

2025

SEASONED to SHARE



Gladys McDaniel

Cheese Straws

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:
JEREMY GLUNT,
Deputy Chief Executive

SERVINGS: 1 batch

These are fast, delicious, not super healthy (GO MARGARINE!), and they work nicely as gifts or potluck contributions. Holiday perfection and a family favorite.

INGREDIENTS:

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup margarine
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sharp cheddar cheese, grated
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup parmesan cheese
1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups plain flour
1 teaspoon salt
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon paprika

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- Mix cheese and margarine together lightly.
- Add in flour, salt, and paprika.
- Shape into straws.
- Bake 10-12 minutes.
- Enjoy!

Stuffed Mushrooms with Walnuts

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:
EMILY NORRIS,
Marketing Manager

These mushrooms are so easy to make and absolutely delicious. Perfect as a savory appetizer or a flavorful side, they're a delicious addition to any meal.

SERVINGS: ~20



INGREDIENTS:

1 pound fresh white button mushrooms
1 (8 ounce) soft onion and chive cream
cheese
2 tablespoon chopped walnuts
¼ teaspoon dried basil
¼ teaspoon dried parsley

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
- Clean the mushrooms and gently remove the stems.
- In a bowl, combine the cream cheese, basil, and parsley. Optional: chop the mushroom stems and fold them into the mixture for extra flavor.
- Spoon the cheese mixture into each mushroom cap, filling generously.
- Top each stuffed mushroom with a sprinkle of chopped walnuts.
- Bake for 15–20 minutes, or until the mushrooms are tender and the tops are lightly golden.
- Serve warm and enjoy!

Homemade Ginger Ale

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

CAITLIN MACKEY,

Director, Engagement & Experience

SERVINGS: 1

When your body needs a break from all the holiday treats, this homemade ginger ale is a pinch to make and soothes a holiday-heavy stomach!

INGREDIENTS:

4 ounces fresh ginger
1½ cups water
½ cup sugar
½ cup honey
Pinch table salt
¼ cup lime juice (about 2 limes)
¾ cup cold plain seltzer water

INSTRUCTIONS:

- For the ginger syrup: Slice ginger crosswise ¼ inch thick to produce about 1 cup of sliced ginger.
- In medium saucepan, combine sliced ginger, water, sugar, honey, and salt. Bring to simmer over medium heat.
- Reduce heat to medium-low and cook, stirring occasionally with wooden spoon, for 15 minutes. Remove from heat.
- Stir in lime juice. Let mixture cool completely, about 30 minutes.
- Line a fine-mesh strainer with triple layer of cheesecloth. Place strainer over medium bowl. Pour cooled ginger mixture through strainer into bowl, pressing gently on ginger pieces to extract as much liquid as possible. Discard cheesecloth and ginger pieces. Pour strained ginger syrup into jar with tight-fitting lid. (Ginger syrup can be refrigerated for up to 1 week.)
- To make one ginger ale: Stir or shake ginger syrup to recombine. Place ice in glass. Pour cold seltzer into glass over ice. Add ¼ cup ginger syrup to seltzer. Stir gently to combine.

Slow Cooker Chicken Taco Soup

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:
SUSAN LANDIS,
Chief Executive Officer

SERVINGS: 6

When colder weather appears, this slow cooker recipe is on repeat in the Landis-Garcia household. And it has beer in it! What could be better?

INGREDIENTS:

1 onion, chopped
2-3 cans of black beans (or use whatever beans you like!)
1 8-ounce can of tomato sauce
1 12 fluid ounce can or bottle of beer
2 10-ounce cans of diced tomatoes with green chilis
4 whole skinless chicken breasts (or fewer if you want less chicken and more soup!)
Taco seasoning (up to you how spicy you want it)
Optional: 1 15-ounce kernel corn (or Trader Joe's frozen southwestern corn)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Place the onion, beans, tomato sauce, beer, diced tomatoes, and taco seasoning in a slow cooker.
- Lay chicken breasts on top and press down slightly until just covered by the ingredients.
- Set slow cooker for low heat, cover, and cook for 5 hours. (I am impatient and routinely put this together too late in the day, so don't hesitate to crank it to high for faster cooking.)
- Remove chicken, check it's cooked, shred according to how you like it, and return to the slow cooker.
- Let warm or cook more if needed.
- Ladle into bowls and top with shredded Cheddar cheese, sour cream and/or avocado.
- Top with crushed tortilla chips.

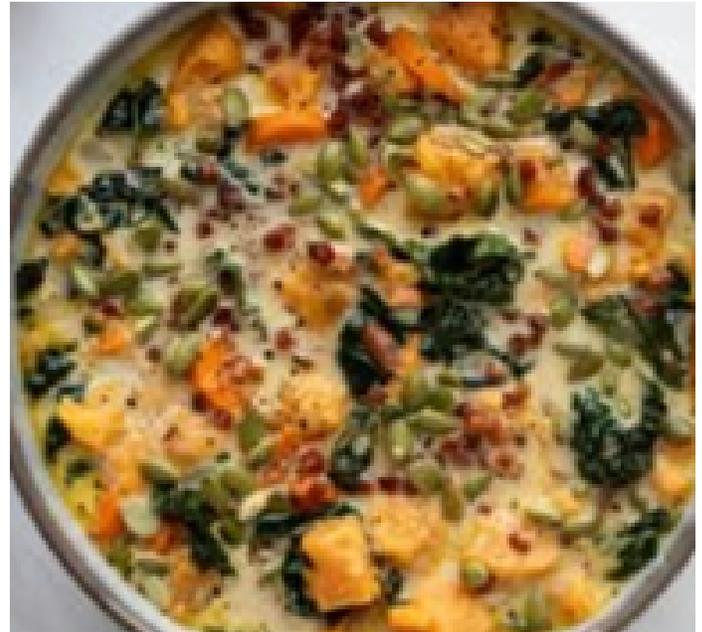
Sweet Potato Chowder with Pancetta

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

KELSEY FREDKIN,
Senior Manager, Engagement &
Experience

An autumn staple in our house! Served with warm bread and makes four big bowls.

SERVINGS: 4



INGREDIENTS:

4 ounces pancetta, diced
1 tablespoon unsalted butter
1 sweet onion, diced
3 garlic cloves, minced
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon pepper
¼ teaspoon ground sage
¼ teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg
½ cup chopped carrots
3 cups chopped sweet potato, about 1 inch in size
5 cups reduced-sodium chicken stock
⅓ cup cream, half and half or coconut cream/milk
2 cups chopped Tuscan kale or spinach

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Heat a large pot over medium-low heat and add the pancetta. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the fat is rendered and the pancetta is crisp, about 6 to 8 minutes. Remove the pancetta with a slotted spoon and place it on a paper towel lined plate to remove any excess grease.
- Keep the pot on medium low heat and add the butter. Stir in the onion, garlic, salt, pepper and sage. Stir in the fresh nutmeg. Cook, stirring occasionally, until the onions softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in the carrots and sweet potato, tossing everything to combine.
- Pour in the chicken stock and bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce it to a simmer and cook for 10 minutes. Cover and cook for an additional 10 to 15 minutes, or until the sweet potatoes cubes soften. Stir in the cream/halfhalf/etc. Taste the soup and season with additional salt or pepper if needed but remember we will add the salty pancetta back on top too!
- A few minutes before serving, stir in the kale/spinach. Serve it almost immediately,
- Serve with the pancetta for topping.

Winter Minestrone & Garlic Bruschetta Soup

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:
AME PETRY,
Senior Manager, Events

SERVINGS: 6-8

INGREDIENTS:

Olive oil
4 ounces pancetta, ½-inch-diced, or 4 ounces of bacon
1½ cups chopped yellow onions
2 cups (½-inch) diced carrots (3 carrots)
2 cups (½-inch) diced celery (3 stalks)
2½ cups (½-inch) diced peeled butternut squash
1½ tablespoons minced garlic (4 cloves)
2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme leaves
26 ounces canned or boxed chopped tomatoes, such as Pomi
6 to 8 cups chicken stock, preferably homemade
1 bay leaf
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
1 (15-ounce) can cannellini beans, drained and rinsed
2 cups cooked small pasta, such as tubetti, or substitute with an additional can (15-ounce) of cannellini beans
8 to 10 ounces fresh baby spinach leaves
½ cup good dry white wine
2 tablespoons store-bought pesto. If reheating, store the pesto separately and only add it just before eating.
Freshly grated Parmesan cheese, for serving

I love making this soup from the Barefoot Contessa, especially during late fall and winter. Her winter recipes are endlessly cozy and I cannot recommend them enough. This recipe in particular reheats well so I make a large batch and enjoy it for several meals. Pesto makes this soup irresistible, so I urge you not to skip that ingredient! The original recipe includes pasta, but I usually make it with extra beans instead. I included both options here.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Heat 2 tablespoons of olive oil over medium heat in a large, heavy pot or Dutch oven. Add the pancetta (or bacon) and cook over medium-low heat for 6 to 8 minutes, stirring occasionally, until lightly browned. Add the onions, carrots, celery, squash, garlic, and thyme and cook over medium heat, stirring occasionally, for 8 to 10 minutes, until the vegetables begin to soften.
- Add the tomatoes, 6 cups of the chicken stock, the bay leaf, 1 tablespoon salt, and 1-1/2 teaspoons pepper to the pot. Bring to a boil, then lower the heat and simmer uncovered for 30 minutes, until the vegetables are tender.
- Discard the bay leaf. Add the beans and cooked pasta (if including) and heat through. The soup should be quite thick but if it's too thick, add more chicken stock. Just before serving, reheat the soup, add the spinach, and toss with 2 big spoons (like tossing a salad). Cook just until the leaves are wilted. Stir in the white wine and pesto. Depending on the saltiness of the chicken stock, add another teaspoon or two of salt to taste. Serve large shallow bowls of soup with a bruschetta on top. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese, drizzle with olive oil, and serve hot.

French Toast Casserole

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

CAITLIN MACKEY,

Director, Engagement & Experience

SERVINGS: 1 casserole

This decadent casserole (don't dare skimp on the butter!) borrowed from an old southern tv personality, has been a staple in our house at holiday time for years. It's a perfect to make ahead, feed a crowd – and then take a nap! Or use the sugar rush to fuel last minute holiday shopping!

INGREDIENTS:

French Toast:

1 (13 -16 ounce) French bread
8 large eggs
2 cups half-and-half
1 cup milk
2 tablespoons granulated sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 dash salt

Praline Topping:

½ lb butter
1 cup packed light brown sugar
1 cup chopped pecans
2 tablespoons light corn syrup
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Slice French bread into 20 slices, 1-inch each. Arrange slices in a generously buttered 9 by 13-inch baking dish in 2 rows, overlapping the slices.
- In a large bowl, combine the eggs, half-and-half, milk, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt and beat until blended but not too bubbly.
- Pour mixture over the bread slices, making sure all are covered evenly with the milk-egg mixture. Spoon some of the mixture in between the slices. Cover with foil and refrigerate overnight.
- The next day, preheat oven to 350 degrees F.

For the Praline Topping:

- Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl and blend well. Makes enough for Baked French Toast Casserole.
- Spread Praline Topping evenly over the bread and bake for 40 minutes, until puffed and lightly golden.

Chicken Buffalo

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

GARY CRAMER

Managing Editor

For full disclosure, this is my shameless attempt to partially recreate and partially put my own spin on a dish called Chicken Alamo, which I have only ever seen on the menu of Hard Times Chili, a small chain of D.C.-area restaurants that got its start in Alexandria, Va. I became pretty addicted to this stuff when I lived in Virginia—especially in the last half-dozen years when I lived just down the road from a Hard Times in Springfield.



SERVINGS: 1-2

INGREDIENTS:

Spicy Chicken:

Chicken breast tenderloins or chicken fajita-style strips

Salt, pepper, garlic powder, cayenne pepper

Hot sauce of your choice (Frank's Red Hot, for example)

Butter

Brown Sugar

Optional: Add smoked paprika or chili powder for a bit of smokiness.

Spaghetti and Topping:

Cooked spaghetti

Parmesan peppercorn dressing

Shaved parmesan cheese

Diced tomatoes

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat grill or grill pan to medium high heat. Place the chicken on a baking sheet or large plate.
- Mix a teaspoon of salt, pepper, teaspoon of garlic powder, and cayenne in a small bowl. Season the chicken on all sides with the seasoning blend.
- Next, melt the butter in the microwave or on the stove top. While the butter is still warm, stir in the hot sauce and brown sugar.
- Set this sauce to the side with a basting brush.
- Once the grill or grill pan is warm, cook the chicken for 2 minutes before flipping.
- Next, flip the chicken and brush the top with the buffalo sauce. Close the grill or grill pan and cook for 2 minutes.
- Repeat the process of flipping, basting, and grilling for 2 minutes until you have cooked the chicken tenders for 8 minutes total.
- Meanwhile, cook the spaghetti to your liking, drain, and mix it with as much of the parmesan peppercorn dressing as you think makes sense. Top this with the cooked chicken, shaved parmesan cheese, and diced tomatoes. You may wish to sprinkle some more chili powder on top.
- To even up this dish's temperature all around and melt the cheese for a real touch of class, you can bake the combined elements in the oven or microwave to your liking.

Chicken Lettuce Wraps

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

MELODIE WALKER EDMUND

Director, Database Administration

SERVINGS: 4

INGREDIENTS:

1.5 pounds lean ground Turkey
½ cup sweet onions minced
3-4 cloves garlic minced
1 cup shiitake mushrooms
½ cup water chestnuts canned
1 Green Pepper Diced
vegetable oil
salt and pepper to taste
butter lettuce or romaine lettuce

Sauce

1 ½ tablespoons soy sauce
2 tablespoons hoisin sauce
2 teaspoons rice wine
1 tablespoon sesame oil
1 tablespoon sugar
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon corn starch
2 tablespoons water
½ teaspoon dark soy sauce optional

Garnish

green onions sliced
red pepper flakes optional

INSTRUCTIONS:

- If you are using dried shiitake mushrooms, soak them in warm water for 10-15 minutes, or until they are soft. Then cut them into small pieces.
- Drain water from canned water chestnuts and dice water chestnuts into small pieces.
- Dice green Onion
- Mince onions and garlic.
- Slice green onions (for garnish)
- Combine all the sauce ingredients in a small bowl and mix well.
- Add vegetable oil to a large skillet and heat the skillet. Add green pepper, onions, and garlic, sauté until fragrant. Do not brown or burn garlic and onions.
- Set aside in a bowl.
- Add ground turkey to the skillet, season with a few pinches of salt and pepper.
- Once ground turkey is cooked, add the green peppers, onions, and garlic back in, then add shiitake mushrooms, water chestnuts, and sauce. Stir to combine and bring to a boil.
- Cook for another 1-2 minutes, or until the liquid thickens. Remove from heat.
- Fill lettuce with filling. Garnish with green onions and red pepper flakes (optional).
- Serve and enjoy!

Spaghetti Carbonara

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

BILL BEYER,

Vice President, Business Development

SERVINGS: 1-2

INGREDIENTS:

7 ounces spaghetti
2 teaspoons olive oil
4 ounces guanciale or pancetta in one piece
¼ cup dry white vermouth or wine
1 egg yolk
1 whole egg
¼ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese
A grind of black pepper
A grating of fresh nutmeg
4 teaspoons unsalted butter



INSTRUCTIONS:

- Put water on for the pasta and when it's boiling add a decent amount of salt and then, when it's boiling again, the spaghetti. Italians say the water pasta cooks in should be as salty as the Mediterranean.
- Cut the rind off the pancetta (or guanciale if you've been able to get it) and put the rind in the pan with the oil on medium to high while you dice the rest of the pancetta. Then add it and fry for about 5 minutes, maybe more, until it is beginning to crisp. Remove the rind (I like to eat it, but you may not feel the same way.) Throw in the vermouth and let it bubble away for about 3 minutes until you have about 2 teaspoons or so of syrupy wine-infused bacon fat. Remove from the heat.
- For the egg mixture, simply beat the yolk, the whole egg, the cheese, the pepper and the nutmeg (the pancetta and the cheese should provide enough salt) together with a fork. When the pasta's ready, quickly put the bacon pan back on the heat, adding the butter as you do so. Remove a cupful of pasta-cooking water and then drain the spaghetti and tip it into the pancetta pan. Mix it well together, then turn off the heat (take the pan away from the hob if your stove's electric).
- Pour the egg mixture over the bacony pasta and quickly and thoroughly turn the pasta so that it's all covered in the sauce. Whatever you do, don't turn the heat back on or you'll have scrambled eggs; in time, the hot pasta along with the residual heat of the pan will set the eggs to form a thickly creamy sauce that binds and clings lightly to each strand of pasta. Add a tablespoon or so, going gently, of the pasta cooking water as you toss it all together. This will help make the sauce creamier.

Dill Pickle Pasta Salad

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

KARA BASTARACHE,

Senior Manager, Workforce Development

SERVINGS: 4

INGREDIENTS:

Dressing:

1 cup mayonnaise
1/2 cup sour cream
1/4 cup pickle juice (from the jar)
1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper
1/2 teaspoon salt

Pasta Salad:

1 pound corkscrew pasta or other short pasta
2 1/2 cups diced dill pickles, plus extra for garnish
2 cups diced cheddar cheese
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, plus extra for garnish

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Stir together the mayonnaise, sour cream, pickle juice, black pepper, and salt. Set aside.
- Cook the pasta according to package directions. Drain, rinse with cold water, drain again, and let sit for 5 minutes.
- In a large bowl, combine the pasta, diced pickles, cheddar cheese, and fresh dill.
- Pour the dressing over the top and mix until everything is coated.
- Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour before serving. Garnish with extra pickles and dill.

Golden Cornbread with Whipped Honey Butter

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

LISA TOWNSEND,

Director, Marketing & Communications

This cornbread is dressed for the occasion—baked in a turkey mold and paired with whipped honey butter. Your guests will gobble up this cornbread with its soft crumb and mild sweetness. If you don't have a turkey mold, it bakes perfectly in an 8"x8" pan.



SERVINGS: 9

INGREDIENTS:

Cornbread:

½ cup melted butter
2 eggs
1 cup buttermilk
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 cup cornmeal
1 cup flour

Honey Butter:

1/2 cup unsalted butter, softened
3 tablespoons high-quality honey (hot honey is a great alternate)
1/4 teaspoon sea salt (or ½ tsp diamond crystal kosher salt)
1/4 teaspoons cinnamon (optional)

Notes: Store in the fridge for up to a month. Bring to room temperature before serving. If you want to double the recipe for a larger crowd, use a 9x13 pan.

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 375 and grease an 8x8 pan (or a turkey cornbread mold).
- Whisk the eggs and buttermilk in a medium bowl.
- Mix the dry ingredients in a large bowl.
- Add the wet ingredients to the dry and stir until just combined. Then, mix in the melted butter. Don't over stir, just mix until everything is combined.
- Pour into your prepared pan and bake for 30 minutes.
- Let cool in the pan, then cut and slather with honey butter.

Honey Butter:

- Place butter and salt in mixing bowl and whip until light and airy, 30-60 seconds.
- Wipe down the sides of the bowl.
- Add half the honey and all the cinnamon, if using. Whip until fluffy and well aerated, 60-90 seconds.
- Scrape down the bowl again.
- Add the remaining honey and repeat; ensure the honey is evenly distributed with no streaks remaining.

Grandmother Lucy's Bread Stuffing

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

JEN MILAN

Manager, Certification

While cornbread stuffing is a favorite in the South, my Grandmother Lucy always made her signature "bread cube stuffing," and it became a family tradition. All of us grandkids would pitch in to help, which made it even more special.

This recipe scales up beautifully for a crowd—just remember to allow extra cooking time. And if you're like my Uncle Tom, who believed poultry seasoning should be its own food group, feel free to season to taste! That's what makes it yours!



INSTRUCTIONS:

- Gather all ingredients.
- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
- Melt butter in a large skillet over medium-high heat.
- Cook celery and onion in butter until softened, 5 to 10 minutes. You can season the veggies a bit too if you like.
- Place bread cubes in a large bowl. Season with salt, pepper, sage, thyme, and poultry seasoning.
- Add cooked onion-celery mixture and egg to bread cubes; mix just until combined.
- Pour bread mixture into a large casserole dish; cover the dish with aluminum foil.
- Bake in the preheated oven until heated through and golden on top, about 1 hour. You can remove the foil towards the end of cooking if you want a "crusty" top.

SERVINGS: 8-10

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup butter
1 ½ cups chopped celery with leaves
¾ cup chopped onion
1 egg, beaten
9 cups bread cubes (a bit stale or cook to dry out)
2 teaspoons salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
½ teaspoon sage, ground or fresh
1 teaspoon thyme, ground or fresh
1 tablespoon poultry seasoning, or to taste

Warm Potato Salad with Goat Cheese

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

CHRSTY HERZ,

Senior Director, Governance &
Operations

Use Yukon Golds, fingerlings, or red bliss potatoes for this warm, creamy salad. The goat cheese melts into the dressing when you toss it with the potatoes.



SERVINGS: 6

INGREDIENTS:

Dressing:

1 tablespoon white wine vinegar or sherry vinegar
1 tablespoon freshly squeezed lemon juice
Salt to taste
1 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 small or medium garlic clove, minced or pureed
1/3 cup extra virgin olive oil, or for a low-fat dressing, use 1/4 cup low-fat yogurt or buttermilk and 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Salad:

1 1/2 pounds potatoes (Yukon gold, fingerling, or red bliss)
Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
2 to 4 tablespoons finely chopped red onion (to taste), rinsed with cold water and drained
2 tablespoons chopped flat-leaf parsley
2 ounces soft goat cheese
2 to 3 sage leaves, cut into thin slivers (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Whisk together the lemon juice, vinegar, mustard, salt, pepper, and garlic.
- Whisk in the olive oil (or yogurt and olive oil).
- Taste and adjust seasonings.
- Set aside.
- Scrub the potatoes and cut into 3/4 inch dice if large.
- Steam above 1 inch of boiling water until tender, but not mushy, about 10-12 minutes.
- Remove from the heat and toss while hot in a bowl with salt, pepper, onions, parsley, goat cheese, and dressing.
- Sprinkle the sage over the top and serve.

Bourbon Pecan Pie

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

MICHELE NOLEN,

Senior Manager, Sales Enablement

My family has made this easy, classic pie every holiday season for over a decade. And premade pie shells come in packs of two, so we never make just one!

My husband, the head chef, figured out a way to make these pies even better by soaking some ingredients up front. And of course, you can choose to decrease – or increase – the bourbon quotient depending on the audience.



SERVINGS: 6

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup brown sugar
1 ½ cups pecan halves
½ cup dark corn syrup
2 tablespoons bourbon
3 tablespoons melted butter
3 large beaten eggs
1 (9 inch) unbaked deep dish pie shell

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.
- In a medium bowl, stir together the brown sugar, pecans, corn syrup, and bourbon. Let that mixture soak for 1-2 hours.
- Add the melted butter and stir a bunch so the butter is not hot.
- Add the eggs and stir until all ingredients are combined.
- Pour mixture into an unbaked pie shell and place on a heavy-duty cookie sheet.
- Bake for 10 minutes. Lower the oven temperature to 350 °F, and continue to bake for an additional 25 minutes, or until pie is set.
- Remove from oven and cool on a wire rack.

Brown Sugar Cinnamon Bundt Coffee Cake

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

MARK LAMONT,

Director, Membership & Customer Operations

Coffee cake is one of my favorite cakes to make, serve, and eat! It took me a while to find the right one and this one is the best crowd pleaser. The outer cinnamon sugar crust and the inner brown sugar swirl makes this cake a truly sweet winner!!!



SERVINGS: 1 Cake

INGREDIENTS:

Cake:

1 box cake mix white
3-ounce pudding French vanilla, instant
4 large eggs
1 cup of water
½ cup oil

Brown Sugar Swirl:

½ cup brown sugar
¼ cup butter cold, cut in cubes
⅓ cup flour

Pan Dusting:

1 teaspoon cinnamon
2 tablespoons cinnamon sugar

Glaze Topping (optional):

¼ cup powdered sugar
2-3 tablespoons cream, or whole milk
½ teaspoon vanilla

INSTRUCTIONS:

Cake:

- In a bowl, mix the brown sugar, butter, flour, and cinnamon. Set aside in the fridge.
- Heat the oven to 375 degrees F.
- Spray a bundt pan with nonstick spray.
- Sprinkle the Cinnamon Sugar in the pan, coat evenly all sides and center, and set aside.
- In a mixing bowl, stir together the cake mix and pudding powder.
- Add remaining ingredients and mix well. Pour half into the bundt pan. Mix with a hand mixer until smooth.
- Add half the batter to the bundt pan.
- Get the brown sugar butter swirl mixture from the fridge.
- Take clumps of the brown sugar butter mixture and drop evenly on the batter in the bundt.
- Add the rest of the batter on top and bake for 35-40 minutes.
- Allow it to cool and turn out on a platter to eat.

Glaze Topping:

- Combine the powdered sugar, and milk, and vanilla extract in a small bowl. Check the consistency of the icing. If it is too thick, add 1/2 tsp of cream at a time till you get to your desired consistency.
- Whisk until smooth and drizzle over cooled cake.

Cream Cheese Filled Blueberry Lemon Bread

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

EMILY NORRIS,
Marketing Manager

We can't get enough of lemon in this house, so this blueberry lemon bread is a family favorite. Since I'm not into sweet breakfasts, we usually enjoy it as a dessert.



SERVINGS: 12

INGREDIENTS:

Bread and Cream Cheese Layer:

¼ cup canola oil
1 cup sugar (200g)
2 large eggs
¾ cup plain 0% Greek yogurt
teaspoon vanilla
¼ cup lemon juice (1 lemon)
1 ½ cups all purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon salt
zest of 2 lemons (or 3, if you like it tangy)
1 cup fresh or frozen blueberries
(*if using frozen blueberries, toss with 1 tablespoon flour before adding to batter)
oz cream cheese ½ package
¼ cup sugar 50g
1 egg white

Glaze (optional):

1/2 cup powdered icing sugar
1-2 tablespoons lemon juice

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 350 degrees F and lightly grease an 8×4" (or 9×5" — see note above) loaf pan (I recommend glass or silicone as it will darken more quickly in a non stick pan).
- In a large bowl whisk together oil and sugar. Add eggs, yogurt, vanilla and juice and whisk until smooth.
- Add flour, baking powder, salt and lemon zest and stir just until combined. Fold in blueberries.
- Make the cream cheese layer: in a medium bowl, beat cream cheese, sugar and egg white with an electric mixer until smooth.
- Pour ⅔ of your bread batter into prepared loaf pan. Top with all of cream cheese mixture and spread evenly. Top with remaining ⅓ bread batter and smooth the top.
- Bake at 350 degrees F for 60-70 minutes, covering loosely with foil after 30 minutes or when top is golden, until a toothpick in the bread comes out clean or with moist crumbs. Note that the cream cheese will set as it cools.
- Cool to room temperature before slicing and serving. Store leftovers in the fridge for up to 4-5 days.

Glaze:

- Gradually stir lemon juice into powdered icing sugar until desired consistency is reached — you may not need all of the lemon juice!
- Drizzle over loaf before serving.

Crustless Cranberry Pie

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:
SARA HUGHES,
Senior Manager, Learning
Development & Design



SERVINGS: 1 pie

This Crustless Cranberry Pie is a festive favorite—easy to make, bursting with tart cranberries, and perfect for holiday gatherings. Bonus: it freezes beautifully, so you can bake ahead and enjoy a slice of homemade goodness anytime!

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup white sugar
¼ teaspoon salt
2 cups fresh cranberries
½ cup chopped walnuts
½ cup butter, melted
2 large eggs, beaten
1 teaspoon almond extract

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Grease a 9-inch pie pan.
- Combine flour, sugar, and salt in a bowl. Add cranberries and walnuts and toss to coat. Stir in butter, eggs, and almond extract.
- Spread the batter into the prepared pan. Bake in the preheated oven until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean, about 40 minutes.

Flan de Queso

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:
STEVEN GONZALEZ,
Director, Certification

SERVINGS: 8

Flan is a silky, caramel-topped custard dessert that's basically what happens when eggs, milk, and sugar decide to throw a party in your mouth. If you're a fan of cheesecake, you'll love this Flan de Queso recipe!

INGREDIENTS:

Caramel:

1 cup granulated sugar
¼ cup water

Flan:

1 (12 ounce) can evaporated milk
1 (14 ounce) can sweetened condensed milk
4 ounces cream cheese (optional, for a creamier texture)
4 large eggs (5 large eggs if excluding cream cheese)
1 tablespoon vanilla extract

INSTRUCTIONS:

- In a saucepan over medium heat, combine sugar and water.
- Cook without stirring until the sugar melts and turns a deep golden color (about 8–10 minutes).
- Immediately pour the caramel into a round 9-inch cake pan or flan mold, swirling to coat the bottom evenly. Set aside to cool and harden.
- In a blender, combine evaporated milk, sweetened condensed milk, eggs, vanilla, and cream cheese (if using).
- Blend until smooth and fully combined.
- Pour the flan mixture over the hardened caramel in the pan.
- Place the flan pan in a larger baking dish and fill the outer dish with hot water (about halfway up the sides) to create a water bath.
- Bake at 350°F (175°C) for about 1 hour, or until the center is set and a knife inserted comes out clean.
- Remove from oven and let cool to room temperature.
- Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight.
- To serve, run a knife around the edges and invert onto a serving plate.

No-Bake Cookies and Cream Bars

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

KELSEY FREDKIN,

Senior Manager, Engagement & Experience

Super easy and delicious! Tip: grease your hands when making this! Use a little softened butter or cooking spray on your hands to press warm treats into pan. Prevents it sticking to your hands.



SERVINGS: 4

INGREDIENTS:

One 16 ounce package of Oreos (I use double-stuffed)
5 cups Large Marshmallows or 7 cups mini marshmallows
4 tablespoons butter or 6 tablespoons if using mini marshmallows

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Place Oreos in food processor and pulse until ground. Or put in a ziplock bag and crush with rolling pin
- Melt marshmallows and butter in microwave in a large heat proof bowl until puffed, about 1 1/2- 2 minutes. If using the stovetop method to melt your marshmallows, place butter into large pot over medium heat to melt.
- Stir in marshmallows until melted.
- Remove from heat and pour in ground Oreo Cookies.
- Stir to combine, then transfer to a parchment lined or greased 8×8 inch baking pan.
- Let set up for 10 minutes. Use plastic knife to cut bars into squares to prevent sticking.

Joy's Easy Banana Bread

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

MARIUS CROOK,

Senior Manager, Learning Technology

This banana bread is quick and easy to prepare, and everyone always comes back for seconds!



SERVINGS: 1 loaf

INGREDIENTS:

3 ripe bananas, mashed
1 cup white sugar
1 egg
¼ cup melted butter
1 ½ cups all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon salt

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Gather all ingredients. Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F. Grease a 9x5-inch loaf pan.
- Combine bananas, sugar, egg, and butter together in a bowl. Mix flour and baking soda together in a separate bowl; stir into the banana mixture until the batter is just mixed.
- Stir in salt; pour batter into the prepared loaf pan.
- Bake in the preheated oven until a toothpick inserted in the center of the bread comes out clean, about 1 hour.
- Enjoy!

Peppermint Meringue Cookies

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

LISA TOWNSEND,

Director, Marketing and Communications

Crisp, sweet, and swirled with peppermint cheer—these meringues are the ultimate way to give those leftover egg whites in your kitchen a chance to shine. They are great for gifting, nibbling, or adding a pop of holiday magic to your dessert table.



SERVINGS: 36

INGREDIENTS:

3 large egg whites

Pinch fine salt

1/4 teaspoon cream of tartar

3/4 cup superfine sugar

1/4 to 1/2 teaspoon peppermint extract

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Position oven racks in the top and bottom thirds of the oven and preheat to 250 degrees F. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
- Beat the egg whites and salt with an electric mixer on medium-high speed in a large bowl until foamy. Add the cream of tartar and continue to beat until soft peaks form. While beating, add the sugar 1 tablespoon at a time. Continue to beat until stiff peaks form. Beat in the peppermint.
- Fold the top of a pastry bag fitted with a round tip over and down a few inches. Fill the bag with the meringue.
- Pipe 1-inch-diameter mounds of meringue spaced 1 inch apart onto the prepared baking sheets.
- Bake until the meringues are no longer glossy and feel light and dry when picked up, about 1 hour. Open the oven for a few minutes, then turn it off and shut the door. Leave the meringues in the oven until they are completely dry inside, about 2 hours.

Note: The meringues can be stored in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 days.

Pound Cake

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:

FAITH THOMAS,

Manager, Learning Strategy & Delivery

Buttery, vanilla-forward pound cake with a tight, velvety crumb. The sour cream keeps it crazy-moist without making it heavy. Perfect plain, dusted with powdered sugar, or with berries and whipped cream.



SERVINGS: 12

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound unsalted butter, room temp
3 cups granulated sugar
6 large eggs, room temp
2 tablespoons vanilla extract
1 (8-ounce) container sour cream, room temp
3 cups all-purpose flour
(Optional but recommended: ½ teaspoon fine salt to balance sweetness)

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Preheat oven to 325 degrees F.
- Generously grease and flour the Bundt pan (get into every groove) or spray with baker's spray.
- Beat butter and sugar on medium-high until very pale and fluffy, 4–6 minutes. Don't rush—this is your lift since there's no baking powder.
- Beat in eggs one at a time, about 20–30 seconds each, scraping the bowl as needed until fully emulsified.
- Mix in vanilla (and salt, if using).
- With the mixer on low, mix in flour in 3 additions, alternating with the sour cream in 2 additions (flour → sour cream → flour → sour cream → flour). Start and end with flour. Stop as soon as it's combined—don't overmix.
- Give the batter a final gentle fold with a spatula to catch any pockets.
- Scrape into the prepared pan, smooth the top, and tap the pan 2–3 times on the counter to release air bubbles.
- Bake for 75–90 minutes (Bundt) or 60–70 minutes (loaves), until a skewer comes out with a few moist crumbs and the top springs back.
- Cool in pan. Let rest 15 minutes in the pan—this sets the crumb so it won't tear.
- Turn out. Invert onto a rack; lift the pan off. Cool completely before slicing (at least 1 hour).
- Dust with powdered sugar or brush with a quick vanilla syrup (optional).

Russian Tea Cakes

STAFF CONTRIBUTOR:
MARIAN VALIA,
Chief Learning Officer

Each year, our family bakes Russian tea cakes. We give them a personal twist by shaping them into delicate half moons.



SERVINGS: 36

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup unsalted butter, softened
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
6 tablespoons powdered sugar
1 cup finely chopped walnuts
1/3 cup powdered sugar, or more as needed

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Gather all ingredients.
- Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
- Cream butter and vanilla together in a medium bowl with an electric mixer until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes.
- Whisk flour and 6 tablespoons powdered sugar together in a separate bowl. Add to the butter mixture and stir until just blended. Add walnuts and mix until incorporated; the mixture may be crumbly.
- Take small scoops of dough and roll between your hands into 1-inch balls. Place balls 2 inches apart on ungreased cookie sheets.
- Bake in the preheated oven until edges are just turning golden, about 12 minutes.
- Remove from the oven and transfer to a wire rack to cool for 15 minutes.
- Place the remaining 1/3 cup powdered sugar in a small bowl. Roll cooled cookies in the powdered sugar once or twice.
- Enjoy!