

EXCLUSIVE MEMBERS EDITION

# Cuisine<sup>®</sup> at home

**COZY**  
**COMFORT**  
**FOODS**

INSIDE  
EXCLUSIVE MEMBERS EDITION

Mexican  
Menus **PAGE 51**

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Suppers

Splendid  
Soups &  
Stews

The Perfect  
Pot Pie  
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**JUST  
FOR YOU!**  
Tips & Techniques  
from the Test Kitchen



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Issue 125 October 2017



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## EXCLUSIVE MEMBERS EDITION

- 51 **Mexican Menus**  
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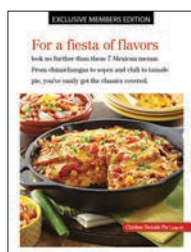
## from the editor

Fall is upon us and that means it's time for some hearty food. And we have all the recipes you need for perfect fall fare.

Starting on page 8, there are three stick-to-your-ribs skillet meals that your family will beg you to keep on rotation all season long. And it's hard to imagine a more iconic comfort food than pot pie. In this issue, we're revisiting this classic, times two. With "individual" Chicken Little Pot Pies and our take on a Boeuf Bourguignon Pie, you'll be in pie heaven. Both pies feature an herb-enhanced dough that bakes up perfectly flaky. As an added bonus, these pies are great for freezing, so you can make them ahead and enjoy them anytime you want, like on September 23rd — National Pot Pie Day.

But it's not just about comfort. When you're longing for a great deli sandwich, try your hand at homemade Pastrami, starting on page 42. And what's pastrami without rye bread? We have that covered, too. Plus, two retro treats can't be forgotten — fig bars appear just in time for back-to-school season, and our mocha take on Boston Cream Pie will have you marking your calendar for its special day, too.

Terry



### EXCLUSIVE MEMBERS EDITION

In this issue of your Exclusive Members Edition, you can enjoy Mexican cuisine with a variety of authentic meals you and your family are sure to love. Reach for these recipes when you're short on time but still want great flavor. Fewer ingredients means you can enjoy crispy chimichangas and homemade sopes in no time.

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## Tips & Timesavers

From our Readers



### ALL 'ROUND WINNER

Sliders are a big hit at my house and I've tried various ways of making cheese fit on them. I used to fold or tear the slices of cheese to the size of the baby burgers, but then I came up with a solution. I use a biscuit cutter slightly smaller than the burgers and punch out about two discs per square slice. I save the scraps for nachos or to add to mac 'n cheese.

*Pat Rolfe, Brentwood, TN*



### SWEET THANG

Granulated sugar seems to stay gritty no matter how long I whisk it into my salad dressings. I've started using powdered sugar as a substitute. The finer sugar dissolves quickly and I always have it on hand.

*Connie Griffis, South Jordan, UT*



### HOMEMADE FROZEN PIZZA

I've found that if I plan ahead, I can have homemade pizza anytime I want. I buy fresh pizza dough at the supermarket, portion it, roll it out, and parbake the individual crusts at 350° for 7 minutes. Once cool, I wrap and freeze them. When I'm ready to make pizza, I just top one of my fresh-frozen crusts and bake at it 400° for 10–12 minutes.

*Shaini Kothari, Brooklyn, NY*

### ENGLISH BAKE OFF

When I make casseroles I use English muffin crumbs for a super-crunchy topping. I butter two muffin halves, tear them into pieces, and pulse them into crumbs with my food processor. They're covered in butter and ready to top my casserole.

*Arliss Morris, Huffman, TX*



### THE SILVER SCREEN

Since I don't own a grill, I use my broiler for cooking burgers, steaks, etc. But it can become a splattering hazard. Just as I would with a frying pan, I place an ovenproof splatter guard over the meat as it broils. The guard reduces the chances of grease splattering and smoking.

*Virginia Fischer, Lilliwaup, WA*



### KEEPING IT BAKERY FRESH

I love to bake cakes, but after a few slices are eaten it becomes a problem keeping the cut cake from drying out. Since I keep a slice of bread in my brown sugar canister to keep the sugar fresh, why not try it with cake? Now I put bread slices on the cut sides of the cake and pin them in place with toothpicks.

*Jackie Shulman, Tucker, GA*

### NECESSITY'S INVENTION

Recently I was cooking at a friend's house when I realized I didn't know where they kept their colander for draining pasta. I found a perforated pizza pan with a small lip, perfect for draining the pasta. The holes let the water drain and the lip on the pan kept the pasta inside.

*Tracy Turner Yakimo, Lakeport, CA*

### ALL KEYED UP

It may sound silly, but my nails are kind of an investment for me and I hate to chip or ruin them scraping up stuck-on food. I've found that an old credit card or leftover hotel key card works great to remove cemented food from my kitchen appliances and countertops.

*Dorothy Vickerman, Clinton, CT*

### HAVE SPICE, WILL TRAVEL

I'm on the road often and I like to stay in lodgings that have kitchenettes. I love to prepare food from local sources, but I don't want to buy new bottles of seasonings at each stop. Now I bring my spice "cabinet" with me. I use the plastic, screw-top containers that beading hobbyists and fishermen are familiar with.

*Kay Doolittle, Klamath Falls, OR*



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## Cuisine Notes

### Questions & Answers



**Q:** How and when should I season my cast-iron skillet? And how do I properly measure it? Does the size relate to the number on the bottom? — Ann Duffy, Sparta, NJ

**Answer:** When your skillet is dull, dry, or rusty, it needs to be seasoned. This keeps food from sticking and rust from developing. All you need to do is preheat an oven to 350 degrees. Scrub the skillet in hot, soapy water using a stiff brush, then dry it. Apply a layer of vegetable or olive oil all over the inside of the skillet, then bake it for one hour.

As far as measuring cast-iron skillets, the industry standard is to measure them across the top, from

outside rim to outside rim. Though some skillets include an item number on the bottom, it doesn't match the skillet's measurement. As an example, a Lodge 8-inch skillet has the code 5SK on the bottom. You might naturally think that means it's a 5-inch skillet. But that number actually dates back to the days when cast-iron pots and pans were sized to fit on the numbered eyes of a wood burning stove. Thus, a skillet with the code 5SK would fit a #5 stove eye.



**Q:** What is curing salt? Is it the same thing as Tender Quick?

— H.J. Bone, Muncie, IN

**Answer:** Curing salts impart the characteristic color and flavor to cured meats. Historically they were used to inhibit botulism. But with today's refrigeration, this is much less of an issue.

The most common curing salt, known as Prague Powder #1 or InstaCure, is often referred to as pink salt (not to be confused with Himalayan pink salt). It's a mixture of table salt and 6.25 percent sodium nitrite. Pink salt is commonly used in recipes for homemade cured meats that require a relatively fast curing time, and that are also cooked, brined, smoked (such as in the pastrami on page 42), or canned.

Tender Quick is a brand of fast curing salt that contains salt, sugar, and both sodium nitrate and sodium nitrite. It's used in very different ratios than pink salt and should not be used interchangeably.

## Q: Is hanger steak the same as butcher's steak?

— Lynn Newton, San Bernardino, CA

**Answer:** Yes. Named because it hangs between the cow's rib and the short loin, hanger steak has lots of full, rich, beefy flavor, tenderness (some say second only to filet mignon), and juiciness.



Sometimes misspelled as hangar steak, it's also known as butcher's steak or butcher's tenderloin. That's because butchers used to save it for themselves, rather than sell it since it was considered unattractive. Though they knew it offered great flavor.

Typically used in the classic bistro dish, steak frites, hanger steak also takes well to marinating. Plus it's wonderful ground, making a fantastic hamburger. And it can be cubed for stews, like in the Boeuf Bourguignon Pot Pie on page 31, as it is far better than anything labeled stew meat.

If you can't find it, ask your butcher if he has some hidden away, or ask for a substitution that will work for your recipe.

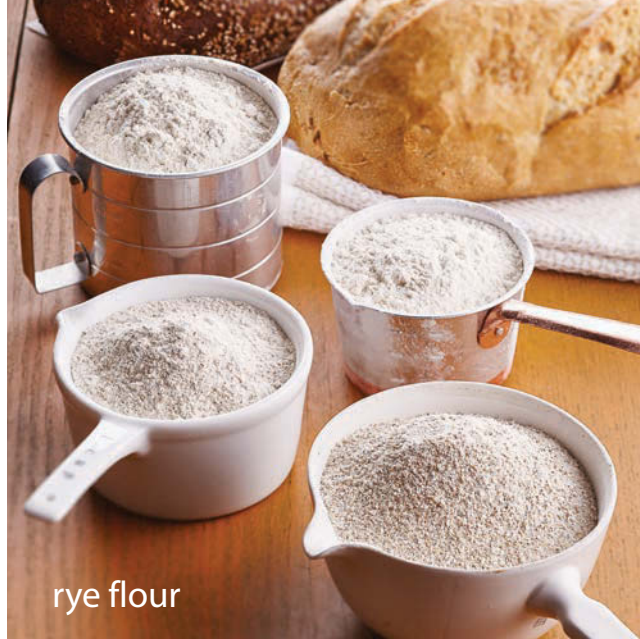
## Q: What is ghee? Is it different than clarified butter?

— Kimberly Berry, Montpelier, VT

**Answer:** Both ghee [GEE] and clarified butter are made by melting unsalted butter and skimming off the water and milk solids (which means they both have a high smoke point). Ghee is just a "purer" more precise form of clarified butter — it's cooked longer so nearly *all* the moisture and milk solids are removed. This gives it a deeper, more nutty flavor than the more neutral-flavored clarified butter. While the terms are often used interchangeably, there is a difference — all ghee is clarified butter, but not all clarified butter is considered ghee.

An ancient ingredient in Indian recipes, ghee is pretty

much deemed suitable for those with a dairy intolerance (except those with severe intolerance). You can use it for cooking the same way you would regular butter and cooking oils.



rye flour

## tell me more

Rye flours are milled from rye kernels (aka rye berries). They range from light to dark depending on how much bran and germ are removed when they're milled — more bran and germ deliver darker flour and result in loaves with more rye flavor and denser texture. There is no standard for labeling, or how much whole grain a product must contain, but this is a general guide.

**White or light rye** contains no, or very little bran, germ, or the outer coat. It's missing many nutrients of the rye berry. The bread made from these flours stay fairly light in color and are mild flavored.

**Medium rye** contains some, but not all of the bran and germ. This flour begins to exhibit the flavor and character of rye. It's what was used in the bread on page 41.

**Dark rye** varies somewhat. It can either be milled from the outer part of the berry and contain some bran, or be 100% whole grain.

**Rye meal or whole-grain rye flour** contains all of the bran, germ, and outer coat. It can be ground fine, medium, or coarse.

**Pumpernickel flour** is actually a darker, coarse, whole-grain rye flour from whole rye berries. The brown color of the classic bread is a result of adding molasses to the dough.

### Do you have a question for *Cuisine at home* magazine?

If you're mystified by a cooking term, procedure, or technique, we're here to help. To submit your cooking question for possible publication, contact us through our email address below. Please include your name, address, email, and a daytime phone number.

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Cuisine Tonight

Weeknight Menus

# SKILLET SUPPERS

As relevant today as it was with the pioneers, a cast-iron skillet exudes comfort in both thought and reality with these three fall menus.

**ABOVE:** Skillet-Fried Pork Chops

**FALL** automatically conjures up feelings of hearth and home. When the days get longer and the mercury starts to dip, longings for warm, comforting meals resurface. Thus, there's no better time to turn to your handy-dandy cast-iron skillet for multiple meals designed to satisfy. With pork chops, shepherd's pie, and a hearty chowder casserole, there's something here for everyone.

## Skillet-Fried Pork Chops with apple sauce

Makes 4 servings  
Total time: 45 minutes

### FOR THE PORK CHOPS, SEASON:

- 4 bone-in pork chops, (1-1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-inch thick, about 12 oz. *each*)
- Salt and black pepper
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour

### MELT:

- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter

### FOR THE SAUCE, MELT:

- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic

### DEGLAZE:

- 3/4 cup *each* low-sodium chicken broth and apple cider
- 2 Pink Lady apples, diced (about 3 cups)
- 1 Tbsp. cider vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh sage
- Fresh sage leaves

**For the pork chops, season** chops on both sides with salt and pepper, then dredge in flour (shaking off and reserving excess).



Use all the flour to dredge the chops. Save any remaining flour (about 2 Tbsp.) to thicken the sauce.

**Melt** 2 Tbsp. butter in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet over medium-high heat. Add chops and cook until browned and a thermometer inserted near, but not touching the bone, registers 140°, 7–10 minutes per side. Transfer chops to a plate; tent with foil and let rest 10 minutes.

**For the sauce, melt** 1 Tbsp. butter in same skillet over medium-high heat. Add onions and garlic; cook until softened, 3–5 minutes. Stir in remaining (about 2 Tbsp.) flour; cook 1–2 minutes.

**Deglaze** skillet with broth and cider, scraping up any brown bits. Bring sauce to a boil, reduce heat to medium, and simmer until it thickens, about 5 minutes.

**Stir in** apples, vinegar, and minced sage; season sauce with salt and pepper. Simmer sauce until apples slightly soften, about 3 minutes. Return chops to skillet along with any residual juices on the plate, coat chops with sauce, and garnish skillet with sage leaves.

Per serving: 476 cal; 19g total fat (9g sat); 137mg chol; 145mg sodium; 29g carb; 3g fiber; 47g protein



So the chops don't become tough, and because of carryover cooking, cook the pork to 140-degrees.



## Country Smashed Sweet Potatoes

*You can tell these tubers are good for you just by looking at them. Sweet potatoes get their orange hue from beta-carotene. They're also high in fiber, and a good source of iron and vitamins C and B6.*

Makes 4 servings (3<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cups)  
Total time: 30 minutes

### COOK:

- 2 lb. sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed

### OFF HEAT, ADD:

- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 Tbsp. half-and-half
- 2 Tbsp. light brown sugar
- 1/8 tsp. ground cinnamon
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- Chopped fresh parsley

**Cook** sweet potatoes in a pot of boiling salted water until fork-tender, 10–15 minutes. Drain sweet potatoes and return to pot. Cook sweet potatoes over medium-low heat, stirring, to remove excess moisture, 1–2 minutes.

**Off heat, add** butter, half-and-half, brown sugar, and cinnamon; crush with a potato masher until combined and desired consistency.

**Season** sweet potatoes with salt and pepper; garnish servings with parsley.

Per serving: 329 cal; 12g total fat (8g sat); 33mg chol; 129mg sodium; 52g carb; 7g fiber; 4g protein



### **SALMON CHOWDER SKILLET**

Turn the perennial favorite — fish chowder — into a stick-to-your-ribs skillet casserole. With hash brown potatoes, succulent pieces of fresh salmon, and a bright and bacony bread crumb topping, everyone will be coming back for a second helping.

## Salmon Chowder Skillet

When purchasing salmon for this skillet, choose thick center pieces, rather than thinner ones from the tail end of the fish.

Makes 6 servings  
Total time: about 1 hour

### FOR THE CHOWDER, COOK:

- 2 strips thick-sliced bacon, diced
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 1 cup halved and sliced leeks
- 1/2 cup diced carrot
- 1/2 cup diced celery
- 1/8 tsp. cayenne pepper
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour

### DEGLAZE:

- 1/2 cup dry white wine
- 2 1/4 cups seafood stock
- 3/4 cup heavy cream
- 2 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. minced fresh thyme

### STIR IN:

- 4 cups frozen hash browns, thawed
- 1 lb. salmon fillet, skinned, cut into 2-inch chunks, and seasoned with salt and black pepper

### FOR THE CRUMBS, COMBINE:

- 1 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- Minced zest of 1/2 a lemon
- Chopped fresh parsley



Once the vegetables are coated with flour, cook them for 1 minute to get rid of the flour's raw taste.

Preheat oven to 350°.

**For the chowder, cook** bacon in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet until crisp; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate, then mince once cool.

**Melt** 3 Tbsp. butter in same skillet with drippings over medium-low heat. Stir in leeks, carrot, celery, and cayenne, season with salt and black pepper, and sweat until leeks soften, about 8 minutes. Sprinkle flour over vegetables, and cook, stirring, 1 minute. Increase heat to medium-high.

**Deglaze** skillet with wine, scraping up any brown bits; cook 1 minute. Stir in stock, cream, lemon juice, and thyme; bring to a simmer.

**Stir in** hash browns and salmon; return chowder to a simmer. Place skillet on a baking sheet and bake chowder until bubbly around the edges, about 20 minutes.

**For the crumbs, combine** panko, 1 Tbsp. melted butter, zest, and minced bacon.

**Preheat** broiler to high with rack 6 inches from element.

**Sprinkle** crumbs over chowder, broil until golden, about 2 minutes, then garnish skillet with parsley.

Per serving: 428 cal; 25g total fat (13g sat); 105mg chol; 404mg sodium; 25g carb; 1g fiber; 22g protein



Add the salmon to the chowder just before it goes into the oven to ensure it won't get overcooked and dry out.



## Grapefruit & Cucumber Salad

Crispy cucumbers and juicy pink grapefruit make this the perfect refreshing side to serve with the rich chowder skillet.

Makes 6 servings  
Total time: 20 minutes

### WHISK:

- 3 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tsp. honey
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard

### COMBINE:

- 2 jars segmented pink grapefruit in water (19.5 oz. each), drained
- 1 English cucumber, halved lengthwise and chopped (about 3 cups)
- 1/4 cup shaved red onion
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh parsley
- Salt and black pepper to taste

**Whisk** together lemon juice, oil, honey, and Dijon for the vinaigrette.

**Toss** grapefruit, cucumber, onion, and parsley in a bowl with vinaigrette; season with salt and pepper.

Per serving: 107 cal; 3g total fat (0g sat); 0mg chol; 28mg sodium; 22g carb; 1g fiber; 2g protein



### **SKILLET SHEPHERD'S PIE**

As homespun as it comes, shepherd's pie was originally created as an economical way for Brits to use leftover Sunday roast. It's like a pot pie with mashed potatoes instead of pastry on top. The best part — breaking through the top to spoon out the savory filling.

## Skillet Shepherd's Pie with cheddar mashed potatoes

There are numerous health benefits from eating potato skins, including increased potassium, niacin, and iron intake.

Makes 6 servings  
Total time: 45 minutes

### FOR THE TOPPING, COOK:

1½ lb. Yukon gold potatoes, cubed

### ADD:

½ cup half-and-half  
4 Tbsp. unsalted butter  
1½ cups shredded sharp Cheddar  
¼ cup minced scallions  
Salt and cayenne pepper to taste

### FOR THE FILLING, HEAT:

1 Tbsp. olive oil  
½ cup *each* diced onion, celery, and carrot  
1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic  
1 lb. ground sirloin  
2 Tbsp. chopped fresh rosemary  
1 Tbsp. *each* all-purpose flour and tomato paste  
½ cup dry white or red wine  
1 cup low-sodium beef broth  
1 cup *each* frozen corn kernels and cut green beans, thawed  
1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce  
Salt and black pepper to taste



Using ground sirloin ensures the shepherd's pie is full of beefy flavor, yet not overly greasy.

**For the topping, cook** potatoes in a pot of boiling salted water until fork-tender, 10–12 minutes. Drain potatoes; return to pot. Cook potatoes over medium-low heat, stirring, to remove excess moisture, 1–2 minutes.

**Add** half-and-half and butter, crushing with a potato masher until smooth. Stir in cheese and scallions, then season potatoes with salt and cayenne.

**For the filling, heat** oil in a 10-inch cast-iron skillet over medium. Add onion, celery, carrot, and garlic; sweat until softened, 5–7 minutes. Add ground sirloin, increase heat to medium-high, and cook until browned, 5–7 minutes. Stir in rosemary, flour, and tomato paste; cook 1–2 minutes.

**Deglaze** skillet with wine and reduce until nearly evaporated. Stir in broth, corn, green beans, and Worcestershire and bring to a boil. Cook filling until liquid is nearly reduced, 7–8 minutes. Transfer skillet to a baking sheet.

**Preheat** broiler to high with rack 6 inches from element.

**Spread** topping over filling and broil until potatoes are browned, 3–4 minutes. Let pie rest 5 minutes before serving.

Per serving: 462 cal; 25g total fat (14g sat); 93mg chol; 282mg sodium; 33g carb; 4g fiber; 27g protein



To ensure the filling isn't too loose, thaw the frozen corn and beans, and pat them dry before adding.



## Romaine & Grape Salad with honey mustard vinaigrette

Sunflower seeds will take care of your hunger pang, while also boosting your health with significant amounts of vitamin E, magnesium, and selenium.

Makes 6 servings (10 cups)  
Total time: 10 minutes

### FOR THE VINAIGRETTE, WHISK:

3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil  
3 Tbsp. white wine vinegar  
2 Tbsp. honey  
1 Tbsp. Dijon mustard  
2 tsp. minced shallots  
Salt and black pepper to taste

### FOR THE SALAD, TOSS:

1 head romaine lettuce, chopped (8–10 cups)  
1 cup halved seedless red grapes  
¼ cup roasted and salted sunflower seeds

**For the vinaigrette, whisk** together oil, vinegar, honey, Dijon, and shallots; season with salt and pepper.

**For the salad, toss** romaine, grapes, and sunflower seeds in a large bowl with vinaigrette.

Per serving: 147 cal; 10g total fat (1g sat); 0mg chol; 40mg sodium; 14g carb; 3g fiber; 2g protein

# the big **FIG**

Get ready to feel nostalgic. With just one bite of these soft, tender, chewy fig bars, with rolled oats and whole-wheat flour mixed in, you'll be taken straight back to your childhood.



It's back-to-school season, and if you're looking for a lunch box treat or a grab-and-go breakfast, there's no better time to recreate a classic treat. And these bars, made a little more healthy than the usual fig cookies, are so much better than what you likely remember from your school days.

Adding oats, walnuts, and a little white whole-wheat flour to the soft dough gives these

bars a slightly nutty flavor that enhances and complements the subtly sweet fig filling, as well as amps up the good-for-you aspect a bit.

And for the filling, dried figs are the way to go (fresh figs would make the filling too wet). Just be sure to stem the figs for a smooth texture. After that, just simmer and purée them. Then get ready, because you're about to go back in time.

## Fig Bars

*How long you need to cook the filling will depend upon how pliable the figs are — drier figs will take longer.*

Makes 24 bars (one 9×13-inch pan)  
Total time: about 2½ hours + chilling

### FOR THE FILLING, HEAT:

- 1 lb. dried Black Mission figs, stemmed
- 2½ cups water
- Zest of 1 orange
- ½ cup fresh orange juice
- ¼ cup *each* brandy and packed light brown sugar
- ¼ tsp. ground allspice
- ⅛ tsp. table salt

### FOR THE CRUST, WHISK:

- 1½ cups *each* all-purpose flour and white whole-wheat flour
- 1 cup old-fashioned rolled oats
- ½ cup finely chopped walnuts, toasted
- 1½ tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. table salt

### CREAM:

- 2 sticks unsalted butter, softened (16 Tbsp.)
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 1 egg + 1 egg yolk
- 1 tsp. pure vanilla extract

**For the filling, heat** figs, 2½ cups water, zest, orange juice, brandy, ¼ cup brown sugar, allspice, and ⅛ tsp. salt in a saucepan over medium-high until sugar dissolves.

**Reduce** heat to medium-low, and simmer until liquid is evaporated and figs soften and easily flatten with a spatula, about 1 hour, adding more water, ¼ cup at a time, as necessary. Transfer fig mixture to a food processor; purée, then cool to room temperature.

**Fit** a 9×13-inch baking pan with a parchment sling; coat with butter.

**For the crust, whisk** together flours, oats, walnuts, baking powder, and ½ tsp. salt.

**Cream** butter, 1 cup brown sugar, and honey with a mixer on medium speed until light and fluffy, 3–5 minutes. Beat in egg, yolk, and vanilla until combined.

**Beat in** flour mixture on low speed until combined. Divide dough in half, shape half into a rectangle and wrap in plastic, and press other half into prepared baking pan. Chill both doughs at least 1 hour.

**Preheat** oven to 350°.

**Roll** remaining dough half between two sheets of parchment paper to a 9×13-inch rectangle; chill in freezer until firm. Spread filling over crust in pan, then place top crust over filling.

**Bake** bars until top is golden brown and set, 35–40 minutes; let cool completely in pan. Remove bars by lifting parchment sling “handles.”

Per bar: 196 cal; 10g total fat (5g sat); 36mg chol; 90mg sodium; 25g carb; 1g fiber; 3g protein



To avoid burning the fig mixture, add more water as needed, until the figs are super soft and pliable.



For easy removal of the bars, overlap two perpendicular parchment strips in the pan, leaving an overhang.



Use the pan to mark the parchment paper. It's a great way to gauge size when rolling and shaping the dough.

Favorites

From our Test Kitchen

# Hot & Hearty BREAKFASTS

Got company coming for breakfast or brunch? Give the bagels and cream cheese a rest and try one of these two sweet or savory casseroles. You and your guests will be glad you did.



Let's be real. When you've got guests coming for breakfast or brunch, it usually means getting up at the crack of dawn to pull it all together. Breakfast casseroles make it convenient to feed a crowd without losing any beauty rest, because they can, and need, to be made ahead.

With all the flavors of a sticky bun and French toast, this casserole is soon to be added to your "favorite recipes" box. To get started,

look for soft, cheap French bread. Baguettes are too crusty and won't work here. Next, you might need to cut the staled bread down to fill in the dish, like a puzzle. Then when it comes to the caramel, don't stir it once it comes to a boil. It tends to turn the caramel grainy. Lastly, because you shouldn't place a cold baking dish into a hot oven, remove the casserole from the fridge 30 minutes before you plan to bake it.

## Sticky Bun Casserole with whipped cream & bacon

*If your family loves sticky buns, this casserole will have them singing its praises. Full of gooey caramel, rich pecans, and fragrant cinnamon, it's hard to resist.*

Makes 12 servings  
Total time: 1¼ hours + chilling

### FOR THE BREAD, STALE:

8 slices French bread  
(1½-inches thick)

### FOR THE CARAMEL, COMBINE:

2 cups packed brown sugar  
16 Tbsp. unsalted butter  
¼ cup light corn syrup  
¼ tsp. table salt  
1½ cups chopped pecans,  
toasted

### FOR THE CUSTARD, WHISK:

6 eggs  
1½ cups half-and-half  
1½ tsp. pure vanilla extract  
1 tsp. ground cinnamon  
Whipped cream and diced  
cooked bacon (*optional*)

**Preheat** oven to 350°. Coat a 9×13-inch baking dish with nonstick spray.

**For the bread, stale** bread on a baking sheet, 10 minutes per side. Transfer bread to a cooling rack and shut off oven.

**For the caramel, combine** brown sugar, butter, corn syrup, and salt in a saucepan and heat over medium until butter melts. Increase heat to medium-high, bring to a boil, and cook caramel until sugar dissolves, 2 minutes. Stir in pecans; pour into prepared dish.

**For the custard, whisk** together eggs, half-and-half, vanilla, and cinnamon. Dip both sides of bread in custard and arrange on top of caramel.

**Pour** remaining custard over bread, cover dish with plastic wrap, and chill at least 2 hours or up to overnight.

**Preheat** oven to 350°. Remove casserole from refrigerator and let sit at room temperature, about 30 minutes; remove plastic wrap.

**Bake** casserole until custard is set, and a thermometer inserted into the center registers 160°, 40–45 minutes. Let casserole rest 5 minutes, then invert, caramel side up, onto a serving platter. Garnish servings with whipped cream and bacon.

Per serving: 629 cal; 32g total fat (14g sat);  
145mg chol; 401mg sodium; 77g carb; 3g fiber;  
12g protein



To ensure the bread slices absorb the custard and bake evenly, cut uniform slices, 1½-inches thick.



Once the caramel is ready, work quickly to pour it into the dish before it solidifies.



To add flavor and soft texture to the staled bread, dip both sides of slices into the custard.

Favorites



# Mister Crunch

Move over captain, there's a new brunch favorite in town. This ham and cheese strata is inspired by the classic bistro sandwich, croque monsieur, and means "mister crunch" in French. With just one bite of this savory strata, you'll be saying ooh-la-la.

To start, you want to stale the bread, either overnight or in an oven. This ensures it's as absorbent as possible. In keeping with the

sandwich, a béchamel sauce is next (for flavor, this one features a hefty helping of Dijon). And for ease and visual appeal, deli-sliced ham is the way to go.

Once assembled, like all strata, chill it at least several hours, so the bread can absorb the eggs and milk. And to encourage fairly even saturation (you don't want some bread pieces soppy and other slices dry), be sure to weigh the strata down.

## Croque Monsieur Strata with dijon béchamel

Makes 12 servings

Total time: about 2 hours + chilling

### LIGHTLY COAT:

4 Tbsp. unsalted butter + more for coating

1/4 cup all-purpose flour

### WHISK:

3 1/2 cups whole milk, divided

1/3 cup Dijon mustard

1/2 tsp. freshly grated nutmeg

Salt and cayenne pepper to taste

1 lb. sliced artisan-style white or country Italian bread (12–18 slices, about 1/2-inch thick), staled

1 1/2 lb. deli-sliced Virginia ham

12 oz. Gruyère, shredded (about 4 cups)

### WHISK:

8 eggs

1 tsp. black pepper

Chopped fresh parsley

**Lightly coat** a 9×13-inch baking dish with butter.

**Melt** 4 Tbsp. butter in a saucepan over medium heat until foamy.

Whisk in flour and cook roux 1–2 minutes.

**Whisk in** 2 cups milk in a thin steady stream until completely combined, then whisk in Dijon and nutmeg; season with salt and cayenne. Reduce heat to medium-low; cook béchamel until it thickens, coats the back of a spoon, and leaves a trail that does not fill in, 4–6 minutes.

**Pour** one-fourth (about 1/2 cup) béchamel into bottom of prepared baking dish, then layer with one-third of bread slices, half the ham, one-third (about 1 1/3 cups) Gruyère, and about 1/2 cup béchamel over top. Repeat layering one more time, then top with remaining bread slices and remaining one-fourth (about 1/2 cup) béchamel.

**Whisk** together eggs, remaining 1 1/2 cups milk, and black pepper; pour over layers in baking dish and top with remaining 1 1/3 cups Gruyère. Cover strata with plastic wrap and weigh down; chill at least 4 hours or up to overnight.

**Preheat** oven to 375°. Remove strata from refrigerator and let sit at room temperature, about 30 minutes; remove plastic wrap.

**Bake** strata until browned and bubbly and a thermometer inserted into the center registers 160°, 60–75 minutes, tenting with foil if it browns too quickly. Let strata stand 10–15 minutes before serving and garnishing with parsley.

Per serving: 408 cal; 21g total fat (11g sat); 200mg chol; 1063mg sodium; 26g carb; 1g fiber; 28g protein



For a lump-free sauce, slowly whisk the milk into the roux until it's smooth and completely combined.



To encourage even absorption, weigh down a baking sheet set on top of the assembled strata.



To be sure the eggs get cooked through, temp the strata in the center. It should register 160°.

Cuisine for Two

Perfect Portions

# talking Tenderloin

Often overlooked and underused, yet perfect in every way, pork tenderloin is the Cinderella of the food world. It's tender, flavorful, a breeze to work with, and cooks in a snap, too.



**S**altimbocca [sahl-tihm-BOH-kuh] is a Roman specialty meaning “jump in the mouth.” And with just one bite of this incredible dish, you’ll definitely want it to.

Typically made with veal, plus prosciutto, sage, and fortified wine, pork tenderloin is easier to find and a great stand-in for veal. Not only is it an ultra-tender cut, it’s perfect for pounding into cutlets, and easily takes on saltimbocca’s bold flavors. A speedy pasta side is all this meal needs to make it restaurant quality.

## Pork Saltimbocca with sherry sauce

*To keep from shredding the pieces of meat, pound the medallions in a resealable plastic bag with a teaspoon of water inside.*

Makes 2 servings  
Total time: 30 minutes

### SLICE:

- 12 oz. pork tenderloin, trimmed
- Salt and black pepper
- All-purpose flour

### HEAT:

- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1½ oz. prosciutto, diced

### ADD:

- 6 oz. button or cremini mushrooms
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic

### DEGLAZE:

- ½ cup dry sherry or Marsala
- ½ cup low-sodium chicken broth

### OFF HEAT, STIR IN:

- 1 Tbsp. cold unsalted butter
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh sage

**Slice** tenderloin into six 1-inch-thick pieces. Pound each piece with a meat mallet into ½-inch-thick medallions; season with salt and pepper and dredge in flour.

**Heat** oil in a sauté pan over medium. Add prosciutto and cook until crisp, 3–4 minutes; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate. Add medallions to pan and cook until browned, 2 minutes per side; transfer to a plate.

**Add** mushrooms to pan and cook until they release their liquid and it evaporates, 5–6 minutes. Stir in garlic; cook 1 minute.

**Deglaze** pan with sherry and broth, scraping up any brown bits; bring to a boil. Cook until liquid is reduced by half, about 3 minutes.

**Off heat, stir in** butter and sage until sauce is emulsified. Return medallions to pan, tossing to coat with sauce. Serve medallions with sauce; garnish with prosciutto.

Per serving: 532 cal; 26g total fat (8g sat); 143mg chol; 690mg sodium; 9g carb; 1g fiber; 45g protein



To give the medallions a crust and to add body to the sauce, lightly dredge the pork in flour.



Adding cold butter at the end (called mounting) thickens the sauce and adds flavor.



## Angel Hair Pasta with spinach

*The heat of the hot cooked pasta is enough to wilt the fresh spinach.*

Makes 2 servings (2½ cups)  
Total time: 10 minutes

### COOK:

- 4 oz. dry angel hair pasta

### WHISK:

- 2 Tbsp. heavy cream
- 2 Tbsp. grated Parmesan
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 tsp. minced lemon zest
- Salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes to taste
- 2 cups chopped spinach or arugula
- 2 Tbsp. chopped walnuts, toasted

**Cook** pasta in a pot of boiling salted water according to package directions; reserve ¼ cup pasta water, then drain.

**Whisk** together cream, Parmesan, butter, and zest in a large bowl; season with salt, black pepper, and pepper flakes, then add spinach.

**Add** pasta and reserved pasta water to bowl, tossing until spinach wilts. Garnish servings with walnuts.

Per serving: 388 cal; 19g total fat (9g sat); 41mg chol; 155mg sodium; 45g carb; 3g fiber; 12g protein



## Stew for two

Stews are comfort-food staples, but they can require a bit of time to cook. To expedite the process, use a quick-cooking cut of meat that doesn't require a lengthy braising time, like pork tenderloin. You'll be in your comfort zone in no time.

In this menu, the vibrant flavors of the Greek pantry, like olives, tomato, and feta, come alive, but are arranged in a slightly different way than they might be back in Greece. It's surprising just how much depth you can get with so few ingredients and with such a short amount of cooking time. Because this meal comes together so quickly, prepare the components before you start cooking, and have your pitas ready to pop into the oven.

### Greek Pork & Spinach Stew with beans and olives

*Be sure to remove the silverskin from the pork tenderloin. It's tough, chewy, and doesn't melt during cooking like fat does.*

Makes 2 servings (4 cups)  
Total time: 30 minutes

#### HEAT:

- 2 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 cup minced onions
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 8 oz. pork tenderloin, trimmed, cubed, and seasoned with salt, black pepper, and dried oregano

#### DEGLAZE:

- 1/4 cup dry white wine
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 can tomato sauce (8 oz.)
- 1 Roma tomato, seeded, diced
- 1/4 cup sliced kalamata olives

#### STIR IN:

- 2 cups chopped fresh spinach
- 1/2 cup canned butter beans, drained and rinsed



For flavor and color, toss the cubed pieces of pork with plenty of salt, black pepper, and dried oregano.

**Heat** oil in a pot over medium. Add onions; sweat until softened, 3–4 minutes. Add garlic; cook 1 minute. Add pork and cook until browned, 3–4 minutes.

**Deglaze** pot with wine, scraping up any brown bits. Cook wine until nearly evaporated. Stir in broth, tomato sauce, Roma, and olives; increase heat to medium-high and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer stew 10 minutes.

**Stir in** spinach and beans until spinach is wilted, then season stew with salt and pepper.

Per serving: 474 cal; 23g total fat (3g sat); 74mg chol; 1264mg sodium; 32g carb; 6g fiber; 32g protein



To easily chop the spinach leaves, measure out the amount you need, then use scissors to cut them up.



### Feta-Topped Pitas with pepperoncini

*For the best quality cheese, buy a block of feta and crumble it yourself.*

Makes 2 servings  
Total time: 15 minutes

#### COMBINE:

- 1/4 cup crumbled feta cheese
- 2 Tbsp. chopped pepperoncini
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
- 2 tsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp. minced lemon zest
- 1/4 tsp. minced fresh garlic
- Salt and black pepper to taste

#### BRUSH:

- 2 pitas (6-inch)
- Olive oil

**Preheat** oven to 350°.

**Combine** feta, pepperoncini, parsley, 2 tsp. oil, zest, and garlic; season with salt and pepper.

**Brush** both sides of pitas with oil. Top pitas with feta mixture and transfer to a baking sheet.

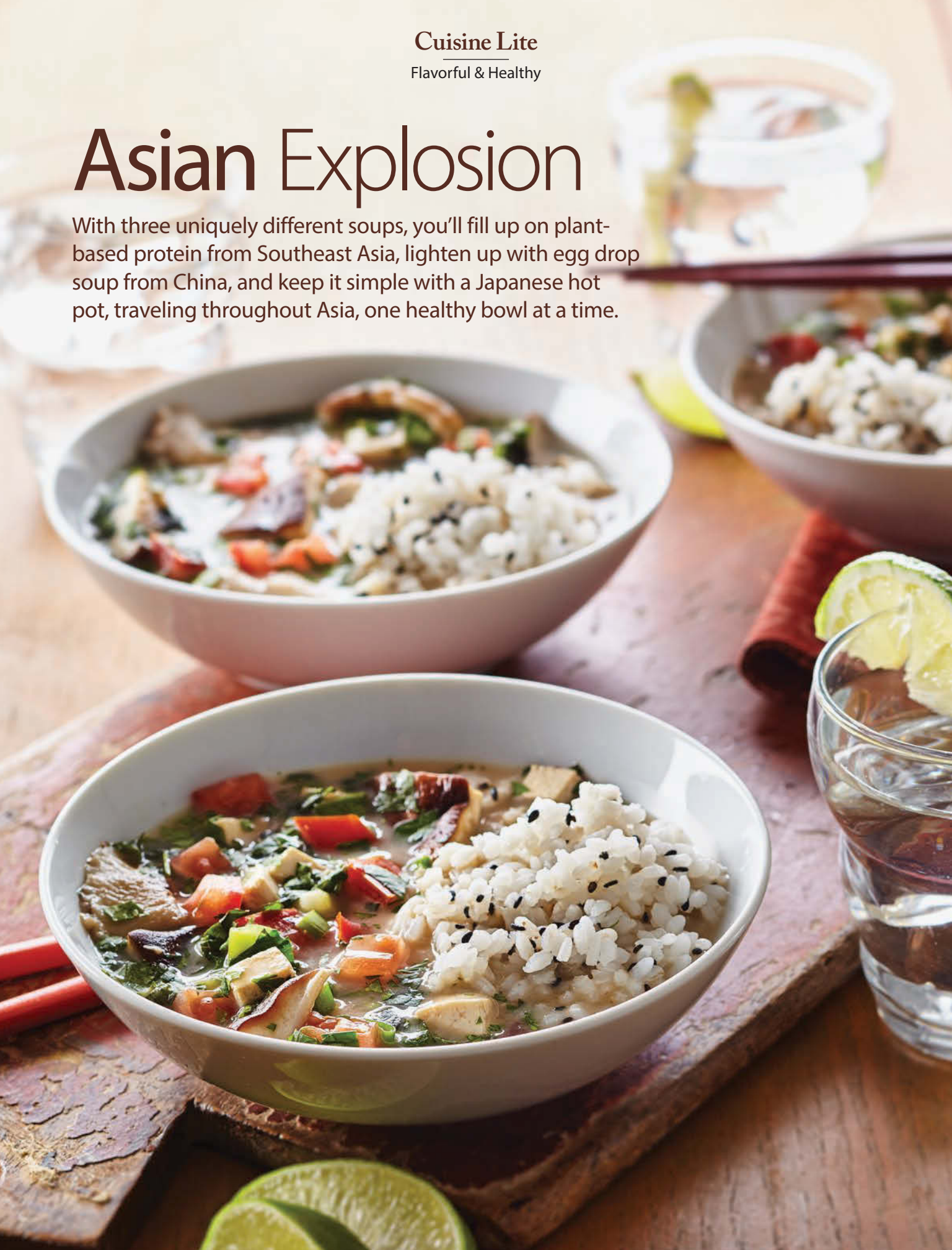
**Bake** pitas until lightly toasted, 10 minutes. Cut pitas into wedges.

Per serving: 258 cal; 9g total fat (4g sat); 17mg chol; 532mg sodium; 35g carb; 2g fiber; 8g protein

Cuisine Lite  
Flavorful & Healthy

# Asian Explosion

With three uniquely different soups, you'll fill up on plant-based protein from Southeast Asia, lighten up with egg drop soup from China, and keep it simple with a Japanese hot pot, traveling throughout Asia, one healthy bowl at a time.



**S**oups are an easy way to pack nutrition into your diet. What vegetable doesn't taste good after simmering in a flavorful broth? And as a bonus, beyond their health benefits and taste, all of these soups come together in under 45 minutes, which makes eating well a no-brainer.

Hailing from Laos and Thailand, tom yum is a spicy soup best known for its hot-and-sour broth often made with chicken or seafood.

This vegetarian version relies on extra-firm tofu for its protein source. But to make this a meal, bulk it up with shiitake mushrooms, tomatoes, and a hefty amount of fresh herbs. Then ladle it over sticky rice for a bowl that's jam-packed with all the important food groups. And while tom yum is typically made with kaffir lime leaves, they can be hard to find. Instead, serve this soup with lime wedges for a burst of bright flavor.

## Vegetarian Tom Yum with tofu & shiitake mushrooms

*Tamarind paste adds a slightly sweet and sour depth to sauces, chutneys, curries, and soups. Find it in Asian and Mexican markets.*

### Calories: 360

Makes 4 servings (9½ cups)

Total time: 40 minutes

### COOK:

- ¾ cup dry sushi rice
- 1 Tbsp. rice vinegar
- 1 tsp. black sesame seeds

### COMBINE:

- 8 cups vegetable stock
- ¼ cup tamarind paste
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh garlic
- 1 stalk lemongrass, halved lengthwise
- 6 ¼-inch-thick slices fresh ginger

### STIR IN:

- 12 oz. extra-firm tofu, diced
- 2 cups diced tomatoes
- 8 oz. shiitake mushrooms, stemmed and quartered
- 1 can lite coconut milk (13.66 oz.)
- ½ cup *each* chopped fresh Thai basil, cilantro, and scallions
- 1 Tbsp. *each* chili garlic sauce and low-sodium soy sauce
- Lime wedges

**Cook** rice according to package directions. Stir in vinegar and sesame seeds.

**Combine** stock, tamarind paste, garlic, lemongrass, and ginger in a pot, bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium, and simmer soup 20 minutes. Discard lemongrass and ginger.

**Stir in** tofu, tomatoes, and mushrooms; cook 2 minutes. Stir in coconut milk, basil, cilantro, scallions, chili garlic sauce, and soy sauce, and heat through.

**Divide** rice among four bowls and ladle soup over the top; serve with lime wedges.

**Per serving:** 360 cal; 9g total fat (3g sat, 0g mono, 0g poly); 0mg chol; 522mg sodium; 57g carb (8g fiber, 8g total sugars); 13g protein; 5mg iron; 248mg calcium



For easy removal, and so it doesn't fall apart, halve lemongrass lengthwise, leaving the root end intact.



Shiitake stems are too tough and woody to eat. Gently pull their stems off, then clean mushrooms.

### Soups on

Egg drop soup isn't new, but it's a staple on Chinese restaurant menus. And this version is comforting and satisfying, while being light and easy to make. Chicken breasts keep calories low and protein high. And a few Asian staples, like mirin, ginger, and toasted sesame oil, up the ante in the flavor department in this simply good soup.

Then, have some fun when you travel to Japan with this riff on a hot pot. With bold ingredients like anchovies, pineapple, and lemongrass, you'll craft a flavorful meal in no time. And for ultra-tender steak, thinly slice it, then simply ladle the steaming broth over the top. The heat of the broth is enough to cook it through.



### Chicken Egg Drop Soup with bok choy

*To make sure this soup comes together quickly and to avoid dry chicken, have your ingredients prepped and ready before cooking.*

**Calories: 281**

Makes 4 servings (8 cups)

Total time: 25 minutes

**HEAT:**

- 6 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 bunch bok choy (1½ lb.), trimmed, chopped, greens and whites separated
- 2 Tbsp. mirin
- 2 Tbsp. minced fresh ginger
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1 bunch scallions, minced, whites and greens separated
- 1 lb. boneless, skinless chicken breast, diced
- ¾ tsp. kosher salt

**SLOWLY ADD:**

- 3 eggs, beaten
- 1 Tbsp. toasted sesame oil
- Black pepper to taste

**Heat** broth, bok choy whites, mirin, ginger, garlic, and scallion whites in a pot over medium-high; bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium, and simmer until bok choy whites soften, 5 minutes. Increase heat to high; stir in bok choy greens and chicken. Simmer soup until chicken is cooked through, 2 minutes.

**Slowly add** eggs in a steady stream, let sit 30 seconds, then stir to break eggs into pieces. Reduce heat to medium and allow eggs to cook, 1 minute. Stir in scallion greens and sesame oil; season soup with pepper.

**Per serving:** 281 cal; 10g total fat (2g sat, 4g mono, 3g poly); 212mg chol; 763mg sodium; 9g carb (2g fiber, 5g total sugars); 35g protein; 3mg iron; 219mg calcium



## Sour Beef Hot Pot with fresh herbs

Known as nabemono [nah-beh-MOH-noh] in Japan, there are endless variations of hot pots. Guests dip meat and veggies into a simmering pot of broth placed in the center of the table.

### Calories: 300

Makes 4 servings (8 cups)

Total time: 35 minutes

### PREPARE:

- 4 oz. dry udon noodles, broken into 2-inch pieces

### HEAT:

- 1 tsp. each toasted sesame oil and vegetable oil
- 2 anchovy fillets, packed in oil
- 1 Tbsp. each minced fresh garlic and seeded and minced red serrano chile
- 1 cup minced fresh pineapple, divided

### STIR IN:

- 6 cups low-sodium beef broth
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup rice wine vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup thinly sliced shallots
- 1 stalk lemongrass, halved lengthwise
- 1 lb. New York strip steak, trimmed and thinly sliced against the grain
- 3 Tbsp. each minced fresh Thai basil, mint, and cilantro
- 1 red serrano chile, thinly sliced

**Prepare** noodles according to package directions; set aside.

**Heat** oils with anchovies in a pot over medium-high and cook until anchovies nearly dissolve. Add garlic, minced chile, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup pineapple; cook until softened, about 3 minutes.

**Stir in** broth, vinegar, shallots, and lemongrass, bring to a boil, then reduce heat to medium, and simmer soup 15–20 minutes; discard lemongrass. Stir in noodles, remaining  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup pineapple, basil, mint, and cilantro.

**Divide** steak among four bowls, then ladle soup over the top. Garnish servings with sliced chile.

**Per serving:** 386 cal; 12g total fat (4g sat, 2g mono, 2g poly); 75mg chol; 312mg sodium; 16g carb (2g fiber, 9g total sugars); 43g protein; 2mg iron; 77mg calcium

# Make-Ahead Pot Pies

Pot pies may be the ultimate comfort food, and for good reason. They're basically hearty stews baked into flaky, buttery pie crusts. What's not to like?

Plus, pot pies lend themselves to being made ahead. In all honesty, they are a labor of love, and they're not something you're likely going

to whip up quickly for dinner. But, if you make some to keep in the freezer, hot and savory pot pies will be at your fingertips any night of the week.

And with one master dough recipe, you're free to make either four small pies, meant to feed one or two, or a large one, that's meant to feed a crowd.

## Herbed Pie Dough

*Adding herbs to a pie dough is a simple way to add a touch of elegance and a lot more flavor.*

Makes four 6-inch lattice-top pies or one 9-inch double-crust pie  
Total time: 15 minutes

### PULSE:

- 4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 Tbsp. *each* minced fresh parsley and thyme
- 1 tsp. *each* kosher salt and black pepper

### ADD:

- 2 sticks cold unsalted butter (16 Tbsp.), cubed
- 1/2 cup cold shortening (8 Tbsp.), cubed
- 10–14 Tbsp. ice water

**Pulse** flour, sugar, parsley, thyme, salt, and pepper in a food processor to combine.

**Add** butter and shortening; pulse until pea-sized. Add water, 2 Tbsp. at a time, pulsing after each addition, until dough holds together.

**Turn** dough onto a work surface and knead just to incorporate dry portions.

**Divide** dough into 8 portions for Chicken Little Pot Pies, or 2 portions for Boeuf Bourguignon Pot Pie. Wrap portions in plastic wrap, flatten into discs, then chill at least 30 minutes or up to 3 days.



## Chicken Little Pot Pies with cauliflower & peas

Swap out the usual potatoes in the filling for something a little different, but just as tasty — cauliflower.

Makes 8 servings (four 6-inch pies)  
Prep time: 1 hour  
Bake time 65–70 minutes + cooling

### FOR THE FILLING, MELT:

- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 cups fresh cauliflower florets
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup diced onion
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup each sliced celery and carrot
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic

### STIR IN:

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp. each kosher salt and black pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. turmeric

### WHISK IN:

- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup dry vermouth
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup half-and-half
- 3 cups shredded cooked chicken
- 1 cup frozen green peas
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh thyme

### FOR THE CRUST, ROLL:

- 1 recipe Herbed Pie Dough (page 28)
- 1 egg + 2 Tbsp. water

### TO BAKE POT PIES IMMEDIATELY, BRUSH

tops of pies with egg wash, place on prepared baking sheet, then bake until golden brown and bubbly, 30–35 minutes for the Chicken Little Pot Pies and about 40 minutes for the Boeuf Bourguignon Pot Pie. Remove pies from oven and let rest 15 minutes before serving.

**For the filling, melt** butter in a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add cauliflower, onion, celery, carrot, and garlic; cook until onion starts to soften, about 3 minutes.

**Stir in** flour, salt, pepper, and turmeric; cook 1 minute.

**Whisk in** broth, vermouth, and half-and-half until no lumps remain.

**Simmer** mixture over medium-low heat until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, 8–10 minutes. Stir in chicken, peas, and thyme. Remove filling from heat.

**For the crust, roll** four dough discs on a lightly floured surface into 8-inch rounds, then press each into bottom of a 6-inch pie tin without stretching. Chill pie crusts while rolling remaining dough discs.

**Roll** remaining four dough discs for top crusts on sheets of parchment paper into 8-inch rounds. Cut each round into twelve,  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch-wide strips, chilling each as you finish.

**Divide** filling among prepared pie tins (about 1 rounded cup each).

**Arrange** six lattice strips vertically across top of each pie. Weave remaining six strips horizontally through vertical strips. Trim overhang to  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch, press lattice tops and bottom edges together, turn under, then crimp.

**Cover** pies with plastic wrap, then freeze. When ready to bake, remove pies from freezer 15 minutes prior to baking (do not thaw). Remove plastic wrap.

**Preheat** oven to 425°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.

**Beat** together egg and water; brush over crusts. Place pies on prepared baking sheet, and bake until crust is golden and a thermometer inserted into centers registers 165°, 65–70 minutes, covering edges with foil if browning too quickly. Let pies rest 15 minutes before serving.

Per serving: 719 cal; 39g total fat (22g sat); 132mg chol; 576mg sodium; 60g carb; 4g fiber; 27g protein



Once the vertical lattice strips are in place, pull back every other one to weave the horizontal strips.



For gorgeous golden brown lattice tops and crimped edges, brush the pies with egg wash before baking.

## Savory as pie

This hearty beef pot pie is an American twist on a French classic — boeuf bourguignon [BEUF boor-gee-NYON]. All the usual suspects in the popular stew are here, so it still has all the great flavor you love. But instead of using a tough cut of beef, which is perfect for a low-and-slow braise, tender hanger steak is the perfect choice because it cooks so quickly. Or, choose another tender cut, but

stick with those that have bold, beefy flavor, like rib-eye, or petite shoulder tender. While beef tenderloin is, as its name implies, tender, it doesn't bring much flavor to the party.

And when you bake a filling as wonderful as this one, with hearty chunks of vegetables and fragrant herbs, wrapped in an herb-enhanced crust, dinner just doesn't get any better.



## Boeuf Bourguignon Pot Pie with rosemary & thyme

To roll cut a carrot, first cut a whole carrot at a 45-degree angle, give it a quarter turn, cut again, and repeat.

Makes 8 servings (one 9-inch pie)  
Prep time: 1 hour  
Baking time 80–90 minutes + cooling

### FOR THE FILLING, MELT:

- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
  - 8 oz. cremini mushrooms, sliced 1/4-inch thick
  - 2 cups frozen pearl onions, thawed
  - 1 sprig *each* fresh rosemary and thyme
- Salt and black pepper to taste

### COOK:

- 4 strips thick-sliced bacon, diced

### COMBINE:

- 1 Tbsp. dried rosemary
- 2 tsp. *each* kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 1/2 lb. hanger steak, trimmed and cubed
- 1 1/4 cups 1/2-inch roll-cut carrots
- 3/4 cup chopped celery
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1/4 cup all-purpose flour

### DEGLAZE:

- 1 1/2 cups dry red wine (such as Pinot Noir or Burgundy)
- 1 1/2 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 Tbsp. *each* chopped fresh rosemary and thyme

### FOR THE CRUST, ROLL:

- 1 Recipe Herbed Pie Dough (page 28)
- 1 egg + 2 Tbsp. water

**For the filling, melt** butter in a sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add mushrooms, onions, and rosemary and thyme sprigs. Cook, stirring occasionally, until mushrooms begin to brown, 8–10 minutes, then season with salt and pepper. Remove filling from heat. Discard herb sprigs.

**Cook** bacon in a sauté pan until crisp; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate and reserve drippings.

**Combine** dried rosemary, 2 tsp. salt, and 2 tsp. pepper; toss with steak. Cook half the steak in drippings in pan over medium-high heat until browned on all sides, 5–6 minutes; transfer to a plate. Repeat browning with remaining steak.

**Add** carrots, celery, and garlic to pan; season with salt and pepper. Cover pan, reduce heat to medium, and sweat vegetables until crisp-tender, 6–8 minutes. Stir in tomato paste and cook 1 minute. Stir in flour; cook 1 minute more.

**Deglaze** pan with wine, scraping up any brown bits, then stir in broth. Increase heat to high, bring filling to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer until thick enough to coat the back of a spoon, 3–5 minutes.

**Stir in** chopped rosemary and thyme; remove filling from heat.

**For the crust, roll** one dough disc between 2 pieces of parchment paper into a 13-inch round, then press into the bottom of a 9-inch pie plate without stretching; pour in filling.

**Roll** remaining dough disc between 2 pieces of parchment paper into a 13-inch round and place over filling. Trim overhang to 1/2-inch. Press the two edges of crust together, turn under, then crimp and cut slits into the top.

**Cover** pie with plastic wrap, then freeze. When ready to bake, remove pie from freezer 30 minutes prior to baking (do not thaw). Remove plastic wrap.

**Preheat** oven to 425°. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.

**Beat** together egg and water; brush over crust. Place pie on prepared baking sheet, and bake until crust is golden and a thermometer inserted into center registers 165°, 100–110 minutes, covering edge with foil if browning too quickly. Let pie rest 15 minutes before serving.

Per serving: 807 cal; 47g total fat (23g sat); 125mg chol; 957mg sodium; 61g carb; 4g fiber; 27g protein



To ensure tender chunks of steak, cut them into hearty-sized chunks so they won't get overcooked.



So the dough is easy to roll out, roll it between parchment paper and refrigerate if it gets too warm.

# *fall party*

Getting together with family and friends is one of life's pleasures, but planning the menu and executing it can be stressful. It doesn't have to be. With these recipes in hand and their easy-to-follow directions, this might just be your best party ever.



**P**lanning a get-together this season? Let this simple yet sensational full menu be your guide to success. With recipes for stew, scones, slaw, and dessert, you'll have every reason to celebrate this much-loved time of year.

Stew is the main event, and this one couldn't be easier or more delicious. In fact, make it a day ahead and reheat it before the party begins. It'll taste even better because all of the flavors will have time to meld.

Start with unseasoned pork sausage that you spice up yourself. Throw in butternut squash to give the stew some flavor, color, texture, and a host of health benefits. High in nutrients and low in calories, this squash is an excellent source of vitamin A and is a rich source of antioxidants.

And for a new twist on cornbread, pair the stew with a version of scones you may never have had before. Cornmeal adds some crunch, and a drizzle of honey sweetens them just right.

## Sausage & Butternut Squash Stew

Makes 8 servings (12 cups)  
Total time: 45 minutes

### HEAT:

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 lb. ground pork sausage

### ADD:

- 1 cup *each* diced onions and green bell peppers
- 2 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1 Tbsp. *each* chili powder and ground cumin
- 2 tsp. dried oregano

### STIR IN:

- 4 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 2½ cups diced butternut squash
- 1 can diced tomatoes in juice (28 oz.)
- 1 can red kidney beans (16 oz.), drained and rinsed
- 1 can black beans (15 oz.), drained and rinsed

### OFF HEAT, STIR IN:

- ½ cup chopped fresh cilantro
- Salt and black pepper to taste

**Heat** oil in a large pot over medium. Add sausage and cook until browned and cooked through, about 10 minutes.

**Add** onions and bell peppers; sweat until they begin to soften, about 5 minutes. Add tomato paste, garlic, chili powder, cumin, and oregano; cook 1 minute.

**Stir in** broth, squash, tomatoes, kidney beans, and black beans. Bring stew to a boil, cover, and reduce heat to medium-low. Simmer stew, stirring occasionally, until squash is fork-tender, 15 minutes.

**Off heat, stir in** cilantro and season stew with salt and pepper.

Per serving: 358 cal; 18g total fat (5g sat); 41mg chol; 945mg sodium; 32g carb; 10g fiber; 18g protein

## Cornmeal Scones with honey

Makes 8 scones  
Total time: about 45 minutes

### WHISK:

- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup yellow cornmeal
- 3 Tbsp. granulated sugar
- 1 Tbsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. kosher salt

### CUT:

- 6 Tbsp. cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 2 Tbsp. honey
- 1 Tbsp. sparkling sugar

**Preheat** oven to 425°.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

**Whisk** together flour, cornmeal, granulated sugar, baking powder, and salt.

**Cut** butter into flour mixture until crumbly, leaving some larger pieces of butter. Stir in cream just until dough comes together.

**Turn** dough onto a lightly floured surface and pat into an 8-inch round, ¾-inch thick. Cut round into 8 wedges, then transfer to prepared baking sheet. Brush scones with honey and sprinkle with sparkling sugar.

**Bake** scones until golden brown, 15–18 minutes. Serve scones warm or at room temperature.

Per scone: 347 cal; 20g total fat (12g sat); 64mg chol; 339mg sodium; 39g carb; 1g fiber; 4g protein



Butternut squash is an easy winter squash to work with. Simply halve it, scrape out the seeds, then peel it.



To keep the flavor and color of the cilantro bright, add it off heat once the stew is fully cooked.

## Fall fest

Keeping things simple is one of the keys to successful entertaining. And this fresh yet informal menu is just the ticket. Designed with you in mind, you'll feel liberated instead of overwhelmed by the thought of hosting a party.

This slaw easily fills out the menu — it's as colorful as it is tasty. And it too can be made ahead, but wait to toss the vegetables with the

vinaigrette to keep it crispy and so the colors don't leech.

Then, be sure to save room on the table for dessert. Top a blend of apples and pears with caramel and you'll devour this autumn tart in no time. And no one needs to know just how simple it is to make. Purchased puff pastry keeps things easy, plus it's delicious right from the oven or at room temperature.



## Broccoli Slaw with jicama & beets

Makes 8 servings (7½ cups)  
Total time: 30 minutes

### WHISK:

- ¼ cup *each* extra-virgin olive oil and cider vinegar
- 2 tsp. grated fresh ginger
- 1 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. sugar
- Salt and black pepper to taste

### COMBINE:

- 1 pkg. broccoli slaw mix (10 oz.)
- 1 cup *each* julienned jicama and fresh beets
- ¾ cup shredded carrots
- ½ cup *each* julienned radishes and sliced scallions

**Whisk** together oil, vinegar, ginger, Dijon, and sugar for the vinaigrette; season with salt and pepper.

**Combine** slaw mix, jicama, beets, carrots, radishes, and scallions in a large bowl for the slaw.

**Toss** slaw with vinaigrette to coat.

Per serving: 96 cal; 7g total fat (1g sat); 0mg chol; 44mg sodium; 7g carb; 3g fiber; 2g protein



A mandoline makes quick work of julienning the jicama, beets, and radishes.

## Apple-Pear Tarts with caramel sauce

Makes 8 servings (2 tarts)  
Total time: 1 hour

### FOR THE TARTS, COMBINE:

- 2 Tbsp. each granulated sugar and brown sugar
- 1/4 tsp. each table salt and ground cinnamon

### TOSS:

- 1 Granny Smith apple, thinly sliced
- 1 red Bartlett pear, thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry (1/2 pkg.; 8.65 oz.), halved horizontally, thawed

### FOR THE CARAMEL, COMBINE:

- 1/4 cup packed brown sugar
  - 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter
  - 2 Tbsp. heavy cream
  - 1/4 tsp. pure vanilla extract
  - 1/8 tsp. table salt
- Finely chopped toasted pecans

**Preheat** oven to 425°. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

**For the tarts, combine** granulated sugar, 2 Tbsp. brown sugar, 1/4 tsp. salt, and cinnamon.

**Toss** apples and pears with lemon juice, then toss with sugar mixture.

**Place** puff pastry halves on prepared baking sheet. Arrange apple and pear slices, overlapping, onto pastry halves, leaving an edge around all sides. Slightly pinch edges around tarts to enclose (this helps the edges puff up around the outside). Bake tarts until golden brown, 20–25 minutes.

**For the caramel, combine** 1/4 cup brown sugar, butter, cream, vanilla, and 1/8 tsp. salt in a saucepan and heat over medium-low until thickened, 5–7 minutes. Drizzle tarts with caramel, then garnish with pecans.

Per serving: 125 cal; 6g total fat (3g sat); 13mg chol; 130mg sodium; 20g carb; 1g fiber; 1g protein



**1** INGREDIENT **4** WAYS

# Cauliflower

These days, cauliflower is making a comeback with its appeal and versatility. Find out just how tasty this “stalk flower” can be when you use your head.

In the word’s of Mark Twain, “cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education.” He was on to something. Considered one of the healthiest foods on earth, cauliflower has become increasingly popular for those looking to follow a low-carb diet. By simply pulsing florets into “rice,” a nutritious, grain-free risotto is made just as delicious as the classic.

Or, for something more substantial, give these mild-flavored cauliflower “steaks” a try by roasting them until tender. And what’s a steak without sauce? Inspired by a Sicilian eggplant dish, this caponata relies on roasted red peppers and dried currants for the requisite sweetness, while white wine vinegar adds the sour component. This full-flavored dish is not to be missed.

## Cauliflower Risotto

*The sulfur-containing compounds found in cauliflower provide a variety of health benefits.*

Makes 4 servings (3½ cups)  
Total time: 30 minutes

### PULSE:

- 1 head cauliflower (2 lb.), trimmed and cut into florets

### MELT:

- 2 Tbsp. each unsalted butter and olive oil
- ¼ cup minced shallots
- Salt and black pepper

### DEGLAZE:

- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1½ cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth, warmed

### OFF HEAT, STIR IN:

- ½ cup grated Parmesan
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

**Pulse** cauliflower in a food processor until the size of rice.

**Melt** butter with oil in a sauté pan over medium heat. Add shallots and sweat until softened, but not browned, 3–4 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high. Stir in cauliflower, season with salt and pepper, and cook 2 minutes.

**Deglaze** pan with wine and cook until nearly absorbed. Stir in ½ cup broth; simmer until absorbed, stirring, 4–5 minutes. Continue adding broth in ½-cup increments, stirring, until each addition is absorbed before adding the next. Season risotto with salt and pepper.

**Off heat, stir in** Parmesan and cream; garnish with parsley.

Per serving: 333 cal; 23g total fat (11g sat); 51mg chol; 342mg sodium; 14g carb; 5g fiber; 12g protein



## Roasted Cauliflower Steaks with red pepper caponata

To yield four cauliflower steaks, you'll need to use two heads. Reserve the remaining cauliflower for a couple of the other recipes in this section.

Makes 4 servings  
Total time: about 1 hour

### FOR THE CAULIFLOWER, ARRANGE:

- 4 1-inch-thick cauliflower steaks (from 2 heads)
- Olive oil
- Kosher salt

### FOR THE CAPONATA, SWEAT:

- 1/4 cup dried currants
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 1/2 tsp. anchovy paste
- 3 Tbsp. olive oil

### STIR IN:

- 4 red bell peppers, roasted, peeled, seeded, and julienned
- 3 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. capers
- 1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted
- Thinly sliced fresh mint

**Preheat** oven to 375°.

**For the cauliflower, arrange** steaks on a baking sheet, drizzle both sides with oil, then season with salt. Roast steaks until fork-tender, about 25 minutes.

**For the caponata, sweat** currants, garlic, pepper flakes, and anchovy paste in 3 Tbsp. oil in a sauté pan over medium-low heat until currants begin to soften, about 2 minutes.

**Stir in** roasted peppers, vinegar, and capers; simmer until heated through, about 4 minutes. Stir in pine nuts, season with salt, then serve caponata over steaks, and garnish with mint.

Per serving: 339 cal; 24g total fat (3g sat); 2mg chol; 271mg sodium; 27g carb; 8g fiber; 8g protein



For steaks that hold together rather than fall apart, cut from the center of the head so the core stays intact.



So you're able to get rid of all the skin on the peppers, roast them until the skins are completely charred.



## Versatile veggie

If you still aren't convinced of cauliflower's versatility yet, you will be now. Based on the flavors of an everything bagel, this whole-roasted head of cauliflower delivers the works with its flavor and presentation, plus it handily feeds a crowd. Then all this head needs is an herbed cream cheese dip to complete the bagel shop theme.

And when you were a kid, cauliflower with cheese sauce was likely the only way you ever considered eating this cabbage cousin. But with aged Cheddar, beer, Dijon, and Worcestershire, this grown-up sauce is probably completely different than what your mom served you. Not only is this one rich and flavorful, it's so good that you're apt to pour it on everything.

### Everything Bagel Cauliflower with herbed cream cheese

*You'll have a few tablespoons of spice blend leftover. Use it to sprinkle it over popcorn, bagels, roasted vegetables — the options are endless.*

Makes 12 servings  
Total time: 1¼ hours

#### FOR THE SPICE BLEND, COMBINE:

- 2 Tbsp. *each* dried minced garlic and dried onion flakes
- 1 Tbsp. *each* poppy seeds and toasted sesame seeds
- 1 tsp. kosher salt

#### WHISK:

- ½ cup plain full-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 tsp. kosher salt
- ½ tsp. minced fresh garlic
- Black pepper to taste
- 1 large head cauliflower (2–2½ lb.)

#### FOR THE SAUCE, PURÉE:

- 4 oz. plain cream cheese, softened
- 2 oz. goat cheese, softened
- 3 Tbsp. buttermilk
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- ½ tsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1 Tbsp. *each* minced fresh parsley and chives
- 1 tsp. minced fresh dill
- Salt and black pepper to taste

**Preheat** oven to 400°. Line a baking sheet with foil.

**For the spice blend, combine** dried garlic, dried onion, poppy seeds, sesame seeds, and 1 tsp. salt.

**Whisk** together 2 Tbsp. spice blend, yogurt, oil, 1 Tbsp. lemon juice, 1 tsp. salt, and ½ tsp. fresh garlic in a large bowl; season with pepper.

**Add** cauliflower to yogurt mixture and coat completely. Transfer cauliflower to prepared baking sheet and sprinkle with 1 Tbsp. spice blend.

**Roast** cauliflower until golden brown and fork-tender, about 1 hour. Let cauliflower rest 10 minutes, then transfer to a serving platter.

**For the sauce, purée** cream cheese, goat cheese, buttermilk, 1 Tbsp. lemon juice, and ½ tsp. fresh garlic in a mini food processor. Add parsley, chives, and dill and pulse until combined; season with salt and pepper. Serve cauliflower with sauce.

Per serving: 101 cal; 7g total fat (4g sat); 15mg chol; 479mg sodium; 6g carb; 2g fiber; 4g protein

## Cheesy Cauliflower

A mild lager, like Corona, infuses subtle flavor into the sauce.

Makes 8 servings  
(8 cups cauliflower + 2½ cups sauce)  
Total time: 30 minutes

### FOR THE CAULIFLOWER, ADD:

- 1 head cauliflower (2 lb.), trimmed and cut into florets (about 8 cups)  
Salt and black pepper to taste

### FOR THE SAUCE, MELT:

- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup each half-and-half and lager beer
- 2 tsp. Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

### WHISK IN:

- 7 oz. aged sharp Cheddar, shredded  
Tabasco sauce to taste  
Minced fresh chives

**For the cauliflower, add** florets to a steamer basket set in a pot over high heat with one inch of boiling water in it. Cover pot and steam florets until fork-tender, tossing occasionally, about 10 minutes; transfer to a bowl and season with salt and pepper.

**For the sauce, melt** butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in flour until smooth, then whisk in half-and-half, beer, Dijon, and Worcestershire until smooth.

Cook sauce until it coats the back of a spoon and leaves a trail that does not fill in when swiped, 5–7 minutes. Reduce heat to low.

**Whisk in** Cheddar, a handful at a time, adding more once melted. Off heat, season sauce with salt, pepper, and Tabasco. Serve florets with sauce; garnish with chives.

Per serving: 237 cal; 18g total fat (12g sat); 50mg chol; 226mg sodium; 10g carb; 2g fiber; 9g protein



To ensure the sauce isn't too loose, cook it until it coats the back of a spoon and holds a line when swiped.



Adding the Cheddar a little at a time, and whisking until melted, yields a smooth sauce.



# Rustic Rye Bread

If you're on the artisan bread bandwagon, this loaf of rye is for you. With just a few ingredients and a bit of patience, you too can share the cathartic experience of baking bread.

It's true: With little to no effort, you can bake a loaf of homemade bread with the best of them. But why bother baking bread with all of the great artisan loaves on the market these days? Besides the feeling of accomplishment, as well as the wonderful smells wafting through the house, it's actually hard to find a decent loaf of bakery-fresh rye bread. Commercial rye breads are mass-produced and they're usually made with processed white rye flour and artificial caraway flavoring, so they don't taste that great and have very little food value.

When it comes to baking rye bread though, a few things differ from it and wheat dough. Rye doughs are stickier, softer, and more difficult to handle than stronger wheat doughs. They have a

higher ash content (a measure of mineral content) than wheat, which encourages rapid yeast activity. Consequently, rye doughs ferment faster than wheat doughs. And because rye flour has less gluten, it could potentially overproof because it can only support a certain amount of rising before it collapses. To prevent this from happening, and for added structure, supplement with bread flour.

After shaping the loaf, keep a careful eye on the final proofing and don't expect the dough to puff up like wheat dough does. Put the loaf in the oven when it's slightly underproofed to get the most oven spring.



## Rye Bread

Makes 12 servings (1 loaf)  
Total time: 1 hour + rising

### MIX:

1 1/4 cups warm water (105–115°)  
1 Tbsp. light brown sugar  
1 pkg. active dry yeast (2 1/4 tsp.)  
1 Tbsp. canola or vegetable oil

### COMBINE:

2 cups bread flour  
1 1/4 cups medium rye flour (such as King Arthur)  
1/4 cup instant potato flakes  
1 Tbsp. caraway seeds  
2 tsp. kosher salt  
1 tsp. onion powder

**Mix** water with brown sugar and yeast; let proof until foamy, 5 minutes. Mix in oil.

**Combine** bread flour, rye flour, potato flakes, caraway seeds, salt, and onion powder in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with a dough hook attachment. Add yeast mixture and mix on low speed until a dough forms and no streaks of flour remain, 2 minutes. Increase speed to medium.

**Knead** dough in stand mixer until smooth and elastic, 10 minutes. Dough will be sticky. If dough seems unmanageable, add 1–2 Tbsp. more bread flour and knead until incorporated. Transfer dough to a lightly oiled bowl, cover with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm place until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

**Turn** dough onto a lightly floured surface, shape into an 8-inch loaf, and place into an 8 1/2 × 4 1/2-inch glass (Pyrex) loaf pan. Cover loaf with plastic wrap coated with nonstick spray; let rise until above the edge of the pan, 1–2 hours.

**Preheat** oven to 350° with rack in lowest position. Bake bread until golden brown and a thermometer inserted in the center registers 190°, 30–35 minutes. Transfer bread to a rack; let cool 5 minutes. Turn bread out onto rack and let cool completely.

Per serving: 144 cal; 2g total fat (0g sat); 0mg chol; 325mg sodium; 27g carb; 2g fiber; 4g protein

\* For a boule-shaped loaf, form the dough into a tight round ball after the first rise. Let it rise again until it doubles in size, 1–2 hours, then slash the top and bake it.

## STEPS FOR SUCCESS



**1.** So you don't kill the yeast, add it to warm water, no hotter than 115°. Add sugar so it has something to feed on.



**2.** Adding potato flakes helps create a softer loaf of bread, while caraway seeds and onion powder flavor it.



**3.** Knead the dough until combined, soft, and sticky, adding 1–2 Tbsp. more bread flour as necessary.



**4.** Glass loaf pans conduct heat well, help with browning, and allow you to actually see an entire loaf as it bakes.

# PASTRAMI PERFECTION

Making pastrami isn't a weeknight project, but once you try your hand at making this highly coveted deli staple, you'll fall head over heels for its succulent slices.

Pastrami is traditionally found in Jewish delis. You've probably had it, but do you really know what it is? A cousin to corned beef, pastrami is made by using a 3-step process of brining, smoking, and steaming a piece of brisket, and it's absolutely fantastic.

The first step, brining, keeps the meat moist, adds the first layer of flavor, and protects the meat from spoilage. And after it's brined, rub the meat with a spice blend for the second layer of flavor. For authentic pastrami, black peppercorns and coriander seeds are a must, and grinding your own lends the boldest, freshest flavor. The second step, smoking, adds the final layer of flavor. Other than mesquite, which can overpower the meat, choose your favorite type of wood. Pecan and hickory woods yielded equally delicious results. The third step to creating the pastrami of your dreams is steaming. You'll want to do it in a low-heat oven to keep the meat from drying out and to break down its tough connective tissues.

Whether you serve the juicy slices of pastrami spartan-style — with just mustard between two slices of rye bread — or you doll it up a bit more, you're sure to fall in love.



## Pastrami - brining

*Different brands of salt can vary in cup for cup measurements because of the size of the grains, so be sure to weigh both of the salts for accurate ratios.*

Makes 16 servings (about 4 lb. pastrami)  
Total time: 4 days

### FOR THE BRINE, HEAT:

- 8 cups water
- 12 oz. kosher salt, such as Morton's (about 1<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> cups)
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 3 oz. pink curing salt (about <sup>1</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cup)
- 2 dried bay leaves, crumbled
- 2 cinnamon sticks (3-inch), broken up
- 3 Tbsp. *each* chopped fresh garlic and ginger
- 1 Tbsp. *each* mustard seeds, coriander seeds, and black peppercorns
- 2 tsp. *each* allspice berries and whole cloves

### STIR IN:

- 8 cups ice cubes + water
- 1 brisket flat (about 7 lb.), fat trimmed to within <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>–<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-inch

**For the brine, heat** 8 cups water, kosher salt, brown sugar, pink salt, bay leaves, cinnamon sticks, garlic, ginger, mustard seeds, coriander, peppercorns, allspice, and cloves in a large nonreactive pot over high until brine comes to a simmer, stirring to dissolve salts and sugar, 12 minutes; transfer to a nonreactive container.

**Stir** ice plus water into brine. Once brine is cold, place brisket in brine, weigh down to keep it submerged, then refrigerate 24–26 hours, turning occasionally.

**Remove** brisket from brine, pat dry, then place on a rack set in a baking sheet and refrigerate, uncovered, 8–12 hours. Discard brine.

**Pastrami** recipe continues on page 44.

# BRINE DAYS 1 & 2



Since the fat makes it harder for the brine to thoroughly penetrate the meat, trim it to within <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>–<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-inch. Don't trim off all the fat, though. It keeps the meat moist.



Smoking makes it hard to see the grain of the meat. Cut off a small piece, perpendicular to the grain, before brining so you have a sense of where the grain is after smoking.



For the correct amount of water in the brine, measure out 8 cups ice first, then fill the measuring cup with water to the 8-cup mark.



The simplest way to ensure the brisket is fully submerged in the brine is to weigh it down with a sealed plastic bag full of water.

## TEST KITCHEN TIP

**If the brine isn't below 40 degrees after adding the ice and water, chill it until it is. For food safety measures, never add meat to a warm brine.**

## Pastrami - smoking & steaming

### FOR THE RUB, GRIND:

1/4 cup *each* coriander seeds  
and black peppercorns

### TO SMOKE, PREHEAT:

Wood chunks

**For the rub, grind** coriander and peppercorns in a spice grinder until the texture of chunky sand. Coat brisket with rub, then set on a rack in a 12×16-inch disposable foil pan.

**To smoke, preheat** grill (and the built-in smoker box, if you have one) to high. Place 5 wood chunks on grill grate over far right heating element (or smoker box). Once chunks are really smoking, reduce heat to medium-low on far right heating element (or smoker box) and shut off all other heating elements to maintain a temperature of about 225°. Place prepared brisket pan on unlit side of grill. Fill pan with 1 inch of water.

**Smoke** brisket, covered, until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part registers 150°, about 6 hours, rotating pan halfway through, and replenishing spent wood chunks as necessary.

**Remove** brisket pan from grill and let it and the liquid come to room temperature. Transfer liquid to a microwave-safe container, then cover. Tightly wrap brisket on rack and pan. Refrigerate brisket and liquid overnight.

**To steam, preheat** oven to 250°. Microwave liquid until hot, then pour into bottom of pan. Cover brisket with parchment paper, then tightly wrap with heavy-duty foil. Steam pastrami until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the thickest part registers 202°, 4–6 hours. Let pastrami rest 15 minutes before thinly slicing against the grain.

Per serving: 385 cal; 10g total fat (3g sat);  
92mg chol; 1526mg sodium; 36g carb; 2g fiber;  
31g protein

# SMOKE DAY 3



So they don't fizzle out before they get going, be sure the wood chunks are really smoking before reducing the heat under them, shutting off the other burners, and placing the brisket on the grill.



To prevent heat levels from rising inside the grill, pour water into the pan under the brisket. If temps rise, check the wood chunks. If they're flaming, rather than smoking, liberally spritz them with water. This produces more smoke and drops the temperature.

# STEAM DAY 4



So the connective tissues in the pastrami break down, tightly wrap it with foil to trap steam inside the pan. But, first cover the pastrami with a layer of parchment paper. This is to protect it from a chemical reaction known as "lasagna cell" that can melt the foil.



## CURE IT

Adding pink (curing) salt to the brine gives the meat its characteristic flavor and color, plus it prevents spoilage.

## TEST KITCHEN TIPS

### Smoking Know-How

To maintain constant smoke, you'll need to add fresh wood chunks as the previous ones burn away. To get the new chunks to burn, you may need to increase the heat under them. In that case, leave the lid open until the chunks start producing smoke, then reduce the heat, and close the lid.

### Skip a Day

If you have time to smoke and steam the pastrami on the same day, after smoking, simply cover it with parchment paper, wrap tightly with heavy-duty foil, then steam the pastrami according to recipe directions on page 44. Steaming ensures the tough connective tissues have broken down and melted away.

## SMOKE IT

Choose untreated wood chunks to smoke with — they'll last longer than chips. And if a smoker is available to you, feel free to use it, rather than your gas grill.



## TOOLS TO USE



1. Use a **nonreactive pot** and **heat-resistant spatula** to make the brine.
2. Choose a **nonreactive container** to brine in, like stainless steel, heavy plastic (an 18-qt. polycarbonate container from the local restaurant supply store worked great), or glass. Avoid aluminum, cast iron, brass, or copper which can cause off flavors.
3. Purchase "**fresh**" **dried spices and seasonings** for the most vibrant flavors.
4. Use **pink curing salt** in addition to **kosher salt** in the brine. (See page 6 for more information.)
5. Weigh out both the pink salt and the kosher salt with a **scale** for accurate results.
6. Grind spices using a **coffee grinder** for the correct consistency and freshest flavor.
7. Smoke the brined brisket on a **rack** set on top of a **disposable foil pan** for convenience.
8. Use an **8-cup liquid measuring cup** to measure water and ice for accurate results.
9. **Wood chunks** give pastrami its classic smoky flavor; choose your favorite type.
10. A **probe-style thermometer** works best for monitoring the temperature of the meat without having to open the grill or oven, but a standard instant-read thermometer is your next best bet.
11. If the wood chunks catch fire, spritz them generously with water using a **squirt bottle**, to keep the temp in check and create more smoke.
12. Tightly wrap the pastrami with **parchment** and **heavy-duty foil** to trap steam inside.

## Faster with Fewer

Easy Recipes, Simple Ingredients



# Pasta Sauces

When you need to throw dinner together in a hurry, but still want something decent to eat, these pasta sauces are not only quick, they'll more than satisfy.

## Tomato-Anchovy Sauce

Makes 10 servings (5 cups)  
Total time: 20 minutes

### SWEAT:

- 1/2 cup shredded white onion (1/2 an onion)
- 1 Tbsp. anchovy paste
- 1 1/2 tsp. dried oregano
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil

### STIR IN:

- 1 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 can crushed tomatoes (28 oz.)
- 1 can tomato sauce (15 oz.)
- 1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- Salt and black pepper to taste

**Sweat** onion, anchovy paste, and oregano in oil in a saucepan over medium heat until onion softens and liquid evaporates, 5 minutes.

**Stir in** tomato paste and cook 1 minute. Add crushed tomatoes and tomato sauce; bring sauce to a simmer and cook 10 minutes. Stir in vinegar, then season sauce with salt and pepper.

Per serving: 73 cal; 3g total fat (0g sat); 6mg chol; 446mg sodium; 9g carb; 3g fiber; 2g protein

## Green Olive Sauce

Makes 4 servings (2 cups)  
Total time: 25 minutes

### PULSE:

- 2 jars castelvetrano olives (10 drained oz. each), quartered, divided
- 1 bunch fresh parsley
- 1/3 cup packed chopped fresh basil
- 2 Tbsp. pecorino
- Minced zest each of 1/2 an orange and lemon
- 1 tsp. honey
- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice

### SWEAT:

- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1/4 tsp. red pepper flakes
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- Black pepper to taste

**Pulse** half the olives, parsley, basil, pecorino, orange and lemon zests, and honey in a food processor until chunky. Add orange and lemon juice; pulse until olives are minced. **Sweat** garlic and pepper flakes in oil in a saucepan over medium heat until garlic softens, 1 minute. Stir in minced olive mixture and remaining quartered olives; cook until heated through, 3–4 minutes. Season sauce with pepper.

Per serving: 342 cal; 32g total fat (2g sat); 3mg chol; 2914mg sodium; 7g carb; 1g fiber; 2g protein



## Fresh Tomato-Vodka Sauce with pancetta

Makes 4 servings (2 cups)  
Total time: 30 minutes

### COOK:

- 1 pkg. pancetta (3 oz.), diced

### HEAT:

- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1/2 cup minced onion
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1 Tbsp. tomato paste
- 1 lb. fresh tomatoes (such as Campari), seeded and chopped

### DEGLAZE:

- 1/2 cup vodka
  - 1/2 cup heavy cream
  - 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh basil
- Salt, black pepper, and red pepper flakes to taste

**Cook** pancetta in a sauté pan until crisp; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate, drain drippings, and wipe out pan.

**Heat** oil in same pan over medium. Add onion and cook until it softens, 3–4 minutes. Add garlic and tomato paste; cook until fragrant, 1 minute. Add tomatoes and cook until they start to break down, 2–3 minutes.

**Deglaze** skillet with vodka, scraping up any brown bits. Cook until vodka is nearly evaporated, 3 minutes. Stir in cream and bring to a boil; cook 1 minute. Stir in basil and pancetta; season sauce with salt, black pepper, and pepper flakes.

Per serving: 342 cal; 25g total fat (10g sat); 58mg chol; 427mg sodium; 9g carb; 2g fiber; 6g protein



## Gorgonzola Sauce with walnuts

Makes 4 servings (1 1/2 cups)  
Total time: 20 minutes

### HEAT:

- 1 1/2 cups heavy cream
- 1/2 cup dry vermouth

### WHISK IN:

- 6 oz. crumbled Gorgonzola
  - 1/4 cup grated Parmesan
  - Minced zest of 1 lemon
  - 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- Salt, black pepper, and freshly grated nutmeg to taste
- Chopped toasted walnuts  
Chopped fresh parsley

**Heat** cream and vermouth in a saucepan over medium; simmer until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes.

**Whisk in** Gorgonzola and Parmesan and simmer until cheeses melt and sauce thickens, 5 minutes. Whisk in zest and lemon juice; season sauce with salt, pepper, and nutmeg.

**Garnish** servings with walnuts and parsley.

Per serving: 532 cal; 48g total fat (31g sat); 169mg chol; 733mg sodium; 4g carb; 2g fiber; 14g protein

# Mocha Cream Pie

Who says you can't make a good thing better? While purists don't like their desserts messed with, this Boston Cream Pie, version 2.0, is as delicious as the classic, and even more stunning.

Perhaps a surprise to you, Boston Cream Pie isn't actually a pie at all. It's an East Coast staple hailing from the famous Parker House Hotel in Boston. Regardless of who you talk to, the perimeters for qualifying as a Boston Cream Pie are fairly standard across the board. Two rich, yellow sponge cakes sandwich a luxurious vanilla pastry cream, and a silky, shiny chocolate glaze tops it all off.

How do you improve on that? Instead of two layers of sponge cake, stack it high with three. It gives the "pie" more visual appeal, but let's be honest, there's twice as much room for pastry cream. And speaking of pastry cream, this mocha variation not only contrasts the yellow cakes beautifully, it's ultra chocolatey with just enough espresso to grab your attention.



## Mocha Boston Cream Pie

Makes 12 servings (one 9-inch cake)  
Total time: 1¼ hours + chilling

### FOR THE CAKES, SIFT:

- 2 cups cake flour (8 oz.)
- 1¼ cups sugar, divided
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. table salt

### WHISK:

- 6 eggs, separated
- ¾ cup whole milk, room temperature
- ¼ cup canola oil
- 4 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- 1 Tbsp. pure vanilla extract
- ½ tsp. cream of tartar

### FOR THE PASTRY CREAM, WHISK:

- 6 egg yolks
- ⅓ cup cornstarch
- ¾ cup sugar, divided
- 2 Tbsp. Kahlúa liqueur

### HEAT:

- 2½ cups whole milk
- 4 oz. semisweet bar chocolate, finely chopped

### COMBINE:

- 1 Tbsp. *each* pure vanilla extract and instant espresso powder
- 5 Tbsp. unsalted butter, cubed
- ¼ tsp. table salt

### FOR THE GANACHE, HEAT:

- ⅓ cup heavy cream
- 1 Tbsp. corn syrup
- 4 oz. semisweet bar chocolate, finely chopped
- ½ tsp. pure vanilla extract

**Preheat** oven to 325°. Coat three 9×2-inch-round cake pans with nonstick spray, line with parchment paper, and coat with spray again.

**For the cakes, sift** together flour, 1 cup sugar, baking powder, and ½ tsp. salt.

**Whisk** together 6 yolks, ¾ cup milk, oil, 4 Tbsp. butter, and 1 Tbsp. vanilla in a bowl until smooth; whisk in flour mixture just until combined for the batter.

**Beat** egg whites and cream of tartar in a bowl with a hand mixer on medium speed until soft peaks form, 5 minutes; increase speed to medium-high. Gradually sprinkle in remaining ¼ cup sugar and beat until whites are stiff and glossy, but not dry, 3–4 minutes more.

**Fold** beaten egg whites into batter in four additions, adding more when no streaks remain. Divide batter among prepared pans.

**Bake** cakes until golden and they spring back when lightly touched, 30 minutes, rotating pans halfway through. Let cakes cool in pans 10 minutes, then turn onto racks to cool completely.

**For the pastry cream, whisk** together 6 yolks, cornstarch, ¼ cup sugar, and liqueur until frothy.

**Heat** 2½ cups milk and remaining ½ cup sugar in a saucepan over medium, and simmer, about 12 minutes. Off heat, whisk in 4 oz. chocolate until fully incorporated.

**Whisk** half the chocolate mixture into the yolk mixture, then slowly whisk back into pan. Cook pastry cream over medium heat, whisking constantly, until thickened, 2–3 minutes.

**Combine** 1 Tbsp. vanilla and espresso powder. Whisk into pastry cream along with 5 Tbsp. butter and ¼ tsp. salt. Transfer pastry cream to a bowl, press plastic wrap over surface, and chill until cold, at least 2 hours.

**For the ganache, heat** cream and corn syrup in a saucepan over medium to a simmer. Off heat, stir in 4 oz. chocolate; let stand 8 minutes, then whisk until smooth. Stir in ½ tsp. vanilla.

**To assemble, arrange** 1 cake round on a serving plate. Spread 1½ cups pastry cream over cake, leaving a ¼-inch border; arrange second cake round on top. Repeat spreading pastry cream and arranging last cake round on top. Pour ganache over top cake layer and gently spread toward edges. Let ganache set at least 30 minutes before serving.

Per serving: 557 cal; 30g total fat (15g sat); 224mg chol; 312mg sodium; 63g carb; 0g fiber; 10g protein



For cake that's both flavorful and moist, use a combination of melted butter and a neutral-flavored oil.



Whipping cold egg whites takes longer and results in less volume, but creates a more stable foam.



Slightly mound the pastry cream in the center of each layer. The weight of the cakes will evenly distribute it.



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# For a fiesta of flavors

look no further than these 7 Mexican menus.

From chimichangas to sopas and chili to tamale pie, you've easily got the classics covered.





## Jerky Chimichangas

Why do the expected when you can do the unexpected?  
With these chimichangas, jerky is no longer just a snack.

It's easy to find a chimichanga stuffed with shredded beef, chicken, or pork. But have you ever seen one stuffed with shredded beef jerky?

This surprising addition adds amazing texture and flavor — it's a mystery why others haven't caught on to this secret. Quickly heating the jerky in the oven imparts charred flavor, while also softening it, allowing

it to shred easily. It follows a classic approach after that — mix with onions, garlic, tomatoes, poblanos, and cheese, then wrap in a tortilla and fry until golden and crispy.

Serve this dynamite dish alongside a refreshing green salad with a surprise of its own — pickled cactus leaves. And a creamy sweet and tart dressing brings it all together.

### GOOD TO KNOW: Nopales

These fleshy, oval-shaped leaves are from the prickly pear cactus. Nopales range in color from pale to dark green, and have a delicate, slightly tart green bean flavor. You can buy them fresh or pickled in jars at Mexican markets.

## Beef Jerky Chimichangas

Jerky is typically made from beef that's been trimmed of fat, cut into strips, and dried. It's lean, very flavorful, and high in protein.

Makes 4 servings  
Total time: 40 minutes

### CHAR:

- 2 poblano chiles
- 4 oz. smoked beef jerky

### SAUTÉ:

- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup chopped onion
- 2 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil

### STIR IN:

- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups seeded and diced tomatoes

### DIVIDE:

- 4 flour tortillas (10-inch)
- 2 cups shredded Colby Jack cheese

### HEAT:

- 2 cups safflower or vegetable oil

**Preheat** oven to 350°.

**Char** poblanos over a gas burner (or under a broiler set on high) until blackened. Transfer poblanos to a bowl; cover with plastic wrap to steam. When cool enough to handle, peel, seed, and chop poblanos; set aside.

**Roast** jerky on a baking sheet until slightly darkened and flexible, about 5 minutes; transfer to a food processor and pulse until minced.

**Sauté** onion and garlic in olive oil in a sauté pan over medium-high heat until onion is softened, 3 minutes.

**Stir in** tomatoes and sauté until liquid thickens, 7–10 minutes, then add poblanos and jerky.

**Divide** filling among tortillas (about  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup per tortilla) then top with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cheese. Fold sides of each tortilla into center, then roll edge closest to you over the filling; continue rolling and tucking in filling until enclosed.

**Heat** safflower oil in a sauté pan over medium-high heat to 365°. Fry chimichangas, starting seam side down, until golden brown on all sides, about 10 minutes. Transfer chimichangas to a paper-towel-lined plate to drain before serving.

Per serving: 828 cal; 44g total fat (16g sat); 201mg chol; 1081mg sodium; 33g carb; 5g fiber; 75g protein



For the best texture, pulse the beef jerky *just* until it's minced so it doesn't turn into a paste.



Once the tomatoes have thickened, add the roasted poblanos and minced beef jerky.



## Nopales Salad with crema dressing

Add a briny bite and cut down on prep time by using purchased pickled nopales.

Makes 4 servings  
Total time: 15 minutes

### WHISK:

- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup white wine vinegar
- 3 Tbsp. Mexican crema or sour cream
- 1 Tbsp. minced shallots
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. Dijon mustard
- Salt and black pepper to taste

### TOSS:

- 4 cups shredded romaine lettuce
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup julienned purchased pickled nopales (cactus leaves)
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup crumbled queso fresco
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup thinly sliced red onion

**Whisk** together vinegar, crema, shallots, sugar, thyme, and Dijon for the dressing; season with salt and pepper.

**Toss** together romaine, nopales, queso fresco, and onion; drizzle with dressing.

Per serving: 95 cal; 5g total fat (3g sat); 19mg chol; 70mg sodium; 8g carb; 2g fiber; 5g protein



## Achiote Chicken

Give bland chicken breasts a Mexican upgrade with a savory achiote marinade and spicy pickled onions and jalapeños.

Sautéed chicken breasts and squash may sound mundane, but when you “pump up the volume” with Mexican flavors, you can bet you’ll eat every last bite.

A citrus-achiote paste marinade adds tons of flavor to the breasts, while also tenderizing and imparting pretty color, too. Then after cooking the chicken, turn the marinade into a sauce that’s

truly out of this world. After that, all you have to do is add sweet and spicy pickled onions and jalapeños to every bite of chicken for a flavor explosion. Your taste buds will be so happy.

Tame the flames and keep the flavor explosion going with bacon-enhanced sautéed chayote — a green, pear-shaped gourd in the same family with cucumber, melon, and squash.

### GOOD TO KNOW: Achiote Paste

Achiote paste is a mixture made from the slightly musky-flavored annatto seed and a blend of spices like oregano, cumin, clove, cinnamon, garlic, black pepper, allspice, and salt. It adds a vivid orange hue to whatever it’s added to.

## Achiote Chicken

To get this dinner ready in 45 minutes, be sure to make the pickled onions and jalapeños first, then marinate the chicken while they “pickle.”

Makes 4 servings  
Total time: 45 minutes

### FOR THE ONIONS, WHISK:

- 1/3 cup fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbsp. each sugar and kosher salt
- 1 medium red onion, thinly sliced
- 1 medium jalapeño, seeded and thinly sliced

### FOR THE MARINADE, PURÉE:

- 1/2 cup fresh orange juice
- 1/3 cup fresh lime juice
- 1 Tbsp. prepared achiote paste
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1 tsp. honey
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (5–6 oz. each)
- Salt and black pepper
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil

**For the onions, whisk** together 1/3 cup lime juice, sugar, and 1 Tbsp. salt; heat in microwave until sugar dissolves, 20 seconds. Add onion and jalapeño; let stand 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**For the marinade, purée** orange juice, 1/3 cup lime juice, achiote paste, garlic, and honey in a blender, then transfer to a bowl. Add chicken, cover, and marinate in the refrigerator 20 minutes.

**Remove** chicken from marinade, reserving marinade. Pat chicken dry and season with salt and pepper. Heat oil in a sauté pan over medium-high until shimmering. Add chicken and sauté until cooked through, about 5 minutes per side. Transfer chicken to a plate; wipe out pan.

**Add** marinade to pan, bring to a boil over high heat, then reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until slightly thickened, about 3 minutes; season with salt and pepper.

**Serve** chicken with sauce and pickled onions and jalapeños.

Per serving: 262 cal; 11g total fat (2g sat); 91mg chol; 486mg sodium; 11g carb; 1g fiber; 31g protein



For the pickled onions, whisk the sugar and salt into the lime juice until completely dissolved.



To be sure the achiote paste gets fully incorporated into the marinade, use a blender to combine it.



So the chicken doesn't just steam while it cooks, pat it dry after removing it from the marinade.



## Chayote Sauté with bacon

Sautéed squash has never tasted so good. Look for chayote at your local Mexican market.

Makes 4 servings (4 cups)  
Total time: 35 minutes

### COOK:

- 4 strips thick-sliced bacon, diced

### SAUTÉ:

- 4 cups peeled and cubed chayote squash
- 1 cup chopped red onions
- 1 Fresno chile, chopped

### ADD:

- 2 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 2 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- Salt and black pepper to taste

**Cook** bacon in a sauté pan until crisp; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate and discard all but 2 Tbsp. drippings.

**Sauté** squash in drippings over medium-high heat until tender, 15–20 minutes. Add onions and chile; sauté until softened, 3–4 minutes more.

**Add** lime juice, cilantro, and bacon; season with salt and pepper.

Per serving: 106 cal; 5g total fat (2g sat); 10mg chol; 332mg sodium; 11g carb; 3g fiber; 6g protein



## Homemade Sopes

A classic Mexican dish, sopes are perfect for pleasing picky eaters. With an array of toppings, everyone should be happy.

Keep things traditional with this recipe for from-scratch sopes. The dough is made with masa harina and water, then formed into thin shells and fried — the focus of these little pies. And it leaves the toppings and flavor combinations up to your imagination, so feel free to go wild. Here, refried beans, seasoned ground beef, and a smattering of typical taco

toppings make for a personalized meal that you won't want to share.

To really make a statement all this menu needs is a simple side. Start with good quality tomatoes — they're the main focus and essential in this dish. Then onions, fresh cilantro, and jalapeño come together for a zippy vinaigrette and one refreshingly easy and flavorful side dish.

### GOOD TO KNOW: Frying Temperature

It's important to heat your oil to 350° when frying the sopes. This ensures they'll be crispy — not soggy. If you don't have a thermometer, a dry piece of popcorn will pop between 325-350°.

## Beef Sopes

Everyone can customize their own sopes. It's even a great way to use up any leftover ingredients you might have lying around.

Makes 4 servings (12 sopes)  
Total time: 45 minutes

### WHISK:

- 2 cups masa harina
- $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp. each kosher salt and baking powder
- $1\frac{1}{2}$  cups hot water
- Vegetable oil

### SAUTÉ:

- 8 oz. ground chuck
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup minced onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. each chili powder, ground cumin, kosher salt, and minced fresh garlic
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. ground coriander

### HEAT:

- $1\frac{1}{4}$  cups canned refried beans
- Shredded iceberg lettuce, sliced black olives, seeded and diced tomatoes, diced pickled jalapeños, and crumbled queso fresco

**Whisk** together masa harina,  $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp. salt, and baking powder; stir in water. Cover dough with a kitchen towel and let rest 15 minutes.

**Divide** dough into 12 balls. Press each dough ball between two pieces of plastic wrap into a  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch-thick disc; pinch edges to create a lip.

**Heat**  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches oil in a cast-iron skillet to  $350^\circ$ . Fry discs, in batches, turning once, until golden brown and crisp on the outside, about 4 minutes. Transfer sope shells to a paper-towel-lined baking sheet; cover with a kitchen towel.

**Sauté** chuck and onion in another skillet over medium-high heat until chuck is cooked through, 5 minutes. Stir in chili powder, cumin,  $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. salt, garlic, and coriander; cook until fragrant, 1 minute.

**Heat** beans in a saucepan over low until warm. Layer beans and chuck mixture in sope shells; top with lettuce, olives, tomatoes, jalapeños, and queso fresco.

Per serving (3 sopes): 499 cal; 18g total fat (3g sat); 35mg chol; 1346mg sodium; 63g carb; 11g fiber; 25g protein



For perfectly sized sope shells that cook evenly, weigh out the dough into equal portions.



So the sopes hold the fillings, pinch the edges of the dough discs to form a rim.



## Sliced Tomatoes with jalapeño vinaigrette

A simple vinaigrette accentuates sliced tomatoes for a refreshing side.

Makes 4 servings  
Total time: 20 minutes

- 2 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 2 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1 Tbsp. white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp. honey
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tsp. kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$  tsp. black pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup minced red onion
- 2 Tbsp. minced jalapeño
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh cilantro
- 8 slices tomato

**Whisk** together lime juice, oil, vinegar, honey, salt, and pepper for the vinaigrette; toss in onion, jalapeño, and cilantro.

**Divide** tomatoes among 4 plates; top with vinaigrette.

Per serving: 93 cal; 7g total fat (1g sat); 0mg chol; 243mg sodium; 7g carb; 1g fiber; 1g protein



## Stuffed Shrimp

Not only great for a weeknight dinner, this stuffed shrimp recipe makes a stunning and impressive appetizer fit for any occasion.

These stuffed shrimp will not only make a statement on your plate, but will leave you happily satisfied.

Use extra-large shrimp to successfully hold the creamy filling in place. The bacon lends a little extra support and — of course — flavor. But so the bacon cooks completely, and to avoid overcooking the shrimp, precook the bacon just until it starts

to brown. Then, wrap the stuffed shrimp and finish cooking them under the broiler.

Add some color to your plate with a fresh slaw made with carrots, cabbage, bell peppers, and red onion. Throw in jalapeño for a little kick, then toss it all together with a citrus-cumin vinaigrette and you've got yourself an amazing meal.

### GOOD TO KNOW: Deveining Shrimp

To remove the dark, gritty “sand” vein of shrimp (known as deveining), make a shallow cut down the length of the shrimp’s back. This will expose the vein. Lift it out with the tip of a knife, then rinse the shrimp under cold water.

## Stuffed Shrimp wrapped with bacon

*Cream cheese and Monterey Jack cheese combine with Mexican flavors like cilantro, chipotle, and lime for an ultra-flavorful filling.*

Makes 4 servings  
Total time: 30 minutes

### SAUTÉ:

- 4 cloves garlic, unpeeled
- 1 tsp. vegetable oil

### COOK:

- 20 strips thin-sliced center-cut bacon

### BEAT:

- 4 oz. cream cheese, softened
- 1/2 cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 1/4 cup minced fresh cilantro
- 1/4 cup panko bread crumbs
- 1 chipotle in adobo sauce, minced
- Juice of 1 lime

### BUTTERFLY:

- 20 extra-large shrimp (16-20 count), peeled, deveined, and butterflied

**Preheat** broiler to high with rack 6 inches from element. Coat a baking sheet with nonstick spray.

**Sauté** garlic cloves in oil in a skillet over medium heat until skins are browned, 3 minutes, stirring often. When cool enough to handle, remove skins and mash garlic.

**Cook** bacon, in batches, in a sauté pan over medium heat just until beginning to brown; transfer to a paper-towel-lined plate.

**Beat** garlic, cream cheese, Monterey Jack, cilantro, panko, chipotle, and lime juice for the filling with a hand mixer until blended.

**Butterfly** shrimp and flatten where split. Mound 2–3 tsp. filling onto butterflied shrimp. Wrap each shrimp with a strip of bacon to enclose the filling; place seam side down on prepared baking sheet.

**Broil** shrimp until opaque and bacon is cooked, 7 minutes.

Per servings: 331 cal; 26g total fat (13g sat); 125mg chol; 1071mg sodium; 6g carb; 0g fiber; 21g protein



Because shrimp cook more quickly than bacon, parcook the bacon before wrapping and broiling.



To butterfly the shrimp, deepen the cut where the vein runs, but avoid slicing all the way through.



To keep the filling intact, tightly wrap stuffed shrimp with bacon, then place seam side down.



## Jalapeño Slaw

*This slaw is spicy and refreshing, making it the perfect side for the rich and creamy stuffed shrimp.*

Makes 4 servings  
Total time: 15 minutes

### WHISK:

- 3 Tbsp. fresh lime juice
- 3 Tbsp. fresh orange juice
- 3 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 tsp. sugar
- 1 tsp. ground cumin
- 1/2 tsp. each kosher salt and black pepper

### TOSS:

- 1 pkg. coleslaw mix (14 oz.)
- 1 cup sliced mini sweet peppers
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced red onion
- 1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 jalapeño, sliced

**Whisk** together lime juice, orange juice, oil, sugar, cumin, salt, and pepper for the vinaigrette.

**Toss** coleslaw mix, peppers, onion, cilantro, and jalapeño with vinaigrette; let stand 5 minutes.

Per serving: 144 cal; 11g total fat (1g sat); 0mg chol; 311mg sodium; 12g carb; 3g fiber; 2g protein



## Sopa Seca

This classic Mexican soup is a crowd pleaser. Toasted noodles soak up a flavorful broth, and a fresh relish makes a great topper.

Literally meaning “dry soup”, *sopa seca* starts off soupy and thickens as the noodles soak up the tomato-based broth. And this one has a little bit of everything, including the meat from a smoked turkey leg. It’s an essential part of this recipe because it adds a smoky touch and depth to this soup. Toasted fideo noodles are just as important, and make this dish unique.

Then, combine broth with some fire-roasted tomatoes and chipotles in adobo sauce for ample Mexican flare, and some extra heat. And, top it all off with a green bell pepper relish that’s simply pulsed in a food processor.

Finally, lighten things up — toss watercress with tangerines, radishes, and a light, lemony vinaigrette to complement the hearty soup.

### GOOD TO KNOW: Fideos

Fideos [ fih-DAY-ohs] is a type of pasta used in Mexican or Spanish cooking. It can be found as short strands or coiled bunches. You can find fideos sold with other dry pastas or in the Mexican aisle of most grocery stores.

## Turkey Sopa Seca with green bell pepper relish

Smoked turkey legs can be found in most supermarkets. You can substitute two cups chopped rotisserie chicken if you can't find a smoked turkey leg.

Makes 4 servings (6 cups)  
Total time: 50 minutes

### FOR THE SOUP, TOAST:

- 1 pkg. dry fideo noodles (6.5 oz.)

### SAUTÉ:

- 1 cup chopped onions
- 1 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 cups low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 can fire-roasted diced tomatoes (14.5 oz.)

### STIR IN:

- 1 smoked turkey leg (1 lb.), meat removed (about 2 cups)
- 1 can tomato sauce (8 oz.)
- 1 Tbsp. minced chipotle in adobo sauce
- 1 Tbsp. dried Mexican oregano
- 1 tsp. ground coriander
- Salt and black pepper to taste

### FOR THE RELISH, MINCE:

- 1 cup chopped green bell peppers
- 1/2 cup *each* chopped onion and fresh cilantro
- 1/4 cup seeded and chopped red jalapeño or Fresno chile
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh garlic
- 1 cup shredded pepper Jack cheese
- Sour cream and lime wedges

**Preheat** oven to 375°. Coat a baking sheet with nonstick spray.

**For the soup, toast** fideos on prepared baking sheet until golden brown, 4–5 minutes.

**Sauté** 1 cup onions and minced garlic in oil in a large pot over medium-high heat until softened, 2–3 minutes. Add broth and tomatoes; bring to a boil.

**Stir in** turkey, tomato sauce, chipotle, oregano, coriander, and fideos; simmer until fideos are tender, about 5 minutes. Season soup with salt and pepper.

**For the relish, mince** bell peppers, 1/2 cup onion, cilantro, jalapeño, and chopped garlic in a mini food processor, scraping down sides as needed.

**Top** soup with relish, pepper Jack, sour cream, and lime wedges.

Per serving: 625 cal; 25g total fat (10g sat); 116mg chol; 1869mg sodium; 53g carb; 5g fiber; 48g protein



Be sure to use the short-strand fideos, and toast them until evenly browned to add depth to the soup.



A mini food processor makes quick work of mincing and combining ingredients for the relish.



## Watercress Salad with tangerines

Fresh and vibrant, this salad has a bevy of tastes and textures.

Makes 4 servings (6 cups)  
Total time: 20 minutes

- 2 cups watercress, stems removed
- 1 1/2 cups fresh tangerine segments
- 1 cup fresh parsley leaves
- 1 cup fresh cilantro leaves
- 1/2 cup thinly sliced radishes
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds, toasted
- 1 Tbsp. fresh lemon zest
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- Salt and black pepper to taste

**Toss** watercress, tangerine segments, parsley, cilantro, radishes, and almonds with zest and lemon juice. Season salad with salt and pepper.

Per serving: 85 cal; 3g total fat (0g sat); 0mg chol; 25mg sodium; 14g carb; 3g fiber; 3g protein



## Chili con Carne

This recipe violates a Texan's cardinal rule for chili — it contains beans. But wherever your chili loyalties lie, this recipe is worth a try.

One must have a chili recipe in their back pocket at all times. And this recipe is the perfect one to save. A true classic, it sticks to the essentials — ground beef, chili powder, cumin, coriander, oregano, onions, beans, and tomatoes.

All this chili needs is a bit of time to simmer, and some cilantro and jalapeño at the end for freshness.

Then, all that's left to do is to ladle the chili into bowls, top with shredded cheese, toss on some minced red onion, and dinner is served.

But no chili is complete without some sort of cornbread or muffin, so bake up a batch of these creamy, corn minis. And you better set aside a few for yourself, because these little bites will be gone in no time.

### GOOD TO KNOW: Cilantro

Widely used in Caribbean, Latin, and Asian cuisines, cilantro, (also known as coriander or Chinese parsley), comes from the coriander plant. It adds a distinctive strong flavor from both the leaves and stems.

## Chili con Carne

A classic chili recipe, this will become a go-to dish for any occasion. Get the muffins in the oven before starting the chili so they have enough time to cool.

Makes 8 servings (15 cups)  
Total time: 45 minutes

### SAUTÉ:

- 3 lb. ground chuck
- 1 Tbsp. canola oil
- 3 cups diced onions
- 2 Tbsp. minced fresh garlic
- 3 Tbsp. chili powder
- 2 Tbsp. ground cumin
- 1 Tbsp. dried oregano
- 2 tsp. ground coriander
- 1/2 tsp. cayenne pepper

### STIR IN:

- 3 cups low-sodium beef broth
- 1 can crushed tomatoes (28 oz.)
- 1 Tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1 can kidney beans (15 oz.), drained and rinsed
- 1 can diced tomatoes in juice (14.5 oz.)
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh cilantro
- 1 jalapeño, minced
- Salt to taste

### GARNISH:

- Shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- Minced red onion

**Sauté** chuck in oil in a pot over medium heat until cooked through. Drain off the fat and return beef to the pot with the onions, garlic, chili powder, cumin, oregano, coriander, and cayenne. Reduce heat to medium-low and cook chuck mixture, partially covered, until onions are soft, about 10 minutes, stirring occasionally.

**Stir in** broth, crushed tomatoes, and vinegar. Bring chili to a boil over high heat, reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer 10 minutes. Add beans, diced tomatoes, cilantro, and jalapeño, and cook until heated through, about 5 minutes; season with salt.

**Garnish** chili with cheese and red onion.

Per serving: 348 cal; 10g total fat (3g sat); 90mg chol; 536mg sodium; 25g carb; 7g fiber; 41g protein



After sautéing the chuck, drain it in a colander. This will keep the chili from becoming too greasy.



The crushed tomatoes add thickness to the chili, while the diced tomatoes give it texture.



Once the chili has simmered, stir in the beans — they shouldn't cook too long or they'll turn mushy.



## Creamy Corn Muffins

Creamed corn adds a velvety texture and keeps these mini muffins moist.

Makes 18 muffins  
Total time: 1 hour

- 1/2 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tsp. sugar
- 1/2 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 can creamed corn (8.25 oz.)
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1/2 cup vegetable oil
- 2 eggs

**Preheat** oven to 400°. Coat 2 mini-muffin pans with nonstick spray and place on a baking sheet.

**Combine** cornmeal, flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt.

**Whisk** together corn, sour cream, oil, and eggs in a large bowl. Add dry ingredients and stir just until combined.

**Pour** batter into prepared pans, filling every other well so they bake evenly. Bake muffins until a toothpick inserted in the centers comes out clean, 15–20 minutes. Cool muffins in pans 5–10 minutes, then remove.

Per muffin: 127 cal; 9g total fat (2g sat); 30mg chol; 168mg sodium; 9g carb; 0g fiber; 2g protein



## Chicken Tamale Pie

This all-in-one pie is piled high with Mexican flavors and textures. It's a surefire way to satisfy even the hungriest of diners.

Here's a recipe for tamale pie that has a little bit of everything in it. From shredded chicken to tender cornbread and ooey-goey melted cheese, there's not much missing in this dish.

For a crispy, golden crust on the bottom, preheat the cast-iron skillet in the oven while you prepare the rest of the ingredients. Then, when you're ready to assemble, pour the cornbread

batter into the butter-coated hot skillet. The buttermilk cornbread soaks up the fresh tomato sauce and is topped with shredded chicken and a blend of cheeses for a heavenly, creamy finish.

A simple bean salad with radishes and corn freshens up the meal. With all the crunch and flavor, you'll find yourself reaching for more.

### GOOD TO KNOW: Cast-Iron Skillets

An indispensable piece of cookware, cast-iron gets its name from the way it's made. Molten iron is "cast" in a mold made of sand. The outcome is a skillet with a porous surface that needs to be "seasoned" before using.

## Chicken Tamale Pie

If you love tamales but don't want to mess around with corn husks and fussy assembly, this tamale baked in a skillet will be right up your alley.

Makes 6 servings (one 10-inch pie)  
Total time: 1 hour

### PULSE:

- 3 cups chopped fresh tomatoes, divided
- 1/2 cup diced onion
- 2 cloves garlic, smashed

### HEAT:

- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 2 Tbsp. chili powder
- 1 Tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 tsp. ground cumin
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth
- 2 cups shredded cooked chicken
- Salt and black pepper to taste

### COMBINE:

- 3/4 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1/2 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp. each baking powder and sugar
- 1 tsp. table salt
- 3/4 cup buttermilk
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1 egg
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels, thawed
- 1 can diced green chiles (4.5 oz.), drained
- 1 Tbsp. unsalted butter
- 2 cups shredded Colby Jack cheese

**Preheat** oven to 425°. Place a 10-inch cast-iron skillet on a baking sheet and transfer to the oven.

**Pulse** 2 cups tomatoes, onion, and garlic in a food processor until nearly puréed.

**Heat** oil in a saucepan over medium. Stir in chili powder, 1 Tbsp. flour, and cumin; cook 1 minute. Whisk in broth and tomato mixture; bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer sauce until thickened, 10 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season sauce with salt and pepper, then cool. Reserve 1/2 cup sauce, then stir in chicken and remaining 1 cup tomatoes.

**Combine** cornmeal, 1/2 cup flour, baking powder, sugar, and 1 tsp. salt.

**Whisk** together buttermilk, melted butter, and egg. Fold in dry ingredients just until combined, then stir in corn and green chiles.

**Melt** 1 Tbsp. butter in preheated skillet; carefully pour in batter and bake 20 minutes. Poke holes in cornbread, spread reserved 1/2 cup sauce over top, then top with chicken mixture. Sprinkle cheese over top and bake pie until cheese melts, 10 minutes.

Per serving: 479 cal; 22g total fat (12g sat); 122mg chol; 936mg sodium; 39g carb; 3g fiber; 30g protein



For the ideal texture, pulse the tomatoes, onions, and garlic until nearly puréed.



To prevent overmixing the cornbread batter, fold the dry ingredients into the wet.



## Pinto Bean Salad with lemon-garlic vinaigrette

To avoid bites of raw garlic in the vinaigrette, make a paste with salt by pressing and dragging it with a knife.

Makes 6 servings (about 4 cups)  
Total time: 20 minutes

- 1 can pinto beans (16 oz.), drained and rinsed
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels, thawed
- 1 cup halved and thinly sliced radishes
- 3/4 cup sliced scallions
- 1 Tbsp. chopped fresh garlic
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1 Tbsp. minced lemon zest
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tbsp. extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and black pepper to taste

**Combine** beans, corn, radishes, and scallions.

**Crush** garlic on a cutting board with 1/4 tsp. salt, then press and drag with the flat side of knife blade until a paste forms.

**Whisk** together zest, lemon juice, oil, and garlic paste; toss with bean mixture. Season salad with salt and pepper and chill until ready to serve.

Per serving: 116 cal; 3g total fat (0g sat); 0mg chol; 318mg sodium; 18g carb; 5g fiber; 5g protein

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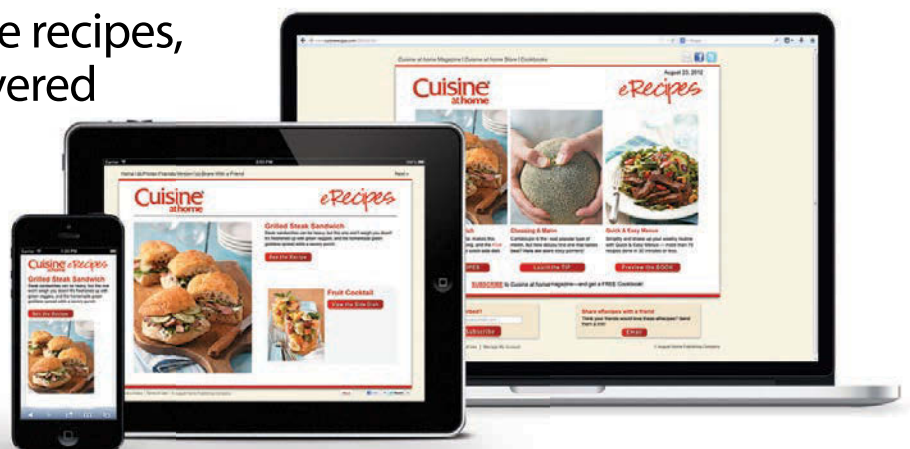
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Members can get more recipes, tips & techniques delivered to them by email each week!

*Great recipes & tips on any device!*





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## TABLE FOR TWO

### Flavor is served

Autumnal flavors shine in these two perfectly portioned pork tenderloin menus. With an Italian-inspired dish and a bold Greek stew, you might want to double these recipes.

## THE FIGS HAVE IT

### Oh how sweet

No need to grab the packaged cookies. These tender, chewy treats are hands-down all you could ever want in a big fig bar. Pinky promise.



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## FALL FEST

### Easy entertaining

With simple, seasonal recipes it's time to gather your friends and family. From stew to scones, and slaw to tarts, this menu gives you every reason to celebrate.



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