it thickens, and then pour back into the vegetables.)

Serve warm.



Grilled Polenta With Wild Mushroom Sauce

Servings: 5

Showy, tasty, and good for guests.

1 recipe polenta, poured into a moist bowl and cooled completely
2 pounds mixed wild mushrooms
1 large onion
4 cloves garlic, minced
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 tablespoon rosemary
1 tablespoon tomato puree
1 cup red wine

1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 1/3 vegetable broth or water
2 teaspoons vegetarian Worcestershire sauce
salt and pepper, to taste
2 tablespoons olive oil
pecorino cheese
parsley, minced, to garnish
radishes

Cut the tough stems off the mushrooms, and chop them coarsely if they are too large.

Sauté onions, garlic and rosemary in 2 tablespoons olive oil, until the onion appears transparent. Add mushrooms and sauté for 10 minutes or until the liquid from the mushrooms has evaporated.

Mix the cornstarch with the broth and add to the pan.

Pour the tomato puree and wine into the mushroom mix and stir. Add Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper, and cook for a couple of minutes until the sauce thickens.

Cut the polenta into 3" - 5" triangles.

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a pan. Fry the polenta pieces in the oil until the bottom becomes golden brown. Add the radishes and then sauté very lightly on the sides.

Flip the polenta pieces over, sprinkle with some cheese, and fry until the bottom becomes golden brown.

Pour the mushroom sauce over a serving dish, top with polenta triangles, sprinkle with parsley and garnish with radishes.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit wild mushrooms and use sliced button mushrooms instead.

Grilled Vegetables in Balsamic Tomato Sauce With Couscous

Servings: 2

1 red bell pepper, cut into strips
1 zucchini, cut into strips
1 eggplant, sliced 1/2" thick
1 onion, cut to eighths
2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
1/2 cup crushed tomatoes
1 cup couscous
1 cup water, boiling
2 tablespoons olive oil
salt, to taste

Heat grill pan over high heat with olive oil. When it becomes very hot, add all of the vegetables to the pan.

Cook, turning the vegetables occasionally, for about 15 minutes or until the pieces are evenly browned and cooked through.

In a bowl, pour the boiling water over couscous; cover and let sit for 5 minutes.

Fluff with a fork, and season with salt.

Add vinegar, tomatoes and salt to the pan containing the vegetables, and heat thoroughly.

Place the couscous on a serving platter; top with vegetables and serve.

Kale-Filled Omelet

Servings: 2

1 cup kale, chopped coarsely
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove garlic, sliced
1/2 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
5 eggs , lightly beaten
salt and pepper, to taste

Sauté kale and garlic in 1 tablespoon of oil until the leaves are wilted. Sprinkle with vinegar, salt and pepper, and set aside.

Heat the rest of the oil into a non-stick 9" pan. Swirl the oil to coat the pan.

Pour the eggs into the pan and let it set a little.

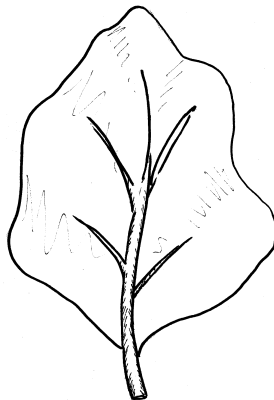
Pull the sides up to get the runny parts to flow underneath so they will set also.

Put the kale mixture on half of the omelet and flip the other half over.

Serve immediately.

Variation Ideas:

-Add ½ cup shredded cheese with the kale to the eggs.



Kidney Bean Chili, Indian

Servings: 2

Full of fragrance, this chili is a delicious change from the norm.

1 can kidney beans, drained
1 small onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
2 tablespoons tomato puree
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon coriander
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon chili powder
salt, to taste
1 1/2 cups water
1 tablespoon oil

sauté all of the spices in oil for 30 seconds.

Add onion, garlic, and ginger and sauté for 2 minutes.

Add the beans and tomato puree and cook for 1 minute.

Add the water and cook for 15 minutes or until the sauce is the consistency you prefer for your chili.

Serve with basmati rice and chutney.

Kidney Beans, Rice and Acorn Squash Chili

Servings: 2

Try with other kinds of beans.

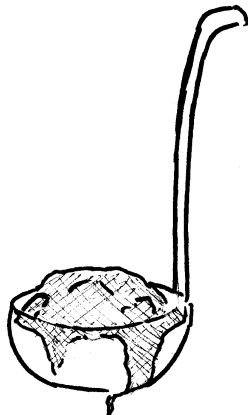
1 can kidney beans
1 cup basmati rice, boiled
1/2 onion, chopped
1 cup acorn squash, chopped and boiled
3 tablespoons sun-dried tomato halves, diced
1 tablespoon basil, dried
1 tablespoon cumin
1 tablespoon cardamom
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 tablespoon oil

Coarsely mash most of the beans in their own liquid.

Sauté the onions in oil until lightly browned.

Add spices and tomatoes and cook for 5 minutes.

Add beans, squash and rice, and cook until heated thoroughly.



Lentils, Potato and Vegetables, South Indian

Servings: 4

This dish is lively if you are not scared of spices and tastes very dull if you cut them down. Serve with some plain yogurt or fresh cheese to cleanse your taste buds every once in a while. It is tasty and filling.

1 cup red lentils. 2 1/2 cups water
2 potatoes, peeled and cut into little chunks
4 ounces broccoli florets
1 onion, sliced thin
1 teaspoon turmeric
1/2 teaspoon mustard seeds
1/2 teaspoon fenugreek seeds (optional)
1/2 tablespoon curry powder
1 small jalapeno chili pepper, seeded and sliced
2 tablespoons oil
1 tablespoon lemon juice
2 tablespoons dried coconut, shredded and toasted
salt, to taste

Place lentils, water and turmeric into a saucepan and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for 30 minutes or until lentils become soft.

In a separate pot, boil potatoes for 10 minutes or until almost cooked. Drain.

Heat the oil in a frying pan or wok. Add mustard seeds, fenugreek seeds, and curry powder and cook for a couple of minutes or until the mustard seeds begin to pop.

Add sliced onion, broccoli and chili. Stir-fry for 8 minutes.

Add potatoes and stir-fry for 2 more minutes.

Stir in lentils, salt and lemon. Heat thoroughly.

Garnish with coconut.

Serve over boiled basmati rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Use yellow split peas instead of lentils.

-Omit broccoli; add 4 oz French beans instead.

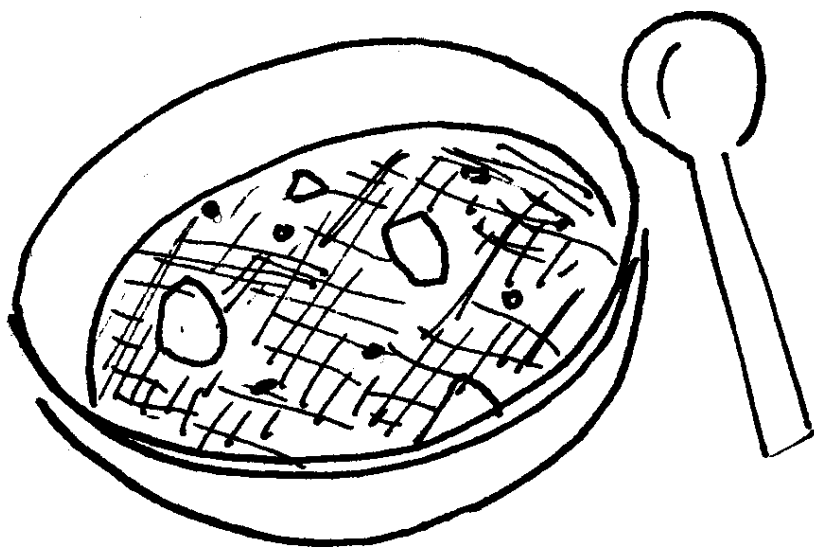
-Add 1/2 cup sliced mushrooms with the onion.

-Omit lemon juice; use lime juice instead.

-Omit curry powder; use cumin seeds or cumin powder instead. Add 1 minced garlic with the onion.

-Add 1 teaspoon sugar to the curry powder. Add 2 chopped tomatoes when adding the boiled potatoes in the recipe.

-Omit curry powder; instead use 1 inch fresh ginger root, finely chopped.



Mushroom-Coconut Milk Stew, Thai

Servings: 2

You can add more coconut milk to turn this stew into soup.

1/2 pound mixed wild mushrooms, cut coarsely if they are too large

1/3 onion, sliced thin

1 clove garlic

1/2 cup coconut milk

1 teaspoon coriander

1 teaspoon dried lemon grass

1/2 tablespoon lime juice, to taste

1 tablespoon tomato puree

1 teaspoon chili powder, or to taste

1 tablespoon oil

salt, to taste

Sauté the onion and garlic in oil until onion becomes transparent.

Add mushrooms and sauté for 10 minutes or until the liquid that will leak out from the mushrooms has evaporated.

Add the rest of the ingredients except for the lime juice and cook for 10 minutes.

Sprinkle with lime juice and serve.

Serve with jasmine rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit coconut milk, garlic, coriander, lemon grass, lime juice, tomato puree, and chili powder; instead make a Béchamel Sauce with 1/3 cup milk, 1 tablespoon flour and 2 tablespoons butter.

Add the sautéed onion and mushroom mixture and fold in with 1/4 cup sour cream, 1/4 teaspoon mustard. Season with salt and pepper.

Omelet with Fresh Herbs and Mozzarella

Servings: 2

4 eggs, lightly beaten
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon fresh chives, chopped
1 tablespoon fresh chervil
1/4 cup mozzarella cheese, grated
salt and pepper, to taste

Fold the herbs and pepper into the eggs and let it sit for 30 minutes.

Heat the butter on a non-stick pan and coat evenly.

Pour the egg mixture into the pan; stir gently a couple of times. When the eggs start to set, sprinkle the mozzarella onto half of the omelet.

Flip the plain side over the cheesy side and cook until the eggs look set.

Divide to two and serve immediately.

Variation Ideas:

- Omit the herbs and cheese; put blanched asparagus in the center of the omelet.*
- Sauté mushrooms and onions; add to the center of the omelet after sprinkling the cheese.*
- Omit mozzarella; use any other kind of cheese instead.*
- Omit herbs and cheese; serve with salsa on top.*

Peas With Cheese, Indian

Servings: 6

This Punjabi dish is perfect vegetarian Indian dinner fare!

3 cups frozen peas	1 teaspoon red pepper flakes, or to taste
1 onion, chopped	1 teaspoon fresh ginger, grated
3 medium tomatoes, chopped fine	1/4 teaspoon turmeric
1 cup Indian cheese (paneer), cubed	salt and pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon coriander, ground	2 cups water
	4 tablespoons oil

Process the chopped onion, ginger, and 1/3 cup water in a food processor until you have a smooth paste.

Heat the oil in a frying pan. When hot, put in the pieces of paneer in a single layer and fry until golden brown on all sides. Remove and place on a plate.

Put the onion mixture into the oil. (Keep your face away from the pan as the paste might splatter). Fry, stirring constantly, for about 10 minutes or until the paste turns into a light brown color.

Add the coriander, turmeric, red pepper and fry for another minute, stirring constantly.

Add the minced tomatoes and stir-fry for another 3 to 4 minutes or until the tomatoes turn a dark, reddish-brown shade.

Add 2 cups of water and salt and pepper to taste. Simmer for 10 minutes; add water if it gets too dry.

Add the paneer and peas and cook for 10 more minutes.

Serve over jasmine rice with yogurt on the side, accompanied with some small Indian side dishes.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit paneer and use tofu instead.

-Omit paneer altogether.

Polenta With Eggplant Sauce

Servings: 2

1/2 recipe polenta
1/2 ounce dried mushrooms
1 red bell pepper, cut into strips
2 cups eggplant, cut into 1/2" cubes
2 1/2 cups crushed tomatoes
1/2 onion, chopped
2 tablespoons parsley, chopped fine
1 tablespoon olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste

Soak the dried mushrooms in hot water for 15 minutes. Squeeze them dry and slice thin. Save the liquid.

In a large pan, sauté the eggplant cubes in oil for 5 minutes.

Add mushrooms and pepper and sauté for 4 minutes.

Add tomatoes and the reserved mushroom liquid and simmer for 40 minutes.

Pour over polenta on a serving dish. Sprinkle with parsley and serve.



Potato Omelet, Spanish

Servings: 4

This omelet could be served as a side dish for up to 8 people. If using as the main dish, serve a big salad on the side.

4 medium baking potatoes, peeled and sliced 1/8-inch thick
1 small onion, finely chopped
1/2 cup plus 2 teaspoons olive oil
5 large eggs, beaten
2 cloves garlic, minced
3 tablespoons parsley, finely chopped
salt and pepper, to taste
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper

In a skillet, cook the potatoes and onion in 1/2 cup olive oil over very low heat until the potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes. Take them out and let cool.

In a large flat bowl, beat the eggs with the rest of the ingredients except the salt. Add the potato mixture to the bowl and push it down into the egg mixture with a spatula. Let it rest for 15 minutes.

Heat 2 teaspoons of olive oil in the skillet and add the potato mixture, pushing down with the spatula.

Cook over medium heat, shaking the pan frequently, until it is lightly browned underneath.

Find a dish large enough to cover the whole skillet. Put the dish upside-down on top of the skillet; flip the whole thing over; then slide the potatoes back into the skillet and cook the other side until the bottom is golden brown.

Cut into wedges and serve warm or at room temperature.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1 teaspoon of dried herbs like oregano or mint.

-Add 2 ounces of cooked and diced meat with the eggs.

Skillet Beans, Cajun-Style

Servings: 2

1 can black-eyed peas, rinsed and drained
1 small onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 stalk celery, chopped
1/2 green bell pepper, chopped
2 tablespoons oil
1/2 large tomato, chopped
1/2 teaspoon thyme, dried
1/2 teaspoon oregano, dried
a pinch of basil, dried
1 teaspoon Cajun seasoning, or to taste
salt, black pepper and red pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon maple syrup
1 teaspoon liquid smoke flavoring
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 palmful rice
1/2 cup water

In a large skillet, sauté the onions, garlic and bell pepper in oil on medium heat.

Add chopped celery and continue to sauté for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add thyme, basil, oregano, salt, black pepper, Cajun seasoning, and red pepper.

Cover and cook for 5 minutes or until onions are golden, stirring occasionally.

Add tomatoes, maple syrup, mustard, rice, beans, liquid smoke, and water. Cover and simmer 15 more minutes or until the rice is cooked, stirring occasionally.

Variation Ideas:

-Use a different kind of beans instead of black-eyed peas.

Spinach Pie

Servings: 6

This will make a nice lunch or dinner. Serve with tomato salad, and maybe a hearty soup to start.

2 pounds spinach, chopped
8 ounces feta cheese, crumbled
8 ounces cottage cheese
1 egg
1/4 onion, chopped
2 cups bread crumbs
4 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled
2 teaspoons dill weed
salt and pepper, to taste

Put the spinach in a pot and wilt over low-medium heat, stirring constantly. Let it cool and squeeze out any moisture.

Heat the oven to 350 F.

In a bowl, mix the spinach, feta cheese, cottage cheese, egg, onion, dill, salt and pepper. Pour it into a lightly-greased casserole dish.

Mix the bread crumbs with the melted butter and pour on top of the spinach mix.

Bake for 30 minutes.

Stir-Fried Broccoli Rabe, Chinese

Servings: 2

1 pound broccoli rabe, steamed for 12 minutes
2 cloves garlic, sliced thin
1 tablespoon mustard oil or any other oil
2 tablespoons soy sauce
1 palmful almonds, slivered
1/2 tablespoon chili sauce, or to taste
a couple tablespoons of water

Stir-fry the sliced garlic and sliced almonds in mustard oil.

Add the steamed broccoli rabe to garlic, add soy sauce and a little water and stir-fry for 1 minute.

Mix in the chili sauce and serve immediately.

Serve with boiled rice.



Stir-Fried Vegetables, Indian

Servings: 4

2 medium carrots, cut into matchstick size
2 medium bell peppers, sliced
2 zucchinis, cut into matchstick size
4 ounces French beans, cut into 1-inch pieces
5 scallions, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
2 tablespoons oil
1 teaspoon curry powder
1 teaspoon cumin
1 teaspoon red pepper flakes
4 tablespoons cashews
2 tablespoons lemon juice
salt, to taste

Heat the oil in a large pan for a few seconds. Fry the curry, cumin and red pepper flakes in the oil for 30 seconds.

Add all of vegetables, salt, and lemon; stir-fry for 5 minutes.

Garnish with nuts and serve.

Serve over boiled basmati rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit scallions; use 1 sliced medium onion instead.

-Use any kind of nuts if you don't have cashews.

Sweet Potato Burritos

Servings: 6

Yummmmyyyyyy!!

4 cups sweet potatoes, cooked, peeled and mashed
6 cups canned black beans, drained and mashed coarsely
1 large onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons oil
3 tablespoons chili powder
1 tablespoon cumin
1 tablespoon prepared mustard
cayenne pepper, to taste
a pinch of oregano
8 ounces cheddar cheese, grated
2 1/4 cups water
12 flour tortillas
1 cup crushed tomatoes
salt and pepper, to taste
red pepper flakes, to taste

In a saucepan, sauté onion and garlic in oil until onions are transparent.

Add the mashed beans, chili powder, cumin, mustard, cayenne pepper, oregano, and 2 cups of water; cook for 3 minutes over medium heat.

Heat the oven to 350 F.

Place the bean mash, sweet potatoes, and cheddar cheese on each tortilla. Fold up the tortillas and place them, seal-part down, on a lightly-greased pan.

Mix 1/4 cup water, tomatoes, red pepper flakes, salt and pepper; pour over the burritos.

Bake for 12 minutes.

Serve these with sour cream, chopped scallions, chopped radishes and salsa.

Swiss Chard Frittata

Servings: 2

4 eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 cup gruyere cheese, shredded
1 cup Swiss chard, chopped coarsely
1/2 zucchini, sliced thinly
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped
1/2 onion, chopped
1 tablespoon olive oil
salt and pepper, to taste

Add the olive oil to a pan and heat for a few seconds. Sauté the onion in the pan for 1 minute.

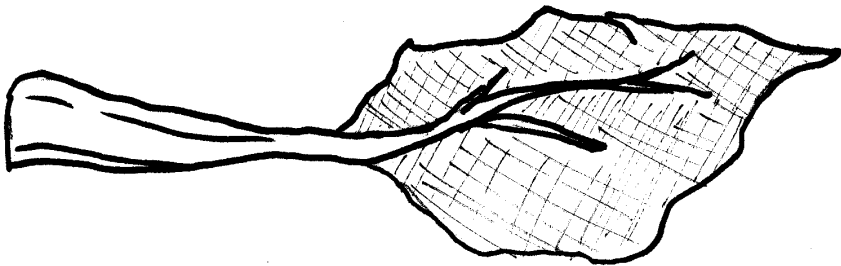
Add sliced zucchini and Swiss chard. Sauté until Swiss chard is wilted and zucchini is soft.

Add parsley and cook for a couple of seconds.

Pour the eggs over the vegetables; top with the cheese and sprinkle on some black pepper.

Turn the heat down to low; cover, and cook until the eggs look set.

Serve with pasta sauce or Garlic Tomato Sauce recipe.



Tomato-Zucchini Tart, French

Servings: 6

I find this to be a perfect dish for a summer party.

Crust:

2 cups flour

1/3 cup whole wheat flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 cup oil

4 tablespoons water, cold

Filling:

1 beefsteak tomato, sliced thin and seeds removed

2 large onions, sliced thin

2 zucchinis, sliced thin

2 tablespoons oil

salt and pepper, to taste

To make the filling, sauté the onions in oil, stirring occasionally, until golden brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Remove the onions and let cool.

In the same pan, sauté the zucchinis for 2 minutes with the leftover oil on the bottom of the pan. Let cool.

Preheat the oven to 400 F.

To make the crust, put the flour and salt into a food processor. Add oil and pulse until the mixture looks crumbly and mealy. Add just enough water until it starts forming a ball in the processor.

Roll it out into 12 inch round on a lightly-floured surface, and put it over a 9-inch pan. Trim the edges and prick tiny holes on the dough with a fork.

Bake in the oven for 15 minutes and let cool completely to room temperature.

Heat the oven to 375 F.

Spread the onions on the crust. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Top with zucchinis and tomatoes, arranging nicely, and season with a little more salt and pepper.

Bake for 25 minutes or until the tomatoes are soft. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Vegetable Curry, Marrakech

Servings: 4

An uncommon and tasty combination of vegetables. Serve this curry over boiled rice.

1 sweet potato, peeled and cubed
1 medium eggplant, peeled and cubed
1 can chickpeas, drained
1 zucchini, cubed
10 ounces spinach, chopped coarsely
1 green bell pepper, chopped
1 red bell pepper, chopped
1 large onion, chopped
4 tablespoons olive oil
3 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon curry powder
1 teaspoon turmeric
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, or to taste
1/4 cup blanched almonds
2 tablespoons raisins
8 ounces orange juice
salt, to taste

Heat the olive oil In a large pan for a few seconds; then sauté the onion and garlic for 1 minute.

Add the spices and sauté for another minute.

Add all the vegetables except the spinach and sauté for 5 minutes.

Add the orange juice and raisins. Simmer until the potatoes are cooked, about 20 minutes. Check it occasionally to make sure enough liquid remains in the pan to prevent scorching; it needed, add a little water.

Add spinach and cook until the leaves are wilted.

Sprinkle with almonds and serve.

Vegetables in Cheese Sauce

Servings: 3

1 1/2 pounds zucchini, cut into 1/2" cubes
1 can corn, drained
1 large tomato, chopped
1 onion, chopped
1 clove garlic, minced
1 5-ounce can evaporated milk
1/2 pound cheddar cheese, grated
1 jalapeno chili pepper, diced
1 teaspoon oil
salt and pepper, to taste

Heat the oil in a pan for a few seconds, and then sauté the onion and garlic in it for 1 minute.

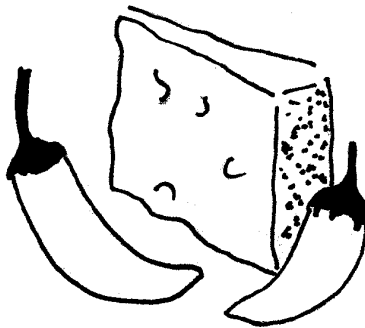
Add the zucchini, tomato and jalapeno pepper, and sauté for a couple of minutes.

Add evaporated milk and simmer until the zucchini is tender, about 15 minutes.

Add corn and cook for a minute more.

Sprinkle with the salt, pepper and cheese.

Stir until the cheese starts to melt; serve immediately.



Vegetables in Coconut Milk, Far East Asian

Servings: 4

1 pound vegetables (canned baby corn, carrots, asparagus, sugar peas, etc., all cut into similar sizes.)

1 cup coconut milk

1 clove garlic, minced

4 basil leaves, torn

1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1 teaspoon lime zest

1 tablespoon oil

salt, to taste

Heat the oil in a large pan. Add red pepper flakes, garlic, basil leaves and lime zest, and fry for 1 minute.

Stir in the coconut milk and bring to a boil. Lower the heat to simmer; add the vegetables and cook until tender, about 8 minutes.

Serve over jasmine rice.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1/2 tablespoon curry powder with the red pepper flakes.

-Gently fry 1/2 cup fresh whole basil leaves in a little bit of oil for approximately 1 minute, until they are crisp but still keep their green color. Let them drain on a paper towel; use as garnish.

Walnut Patties on Arugula Bed

Yield: 5 patties

The patties are such a tasty experience, you'll forget the weird ingredients pretty quickly!

Walnut Patties:

1 cup rolled oats
1 cup chopped walnuts
1/4 cup flour
1 large egg
1 small onion, chopped
3 tablespoons tomato paste
water
6 tablespoons Romano cheese, grated
oil, to sauté

Arugula Bed:

8 ounces arugula, torn
4 tablespoons raisins
oil and vinegar salad dressing, to taste
5 slices bread
salt and pepper, to taste

Process the oats, flour, egg, and tomato paste in a food processor.

Add the walnuts and onions; process for 30 seconds more.

Add enough water and process the mixture until it has the consistency of hamburger patties.

Make 5 thin patties and refrigerate for 15 minutes.

To make the arugula bed, mix arugula, raisins and salad dressing in a bowl, and then divide them to individual serving dishes.

Remove the patties from the refrigerator. Heat a little bit of oil in a pan, and sauté the patties on one side until brown. Flip them over, top with the cheese, and sauté until the other side is also brown.

Toast the bread and set one slice on each arugula bed. Place the patties on top and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit arugula; use any other kind of green leaves.

-Omit walnuts; use mixed nuts instead.

-Omit Romano; use Gorgonzola instead.

Zucchini, Indian Style

Servings: 4

4 cups zucchini, quartered
1 green bell pepper, sliced
1 jalapeno chili pepper, sliced
1 cup pureed tomatoes
1 large onion, diced
4 cloves garlic, crushed
1/2 teaspoon mustard seed
1/2 teaspoon cumin powder
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
3 tablespoons curry powder
1 tablespoon oil
salt, to taste

sauté mustard seed, cumin and turmeric in oil. When the mustard seeds start to pop, add onion and garlic, and fry until the onions are glossy.

Add green pepper and fry for 10 minutes. Add zucchini and fry for 10 minutes more.

Add tomatoes, curry powder, jalapeno pepper, and salt. Cook for 20 minutes, adding water if necessary to prevent it from sticking to the bottom of the pan.

Serve over rice or with flat bread.

Zucchini, Italian Style

Servings: 4

The taste is new and surprising in this recipe - and it is easy and fast to make.

3 zucchinis, sliced 1/2" thick
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 onion, chopped
4 cloves garlic, chopped
2/3 cup white wine
1/2 pound ricotta cheese
a pinch of cinnamon
salt and pepper, to taste

Sauté onion and garlic in oil until the onion pieces begin to soften.

Stir in the zucchini, and add salt and pepper.

Add the wine and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, allowing it to reduce by half.

Reduce heat to low-medium. Stir in the ricotta and cinnamon and cook until heated.

Serve over risotto or pasta.



Basic Boiled Rice

Servings: 4

Here is a very basic way of cooking rice. You can add any topping to this recipe, such as a curry or chili dish, and have a delicious and filling dinner.

1 cup rice
1 3/4 cups water

Wash the rice in running water a couple of times until the rinsed water comes out clear.

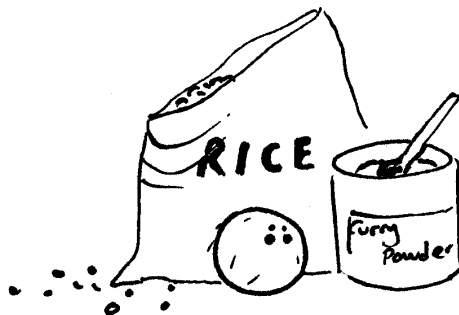
Combine the ingredients and bring to a boil.

Lower the heat; cover and simmer over very low heat for 10 minutes or until the rice is cooked.

Remove from heat and fluff it lightly with a fork. Let sit for 5 minutes before serving.

At the end, if the rice is not yet cooked but has absorbed all of the water, add a little water and keep cooking.

If the rice is cooked but did not absorb all of the water, remove the lid and try evaporating the water by turning up the heat to moderate-to-high, and cook for 3 more minutes.



Cashew and Onion Topped Pilaf, Indian

Servings: 4

Another multi-purpose rice dish. If you like, this dish will soak up the gravy of your meat dish, or simply serve with a vegetarian meal with salad.

2 medium onions, sliced into thin rings
2 tablespoons cashews, halved
1 cup basmati rice
2 cups water
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon ground cloves
2 bay leaves, whole
1 teaspoon sugar
salt and pepper, to taste.5 tablespoons butter

In a large pan, sauté the onions in 3 tablespoons of butter until brown. Remove the onions and set aside.

Melt the remaining 2 tablespoons of butter in the pan; add the spices, sugar, salt and rice and sauté for 2 minutes.

Add water, bring to a boil and simmer over low heat until the rice is cooked, about 15 minutes.

Gently fluff the rice with a fork. Fold back in the onions; add cashews and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit cashews and use another kind of nut.

-Omit butter and use oil instead.

Jasmine Rice with Vegetables, Nuts and Raisins, Indian

Servings: 4

Side dish to Indian and not-so-Indian meat and chicken dishes.

1 cup Jasmine rice
1 cup carrot, grated
1 medium onion, chopped
1/2 cup canned peas, drained
1/2 cup canned sweet corn, drained
2 tablespoons oil
2 teaspoons cardamom
2 teaspoons turmeric
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon clove, ground
salt and pepper, to taste
3 tablespoons walnuts, chopped
3 tablespoons raisins
1 teaspoon lemon zest
2 cups water

Sauté onions in a pot until transparent. Add the spices and sauté for 1 minute more. Add the carrots and sauté for an additional 7 minutes or until the carrots become soft.

Add the rice and lemon zest and stir to combine well with the spices and onions. Add the water and bring to a boil. Then cover and simmer over low heat for about 15 to 20 minutes, until the rice is cooked.

Let the rice sit for 5 minutes and fluff gently with a fork. Fold in with the vegetables, raisins and nuts and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-If you want to use cooked rice instead of raw rice, simply sauté all of the rest of the ingredients in oil and then add in the cooked rice, omitting the water in the recipe.

-Use any kind of blanched or canned vegetables instead of corn and peas.

-Omit walnuts and use cashews instead.

Kashmir Pilaf

Servings: 4

2 cups basmati rice
2 cups milk
1/2 cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon sugar
1/2 cup water
1/2 teaspoon cumin
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1/2 teaspoon cardamom
1 bay leaf
1 cup mixed dried fruit, chopped
2 tablespoons butter
salt, to taste

Wash and soak rice for 15-20 minutes; drain and set aside.

In a bowl, mix milk, cream, sugar, and salt.

In a pot, sauté cumin, cinnamon, bay leaf, cardamom, and cloves in butter for 30 seconds.

Add rice and fry for 2 minutes.

Add milk mixture and water to the pot and simmer until the rice is cooked, about 12 minutes.

Fold in the dried fruit and serve.

Serve with a curry dish or any other Indian or Bangladeshi dish.

Lemongrass Coconut Rice, Thai

Servings: 3

This very fragrant rice will accompany almost anything.

1/2 cup jasmine rice
2 teaspoons dried lemongrass
2 cups coconut milk
1/2 teaspoon turmeric
2 bay leaves, whole

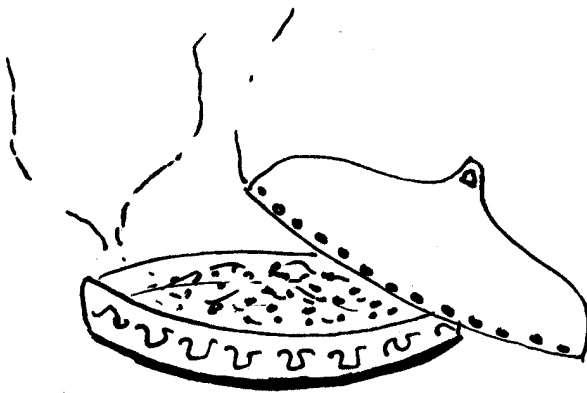
In a pot, combine all ingredients. Bring to a boil and then simmer over low heat until the rice is cooked, about 20 minutes.

Discard the lemongrass and bay leaves.

Fluff the rice gently with a fork and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Fry curry powder and cumin in 1 tablespoon of hot oil for 30 seconds. Then add the oil to the pot with the rest of the ingredients.



Quinoa Pine Nut Pilaf

Servings: 5

2 cups quinoa
3 1/3 cups water
3 tablespoons pine nuts
2 large onions, chopped
6 cloves garlic, crushed
1 tablespoon oil
1 cup fresh basil, chopped
1 red bell pepper, chopped
3 cups canned corn
4 teaspoons cumin
4 teaspoons coriander
salt and pepper, to taste

Put pine nuts into a non-stick pan over medium heat, constantly shaking the pan or stirring with a spoon, until they get a light golden color.

In a saucepan, sauté onions and garlic in oil for 5 minutes or until softened.

Add bell pepper, cumin and coriander; continue to sauté for another 5 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Place quinoa in a fine sieve and rinse well under cold running water for 1-2 minutes.

Add rinsed quinoa and water to the saucepan. Cover tightly and simmer over very low heat for 15 minutes.

Stir in basil and corn; cook for another 5-10 minutes or until quinoa is tender.

Fluff it with a fork; add salt and pepper to taste and top with the toasted pine nuts.

Risotto with Tomato and Basil

Servings: 4

Risotto cooking sounds trickier than it is; the rules you have to follow are important but simple. First find the right kind of rice for risotto; the most common in the US is Arborio. There's no getting around cooking with the rice - it needs constant stirring and adding a little liquid at a time. It's best to use a heavy-bottomed non-stick pot so it won't burn or turn to soup. Make sure the cooking liquid stays warm, for the liquid that the rice can't absorb must evaporate quickly. The cooking time will vary from 20 to 40 minutes; start tasting a little after 20 minutes into the cooking to see if it is ready: the rice will be firm but not chalky inside. Serve the risotto immediately for the best taste. If you really must serve it later, you can reheat it in the microwave, but it won't taste quite the same. But don't be intimidated - good risotto is completely worth the effort, and it is not that difficult to cook!

1 1/2 pounds canned plum tomatoes, drained and cubed

5 cups chicken broth, simmering

3 tablespoons butter

1 tablespoon olive oil

1/3 cup onion, chopped

1 1/2 cups Arborio rice

10 basil leaves, sliced thin

1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

salt and pepper, to taste

In a saucepan, sauté the onion in 2 tablespoons of butter until they have a golden color. Add tomatoes and pepper; cook for 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Add rice; stir to coat.

Add a ladle of broth and stir constantly to wipe the rice away from the bottom and the sides of the pot over moderate heat.

When all the liquid is absorbed and evaporated, add another ladle of broth and keep doing the same thing until the rice is cooked. (If you run out of broth before the rice is cooked, warm up some water and add one ladle at a time until the rice is done.) Add the rest of the butter, cheese, and basil. Stir for a couple of minutes; add salt to taste and serve.

Variation Ideas:

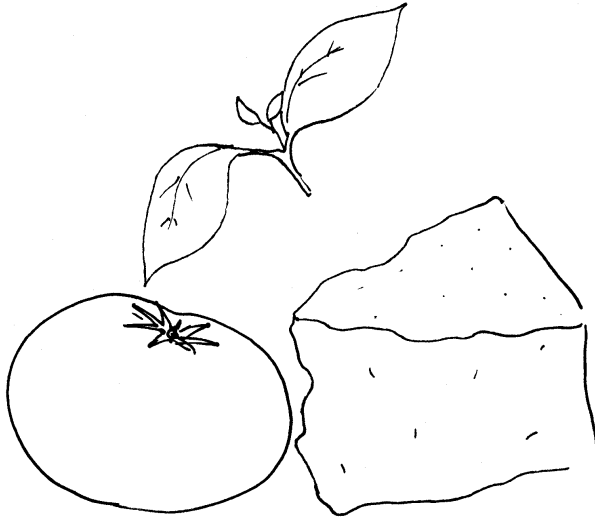
-Omit basil and tomatoes. Add 2/3 pound cabbage, shredded. Add to the sautéed onion and cook over medium heat until cabbage turns into a nutty brown color. Add the rice and follow the rest of the recipe.

-Omit basil and tomatoes. Add the bulbs of 2 medium finocchio, shredded very fine. (For this recipe only use the bulb; you can use the rest of the vegetable in soups.) Add to the sautéed onion and cook with 1/3 cup water over low-to-medium heat until the finocchio fall apart into a pulp.

Add rice and follow the rest of the recipe.

-Omit basil and tomatoes; add a 10-ounce can of beans with the cheese and heat it thoroughly.

-Add any kind of cooked meat, chicken or seafood; cut into bite-sized pieces. Add into the risotto when adding the cheese; heat thoroughly.



Vegetable Rice, Indian

Servings: 6

2 cups mixed vegetables (cauliflower, peas, carrots, etc.)
3 cups jasmine rice
5 1/2 cups water, hot
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 cup plain yogurt
2 onions, sliced thin
3 jalapeno chile peppers, minced
2 cloves garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon fresh ginger, minced
1 teaspoon dried mint
2 teaspoons coriander
2 teaspoons cumin
1/2 teaspoon red chili pepper, or to taste
2 teaspoons ground cloves
2 teaspoons cinnamon
2 teaspoons cardamom
1 teaspoon turmeric mixed with 2 tablespoon water
1/4 cup cashews, chopped
4 tablespoons butter
salt and pepper, to taste

In a mixing bowl, combine 1 teaspoon each of all of the spices except for the turmeric. Add the vegetables and let it marinate for 30 minutes.

In a large pan, heat 2 tablespoons of the butter. Fry the cashews in it for 10 seconds. Add the remaining amount of all of the spices except the turmeric. Add the garlic and onion and continue frying until the onion becomes transparent.

Add the marinated vegetables to the pan. Without adding any water, cook the vegetables on medium heat until the mixture is well-cooked. Fold the yogurt into the vegetables.

In a pot, heat the rest of the butter and sauté the rice in it until the grains turn a faint yellow color, stirring constantly. Add the hot water and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer until almost cooked, about 10 minutes.

Put 1 cup of the cooked rice into a bowl and fold the turmeric mixture into it gently.

Heat the oven to 300 F.

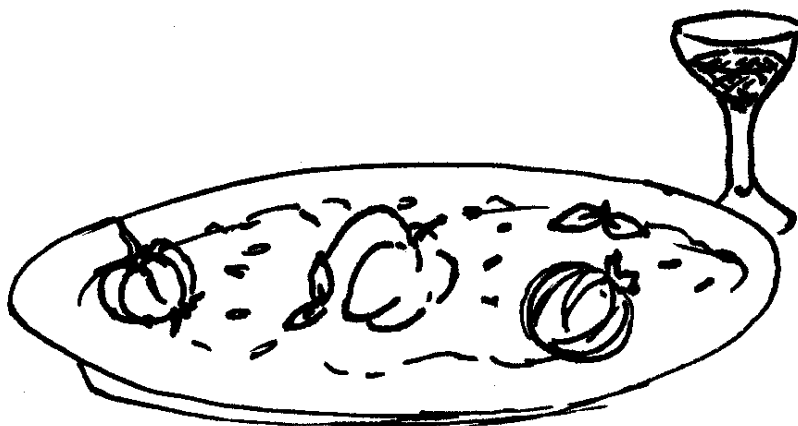
Mix the colored rice with the white rice.

Spread the rice on a pan, top with the vegetable mixture, and cover with aluminum foil. Bake for 20 minutes.

Serve garnished with chopped fresh herbs and with fried onions (which can be found in Indian or Pakistani stores).

Variation Ideas:

-Omit yogurt; cook the rice completely. After mixing the colored rice with the white rice, spread the vegetable mixture on top and serve immediately without baking.



Wedding Rice, Middle Eastern

Servings: 4

peel of 1 1/2 oranges, cut into shreds and blanched for 1 minute
3 tablespoons sugar
3 tablespoons butter
2 carrots, cut into julienne strips
6 tablespoons water
4 tablespoons mixed nuts (such as pistachios, almonds, pine nuts and cashews)
1 1/2 cups basmati rice
3 cups water

Melt 1 1/2 tablespoons of butter in a pot; add carrots, orange peel and sugar, and fry for 3 minutes.

Add 6 tablespoons of water and simmer until evaporated.

Scoop it into a bowl; mix in the nuts and set aside.

Heat the rest of the butter in the same pot. Add the rice and sauté until it gains a faint yellow color.

Add 3 cups of water and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer until rice is cooked and the water is almost fully absorbed, around 12 minutes.

Gently fold the mixture of orange peel, nuts and carrots into the rice.

Cook over very low heat for 20 minutes. Check it frequently and occasionally gently stir to prevent burning.

Variation Ideas:

-Use only half of the nuts; add 2 tablespoons of chopped raisins and dates.

-Sauté 1 whole chicken breast in 1/2 tablespoon of oil with a little bit of salt, pepper and paprika.

Shred the meat and serve on the top of pilaf.

Wild Risotto

Servings: 4

Different with a capital "D"!

5 cups water, boiling
1/4 cup wild rice
1/2 cup Arborio rice
1 tablespoon olive oil
6 scallions, chopped fine
2 cloves garlic, minced
1/2 cup white wine
2 tomatoes, chopped
1 cup canned chickpeas
2/3 cup coconut milk
salt and pepper, to taste

Put the wild rice and 1 cup of the boiling water in a pot. Cover and simmer for 25 minutes. Drain well and set aside.

In a thick-bottomed pot, sauté the scallions and garlic in olive oil for 1 minute. Then add the Arborio rice and sauté for 2 minutes more.

Pour the wine, wild rice, and tarragon into the pot and cook, stirring frequently, for 2 minutes.

Pour 1/2 cup of the remaining 4 cups of boiling water into the pot. Stir frequently until the liquid is absorbed, then add 1/2 cup more water. Continue adding the water in this manner, stirring frequently and waiting between additions until the all of the liquid is absorbed. After about 18 to 20 minutes most of the liquid should be absorbed, and the rice should be tender but still slightly chewy.

When all of the water is absorbed, add the tomatoes, coconut milk, and chickpeas, and stir.

Simmer it, stirring often, until most of the liquid is absorbed. Serve immediately.

Side Dishes



Baked Potatoes, Kashmir Style

Servings: 4

4 baking potatoes
1 tablespoon raisins
1 tablespoon cashews, chopped
fine
1 tablespoon sour cream
salt, to taste
2 small onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, minced

1 1/2 cups tomato puree
a pinch of sugar
1/2 cup water
a pinch of cinnamon
a pinch of ground clove
a pinch of cardamom
a pinch of cayenne pepper
a pinch of cumin

Boil potatoes until almost cooked. Remove the potatoes and let sit until cool enough to handle.

Cut a lengthwise slit along one side of each potato and carefully remove the pulp, leaving the skin intact. Place the pulp in a mixing bowl, and set the skins aside.

In the mixing bowl, add sour cream and salt to the potato pulp, and then mash. Fold in the raisins and cashews.

Heat the oil for a few seconds in a pan. Add all spices and sauté for 10 seconds. Add the onions and garlic, and sauté until the onions are lightly colored. Add tomato puree and cook until the mixture looks dry.

Add the sugar, salt and water and cook for 5 minutes more.

Heat the oven to 200 F.

Stuff the mashed potato back into the skin and place into a casserole dish. Pour the tomato sauce over the potatoes.

Cover the casserole dish with foil and bake in the oven for 20 minutes.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the tomato sauce; use pasta sauce instead.

-Omit bake potatoes; use boiling potatoes instead and cook the food in a casserole dish.

-To save time, use boiling potatoes, boil them all the way until very soft to mash, and omit baking in the oven altogether.

Beans and Bacon in Molasses

Servings: 2

This is a quick version of great baked beans of the southern USA.

1 can (16 oz.) great northern beans
3 slices bacon, chopped coarsely
1/2 medium onion, chopped
3 tablespoons tomato puree
1 tablespoon honey
1 tablespoon molasses
1/2 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon dry mustard
water

Fry bacon pieces in their own fat until crisp.

Add onion and sauté until light brown.

Add the rest of the ingredients with just enough water to cover the beans, and simmer for 30 minutes.

Boil for another minute if the sauce is too watery.

Serve with fried chicken or barbeque.

Variation Ideas:

-Use half great northern beans and half red kidney beans.

Bread and Cheese-filled Squash

Servings: 2

1 small butternut or medium acorn squash
1/2 onion, minced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon bread crumbs
2 slices stale bread, cubed small
2 tablespoons sharp cheddar cheese, cubed small

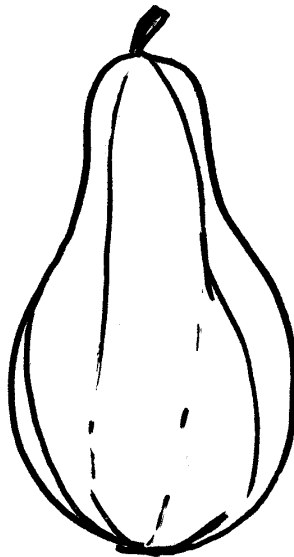
Cut the squash to two and steam.

In a sauté pan, cook the onion in olive oil; add bread crumbs and bread cubes until the bread is crunchy.

Let cool. Add the cheddar cheese.

Heat oven to 350 F.

Scoop onto the squash halves and bake for 20 minutes in oven..



Corn Cakes with Sun Dried Tomato and Goat Cheese

Servings: 4

3/4 ounce sun-dried tomatoes
3/4 cup water, boiling
1 cup canned corn
1 cup water
1/2 cup corn meal
1/2 cup whole wheat flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 egg, beaten
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 clove garlic
1/2 teaspoon red chili pepper, or to taste
salt and pepper, to taste
1 ounce goat cheese

Combine tomatoes and 3/4 cup boiling water and let stand for 30 minutes.

Drain and mince the tomatoes.

Combine the tomatoes, canned corn, cheese and garlic. Toss well.

In a separate bowl, combine the rest of the ingredients except the oil. Add the tomato-corn mixture to the bowl, stirring just until moistened, and let stand for 15 minutes.

Spoon 2 tablespoons of batter per corn cake onto a hot griddle. Cook for 2 1/2 minutes on each side or until both sides are golden brown.

Serve with salsa or sour cream.

Goat Cheese Quesadillas with Guacamole

Servings: 8

4 flour tortillas, each cut into 4 wedges
5 ounces goat cheese, divided to 8 portions
1/4 cup basil pesto, divided to 8 portions
2 tablespoons butter
1 1/2 cups guacamole

Put 1 tortilla wedge on a work surface and spread with 1 portion of goat cheese, covering the surface evenly.

Place another tortilla wedge on top of it and lightly press in order to make them stick together. Set this "sandwich" aside.

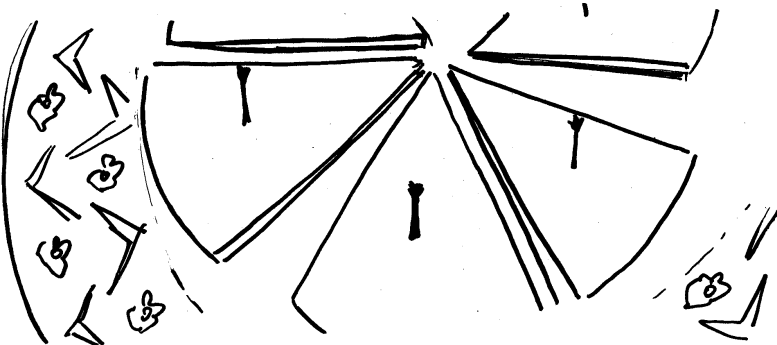
Repeat until you use up all of the tortillas and cheese.

In a pan, heat the butter and sauté the tortilla "sandwiches" until golden on both sides.

Arrange on a serving plate. Put dollops of guacamole on top of each sandwich and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Use tomatillo or tomato salsa instead of guacamole.



Grilled Portobello with Basil-Mustard Sauce

Servings: 4

4 Portobello mushroom caps
4 cloves garlic, crushed
1/2 cup olive oil
2 tablespoons lemon juice
1/2 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup basil leaves, chopped
1/2 tablespoon Dijon mustard
a pinch of cayenne pepper
salt and pepper, to taste

Combine garlic and oil; let sit for 15 minutes.

Mix the rest of the ingredients except for the mushrooms.

Heat the grill or non-stick grilling pan.

Brush the mushrooms with the oil mix.

Place the mushrooms on the grill and cook for approximately 4 minutes per side, brushing with mayonnaise frequently.

Slice the mushrooms and serve.



Jamaican Jerk Marinated Grilled Vegetables

Servings: 4

Add these vegetables to your barbeque party.

**8 cherry tomatoes, halved
1 green bell pepper, seeded and cut into 8 pieces
8 large button mushrooms
8 broccoli florets
1 onion, cut into 8 wedges
6 scallions, diced
1 onion, diced
1 jalapeno chili pepper, minced
3/4 cup soy sauce
1/2 cup red wine vinegar
1/4 cup olive oil
1/3 cup brown sugar
1 tablespoon thyme
1/2 teaspoon clove, ground
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon**

Thread the tomatoes, bell pepper, mushrooms, broccoli and onion wedges onto 4 barbeque skewers, alternating the vegetables.

Mix all of the rest of the ingredients in a bowl.

Pour the contents of the bowl on the skewered vegetables and marinate overnight, turning the skewers occasionally.

Drain the vegetables just before grilling.

Grill on barbeque, 5 minutes on each side, and serve.

Kasha Croquettes

Servings: 4

2 cups kasha, cooked
1/2 cup whole wheat flour
3 scallions, chopped fine
1 tablespoon parsley, chopped fine
salt, to taste
oil, to fry

Place kasha and flour in a large bowl and knead them together with your fingers until it holds shape.

Add chopped scallions, parsley and salt to the mixture and knead lightly to combine.

Form dough into 2"-diameter patties.

Heat 1/2 inch oil in skillet and fry patties over medium heat until brown on each side.

Serve with mustard or some dip on the side.



Lemon-Basil Potatoes

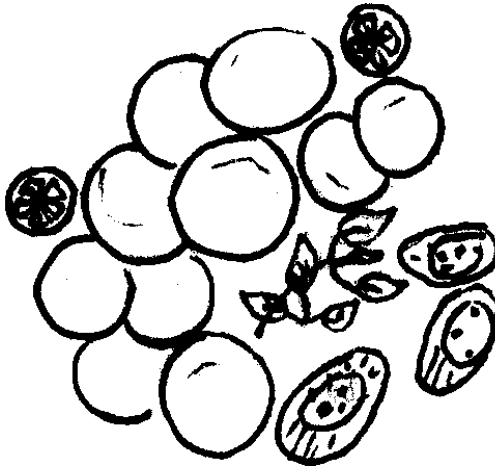
Servings: 5

2 potatoes, peeled and sliced 1/8" thick
1 zucchini, peeled and sliced 1/4" thick
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
4 scallions, chopped coarsely
1 tablespoon lemon zest
1/3 cup fresh basil leaves, chopped
salt and pepper, to taste

Melt butter and oil in a large skillet and the brown potato slices, about 7 minutes.

Add all the ingredients except the basil and cook for 5 minutes.

Add the basil; cook 1 minute and serve.



Macaroni and Cheese in Tomato Sauce

Servings: 6

You can serve this dish to 4 people as a main dish with some salad on the side.

1 cup tomato sauce
1/4 cup onion, chopped fine
1 large clove garlic, minced
1 cup 2% low-fat milk
1/2 cup cottage cheese
1/2 cup cheddar cheese, grated
black pepper, to taste
1 tablespoon oil

Cook macaroni al dente according to the package directions.

Sauté onion and garlic in oil until lightly browned.

Add tomato sauce and cook for 5 minutes.

Pour over the macaroni and coat well.

Heat the oven to 350 F.

In a bowl, mix the cottage cheese, milk, most of the cheddar cheese and pepper.

Place the macaroni in a casserole dish. Pour the cheese mixture on it and fold it in.

Top with the leftover cheddar cheese and bake for 30 minutes.

Mini Frittatas

Servings: 4

6 ounces spinach, chopped
1 cup ricotta cheese
2 tablespoons sour cream
1/2 cup parmesan cheese, grated
1/2 cup cheddar cheese, grated
4 eggs, beaten
1/4 cup milk
Tabasco sauce, to taste
1 teaspoon cumin powder
2 tablespoons parsley, chopped fine
2 tablespoons tomato, minced
1 tablespoon onion, minced
1 teaspoon lemon zest
salt and pepper, to taste

Preheat the oven to 375 F.

In a medium bowl, combine all of the ingredients without over-handling.

Drop the batter on a lightly-greased muffin tin, filling each cup 3/4 of the way.

Bake for 20 minutes or until the muffins are spongy to the touch.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the tomatoes and onions and use prepared tomato salsa or pasta sauce instead.

Polenta, Italian

Servings: 4

Polenta is a kind of porridge made of corn flour and water. Cooking polenta takes time and energy but you can make it in big quantities and use it for many different occasions. I've tried the easy way and bought ready-made polenta from the supermarket, but it just doesn't cut it. Give this a try!

4 cups water

1 cup cornmeal, coarsely ground

salt, to taste

Boil the water in a heavy-bottom pot.

Add salt.

Add cornmeal, letting it stream through your fingers while stirring the water with your other hand.

When all the cornmeal is in the pot, turn the heat to low and stir constantly for about 40 minutes, until the polenta comes away from the side of the pot easily.

Variation Ideas:

-Mix the warm polenta with sautéed mushrooms.

-Mix the warm polenta with sautéed onions.

-Top the polenta with grated Parmesan cheese and bread crumbs and bake in a 450 F oven on the top rack for 15 minutes or until the bread crumbs are light brown.

-Grill, brushed with olive oil.

-Cool it off in a pie pan that has been moistened with water; cut into squares and grill or broil, perhaps with a little cheese sprinkled on the top.

-Serve it warm as a bed for meat, with a stew, or with a dish whose liquid the polenta can readily absorb.

Polished Eggs

Servings: 4

4 eggs, hard-boiled and peeled
2 tablespoons oil
4 cloves garlic, crushed
2 tablespoons brown sugar
4 tablespoons soy sauce

Score shallow spirals into the white of the eggs, from the tops to the bottoms, using a sharp knife.

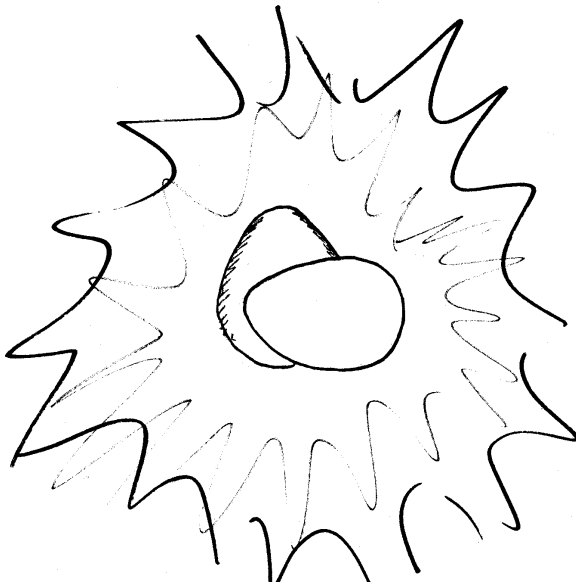
Sauté garlic in oil until it begins to brown.

Stir in sugar and soy sauce. Remove pan from heat.

Place eggs in sauce, and turn to coat.

When eggs are nice and dark, remove from sauce and serve.

Serve on green salad.



Sauerkraut-Filled Puff Pastry

Servings: 4

4 frozen puff pastry sheets, defrosted
4 tablespoons sauerkraut, drained well
1/4 onion, chopped fine
1/2 tablespoon oil
1/2 teaspoon caraway seeds

Sauté the onion in oil until lightly browned.

Mix with sauerkraut and caraway seeds.

Divide the mixture into four portions.

Imagine a square pastry sheet being folded in half diagonally from one corner to the opposite corner to form two triangle "halves" on each sheet. Now place one portion of the sauerkraut mixture on one of the "halves" and then flip the opposite corner over and seal the edges with a little water. (They should look like little triangle bags that are sealed on all sides.) Repeat with the three other pastry sheets.

Bake according to the package directions on the puff pastry.

Sautéed Tomatoes

Servings: 2

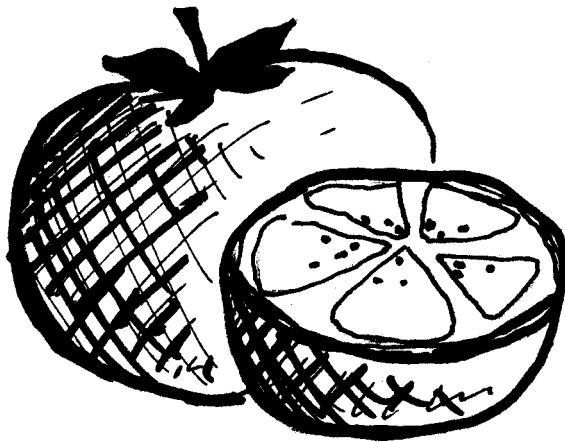
2 medium tomatoes
2 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove garlic, minced
1/2 cup parsley, minced
salt and pepper, to taste

Cut each tomato into 4 wedges and discard the seeds.

Heat 1 tablespoon of olive oil in a pan for a few seconds. Add the tomatoes and brown them on all sides. Remove tomatoes and set aside.

Add garlic, parsley, and 1 more tablespoon of olive oil to the pan. Cook for 1 minute.

Pour the contents of the pan onto the tomatoes; season with pepper and salt. (If the tomatoes are out of season, add a little pinch of sugar.)



Sautéed Zucchini, French

Servings: 4

2 large zucchini, diced
4 anchovy fillets, chopped fine
1 large onion, chopped
3 eggs, hard-boiled, peeled and sliced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1/2 cup bread crumbs
1 tablespoon butter
salt and pepper, to taste

Pour the olive oil into a saucepan and heat for a few seconds. Add anchovy fillets and onion, and sauté for 5 minutes.

Add the zucchini and sauté for 10 minutes more, stirring frequently.

Season with pepper and salt. Fold in the eggs and then pour the contents onto a large serving plate.

Heat the butter in a pan (you can reuse the same pan). Add bread crumbs and fry for a couple of minutes over medium-to-high heat, stirring constantly until the bread crumbs are lightly browned.

Sprinkle the bread crumbs on top of the zucchini and serve.

Great accompaniment to chicken! Also perfect for the vegetarian table to serve with soup and salad.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit anchovy fillets; use 2 tablespoons of anchovy paste instead.

-Add 2 tablespoons of pitted black olives.

-Fold 3 tablespoons of crumbled feta cheese into the zucchini and top with the bread crumbs.

Squash and Cherry Tomatoes in Basil Butter

Servings: 6

1/3 cup basil, fresh
1/2 stick butter
3 cloves garlic, chopped coarsely
1/4 onion, minced fine
1 1/2 pounds zucchini, sliced thin
8 ounces cherry tomatoes, halved
salt and pepper, to taste

Process basil, butter and garlic in a food processor.

Pour into a saucepan and heat; once it has melted, add the onions and sauté for 1 minute.

Add zucchini and tomatoes and sauté for 8 minutes or until zucchini is tender.

Season with salt and pepper and serve immediately.

Serve with crostini, over pasta, or with risotto.

Variation Ideas:

-Use yellow summer squash with the zucchini.

White Bean Puree with Grilled Vegetables

Servings: 4

1 can navy beans, drained
4 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon rosemary
3 cloves garlic
2 red bell peppers
1 small Italian eggplant
salt and pepper, to taste

Mash the beans in a bowl and add olive oil, rosemary, salt and pepper.

Roast the peppers, eggplant and garlic over the burner on all sides, until the skin is black.

Put the peppers in a plastic bag; seal the bag and let it rest for 10 minutes.

Remove the vegetables from the bag. Peel the skin off of the eggplant and chop the meat. Peel the skin off the peppers; discard the seeds and chop. Crush the garlic.

Add the peppers, garlic and eggplants to the bowl; fold them into the beans and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-You can broil the vegetables in the oven or roast them on the barbeque.

-Slice the vegetables and mince the garlic; then sauté them in a little bit of oil and serve over the puree instead of folding them in.

Wilted Spinach with Olive Oil and Garlic

Servings: 4

1 pound baby spinach
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 clove garlic, crushed
3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar
salt, to taste

Heat the oil in a pan. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute.

Add the spinach; constantly turn the leaves around and sauté until slightly wilted.

Sprinkle with the vinegar and salt; serve warm.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit spinach; use broccoli leaves instead..-Add 2 tablespoons of chopped nuts with the vinegar.

-Omit vinegar; use lemon juice instead.

-Omit vinegar; use olive oil based salad dressing instead.



Pies and Cakes



Amaretti and Chocolate Cake, Italian

Servings: 8

Not very showy but extremely moist and yummy!

4 ounces Amaretti di Saronna cookies (macaroons), crushed very fine in a food processor

2 sticks butter, cut into cubes

1 cup sugar

5 eggs, separated

1/2 cup flour

2 ounces chocolate (sweet or semi-sweet), grated

Cream the butter and sugar until fluffy.

Beat the egg yolks one at a time well into the butter mixture.

Add the Amaretti crumbs and flour into the mixture until well incorporated.

Add the chocolate to the mixture and mix the batter thoroughly.

Heat the oven to 350F.

Beat the egg whites until they form stiff peaks when you pull the mixer away.

Gently fold four tablespoons of the egg whites into the batter to loosen the mixture a little, and then fold the rest in.

Pour mixture into a lightly-greased and lightly-floured 10-inch springform pan.

Bake for one hour or until a toothpick comes out dry when inserted.

Let cool and remove from the pan onto a plate.

Apple Cake with Cream Cheese Icing

Servings: 6.

The cake part is lower in fat than regular cakes of this sort! If you want to keep it that way, then leave off the icing or serve it on the side.

3 cups flour
a pinch of salt
1 teaspoon baking soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
1 teaspoon nutmeg
2 cups apple, peeled, cored and diced
1/4 cup pecans, chopped
2 cups sugar
1 cup applesauce
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 large eggs
4 ounces cream cheese, cubed, at room temperature
3 tablespoons butter, at room temperature
1 1/2 cups confectioner's sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 325 F.

Combine flour, salt, baking soda, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a bowl.

Add apple and pecans to the mixture.

In a separate bowl, mix the sugar, applesauce, one teaspoon vanilla extract and eggs well.

Combine the flour mixture with the sugar mixture.

Pour the mix into a buttered 13x9-inch pan and bake for 50 minutes or until a wooden toothpick inserted into the cake comes out dry.

Cool completely.

In a bowl, beat the butter and cream cheese well.

Add the sugar and one teaspoon of vanilla extract and mix.

Spread over the cake.

Apple Pie, US

Servings: 6

2 pounds tart apples
1/2 cup sugar.2 tablespoons corn starch
1 teaspoon lemon zest
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon ground cloves
1 teaspoon cardamom
1 recipe basic double crust dough
2 tablespoons sugar
2 tablespoons water
4 tablespoons heavy cream, at room temperature

Peel and cut the apples into 1/2-inch wedges and put them into a bowl.

Mix the spices, cornstarch, zest and 1/2 cup sugar. Fold into the apples.

Roll out the bottom crust dough onto a 9-inch lightly-greased pie pan. Put the apple mix on the dough.

Cover with the rolled-out top crust dough. Make a few holes or cuts in the dough with a knife. Chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes or more.

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Brush the top of the pie with the water and sprinkle with two tablespoons of sugar. Bake for one hour.

Remove the pan, drizzle the heavy cream into the pie from the holes that you've made. Bake for ten more minutes.

Serve at room temperature or warm with a little grated cheddar cheese sprinkled on the top.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the heavy cream.

-Melt 4 tablespoons of butter and fold into the apples with the sugar mix.

-Add 3 tablespoons of chopped pecans to the apples.

Apple, Walnut and Raisin Cheesecake, Dutch

Different and unforgettable!

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
1 tablespoon cinnamon
6 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled
2 cups apple, peeled and diced
1 cup walnuts, chopped
1/2 cup raisins
3/4 cup sugar
1 pound cream cheese, at room temperature
4 eggs
a pinch of nutmeg

Topping:

1/2 cup flour
a pinch of cinnamon
1/3 cup brown sugar
5 tablespoons butter, cut into small pieces and chilled

Mix the graham cracker crumbs, cinnamon and 6 tablespoons of melted butter and press into a lightly-greased 10" pan to form a pie shell.

Preheat the oven to 320 F.

Spread the apples, nuts and raisins over the pie shell.

In a bowl, cream the sugar, cream cheese and nutmeg until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time. Pour over the apple mix. Bake for 45 minutes.

Put the flour, 5 tablespoons of butter pieces, brown sugar and a pinch of cinnamon into a food processor and pulse until the mixture is crumbly. (If you don't have a food processor, you can use a fork.) Sprinkle this mix on the top of the cake and bake for 45 minutes more. Turn off the oven, open the door, and let the pie cool down inside. Chill for 2 hours or overnight in the refrigerator.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit graham crackers; use cookie crumbs instead.

Banana Bread, West Indies

Servings: 10

You will have trouble keeping this amazing banana bread from people!

3 bananas, mashed
2 1/4 cups flour
1/4 cup water
1 egg
1/2 cup butter, cubed, at room temperature
1/2 cup sugar
3/4 cup raisins
3/4 cup walnuts, chopped
2 tablespoons coconut, shredded
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon nutmeg
1 1/2 teaspoons lemon zest
1 tablespoon baking powder

Beat sugar and butter with a mixer until light and fluffy. Add vanilla and egg and beat well.

Heat the oven to 350 F.

Combine flour, spices and baking powder in a separate bowl.

Mix the flour mixture into the butter mixture, alternating with the mashed bananas, being careful not to over-handle.

Add milk and stir, again being careful not to over-handle.

Fold in the nuts, raisins and lemon zest.

Pour the mixture into a lightly greased loaf pan and bake for 50 minutes or until when a toothpick inserted into the bread comes out clean.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit lemon zest and use lime zest instead.

-Omit walnuts and use pecans instead.

Banana Cream Pie With Chocolate Bottom

Yield: 10-inch pie

Crust:

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
6 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled
1/2 cup chocolate chips or chopped chocolate
1/4 cup milk

Filling:

3 egg yolks
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup cornstarch
3 cups milk
2 bananas, peeled and sliced
1 tablespoon butter, cut into pieces
a pinch of salt

Topping:

1 cup heavy cream

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

For the crust, mix the butter and graham cracker crumbs and press onto a bottom of lightly-greased 9-inch pie pan. Bake for 5 minutes.

In a saucepan, melt the chocolate in butter over low heat, stirring constantly. Spread the chocolate mix onto the pie crust while the crust is still hot. Let cool completely.

For the filling, beat egg yolks in a mixing bowl. Add the cornstarch and sugar; mix well. Stir in the milk, salt and butter.

Pour the filling mixture into a saucepan and cook over medium heat for 5 minutes until thickens, stirring constantly. Do not let it boil. Cover with a plastic wrap. The wrap should directly touch the mixture to prevent it from forming a skin. Let it cool and refrigerate for 2 hours.

Place the bananas over the crust, and then pour in the filling.

To make the topping, beat the heavy cream in a bowl until it makes stiff peaks when you pull the mixer away. Top the pie with the whipped cream or serve the whipped cream on the side.

Basic Pie Dough Recipe, Double Crust

Let it defrost to room temperature before rolling.

3 cups flour

a pinch of salt

1/2 cup shortening, very cold, cut into small pieces

1/2 cup butter, very cold, cut into small pieces

9 tablespoons water, very cold

Follow the directions for the single-crust recipe but divide the dough into 2 slightly unequal pieces before the first chilling.

Roll out the larger piece for the bottom and the smaller one for the top.

After putting the filling on the bottom dough, cover with the top layer and pinch the edges of the doughs together to seal.

Chill for 20 minutes in the refrigerator before baking.

Keeps in the shape of a ball in the refrigerator for 3 days; in the freezer for 6 months.



Basic Pie Dough, Single Crust

Yield: one 8-inch pie

Making a crust that is both crusty and light sometimes become tricky. Even when you do everything perfectly, the humidity, temperature, flour, and so many other variables can go against you. But the basic rules are to work very quickly; to use very cold ingredients; to use no more water than needed; to not handle the dough more than necessary; and to chill in the refrigerator for the recommended time. You'll see that once you get it, the skill and technique will be yours.

2 cups flour

a pinch of salt

5 tablespoons shortening, very cold, cut into small pieces

5 tablespoons butter, very cold, cut into small pieces

6 tablespoons water, very cold

Mix flour and salt.

Cut the shortening and butter into the flour with a pastry blender or two knives, working very quickly.

(If you have a food processor, you can do this using its pulse button.) The dough should look like coarse breadcrumbs.

Sprinkle the water, 2 tablespoons at a time, over the mixture and toss with a fork until the mixture can be gathered into a ball. (You may need more or less than the 6 tablespoons, but the less you end up using, the better.) Knead it once or twice to form it into a ball.

Wrap the dough in plastic wrap and refrigerate for 20 minutes or more.

Take the dough out and let it sit for 5 minutes at room temperature.

Sprinkle a little flour on your working surface and rub a little flour on the rolling pin.

Roll the dough out from the center into a circle, occasionally lifting the dough off the table and giving it a half-turn between rollings. It should be two inches larger in diameter than the pie pan.

Place the dough over the lightly-greased pan and refrigerate for 20 minutes.

Keeps in the shape of a ball in the refrigerator for 3 days; in freezer for 6 months. Let it defrost to room temperature before rolling.

Caramel Praline Apple Pie

Servings: 8

OK, I know what you're thinking - this pie is detailed and time-consuming. But go ahead and bake it, watch people eat it up, and try to tell me it wasn't worth it!

Crust: 2 cups flour

1/2 cup oil

1/4 cup water, cold

1 teaspoon baking powder

1 teaspoon salt

Filling:

8 apples (Cortland apples mixed with any other kind of baking apples works especially well), peeled, cored and sliced

2 tablespoons cornstarch

1/2 cup butter

2/3 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup heavy cream

Praline Topping:

1 cup pecans, chopped coarsely

1/4 cup butter

1/4 cup brown sugar

Crumb Topping:

1/2 cup butter

1/2 cup flour

1/4 cup sugar

To make the crust, put flour, baking powder and salt in a food processor and pulse for 30 seconds.

Add oil and pulse until the dough is crumbly.

Add water, a little at a time, and pulse until the dough is just moist enough to come together.

Roll it out on a 9-inch pie pan and refrigerate until the filling is ready.

To make the filling, combine the butter, brown sugar and cornstarch in a saucepan. Mix well and cook over medium heat until it just begins to bubble.

Add heavy cream and stir constantly until the mixture begins to boil. Pour into a bowl; add apples and fold gently until the apples are coated. Set aside.

To make the praline topping, cook the sugar and butter in small sauté pan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until it reaches 300 F. (Use a candy thermometer.) Remove from heat. Add nuts and pour out onto parchment paper to cool.

Heat the oven to 325 F.

For the crumb topping, use a fork or food processor to cut the butter into the flour and sugar, until it has a coarse crumbly consistency.

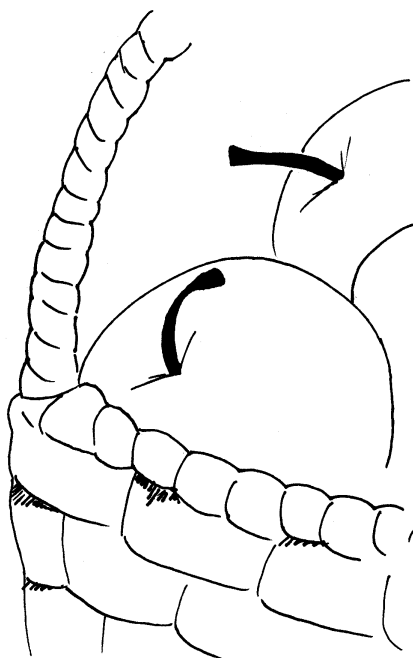
Arrange the apples onto the prepared crust.

Sprinkle the caramelized pecans over the apples.

Sprinkle the crumb topping over the pecans.

Cover the pie with aluminum foil and bake for 1 hour.

Remove the foil and bake for 10 more minutes.



Chocolate Cake with Sour Cherries, German

The cherries sink into the batter while baking and give an incredible moist texture to this easy cake. Much more delicious than it promises to be!

1 can (16 oz.) sour cherries, drained
6 eggs, separated
1 1/2 sticks butter, at room temperature
1 cup sugar
3/4 cup flour
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
6 ounces semisweet chocolate, coarsely chopped
a pinch of salt

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Melt the butter and chocolate over very low heat, stirring constantly. Let cool.

In a mixing bowl, beat the egg whites until stiff peaks form when the mixer is pulled away.

In a large bowl, mix the sugar and egg yolks for 1 minute. Add all ingredients except the egg whites and cherries (but including the chocolate-butter melt) and mix well.

Gently fold in the egg whites, and pour the batter into a lightly-greased 10" springform baking pan.

Top the batter with cherries and bake for 1 hour or until when a toothpick inserted into the middle of the cake would come out clean.

Variation Ideas:

-Add 1/4 cup chopped walnuts into the batter.

Key Lime Pie with a Kick

Yield: 9-inch pie

Crust:

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs, finely crushed in a food processor
6 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled

Filling:

1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
1 tablespoon lime zest, minced
a pinch of salt
3 tablespoons tequila
1/2 cup lime juice

Topping:

1 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon sugar

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Mix the butter and graham cracker crumbs and press onto the bottom of a lightly-greased 9-inch pie pan. Bake for 8 minutes and let cool.

In a bowl, add all the ingredients for the filling and beat well. Let it rest for 5 minutes or until slightly thickened. Pour onto the crust and refrigerate for 2 hours.

In a bowl, beat the heavy cream and sugar until it makes stiff peaks when you pull the mixer away.

Top the pie with the whipped cream just before serving.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the tequila.

-Omit the topping.



Mocha Chocolate Pie, US

This is a rich pie that would be a dream-come-true for a chocolate and coffee lover.

1 basic pie dough, rolled out on a 9-inch pie pan

1 1/2 sticks butter, cut in cubes

3 ounces bittersweet chocolate

3 eggs

1 cup sugar

1/4 cup flour

1/4 cup unsweetened cocoa

2 Tablespoons instant coffee granules

Bake the pie crust for about 8 minutes in oven at 425 F. Let it cool completely.

In a saucepan, melt the chocolate with the butter over very low heat, stirring constantly. Let it cool.

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

In a mixing bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until thick, about 5 minutes.

Stir flour, cocoa and coffee granules into the egg mixture.

Combine the chocolate mix with the egg mix to make the filling.

Pour the filling into the pie crust and bake for 35 minutes or until the center is slightly soft but the edge is firm.

Let it cool for 1 hour.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the pie shell and use an unbaked graham cracker crust instead.

No-Bake Cream Cheese Pie With Strawberries

I made this recipe once when I really wanted a cream cheese pie but felt guilty about ingesting so many calories. This variation is by no stretch of the imagination "fat-free," but it's very satisfying with fewer calories and is very delicious to eat in the summer!

Crust:

1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs, finely crushed in a food processor
6 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled

Filling:

1 8-ounce pkg. cream cheese, at room temperature
3 tablespoons milk
2 tablespoons honey
2 cups strawberries, halved
1/4 cup sugar
1 tablespoon cornstarch
1 tablespoon butter
1 tablespoon lemon juice
a pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 350 F.

To make the crust, mix the butter and graham cracker crumbs and press onto the bottom of a lightly-greased 9-inch pie pan. Bake for 8 minutes and let cool to room temperature.

To make the filling, use a fork or an electric mixer to whip the cream cheese with milk and honey.

Spread over the pie crust and set the crust aside.

In a saucepan, combine 1/4 cup strawberries with enough water to cover. Bring to a boil. Add enough water to make 1/2 cup of liquid.

In a bowl, mix the sugar, cornstarch and salt. Add the mixture to the liquid in the saucepan and bring to a boil, stirring constantly.

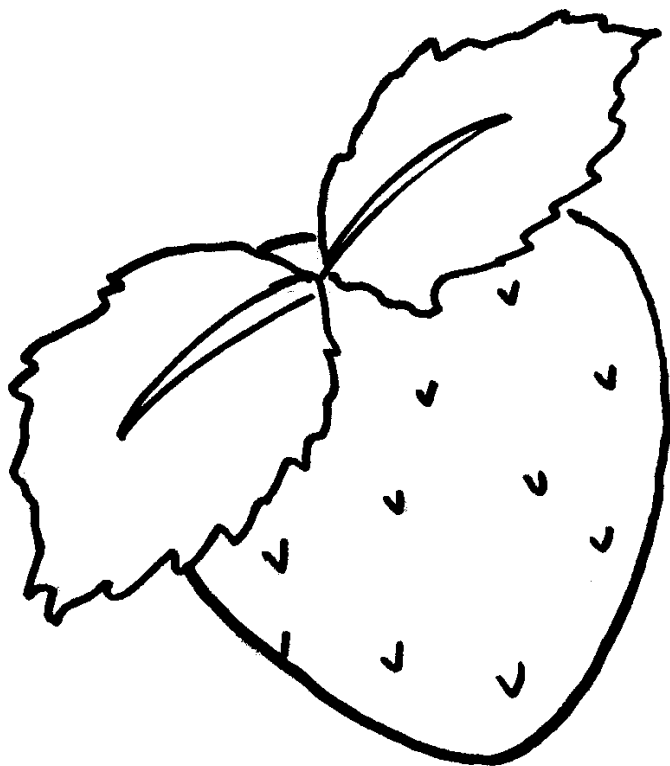
Lower the heat on the saucepan and simmer until it looks clear. Remove from heat and let cool for 5 minutes.

Add butter and lemon juice, and let it cool down all the way down to room temperature.

Place 1 3/4 cups of strawberries over the cheese mixture in the crust, and pour the contents of the saucepan on top. Serve chilled.

Variation Ideas:

- Omit strawberries and use blueberries or mixed berries instead.*
- Use mixed berries.*
- Omit honey; use 2 more tablespoons of sugar instead.*



Pumpkin Chocolate Cheesecake Pie

Servings: 12

Crust:

1 1/2 cups graham cracker
crumbs, finely crushed
3 tablespoons brown sugar
5 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract

Swirl:

3 ounces chocolate, chopped
1/3 cup heavy cream

Filling:

2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, at room temperature and cut into pieces
2/3 cup sugar
1/2 cup canned pumpkin
1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
1/4 cup heavy cream
1/8 teaspoon cinnamon
5 eggs

Combine the ingredients for the crust and press onto the bottom of a lightly-greased 10-inch springform pan.

For the swirl, melt the chocolate in heavy cream in a saucepan over very low heat, stirring constantly.

For the filling, cream the sugar and cream cheese until smooth. Add the pumpkin, ground cloves, heavy cream and cinnamon. Beat well, adding the eggs one at a time while beating.

Heat the oven to 275 F.

Pour the filling over the crust. Drizzle a pattern over the filling with the melted-chocolate mix. (Try making a pattern looking like daisy petals inside each other, or spirals, or any other design; you can draw it through the batter with knife, but do not over-draw.) Bake for 1 hour and 10 minutes or until the center is firm to the touch.

Let cool inside the oven, turning off the oven and opening the door halfway. Remove from the pan onto a plate; chill in the refrigerator for 2 hours.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the chocolate (if you have allergies or are completely deranged).

-Use more graham crackers to make a thicker crust.

Pumpkin Praline Pie

Servings: 8

This pie is a winner - it's even good for people who are sick of eating pumpkin pie on Thanksgiving!

Crust:

1 recipe basic pie single crust,
layered on a 9-inch pie pan; keep
refrigerated until filling is ready

Praline Layer:

1/2 cup pecans, chopped coarsely
1/2 cup brown sugar
3 tablespoons butter, at room
temperature

Filling:

1 cup canned pumpkin
2 large eggs

Topping:

1 cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon sugar
1 cup evaporated milk
1/2 teaspoon ginger
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1 tablespoon flour
1/4 teaspoon ground c3/4 cup
brown sugar loves
a pinch of salt

For the praline layer, combine pecans, brown sugar, and butter in a food processor and process until the mixture looks like a paste. Firmly press the mixture on the pie crust and return the crust to the refrigerator.

Heat the oven to 375 F.

In a bowl, beat the eggs with a hand mixer or fork until eggs are frothy. Add the rest of the ingredients for the filling; mix well.

Remove the crust from the refrigerator. Pour in the filling and cover the edges of the crust with aluminum foil. Bake for 45 minutes, or until the edges are set but the middle is still a little soft.

Refrigerate for 2 hours.

To make the topping, beat the heavy cream in a bowl until it makes stiff peaks when you pull the mixer away. Top the pie with the whipped cream or serve the whipped cream on the side.

Ricotta-Chocolate Cake, Italian

Servings: 8

I like the cool cheesy taste of this cake, rooted in the very old days in Italy.

1 1/2 pounds ricotta cheese
1/2 cup sugar
3 tablespoons flour
3 eggs
1 whole orange rind, minced fine
1/2 cup raisins
1/2 cup crème de cacao or red wine, warm
1/2 cup chocolate chips
a pinch of salt
a pinch of cinnamon
a pinch of nutmeg
1 1/2 cups graham cracker crumbs
6 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled

Soak the raisins in the liquor for 15 minutes and drain well.

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Scoop the raisins out into a bowl, fold with the cheese, and sprinkle with pepper.

Mix the butter and graham cracker crumbs and press onto a bottom of lightly-greased 9-inch pie pan.

Bake for 8 minutes and let cool completely.

Preheat the oven to 325 F.

With a mixer in a bowl, beat the cheese, sugar, eggs, spices and salt until thoroughly incorporated.

Add the flour and mix completely. Fold in the chips and raisins.

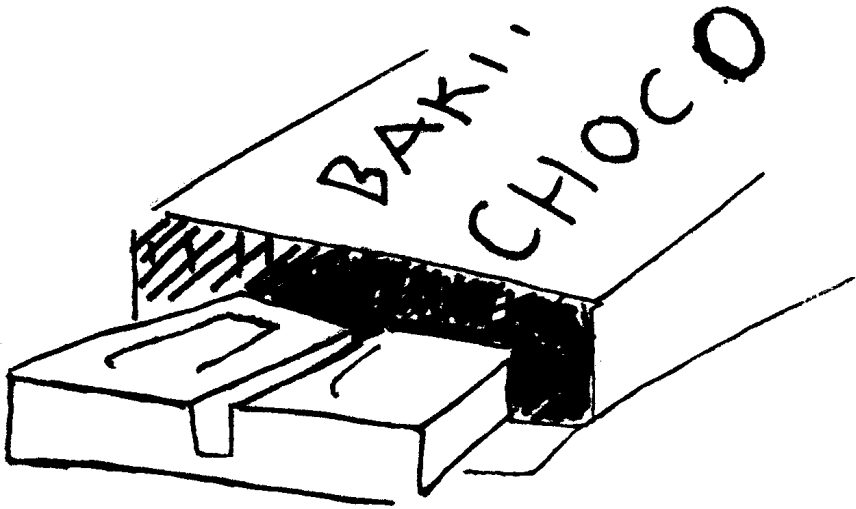
Pour the filling over the crust and bake for 1 hour or until the middle of the cake is firm.

Shut the oven, open the oven door, and let the cake cool for 1/2 hour without removing it.

Chill in the refrigerator for at least 2 hours. Serve cold.

Variation Ideas:

- Omit chocolate; use roasted almond slivers instead.*
- Omit chocolate; use dried sliced apricots.*
- Add 2 tablespoons of cocoa powder and 2 tablespoons of sugar to the graham cracker crumbs.*
- Omit graham cracker crumbs; use cookie crumbs instead.*



Muffins, Cookies and Scones



Cheddar-Cornmeal Muffins

Muffins from heaven!

1 1/2 cups flour
1/2 cup cornmeal
1 tablespoon baking powder
1 egg
1 cup milk
1/4 cup butter, melted and cooled
1 1/2 cups cheddar cheese, grated
2 teaspoons dill seed
1 teaspoon cayenne pepper
1 green chili pepper, seeded and sliced thin
a pinch of salt

Preheat oven to 425 F.

Beat egg with butter and milk until mixed.

**Combine all dry ingredients except for the cheese and sliced chili pepper.
Mix in the butter mixture.**

Fold 1 cup of the cheese and all of the chili peppers into the batter.

Spoon the batter into lightly-greased muffin cups. Top with the remaining cheese.

Bake for 18 minutes or until golden in color.

Serve with a little butter or as a side dish with fried fish.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit dill seeds and use 1/4 cup shredded fresh dill.

Chocolate Biscotti

Servings: 16

1 cup flour
1/2 cup sugar
1/2 cup cocoa
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2 eggs
3/4 teaspoon baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
splash of banana liqueur

Heat the oven to 350 F.

Combine the flour, sugar, cocoa, salt and baking powder.

Mix the vanilla extract and eggs and combine with the flour mix.

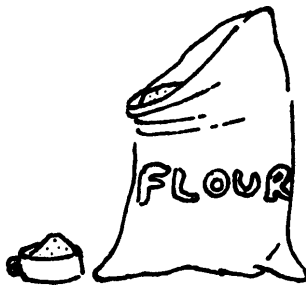
Add enough of a splash of liqueur in order to establish a sticky consistency.

Put the dough on a greased cookie sheet and arrange it into a log about 15" long and 1 1/2 - 2" wide.

Bake for 25 minutes.

Remove from oven. Let cool for 10 minutes, then slice diagonally into 1/2-3/4" slices.

**Place them apart on the sheet on their flat sides (not on their cut sides).
Reduce heat to 325 F and bake for 10 more minutes.**



Coffee-Nut Scones

Servings: 10

2/3 cup milk
2 1/2 tablespoons instant coffee granules
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 large egg, beaten slightly
2 1/4 cups flour
1/3 cup sugar
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 cup cold butter, cubed
3 tablespoons walnuts, chopped fine
2 teaspoons milk
2 teaspoons sugar
a pinch of salt

Combine 2/3 cup milk and coffee granules and cook in the microwave for 1 minute. Stir and let cool.

Stir in vanilla extract and eggs.

Preheat the oven to 425 F.

In a separate bowl, combine flour, 1/3 cup sugar, baking powder, salt, and cinnamon. Mix well.

Add butter and cut it into to flour mixture with a fork, until the mix looks like a crumbly meal. (You can do this in a food processor.) Add walnuts and coffee mixture and mix just until the flour is moist.

Put the dough on a lightly-floured surface and knead only 4 or 5 times. It will be sticky, but don't add more flour. (Handle the dough as little as possible.) Roll the dough out to 3/4" thickness. Flour the rim of a mug or glass and push it through the batter to cut circles.

Mix 2 teaspoons of milk and sugar and brush the scones with this mixture.

Bake for 20 minutes or until lightly browned.

Cranberry-Chocolate Chip Biscotti

Yield: 12 or more pieces

2 1/2 cups flour
1 cup sugar
1/2 cup dried cranberries
1/3 cup chocolate chips
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 tablespoon oil
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon almond extract
3 eggs
a pinch of salt

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

**Mix all the ingredients well. (Don't worry if it looks little dry and crumbly.)
Knead 10 times.**

Divide in half and shape each dough into an 8-inch log.

Place them apart on a greased cookie sheet and press down to a 1-inch thickness.

Bake for 35 minutes.

Remove and let cool for 10 minutes.

Cut each roll diagonally into 1/2 -inch slices.

Place them apart on the sheet on their flat sides (not on their cut sides).

Reduce heat to 325 F and bake them for 10 more minutes.

Jam Muffins

Yield: 1 dozen

These muffins are really fun. You can use 2 or more kinds of jams to get different tastes in one baking. Just be careful not to overmix the batter.

2 cups minus 2 tablespoons flour

1/2 cup sugar

3 teaspoons baking powder

1 egg , beaten

1 cup milk

1/4 cup oil

1/4 cup jam, any flavor

a pinch salt

a pinch nutmeg

Preheat oven to 400 F.

Beat eggs into milk and oil.

In a separate bowl, mix the flour, sugar, baking powder, salt and nutmeg.

Add the egg mixture into the flour mixture, gently stirring. It should be thoroughly moist but still lumpy.

Fill lightly-greased muffin cups 1/3 full with batter. Place 1 teaspoon jam on top of each and fill up the cups with the rest of the batter.

Bake for 15 to 20 minutes.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit milk and use soymilk instead.

-Omit nutmeg and add 1 teaspoon orange zest.

Oatmeal Scones, British

Handle the dough as little as possible and you'll end up with the most delicious scones ever!

3 cups plus 2 tablespoons flour
1/2 cup plus 2 tablespoons sugar
2 1/2 sticks butter, cubed, cold
2 cups oats
1 cup raisins
2 tablespoons orange zest. 1 1/4 teaspoons salt
1 1/4 teaspoons baking soda
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
3/4 cup cold water

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Combine the flour, butter, sugar, salt, baking soda, and baking powder in a food processor and process until it looks crumbly and mealy. If you don't have a food processor, you can just cut the butter into the flour with a fork until it is crumbly.

Add just enough water so that the dough feels moist enough to start coming together.

Remove the dough and put it on a very lightly-floured surface. Add the oats, currants and chopped orange zest and mix just enough to combine.

Roll the dough out into a circle that is 3/4-inch thick.

With a knife or the lightly-floured rim of a glass, cut the dough into 10 circles, each 3 1/2 inches in diameter.

Put the scones on a lightly-greased cookie sheet and bake for 20 minutes or until golden brown.

Oatmeal, Nuts and Raisin Cookies

Yield: 4 dozen

Tastes chewy and really old-fashioned! Very heartwarming.

1 1/2 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
3/4 cup flour
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 stick butter, at room temperature, cut into pieces
1/2 cup brown sugar
1/2 cup sugar
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup raisins
1/4 cup walnuts, chopped

Preheat the oven to 350 F.

Cream the butter and the sugars until fluffy and light.

Beat in the egg and vanilla extract.

In a separate bowl, mix the rest of the ingredients except for the raisins and walnuts. Then beat this mixture into the butter mix.

Add the raisins and walnuts and mix gently.

With a tablespoon, place the batter 2 inches apart on lightly-greased cookie sheets.

Bake for 10 minutes or until golden brown.

Peanut Butter Cookies

Servings: 24

1 stick butter, cubed
1/2 cup chunky peanut butter
3/4 cup brown sugar
2 tablespoons maple syrup
1 egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 cup peanuts, chopped
a pinch of salt

Heat the oven to 375 F.

With a hand mixer, cream the butter, peanut butter and sugar until light and fluffy.

Add egg, maple syrup, and vanilla extract and beat well.

Mix the flour, salt, baking soda, and chopped peanuts into the batter.

With a tablespoon, place the batter 1 1/2" apart onto lightly-greased cookie sheet and bake for 8 minutes or until cookies have a golden color.

Variation Ideas:

-Use 1/4 cup peanuts and 1/4 cup chocolate chips.

-Omit peanuts, sugar, vanilla extract and maple syrup. Add 1/2 cup grated apples with 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon.

Pumpkin Muffins with Walnuts and Chocolate Chips

Servings: 12

1 stick butter, at room temperature, cut into pieces
1 cup brown sugar
2 eggs
3/4 cup canned pumpkin
2 cups flour
1/2 tablespoon baking soda
1 1/2 tablespoons baking powder
1/2 tablespoon salt
1/2 tablespoon each cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger, cardamom
1/2 cup buttermilk
1/4 cup walnuts, chopped
1/4 cup raisins
1/2 cup chocolate chips

Heat the oven to 400 F.

Cream the butter well in a bowl with a mixer.

Add sugar and mix until it looks fluffy.

Beat in the eggs and pumpkin.

Stir in the milk.

Mix the dry ingredients in a separate bowl. Add and stir into the butter mix just until combined.

Pour into lightly-greased muffin pans and bake for 20 minutes or until the muffins spring back when pressed lightly on the top.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit any spice that you don't like.

-Use any kind of nuts in the place of walnuts.

-Omit raisins; use dried cranberries instead.

-You can pour the batter into a cake pan and cook for 35 minutes in 350 F; then top it with a butter or chocolate frosting.

Sour Cream - Poppy Seed Muffins

Yield: 1 dozen

The sour cream adds a wonderful taste to these poppy seed muffins!

1/2 cup brown sugar
1 stick butter, at room
temperature
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups flour

3 teaspoons baking powder
1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1 1/4 cups sour cream
1/2 cup poppy seeds
a pinch of salt

Preheat the oven to 375 F.

In a bowl, cream the sugar and butter until light and fluffy.

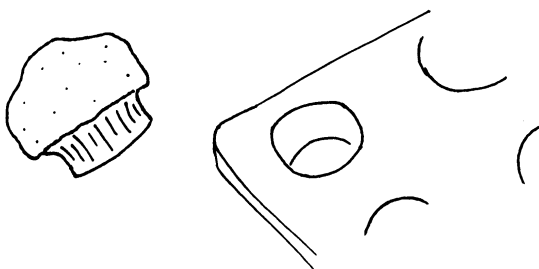
In a separate bowl, mix together all of the dry ingredients except the poppy seeds. Add in the eggs, sour cream, and butter mixture and stir gently. Then fold in the poppy seeds.

Spoon the batter into lightly-greased muffin cups and bake for 20 to 25 minutes; fill an oven-proof cup with 2 cups of water and place on the same rack in order to keep the muffins moist.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit sour cream and use plain yogurt instead.

-Use nonfat sour cream instead of regular.



Sugar Cookie in Syrup, Turkish

Servings: 8

Batter:

4 tablespoons butter, cubed

2 eggs

2 cups flour

1/2 cup confectioner's sugar

1 tablespoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

a pinch of salt

Syrup:

3 1/2 cups sugar

3 cups water

2 tablespoons lemon juice

Topping:

1 egg yolk

16 pistachio nuts, or enough to top each cookie

To make the syrup, combine 3 1/2 cups sugar with 3 cups water in a saucepan. Boil for 1 minute. Add the lemon juice and set it aside to let cool.

To make the batter, add the butter, eggs, baking powder, baking soda and salt into a mixing bowl. Mix well with your fingertips for 5 minutes. (It should feel like your earlobe.) Add the flour and knead for 5 minutes. Cover the dough with a damp cloth and let it rest for 10 minutes.

Heat the oven to 350 F.

Rip walnut-sized pieces from the dough and shape them into balls. Flatten them slightly so they look like puffy cookies. Place 1 pistachio on the middle of each and arrange them on lightly-greased cookie sheets, being careful not to crowd them too close together.

Brush the cookies with egg yolk and bake for 20 minutes or until lightly brown.

Pour all of the syrup over the cookies. Let the cookies soak up the syrup, spooning the syrup on them to thoroughly moisten them if necessary. Serve at room temperature.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit pistachios; top the cookies with almonds instead.

Walnut Cookies with Jam, Argentinean

These are extremely easy to make, and a great way to use up your old jam that nobody wants to touch anymore! Try making holiday shapes, like hearts for Saint Valentine's Day, etc.

1 cup walnuts, ground
1 cup sugar
2 1/2 cups flour
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups butter, cut into small cubes
3 eggs
1 lemon rind
1 1/2 cups jam
confectioner's sugar, to dust

In a bowl, beat the sugar, vanilla extract and butter with a hand mixer until fluffy. Add the eggs and lemon rind and beat for 1 more minute or until nicely blended.

Add the flour and ground walnuts and knead until well-combined, about 2 minutes. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Preheat the oven to 440 F.

Place the dough on a lightly-floured surface and push into a circle about 1/4-inch thick with your fingertips. Cut into shapes with a cookie cutter, jam lid or knife. Place on a lightly-greased cookie pan.

Bake for 12 minutes or until the edges turn light brown.

Spread some jam on a cookie and put another one on top to make a cookie sandwich. Repeat this with all of the cookies.

Let cool to room temperature.

Dust the cookies with some confectioner's sugar and serve.

Variation Ideas:.-Omit walnuts; use almonds instead.

-Omit confectioner's sugar. Cover the top of the cookies with some melted chocolate and sprinkle with chopped nuts or candies.

Sweet Treats



Baked Apple With Walnut Crisp

Servings: 6

6 apples, peeled, cored and sliced thin
1/3 cup sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/4 orange juice
3/4 cup flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
4 tablespoons cold butter, cut into cubes
2/3 cup brown sugar
1 egg
1/2 cup walnuts, chopped fine

Place the apples in a greased 9-inch pie pan.

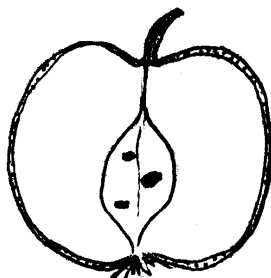
Sprinkle with sugar, cinnamon and juice and mix gently.

Heat oven to 350 F.

Put the butter, flour and baking powder in a food processor and pulse-process a few times until crumbly. (If you don't have a food processor, cut the butter into the flour with a fork)

Add brown sugar, egg and walnuts and process only until mixed.

Sprinkle the mixture over apples and bake for 45 minutes or until golden brown.



Banana Fritters, Southeast Asian

Servings: 6

The batter becomes crunchy and keeps the banana soft and moist on the inside.

6 small bananas, peeled and cut cross-wise into 3-inch lengths

2/3 cup flour

2 tablespoons cornstarch

1/4 cup sugar

a pinch of salt

1/2 cup water

2 teaspoons baking powder

cinnamon

confectioner's sugar

oil, to fry

Combine flour, cornstarch, sugar, salt and baking powder in a bowl.

Slowly stir in the water and mix until the batter is smooth.

Coat the bananas with the batter and fry in hot oil, turning once, until golden brown (about 2 minutes).

Sprinkle with cinnamon and confectioner's sugar.

Variation Ideas:

-Serve with ice cream.

-Use apples instead of bananas.

Coffee-Flavored Custard, French

Servings: 4

Refreshing after a heavy meal!

2 large eggs, beaten
1 1/8 cups milk
1/2 cup sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
3 teaspoons instant coffee powder
water, boiling

Preheat the oven to 375 F.

In a saucepan, combine the milk and sugar. Bring to a boil and remove from heat.

Slowly drizzle the milk into the eggs while whisking the eggs constantly. Add the extract and the coffee powder to the mixture and mix well.

Pour into custard cups. Place the cups in a roasting pan.

Pour the boiling water into the pan, taking care not to spill into the custard cups. (Water should come halfway up the sides of the cups.) Bake the custards for 20 minutes or until when a dry knife, inserted into the center of the custards, would come out clean.

Chill in the refrigerator.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit the coffee and use unsweetened cocoa powder instead.

-Omit the coffee and use raspberry syrup instead.

Easy Crepes with Jam, French

Servings: 6

I find the 8-inch non-stick pans to be the most useful (except of course crepe pans). They are small enough to be able to maneuver and flip the crepes without too much trouble.

3/4 cup flour
2 tablespoons sugar
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 eggs, at room temperature
1 cup milk, at room temperature

3 tablespoons butter, melted and cooled
a pinch of salt
1 1/4 cups jam
1/4 cup confectioner's sugar

Beat the eggs lightly with the milk, vanilla extract, and butter.

Slowly add the flour, sugar and salt into the mix, constantly whisking until it is smooth. Let the batter rest for 30 minutes at room temperature.

Brush an 8-inch non-stick pan very lightly with a little melted butter. Wipe the excess butter with a paper towel and heat the pan over medium heat.

Pour 2 tablespoons of batter, tilting the pan around to thinly coat the bottom. Check the bottom of the crepe by lifting an edge with a spatula or your fingertips to see if it is light-golden in color. Then flip it over and cook the other side.

Repeat this until you run out of batter, re-buttering the pan only if the batter starts to stick.

Brush a serving platter lightly with butter and put the crepes on the top of each other, spreading 1 tablespoon of jam on each. Cut into wedges and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Lightly brown the butter for the batter to get a nuttier flavor.

-Use different kinds of jams for each layer.

-Top with chocolate sauce.

-Top with chopped nuts.

-Top with ice cream.

-Make individual rolls with each crepe.

Fresh Raspberries with Mascarpone Sauce

Servings: 4

2 cups raspberries

8 ounces mascarpone cheese

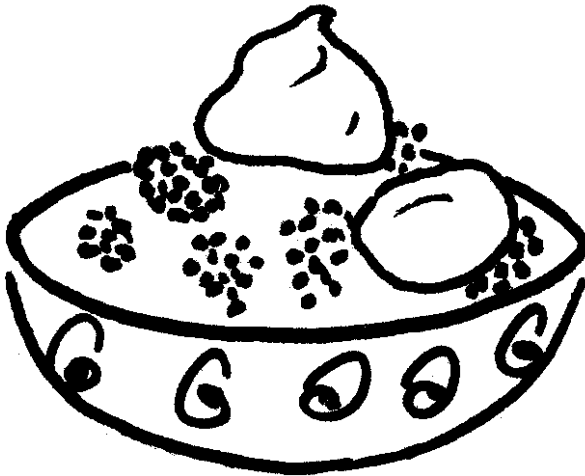
1/4 cup honey

a little splash of vanilla extract

1/2 teaspoon rose water (optional)

Mix the mascarpone cheese, rose water, honey, and vanilla extract.

Place the berries in four individual bowls and top with a dollop of sauce.
Serve immediately.



Marzipan, French

Yield: 12 pieces

You can use other items such as cloves for pumpkin stems, or real cherry stem for marzipan cherry stems, to make these children-friendly edible adornments look real.

7 ounces almond paste

4 tablespoons corn syrup

1 cup flour

1/2 teaspoon water

a couple of drops of food coloring (depending on the desired shape: red for cherries, orange for oranges, green for leaves etc.)

Knead the paste, syrup and sugar to combine.

Mix food coloring with the water and add into the paste. Knead to evenly color it.

Either make shapes by hand, or push into moistened or lightly greased molds for animal, fruit or holiday shapes.

Chill in the refrigerator.

Serve on a pie or just by themselves accompanied with coffee etc.

Mixed Nut Brittle with Brown Sugar

Yield: 1 pounds

This brittle won't break your teeth.

1 cup brown sugar

1 tablespoon butter

1 teaspoon salt

2 1/2 cups mixed nuts like cashews, peanuts and walnuts

1/2 cup water

Combine the sugar, water, butter and salt in a saucepan and heat over medium heat to 300 F, checking with a candy thermometer.

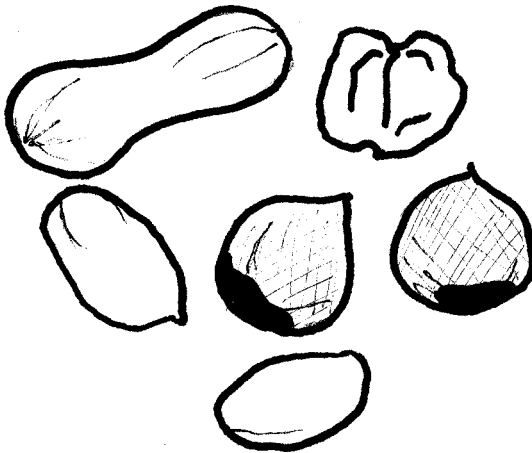
Stir in the nuts and pour onto a lightly-greased cookie sheet.

Let it cool and harden.

Crack to remove.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit brown sugar; use maple sugar instead.



Plantation Pudding

Servings: 4

Old-fashioned, down-to-earth and delicious!

7 slices stale bread
1/3 cup raisins
1 1/2 cups unsweetened applesauce
2 eggs, beaten
1/2 cup milk
1/2 cup sugar
1/4 cup buttermilk
1/2 teaspoon nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon cinnamon
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat oven to 350 F.

Spread bread crumbs and raisins in a 9x13 inch casserole dish.

Mix applesauce, cinnamon, and nutmeg in a bowl, and pour over the bread.

In another bowl, mix eggs, milk, sugar, vanilla extract, and buttermilk, and pour over the bread mixture.

Bake in oven for 30 minutes.



Ricotta Brownies

Yield: 16 squares

3 squares (3 ounces) unsweetened chocolate
1 stick butter
1 1/4 cups sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla extract
3/4 cup ricotta cheese
3 eggs
1 teaspoon lemon juice
1/2 cup flour
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 cup walnuts, chopped
a pinch of salt

Melt chocolate and 6 tablespoons butter. Let cool to room temperature.

In a mixing bowl, cream 2 tablespoons butter, 1/4 cup sugar and 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract. Add ricotta cheese, 1 egg and lemon juice and beat until smooth. Set aside.

Heat the oven to 350 F.

In a separate bowl, beat 2 eggs until thickened. Gradually stir in 1 cup of sugar; add the chocolate mixture and stir.

Stir flour, salt, baking powder, and 1 teaspoon of vanilla extract into the chocolate mixture.

Spoon half of the chocolate batter into a lightly-greased 9" square pan and spread evenly.

Add the ricotta mixture and spread it on top of the chocolate mixture.

Gently spoon the remaining chocolate batter on top of the ricotta mixture. Zigzag through the batter with a knife, being careful not to overmix it.

Bake for 35 minutes and let cool completely. Cut in squares.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit ricotta; use cottage cheese instead.

Tiramisu “Carry Me Up..”, Italian

Servings: 4

... to the heavens! This recipe is so easy that making this yummy dessert is a matter of minutes.

2 small eggs, separated

1 cup mascarpone cheese, at room temperature

1/2 tablespoon brown sugar

1/4 cup marsala wine

1/2 cup black coffee

10 ladyfinger cookies

grated chocolate, to garnish

In a mixing bowl, whisk the egg whites until stiff. (It should make peaks when you pull the mixer away.) In a separate bowl, combine the cheese, sugar, and egg yolks; beat until mixed well. Then fold in the egg whites very gently.

Divide the mixture into three portions. Spread one portion evenly on the bottom of a serving bowl.

(You can also use a glass pan or plate.) Mix the coffee and wine in a separate shallow bowl. Dip in 5 ladyfingers; quickly turn them over so both sides soak up some liquid, but not so much that they fall apart, and lay the ladyfingers on top of the cheese mixture in the serving bowl.

Spread the second portion of the cheese mixture over the ladyfingers in the serving bowl.

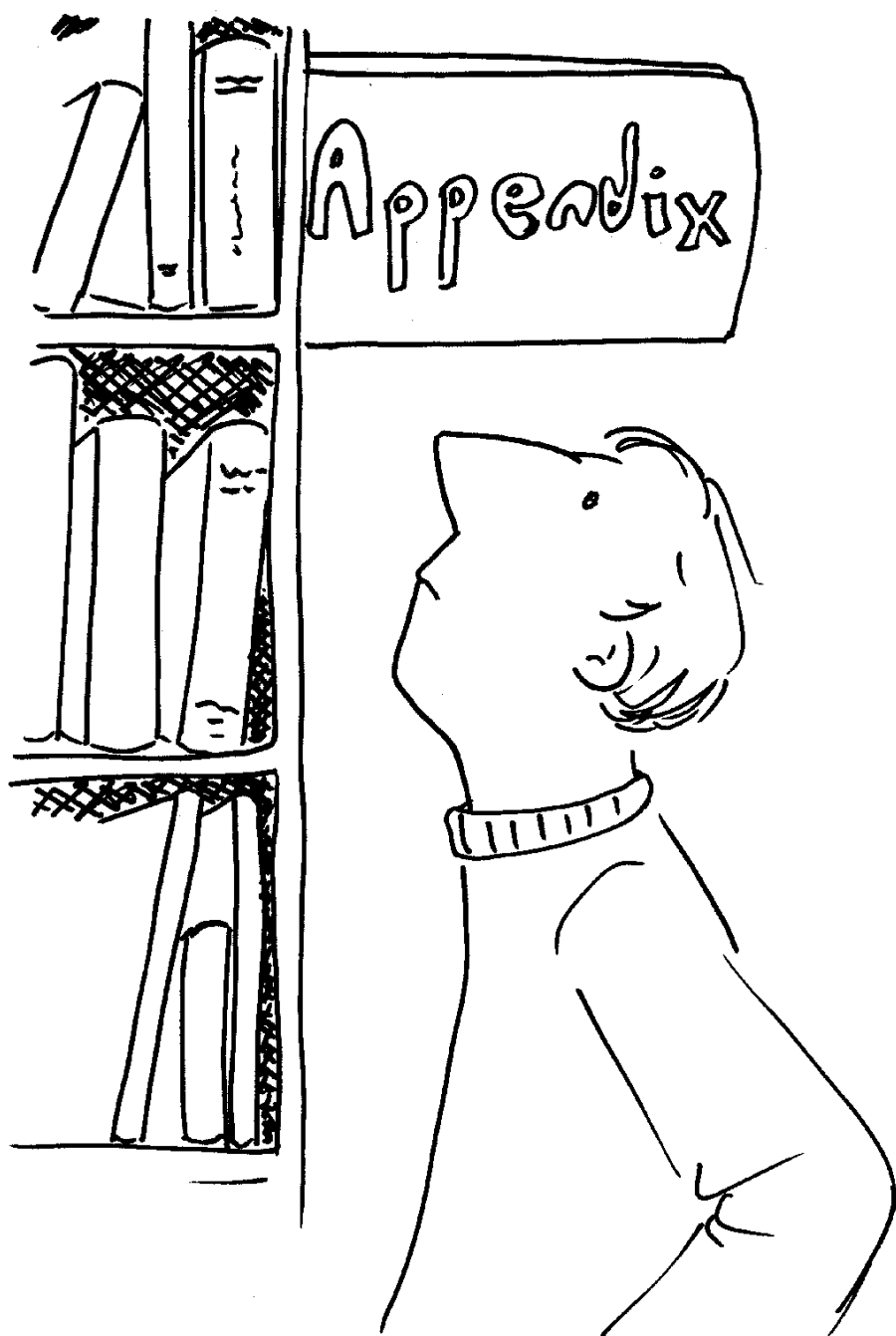
Soak the last 5 ladyfingers in the coffee-wine mixture as before, and again lay them on top of the cheese layer in the serving bowl. Top with the final portion of the cheese mixture. Cover and chill overnight.

Sprinkle with chocolate and serve.

Variation Ideas:

-Omit wine; use chocolate- or coffee-flavored liqueur instead.

-Sprinkle with cocoa powder.



Brief Glossary Of Cooking Techniques

To blanch...means to plunge ingredients into boiling water to cook for a brief period only, and then into cold water to stop the cooking process. It reduces the cooking time so you can use hard vegetables for stir-frying; it gets rid of the bitter taste of citrus peel. To understand if the ingredient is blanched, simply feel a piece and gauge whether it feels like it needs to be cooked for a couple of minutes more - it should be softer than raw but not soft enough yet to eat. This technique is also used to loosen the skins of vegetables or fruits (like tomatoes and peaches) for peeling.

To broil...means to cook with intense direct heat either on a grill or under a broiler.

To beat...means to stir rapidly in a circular motion. This also can be done with an electric mixer.

To brown... means to cook quickly over high heat, causing the surface of the food to brown while the interior stays moist.

To chop...means to cut into smaller-than-bite-sized pieces.

To coat...dipping or rolling food to cover it with an outer "coating."

To cream... means to beat an ingredient (or combination of ingredients) until the mixture is homogeneous, soft, smooth and creamy.

To cut in...means to mix a solid, cold fat (such as butter or shortening) with dry ingredients (such as a flour mixture) until the combination is in the form of small particles. This technique can be achieved by using a pastry blender, two knives, a fork, or fingers (which must be cool so as not to melt the fat).

To cut into matchstick size...means to cut into julienne strips of about 2" in length, 1/2" (or less) wide, 1/8" thick.

To dice...means to cut into cubes from 1/8" to 1/2". The best way to do this is first to cut the ingredients into strips, and then to cut crosswise into cubes.

To flambé... means to sprinkle food with liquor, which, after warming, is ignited just before serving. Do this over high heat either by slightly tilting the

pan so the inside catches fire, or by lighting the liquor with a match. Keep the pan away from your face but don't be alarmed; this takes very little time and the flames won't jump of the pan.

To fold...means to very gently combine a light, airy mixture (like beaten eggs) with a heavier mixture (like cake batter).

To julienne...means to cut food into very thin strips.

To mince... means to cut food into very small pieces. The ingredient should be finely chopped first in one direction, then another.

To pan fry... means to cook on top of the stove with an uncovered pan, with just enough fat or oil to prevent sticking.

To poach...means to cook the food gently in liquid just below the boiling point until the liquid's surface is beginning to show some quivering movement.

To pulse...means to push the button of the food processor on and off frequently to get ingredients to become crumbly without turning into a big mess of dough.

Sauce... means thickened and flavored liquid to accompany food to enhance and bring out its flavor.

To score...means to make shallow cuts (usually in a diamond pattern) in the surface of a food.

To Sauté... means to cook food quickly in a small amount of oil in a skillet or sauté pan, on medium heat with stirring.

To shred... means to cut into narrow threadlike strips about 2 inches in length.

To simmer... means to cooking gently in liquid at a temperature low enough for tiny bubbles to begin to break the surface.

To steam ...means to cook by placing the food on a rack or in a special steamer basket over boiling or simmering water in a covered pan.

To stir-fry...to quickly fry small pieces of food in a small amount of oil in a large pan over very high heat, while constantly and briskly stirring. I recommend using a nonstick pan to reduce the amount of oil, and to use a wok for Chinese stir-frying. The smaller the pieces of food you use, the faster it will cook. Keep your eye on the food, for cooking time will vary according to your stove, pan etc. Combine your ingredients before starting to heat the oil, and keep stirring constantly. You don't have to keep the heat the same all the time - just watch, smell and LISTEN, so that you don't scorch the food from using too-high heat or wilt it from too-low. Just imagine what you'd like to see on your plate if you were in a restaurant, and try to reach to that goal. Stir-fry food cannot wait; serve immediately.

To temper...means to warm a cold ingredient before combining it with a warmer one; this is generally done by mixing a small portion of the warmer ingredient into the colder one. Once the cooler ingredient has been warmed in this manner, you can then safely combine the entire contents of both without fear of curdling the warmer ingredient.

To whisk (or whip)... means to beat ingredients vigorously, incorporating air into the material and increasing its volume.

Zest...is the outermost layer of skin of citrus fruit. Use the thin part of a grater and be careful not to peel any of the white part, for it will make your food unpleasantly bitter. The trick in grating it is to have a light hand and to the fruit around as soon as you see the white part.

Pantry List

Almond: Slivered almonds are best for most purposes if another is not specifically required. Peeling off the skin is not worth of trouble.

Anchovy and Anchovy Paste: We will use both: canned whole anchovy in oil for salads and paste when we just need the flavor. Don't buy the kind that is rolled with capers.

Apple: Keep them in the refrigerator and buy the ones that feel firm without any brown, rotten spots. Pick the medium sizes, and stay away from very big and very small ones. The following apples work especially well for cooking and baking: Baldwin, Cortland, Northern Spy, Rome Beauty, Winesap, and York Imperial.

Asparagus: All the recipes call for fresh asparagus. Look under the stems; they should look tender, juicy, and fresh - if they look like tree branches (dry and split), don't buy them. They go bad quite fast, so prepare your plans accordingly.

Avocado: Buy them with a dark skin, but firm to touch. If you are planning ahead and will use it in a week, buy firmer ones and leave at room temperature to ripen.

Bacon: I buy the most expensive bacon for frying and eating by itself, and use seasoning bacon (bacon end and pieces) for stews, sauces etc. If you divide them into manageable portions, they freeze perfectly.

Baking Powder: The baking powder you'll find is the double-acting kind and is generally suitable for all the recipes.

Baking Soda: In addition for use in the recipes, you can also use this when you have indigestion: Put 2 teaspoonfuls in a glass of water, mix and drink. You can add a little sugar and a couple of drops lemon juice right before drinking to improve the taste.

Beans: Every recipe that uses beans in this book calls for canned beans, which are much faster to work with than using dried beans (even though purists might find some loss of taste). With canned beans, you can make a dish that would require overnight soaking and hour of cooking in a matter of minutes. Keep every kind of canned beans in your pantry like black-eye peas, cannelloni etc. - except for green beans, which taste really nasty when canned.

Beef: You might go for the cheaper cuts if you're using the meat for stew or if you'll slice them very thin (as in a Chinese dish), but otherwise, pay for a higher quality if you don't want to chew a piece of grilled or broiled leather. It is much easier to slice, chop or bone it if it is partially frozen.

Bell Pepper: I only use red and green bell peppers in this book. The yellow peppers are very elegant in color but not elegant enough to be worth twice the cost of green peppers! If you like, you can roast and store in olive oil in refrigerator for over a week for fast sandwiches or sauces.

Beans: Every recipe that uses beans in this book calls for canned beans, which are much faster to work with than using dried beans (even though purists might find some loss of taste). With canned beans, you can make a dish that would require overnight soaking and hour of cooking in a matter of minutes. Keep every kind of canned beans in your pantry like black-eye peas, cannelloni etc. - except for green beans, which taste really nasty when canned.

Black Olives: Do not touch the canned ones - they're not even the same species. Buy the medium wrinkled ones, cured in olive oil. Generally the ones that are sold in the open are much, much better than ones in jars.

Black Pepper: If you are buying ground pepper, stay away from brands whose grind is too powdery and therefore don't have much flavor. Buying peppercorns and grinding at home when needed is preferable.

Bok Choy: This is a Chinese vegetable with a white stalk and dark green leaves. It cooks very fast and is therefore very useful for stir-fry cooking. Regular supermarkets' bok choy is bigger than the ones in Chinese supermarkets, and generally inferior in taste, so use less of it.

Bulgur: This is an ancient grain that consists of steamed, dried and crushed wheat kernels. Buy a medium grinds if not otherwise specified by the recipe. You might find it under the name of Bulgar Wheat or Kiepe.

Butter: Not one recipe in this book calls for salted butter, which is of a lower quality than unsalted and makes it difficult to control the salt content in the dish. You can freeze unsalted (sweet) butter.

Bread Crumbs: Unflavored dried bread crumbs are the best to buy if you want to control all the contents of your dish. Also, you can process stale cubed bread into crumbs and freeze at home.

Brie: If you're cooking, peel off the rind; the easy way is to freeze partially and peel with a knife later.

Broccoli Rabe: A vegetable that is related to both the cabbage and turnip family. The greens have a bitter flavor which can be used in frying, steaming, braising, and in soups or salads.

Broccoli Florets: The florets shouldn't look like they will bloom into flowers in a couple of days; they should also be dark green, not brownish.

Brown Sugar: Buy dark brown sugar for these recipes. Brown sugar is like a spice in itself; it will improve the recipe it goes into with its unique taste, so do not substitute regular sugar. If it gets too hard in its bag, put an apple wedge with the sugar in a well-sealed plastic bag; it will loosen in a couple of days.

Cardamom: You might not be familiar to this spice but when you use it you'll be hooked! They ask a lot of money for it in supermarkets; it's considerably cheaper in ethnic stores.

Cayenne Pepper: It is the same thing with hot red pepper; buy the powder.

Celeriac (celery root): Celery root, also called celeriac, is an ugly, knobby vegetable that is the root of a special celery grown for its root. It is generally found in supermarkets on the vegetable rack with radishes or carrots. Go for a medium grapefruit size, firm, with a minimum amount of knobs. If you peel it too far in advance of cooking or mixing with yogurt, its color will change from creamy to brown. To stop this, either peel right before using or soak briefly in a water-lemon juice mix. You can also use it in soups or stews just like radishes or potatoes.

Chervil: A member of the parsley family; as usual, it's possible to find it dry, but if you can, use fresh.

Chicken: Hardly any recipe in this book uses the whole chicken, so buying parts that you like (bigger packets are obviously cheaper) and freezing is the cheapest option. You can buy either whole chicken breasts or skinless boneless chicken breasts.

Chicken Broth: Bouillon cubes are as good for our purposes as canned broth.

Chocolate: Always use baking chocolate; never use milk chocolate because the milk will react poorly to the baking process. If the recipe calls for melted chocolate, you can use either a microwave oven or a double boiler on the stovetop. If using the microwave, use low power and stir after it is melted. (If you can't control the power on your microwave, take it out every 15 seconds, stir, and put it back in to melt a little more.)

Chutney: Chutney is a spicy condiment made of fruit, vinegar, sugar and spices.

Chive: Sometimes it is difficult to find fresh chives; if you have that problem, buy some and freeze it. It may lose some flavor, but not every recipe is well-suited for dried chives. If you positively cannot find fresh, use dried, half the amount of what the recipe calls for.

Cinnamon: This book doesn't call for any cinnamon sticks because it's sometimes difficult to find in a supermarket, and when you do find it, it often looks like it's sat on the rack for decades. Ground cinnamon is fine for the recipes in this book.

Cloves: It's possible to buy whole cloves and grind them, but ground cloves will do fine.

Cooking wine: Do not buy cooking wine: they sell better stuff in a liquor store for less than half the price. Buy cheap wine instead, and use it just for cooking.

Coriander: Generally when a recipe calls for coriander, it means the powder. That powder is actually from ground seeds - fresh coriander is cilantro.

Corn: If it is not a corn-on-the-cob recipe, use canned sweet corn for the recipes in this book. Frozen corn sticks to each other, making separating a small amount difficult. (Also, they taste drier than canned corn.) Buying small cans can be more economical than large ones if you end up having to throw away leftover corn that's been forgotten in the refrigerator.

Corned Beef: By this, I don't mean for you to make it from scratch; buy it as sliced cold cuts.

Cornmeal: Buy yellow cornmeal, if only because it has slightly more vitamin A in it.

Cornstarch: Cornstarch is a great thickener for sauces and soups, as it does not add any unwanted color or flavor to the food. But be careful, for it will become lumpy when mixed with hot liquid. The best way to avoid this is to temper it by combining some cornstarch with the hot liquid and room temperature water in a bowl; make a paste out of it, and then add it to the sauce or soup to thicken. (If lumps do appear, you can put it into a food processor and process until smooth and thicken over low heat for a couple of minutes.)

Cream Cheese: It may sound strange, but you can freeze cream cheese and defrost as needed. The texture gets a little funny, which makes it less than ideal for spreading on a bagel, but it tastes the same - if you're going to whip and cook it, why care about the texture?

Cumin: Buy ground cumin instead of the seeds, but buy in small amounts, for after 6 months it starts losing its flavor.

Dill Pickle: I cannot possibly get myself to like sweet dill pickles, so I just use the spicy kind. Buy them sliced if you're only using them for the recipes in this book.

Egg: I use raw egg in the kitchen despite widely-publicized concerns about salmonella. The most important thing to remember is to be careful not to buy old eggs or ones with cracked shells, and do not leave them at room temperature for longer than 1 hour.

Eggplant: If the recipe simply calls for “eggplant,” buy the medium-sized firm dark purple ones. Very large eggplants are full of seeds that will ruin your dish. Other varieties also easily found in supermarkets include the much smaller “Italian” eggplants and the long, thin, white skinned “Chinese” ones.

Flour: Buy white flour if another kind is not indicated.

Garlic: Buy garlic with medium-to-large cloves that doesn’t have too much dry skin on them. Canned-chopped-processed garlic just doesn’t taste or smell the same and shouldn’t be used for cooking with this book. Recipes with cooked garlic won’t give you smelly breath, while dishes with uncooked garlic should be eaten with people who truly love each other! Don’t bother buying elephant garlic: it’s not even truly garlic but is from the leek family.

Garlic Powder: Only a very few recipes here use garlic powder, and only if an especially smooth texture is desired. You can always use powder instead of the real thing, but it just isn’t the same.

Ginger: For every recipe, ginger must be peeled before using. You can also freeze it.

Ginger Powder: This book uses ginger powder for soup and dessert recipes. It is not a good stand-in for fresh ginger in stir-fry dishes, but it can substitute fresh ginger in stews if necessary.

Graham Cracker Crumbs: Buy graham crackers and process into crumbs in a food processor. If you like, you can use another kind of cracker instead.

Grated Cheese: You can use any hard cheese you like: Parmesan, Cheddar, Asiago, etc.

Heavy Cream: I am not at all embarrassed to use cream and butter. Instead of substituting these fine ingredients with inferior, artificial, or “low-fat” ones (which turn beautiful food into cow feed), it would be better to learn to eat smaller portions if calorie content is a concern. Because it doesn’t have the same consistency, using milk instead of heavy milk will change the texture of the dish, but feel free to try. Heavy cream turns into whipped cream when whipped, so there’s no need to pay extra for the packing material that comes with pre-whipped stuff.

Kohlrabi: is a member of the turnip family. It has a purple-tinged white bulb-like stem, and its greens are edible. Buy the ones that are heavy for its size and that have firm, deeply-colored green leaves.

Lemon: I generally buy one lemon in case zest is needed and use bottled lemon juice from concentrate for the rest. I know it doesn’t quite take the place of fresh lemon juice, but sometimes I just don’t have the time to pick out the seeds or to run to the store when I’m out of lemons.

Lemon Grass: This herb has a long, thin stalk and a very fragrant base. It is mostly used in Thai cooking, although you might notice it in some Chinese or Indonesian foods. It is sometimes hard to find fresh, so you can substitute it with either dried lemon grass or with lime or lemon zest. If you can find it fresh, peel the tough outer part to reach to the whiter, softer core; mince and use.

Macaroni: I'm not so picky about this and often buy the cheapest brand. Try throwing a handful per person into any soup you like to make a heartier version.

Mayonnaise: Actually it is very easy to make at home, but if you don't have time or will not use that much at once, you should buy it ready-made. If you want to cut the fat, buy reduced-fat but not non-fat; it is simply disgusting.

Mirin: This is a low-alcohol wine that gives Japanese cooking its sweetness. You'll find it in the ethnic food sections of good supermarkets. It may also be called rice wine.

Mustard: Unless otherwise indicated, the recipes call for prepared mustard. This is a matter of your preference: I find American mustard to be pungent and otherwise lacking in flavor; some people find Chinese mustard too hot for their taste. Dijon mustard holds a good middle ground and would work fine with all of the recipes.

Nutmeg: You don't have to buy whole nutmeg - in most cases, ground will do just fine. We can't give up from cooking well just because some recipe calls for some impractical ingredient!

Oil: When I need to use any oil other than olive oil, I use ones that add the least flavor possible (I find sunflower oil to add a certain smell to the food; you may find the same with other types of oil.) Unless specifically indicated, "oil" in the recipes means any neutral oil except olive oil. Go for the second-cheapest.

Olive Oil: Please don't buy the little bottles that look like perfume carriers - this is one case where you don't necessarily get what you pay for. There are great bargains in extra-big tins (especially in Greek or Turkish districts of large cities); buy extra-virgin, and if it says "first cold-pressed," it's as good as gold. Don't buy any flavored ones - who is to decide for you what spices you like to use? Just enjoy it in recipes, on salads, and in as many places as you can. If you care: it is the healthiest fat kind you can get, but more importantly: it is created for gods.

Onion: When it says "onion," it generally means the yellow-colored medium size one. Check if the bag has onions with rotted spots; they will spoil the whole bag quickly. Unless the recipe specifically calls for it, do not use onion powder, flakes or flavorings.

Paprika: Supermarket paprika is very mild, and ethnic-store paprika has more of a kick. The choice is yours; you know which one I use!

Parsley: Flat-leaf parsley will work in every recipe that calls for parsley. Dry parsley tastes nothing like the fresh one - I don't even know what it's good for!

Peel: It is the skin of a fruit or vegetable; in this book, it usually refers to orange, lime, or lemon skin. You can do it carefully with a knife, being sure to completely avoid the white part of the fruit, which is very bitter.

Pesto: This is an uncooked sauce made with fresh basil, garlic, pine nuts, Parmesan or Pecorino and olive oil. Today the term is used for a wider variety of ingredients.

Potato: Sometimes the potato choices in the supermarket are bewildering. Here's a tip: if the skin is very thin and has a light color (red or yellow), it's good for cooking, frying and boiling. If the skin is thick and has a dark color, bake it.

Red Pepper Flakes: You can substitute it with cayenne, but you may prefer the flakes, especially on pizza.

Rind: See definition for Peel. Since rind is often used in recipes in smaller pieces than peel, you can use the small part of a grater instead of a knife if you like - again being sure to completely avoiding the white part of the fruit, which is very bitter.

Sausage: All the recipes with sausage can be used with turkey, chicken or pork sausages as well. If you are going to freeze them, divide them into portions beforehand.

Scallion: A scallion is an immature onion; sometimes it's called a green onion.

Soy Sauce: Surprisingly, Light Soy Sauce has more salt than Dark Soy Sauce. "Low Sodium" is fine.

Sugar: When the recipe calls for sugar, it means granulated white sugar.

Sumac: Always sold ground, this is a dark red berry that is commonly used in Italian and Middle Eastern cuisine. It has a wonderfully astringent taste to it. You can find it in Middle Eastern markets.

Tabasco: Because some people forget that it is only a brand, I wrote this kind for every chili sauce. There are very good chili sauces around that actually will not give a vinegary taste to the dish like Tabasco will.

Tahini: This is a thick paste of ground sesame seed. Look in the international cooking aisle in your supermarket (in rare cases it's next to the peanut butter), or ask in a Middle Eastern store.

Tamarind: ...is a fruit of a tree that is native to Asia and northern Africa and is widely grown in India. It has a sour-sweet taste and is sold as pulp or sauce in oriental, Middle Eastern and Indian stores. The sauce is the easiest one to use (sometimes it is called tamarind concentrate or syrup) but if you can't find it, buy the pulp one, sold in small bricks. In that case, if the recipe calls for 1 tablespoon of tamarind sauce, use 1 tablespoon pulp; soak in 2 tablespoon boiling water, squeeze, discard the seeds, and use the thick residue.

Tomatillos: Even though tomatillos are called green tomatoes, they are actually berries and not fruits. They're generally as big as walnuts and have a parchment-like husk. Buy the firm ones, remove the husks and wash before using. They're often sold in the aisles with Latin American fruits and vegetables.

Tomatoes: I use canned tomatoes a great deal, for it's very hard to find good ripe tomatoes out of season even though they may look red. For some recipes, though, it's just not possible to use canned tomatoes. If the recipe does not call for "plum tomatoes," you'll need to use beefsteak or another kind; if the plums are much riper in the market, you can buy them and double the number called for in the recipe. Also, you can peel and simmer tomatoes in their own juice when they are in season; when it doesn't look watery anymore, divide it into manageable portions and freeze. They will work great in place of canned tomatoes.

Tofu: Buy firm or extra firm for stir-frying.

Turmeric: Buy it from an ethnic store if you can; it is considerably cheaper there.

Vidalia Onion: If you can't find them, you can use Spanish or Red Onions instead.

Walnuts: You can either buy chopped walnuts or buy halves and chop them at home, depending on the price. Don't buy walnuts in the shell; they're too much trouble when you are in a hurry.

White Wine Vinegar: Try not to buy the distilled kind.

Yogurt: There is no recipe for flavored yogurt in this book - only unflavored. It's quite easy to make at home, but you need some yogurt to start with. Boil 1 gallon of milk and cool to the temperature that when you stick your pinkie finger in it, you can handle the heat for 5 seconds. Pour into a deep casserole dish (glass or Pyrex, not metallic). Take a couple tablespoons of warm milk out and mix gently in a separate cup with ½ cup of yogurt. Pour the mix into the milk from one corner gently, without making the milk wave around. Cover and put in a warm, undisturbed place; cover with some sweaters or blankets. (This will increase the time it will take for the milk to cool down, so it will give bacteria a chance to ferment the milk into yogurt.) Let sit for 24 hours. Then put it into the refrigerator; it will be ready to eat in 2 hours. Do not use skim milk for this process.

Troubleshooting and Substitutions

TROUBLESHOOTING

Advice on cooking meat:

How do you understand if the meat is done? The easiest way is to pierce a tiny cut on the meat. If a clear juice comes out, it's cooked; if the liquid is red, you have some time to go. You can also feel it with your fingertips: it should be soft to the touch, but you might need experience to gauge it properly. So why not use the piercing method to be sure, and touch it to learn what it feels like?

New let's say something terrible has happened: the meat is undercooked inside but is turning to char outside. Just cut in two and put microwave it on low power for a couple of minutes, and you'll be fine. (Don't stick your perfectly-cooked side dishes into the microwave by accident with your meat!) Or, if you don't have a microwave or can't control its power, then cut the chunks in half and sauté in little or no butter over medium to high heat quickly. Serve it with confidence; nobody will know the difference! If it's a huge roast and is disastrously undercooked when the outside is getting burned, you can chop it to chunks (or slice it thin) and cook it on a nonstick pan. This may actually force you to try a new recipe; who knows?

Other troubleshooting:

- If your **Béchamel Sauce** came out lumpy, just put it into a food processor and process until smooth and thicken over low heat for couple minutes.
- If your **Rice** came out uncooked and dry, add ¼ cup water and cook for 5 more minutes until rice is cooked. If it came out watery, then take off the lid, turn the heat up and evaporate the liquid, about 3 minutes.
- If you put **too much salt** into the stew, add raw cut potatoes and discard once they have cooked and absorbed the salt.

SUBSTITUTIONS

If you don't have...

Baking Powder: Use $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda plus $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cream of tartar (makes 1 teaspoon baking powder).

Buttermilk: Use 1 cup plain yogurt; or 1 tablespoon vinegar or lemon juice plus enough milk to equal 1 cup; or 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon cream of tartar plus 1 cup milk (makes 1 cup of buttermilk).

Crème Fraiche: Combine 1 cup whipping cream and 2 tablespoons buttermilk in a glass container and cover. Let it stand at room temperature from 8 to 24 hours, until it is very thick. Stir well and keep refrigerated. It can keep up to 10 days.

Coconut Milk: Boil 2 cups milk and remove from heat. Add 1 cup dried, unsweetened coconut; allow to sit for a few hours, then blend and strain out the coconut pieces.

Heavy Cream: Use $\frac{3}{4}$ cup whole milk plus $\frac{1}{3}$ cup butter (makes 1 cup heavy cream).

Sour Cream: Use 1 cup plain yogurt.



Index

Salsa, Sauce, Pesto & Chutney

Almond Dip, Turkish	Guacamole Salsa with Tomato, Mexican
Basil Pesto, Italian	Hollandaise Sauce, Fast and Easy, French
Béchamel Sauce, French	Japanese Dipping Sauce
Beer and Mustard Sauce, British	Mango Chutney, Indian
Black Bean Dip, Mexican	Mint-Cilantro Chutney, Indian
Blue Cheese Dressing	Miso Dressing
Chili Sauce and Vegetables Folded in Mayonnaise	Peanut-Sesame Dressing, Chinese
Deglaze Sauce, French	Pumpkin Seed Salsa, Mexican
Eggplant Caviar, Russian	Raspberry Dressing
Eggplant Sauce, Turkish	Red Bell Pepper Dip, Eastern Mediterranean
Eggplant Tahini Dip, Eastern Mediterranean	Roasted Onion and Tomato Salsa
Fish Sauce Dressing, Thai	Sesame Dressing, Far East Asian
Garlic Mayonnaise, French (Sauce Rouille)	Sherry Vinegar Dressing, French
Garlic Mayonnaise, Spanish (Aioli)	Sun-Dried Tomatoes and Basil Pesto, Italian
Garlic Tomato Sauce	Tomatillo Salsa, Mexican
Goat Cheese Pesto, Italian	Tomato Chutney, Indian
Gorgonzola Dressing	
Gravy	

Soups

Asparagus With Brie, French	Lentil Soup, Indian
Coconut Chicken Soup, Thai	Onion Soup, French
Corn and Bean Soup, British	Pumpkin Soup, Spiced-Up
Cucumber Gazpacho	Scotch Broth
Egg Drop Soup, Chinese	Squash And Chickpea Soup
Gazpacho, Spanish	Vegetarian Borscht, Russian

Sandwiches and Wraps

Black Bean Burgers	Lentil Patties
Chickpea-Oat Patties	Mashed Chickpea Salad Sandwich

Salad

Apple and Cabbage Salad
Baby Beets and Beet Greens
Beet And Apple Salad
Black-eyed Pea Salad with Walnuts
Cabbage-free Coleslaw, North
European
Celery Root Salad, Turkish
Chicken-Broccoli Salad with Cottage
Cheese Dressing
Coleslaw with Cumin-Lime
Vinaigrette
Corn and Artichoke Salad
Cucumber and Carrot Salad, Indian
Farmer's Cheese, Pears and Walnuts
in Bed of Greens

Mediterranean-Style Cannellini Bean
(White Kidney Bean) Salad
Papaya Salad, Thai
Peanut Dressing, African
Quinoa Salad
Sardine Salad, Northwest
Mediterranean
Spinach Salad with Portobello
Mushrooms, Mediterranean
Tomato Salad, Western
Mediterranean
Warm Potato Salad
Watercress Salad Topped With Feta

Pasta

Broccoli Rabe and Ziti
Broccoli-Peanut Noodles
Chinese Noodle Pancakes with
Asparagus
Farfalle in Brie Sauce
Groats and Mushrooms with Pasta,
Jewish

Mushroom and Spinach with Truffle
Oil
Pasta in Tahini Sauce
Stir-Fried Bell Peppers With Ginger,
Basil And Olives
Tomato Sauce for Pasta
Tuna Cream Sauce

Pizzas and Breads

Corn Bread
Cornbread Pizza
Pizza Crust, Deep-Dish
Pizza Crust, Latin

Pizza Crust, Thin
Tex-Mex Sauce for Pizza
Tomato Sauce for Pizza

Beef, Lamb and Pork

Beef and Apricot Barbeque, South
African

Beef Kebab, Southeast Asian
Dry Curry Beef, Indonesian

Lamb Kebab In Walnut Sauce,
Middle Eastern
Lamb Stew, Moorish-Spanish
Meat Patties in Creamy Yogurt Sauce,
Indian
Pork Chops With Orange And
Rosemary

Pork Curry, Southeast Asian
Sausage Stew, Spanish
Steak Kebab, African
Stir-Fried Pork, Chinese
Sweet Pork, Thai

Chicken

Almond Crust Chicken, Pakistani
Chicken Balls in Mascarpone Sauce,
Italian
Chicken in Grape Juice, Italian
Chicken Kebab, Japanese
Chicken Stew in Coconut Milk,
Southeast Asian

Chicken Stew, French
Chicken with Pineapple, Caribbean
Chicken with Spicy Pineapple
Chutney, Balinese
Grilled Chicken, Balinese
Shredded Chicken in Lettuce, Chinese
Stir-Fried Sweet Chicken, Chinese

Fish and Seafood

Grilled Salmon, Alaskan
Orange-Ginger Marinated Shrimp,
Australian

Pollock in Batter with Sauce, German
Tuna Steak, Japanese

Vegetarian Main Dishes

Baked Bean Burritos
Beans with Grilled Onions and
Balsamic Vinegar
Bread Crust Zucchini Quiche
Broccoli Stir-Fry
Cheese, Spinach and Noodle
Casserole
Chickpea Stew with Tomatoes and
Swiss Chard
Corn and Zucchini Stew
Green Beans and Potatoes in Mint
Sauce
Grilled Polenta With Wild Mushroom
Sauce
Grilled Vegetables in Balsamic
Tomato Sauce With Couscous

Kale Filled Omelet
Kidney Bean Chili, Indian
Kidney Beans, Rice and Acorn
Squash Chili
Lentils, Potato and Vegetables, South
Indian
Mushroom-Coconut Milk Stew, Thai
Omelet with Fresh Herbs and
Mozzarella
Peas With Cheese, Indian
Polenta and Eggplant Sauce
Potato Omelet, Spanish
Skillet Beans, Cajun-Style
Spinach Pie
Stir-Fried Broccoli Rabe, Chinese
Stir-Fried Vegetables, Indian

Sweet Potato Burritos
Swiss Chard Frittata
Tomato-Zucchini Tart, French
Vegetable Curry, Marrakech
Vegetables in Cheese Sauce

Vegetables in Coconut Milk, Far East
Asian
Walnut Patties on Arugula Bed
Zucchini, Indian Style
Zucchini, Italian Style

Rice

Basic Boiled Rice
Cashew and Onion Topped Pilaf,
Indian
Jasmine Rice with Vegetables, Nuts
and Raisins, Indian
Kashmir Pilaf

Lemongrass Coconut Rice, Thai
Quinoa Pine Nut Pilaf
Risotto with Tomato and Basil
Vegetable Rice, Indian
Wedding Rice, Middle Eastern
Wild Risotto

Side Dishes

Baked Potatoes, Kashmir Style
Beans and Bacon in Molasses
Bread and Cheese-filled Squash
Corn Cakes with Sun Dried Tomato
and Goat Cheese
Goat Cheese Quesadillas with
Guacamole
Grilled Portobello with Basil-Mustard
Sauce
Jamaican Jerk Marinated Grilled
Vegetables
Kasha Croquettes
Lemon-Basil Potatoes

Macaroni and Cheese in Tomato
Sauce
Mini Frittatas
Polenta, Italy
Polished Eggs
Sauerkraut-Filled Puff Pastry
Sautéed Tomatoes
Sautéed Zucchini, French
Squash and Cherry Tomatoes in Basil
Butter
White Bean Puree with Grilled
Vegetables
Wilted Spinach with Olive Oil and
Garlic

Pies and Cakes

Amaretti and Chocolate Cake, Italian
Apple Cake with Cream Cheese Icing
Apple Pie, US
Apple, Walnut and Raisin
Cheesecake, Dutch
Banana Bread, West Indies
Banana Cream Pie With Chocolate
Bottom

Basic Pie Dough Recipe, Double
Crust
Basic Pie Dough, Single Crust
Caramel Praline Apple Pie
Chocolate Cake with Sour Cherries,
German
Key Lime Pie with a Kick
Mocha Chocolate Pie, US

No-Bake Cream Cheese Pie With
Strawberries
Pumpkin Chocolate Cheesecake Pie

Pumpkin Praline Pie
Ricotta-Chocolate Cake, Italian

Muffins, Cookies and Scones

Cheddar-Cornmeal Muffins
Chocolate Biscotti
Coffee-Nut Scones
Cranberry-Chocolate Chip Biscotti
Jam Muffins
Oatmeal Scones, British
Oatmeal, Nuts and Raisin Cookies

Peanut Butter Cookies
Pumpkin Muffins with Walnuts and
Chocolate Chips
Sour Cream - Poppy Seed Muffins
Sugar Cookie in Syrup, Turkish
Walnut Cookies with Jam,
Argentinean

Sweet Treats

Baked Apple With Walnut Crisp
Banana Fritters, South East Asia
Coffee-Flavored Custard, French
Easy Crepes with Jam, French
Fresh Raspberries with Mascarpone
Sauce

Marzipan, French
Mixed Nut Brittle with Brown Sugar
Plantation Pudding
Ricotta Brownies
Tiramisu "Carry Me Up...", Italian