

Two Sisters' Recipe Collection

Volume Three

Jessica and Sarah Ryder (December 2007)

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Breakfast / Breads

Apricot Bread

INGREDIENTS:

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup dried apricots
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar
2 tablespoons olive or coconut oil
1 egg
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup orange juice
1 cup unbleached white flour
1 cup whole wheat pastry flour
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons baking powder
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon baking soda
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup finely chopped walnuts

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Butter a 9-inch loaf pan and set aside. Soak apricots for 20 minutes in hot water to cover. If desired, soak the apricots in rum or bourbon instead of water.

Drain and chop apricots into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces. Set aside.

Beat the sugar, oil and egg together in a mixing bowl. Stir in water and orange juice. Add the white flour, pastry flour, baking powder, baking soda, and salt, mixing until thoroughly combined. Stir in the walnuts and the apricots. Pour batter into prepared pan and bake for 55-65 minutes or until a wooden pick inserted into the center of the loaf comes out clean. Cool in the pan for 15 minutes. Remove to a wire rack to continue cooling.

Collard Squares

INGREDIENTS:

1 large bunch collard greens
¼ teaspoon crushed red pepper
pinch of salt
1 tablespoon butter plus extra for the baking dish
1 small onion, finely diced
1 clove garlic, minced
¼ pound portobella mushrooms, stems removed, caps finely diced
½ teaspoon tamari or soy sauce
4 large eggs
2 ounces Comté or Gruyère cheese, grated
¼ cup fine dry bread crumbs

DIRECTIONS:

1. Remove the tough stems from the greens and wash the leaves well in several changes of cold water. Place them in a large pot and add the hot pepper flakes and ½ teaspoon salt. Add water to cover by several inches and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to a simmer and cook, uncovered, until the greens are very tender, about 1 hour. Drain well and cool slightly, then squeeze dry and finely chop.
2. While the collards are cooking, melt the butter in a small or medium sauté pan over medium heat. Add the onion and garlic, sprinkle lightly with ¼ teaspoon salt and cook, stirring, for 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms and the tamari and sauté until they are tender, about 5-7 minutes. Remove from heat and cool slightly.
3. Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 9-by-9-inch baking dish.
4. Combine the collards and mushrooms in a bowl. Add the eggs, cheese and bread crumbs and mix well. Spread into the prepared pan. Bake 20 minutes. Cut into squares to serve hot or at room temperature.

Crepes

INGREDIENTS:

3 eggs

1/8 teaspoon salt

1 1/2 cups milk

2 tablespoons butter

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

Leave out the following only for savory crepes...

1 teaspoon honey

Dash of orange or lemon peel

1/2 teaspoon vanilla

Pinch of cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, ginger if you want an extra spice kick

DIRECTIONS:

Use blender or food processor to beat all ingredients until smooth. Let the batter stand for several hours or overnight before cooking the crepes. Brush a crepe or omelet pan or small skillet with olive oil or melted butter; heat until hot, not smoking. Test proper griddle heat by sprinkling on water from wet hands; water will sizzle at proper temperature.

Add about two tablespoons batter. Move the pan to coat with the batter. When crepe is set (about one minute), turn it over by gently moving a spatula under the crepe. Cook on other side approximately 1/2 minute. Place the crepe on a towel, stack to use or place between waxed paper to freeze.

Silver Dollar Crepes: Increase milk about 1/4 cup to make a thinner batter. Pour small amount of batter on hot, greased griddle to form a 3- or 4-inch crepe.

Serving ideas for sweet crepes:

Nutella, fruit, honey, confectioner's sugar, cinnamon

Serving ideas for savory crepes:

Baby spinach or arugula, goat cheese, caramelized onions, balsamic-reduced mushrooms, mozzarella cheese and fresh herbs

The possibilities are endless with what you can put into crepes, but they're even good to eat plain, especially when you add the extra spices for the sweet version. The citrus peel is really what does it!

Hash Brown Strata

INGREDIENTS:

Nonstick cooking spray

2 cups frozen loose-pack diced hash brown potatoes with onion and peppers or you can use

2-3 freshly grated potatoes and chopped onion and pepper

1 cup cut broccoli florets

1/3 cup finely chopped ham (about 2 ounces)

1/3 cup milk

2 tablespoons all-purpose flour

2 8-ounce cartons refrigerated or frozen egg product, thawed or 8-10 eggs

1/2 cup shredded cheddar cheese (2 ounces)

1 tablespoon snipped fresh basil or 1/2 teaspoon dried basil, crushed

1/4 teaspoon black pepper

Fresh basil sprigs (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Lightly coat a 2-quart square baking dish with nonstick cooking spray. Arrange hash brown potatoes and broccoli in bottom of baking dish; top with ham. Set aside.

2. Stir milk gradually into flour in a medium bowl. Stir in eggs, half of the cheese, the snipped or dried basil, and black pepper. Pour egg mixture over vegetables.

3. Bake in preheated oven for 40 to 45 minutes or until knife inserted near the center comes out clean. Sprinkle with remaining cheese. Let stand for 5 minutes. If desired, garnish with fresh basil sprigs.

Make-ahead Tip: Assemble as above, but do not bake. Cover and refrigerate for 4 to 24 hours. Before serving, remove cover and bake as directed above.

Note: This recipe is very similar to quiche and can be easily altered to match different tastes. Try using different vegetables or meats or play with some alternate spices to taste.

Pumpkin Spice Pancakes

INGREDIENTS:

1 ¼ cups unbleached all purpose flour
3 tablespoons sugar
2 teaspoons baking powder
a pinch each of cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, all spice and ginger
¾ teaspoon salt
2/3 cup milk
2/3 cup egg nog
¾ cup pumpkin puree
4 large eggs, separated
¼ cup (½ stick) unsalted butter, melted
1 teaspoon vanilla extract

DIRECTIONS:

Whisk first 5 ingredients in large bowl to blend. Whisk milk, eggnog, pumpkin, egg yolks, melted butter and vanilla in medium bowl to blend well. Add pumpkin mixture to dry ingredients; whisk just until smooth (batter will be thick). Using electric mixer, beat egg whites in another medium bowl until stiff but not dry. Fold whites into batter in 2 additions. Brush large nonstick skillet with oil; heat over medium heat. Working in batches, pour batter by 1/3 cupfuls into skillet. Cook until bubbles form on surface of pancakes and bottoms are brown, about 1½ minutes per side. Repeat with remaining batter, brushing skillet with oil between batches. Serve with syrup.

Raspberry-Topped Lemon Muffins

INGREDIENTS:

1 1/8 cups sugar, divided
4 teaspoons finely grated lemon peel (from two large lemons)
2 cups all purpose flour
2 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
3/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup (1 stick) unsalted butter, room temperature
1 large egg
1 cup buttermilk
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
1 1/2 1/2-pint containers (about) fresh raspberries

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375°F. Line 14 standard muffin cups (or 56 minis) with paper liners. Mash 1/8 cup sugar and lemon peel in small bowl until sugar is slightly moist. Whisk flour, baking powder, and salt in medium bowl to blend. Using electric mixer, beat remaining 1 cup sugar and butter in large bowl until smooth. Beat in egg. Beat in buttermilk, then vanilla and lemon sugar. Beat in flour mixture.

Divide batter among muffin cups (the 2/3-3/4 level worked well for minis). Top each large muffin with 4 raspberries (or mini muffins with one each). Bake muffins until lightly browned on top and tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 35 minutes (baking time was on the shy side of 20 minutes for mini muffins).

Apps / Salads / Soups

Black Bean Confetti Salad

This works equally well as a small salad—even tossed with spinach or salad greens for more bulk—or alongside salsa fresca for scooping up with a tortilla chip.

INGREDIENTS:

2 15-ounce cans black beans, drained and well-rinsed

1 can corn

4 bell peppers, a mix of colors, diced

1 medium white onion, diced

juice of one lime

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon ground cumin

$\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt

$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon honey

$\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon cayenne

optional: if you love cilantro, it's a great match for this salad.

DIRECTIONS:

Mix beans, peppers, corn and onion in a large bowl. In a separate, smaller bowl, whisk remaining ingredients into vinaigrette. Ideally, you'll have a $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of dressing. Pour it over the bean mixture, toss it well and adjust seasonings to taste.

Butternut Squash and Caramelized Onion Galette

INGREDIENTS:

For the pastry:

1¼ cups all-purpose flour

¼ teaspoon salt

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces

¼ cup sour cream

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice

¼ cup ice water

For the filling:

1 small butternut squash (about one pound)

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 to 2 tablespoons butter (if you have only non-stick, the smaller amount will do)

1 large onion, halved and thinly sliced in half-moons

1 teaspoon salt

Pinch of sugar

¼ teaspoon cayenne, or to taste

¾ cup goat cheese (about 2½ ounces), cut into small bits

1½ teaspoons chopped fresh sage leaves

DIRECTIONS:

1. Make pastry: In a bowl, combine the flour and salt. Place the butter in another bowl. Place both bowls in the freezer for 1 hour. Remove the bowls from the freezer and make a well in the center of the flour. Add the butter to the well and, using a pastry blender, cut it in until the mixture resembles coarse meal. Make another well in the center. In a small bowl, whisk together the sour cream, lemon juice and water and add half of this mixture to the well. With your fingertips, mix in the liquid until large lumps form. Remove the large lumps and repeat with the remaining liquid and flour-butter mixture. Pat the lumps into a ball; do not overwork the dough. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for 1 hour.

2. Prepare squash: Preheat oven to 375 degrees F. Peel squash, then halve and scoop out seeds. Cut into a ½-inch dice. Toss pieces with olive oil and a half-teaspoon of the salt and roast on foil-lined sheet for 30 minutes or until pieces are tender, turning it midway if your oven bakes unevenly. Set aside to cool slightly.

3. Caramelize onions: While squash is roasting, melt butter in a heavy skillet and cook onion over low heat with the remaining half-teaspoon of salt and pinch of sugar, stirring occasionally, until soft and lightly golden brown, about 20 minutes. Stir in cayenne.

4. Raise the oven temperature to 400 degrees. Mix squash, caramelized onions, cheese and herbs together in a bowl.

5. Assemble galette: On a floured work surface, roll the dough out into a 12-inch round. Transfer to an ungreased baking sheet. Spread squash, onions, cheese and herb mixture over

the dough, leaving a 1 ½-inch border. Fold the border over the squash, onion and cheese mixture, pleating the edge to make it fit. The center will be open.

6. Bake until golden brown, 30 to 40 minutes. Remove from the oven, let stand for 5 minutes, then slide the galette onto a serving plate. Cut into wedges and serve hot, warm or at room temperature.

Carrot with Toasted Almond Soup

1 cup sliced shallots (about 4 large) or 2 large onions
1 bay leaf
¼ teaspoon ground ginger
¾ teaspoon curry powder
1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
½ stick (¼ cup) unsalted butter
1 small boiling potato
1 ½ pounds carrots, peeled and cut crosswise ¼ inch thick
1 ¾ cups chicken broth (14 fl oz)
1 cup apple cider (preferably unfiltered)
1 ¼ cups water
¾ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
¼ cup sliced almonds, toasted

Cook shallots, bay leaf, ginger, curry powder, and thyme in butter in a 2- to 3-quart heavy saucepan over moderately low heat, stirring occasionally, until shallots are softened and pale golden, 6 to 8 minutes.

Meanwhile, peel potato and cut into ½-inch cubes.

Add potato to shallot mixture along with carrots, broth, cider, water, salt, and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer, covered, until carrots are tender, 20 to 25 minutes. Discard bay leaf.

Purée soup in 2 batches in a blender until smooth, transferring as blended to a large bowl (use caution when blending hot liquids). Return to saucepan to reheat if necessary. Serve soup sprinkled with toasted almonds.

Cornbread Bites

INGREDIENTS:

2/3 cup all-purpose flour
1/2 cup yellow cornmeal
1 tablespoon sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup (2 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese
1/2 cup reduced-fat sour cream
1/4 cup thinly sliced green onions
1 (8 3/4-ounce) can cream-style corn
Dash of hot sauce
1 large egg, lightly beaten
1 small can chopped green chilies

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375°.

Combine flour, cornmeal, sugar, baking powder and salt in a large bowl. Combine cheese and remaining ingredients in a small bowl; stir with a whisk. Add to flour mixture; stir just until moistened.

Divide batter evenly among miniature muffin cups coated with cooking spray. Bake at 375° for 10 minutes or until golden brown. Cool in cups 2 minutes on wire racks; remove from pans. Cool completely on wire racks.

Crunchy Polenta Bites

INGREDIENTS:

2 ³/₄ cups mushroom broth
1 cup polenta PLUS more for sprinkling
finely shredded parmesan (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

In a medium pan, bring the broth to a boil. Add the polenta and cook 2 minutes, stirring constantly. Pour into a 10x7 inch baking dish. Preheat oven to 400. Allow the polenta to set up for about 25 minutes or until it is firm enough to invert onto a flat surface that has been sprinkled with additional polenta and parmesan. Invert. Sprinkle the top with polenta/cheese. Slice into strips, cubes or fun shapes. Place on a parchment lined baking sheet and bake 25 minutes or until the top looks dry and crunchy. Serve immediately.

Melon Prosciutto Salad

INGREDIENTS:

½ of a small ripe cantaloupe, seeds and rind removed, cut into rough 1-inch chunks

A few thin slices of prosciutto, torn into wide strips

1 ball of fresh mozzarella, cut into six slices

About 4 ounces baby arugula

1 tablespoon olive oil, plus more for serving

1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice, plus more for serving

Sea salt

Freshly ground pepper

A small handful of fresh parsley leaves (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Divide the melon, prosciutto and mozzarella between two plates, arranging each item in its own little pile. Set aside.

Put the arugula in a medium bowl. In a small cup, whisk together 1 tablespoon olive oil, 1 teaspoon lemon juice and a pinch of salt. Drizzle the dressing over the arugula and, using your hands, toss very gently. Put a handful of arugula on each plate, alongside the melon, prosciutto, and mozzarella.

Sprinkle a bit of salt and pepper over the mozzarella. Splash a bit of lemon juice over the melon. Drizzle the melon and mozzarella with olive oil. Sprinkle a bit of parsley over the plates, if you like. Serve with crusty bread.

Roasted Fennel and Pancetta Salad

INGREDIENTS:

Salad:

1 fennel bulb and fronds, coarsely chopped
8 or so slices of pancetta
1 avocado, sliced
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon brown sugar
1 bag baby spinach or spring mix greens
¼ cup walnuts or pecans
¼ cup gorgonzola cheese crumbles

Dressing:

½ avocado
¼ cup buttermilk
1 tablespoon white wine vinegar
1 small shallot
1 ½ teaspoons minced parsley
1 garlic clove
¼ cup olive oil

DIRECTIONS:

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Line a baking sheet with foil, toss the fennel and pancetta with olive oil and spread evenly over baking sheet. Crumble brown sugar over fennel and pancetta and roast for about 20-30 minutes.

Make the Dressing. Combine avocado, vinegar, shallot, parsley and garlic in a blender and process until smooth. Drizzle olive oil in and process until smooth.

Toss all ingredients in dressing and serve.

Spinach, Artichoke & Onion Dip

INGREDIENTS:

1 large onion, diced
1 large shallot, diced
1-2 cloves garlic
12 oz fresh baby spinach
1 can artichoke hearts, coarsely chopped
18 oz low fat sour cream
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme
2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
1 teaspoon paprika

DIRECTIONS:

In a large skillet heat the oil. Add the onion and shallot and cook until soft, about 5-8 minutes. Add the spinach and artichoke hearts and sauté about 2 minutes. Cover and lower the heat. Cook for an additional 2-4 minutes. If there is any water remaining in the pan, drain it off. Spread into a thin layer on the pan to cool. When cool, place in a large bowl and stir in the sour cream, paprika, thyme, garlic and Worcestershire sauce. Cover and refrigerate at least one hour or up to one day before serving.

Sweet Potato Sausage Soup

INGREDIENTS:

3 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil, divided

The original recipe calls for 1 10- to 11-ounce fully cooked smoked Portuguese linguiça sausage or chorizo sausage, cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick slices. However, I prefer to use 4 chicken sausages (the garlic and herb or spinach and feta sausage sold at Whole Foods are my favorite. Use whatever sausage you prefer.. the flavor of the sausage is really what spices the soup.

2 medium onions, chopped

2 large garlic cloves, minced

2 large sweet potatoes or yams, peeled, quartered lengthwise, cut crosswise into 1/4-inch-thick slices

3-4 large carrots, peeled and chopped into bite-size bits

1 can cannellini or white beans

6 cups low-salt chicken broth

1 or 2 9-ounce bags fresh baby spinach (depending on how much you like spinach)

A container of sliced baby portabella mushrooms

DIRECTIONS:

Heat 2 tablespoons oil in heavy large pot over medium-high heat. Add sausage; cook until brown, stirring often, about 8 minutes. Transfer sausage to paper towels to drain. Add onions, garlic and mushrooms to pot and cook until translucent, stirring often, about 5 minutes. Add potatoes and carrots and cook until beginning to soften, stirring often, about 12 minutes. Add broth; bring to boil, scraping up browned bits. Reduce heat to medium-low, cover, and simmer until potatoes are soft, stirring occasionally, about 20 minutes. Using potato masher, mash some of potatoes and carrots in pot. Add browned sausage to soup. Stir in spinach and simmer just until wilted, about 5 minutes. Stir in remaining 1 tablespoon oil. Season with salt and pepper. Divide among bowls and serve.

Taco Dip

INGREDIENTS:

1 can of refried beans
*guacamole
fat-free sour cream mixed with 1 taco seasoning packet
shredded cheddar cheese (~8oz)
chopped tomatoes (2-3 large)
½ bunch green onions (scallions)
small can black olives, sliced

DIRECTIONS:

Layer in the order that the ingredients are listed and keep chilled until ready to eat. Serve with baked tortilla chips.

Guacamole

INGREDIENTS:

2 ripe avocados, diced
1/3 purple onion, diced
¼ cup salsa (see volume 2 for fresh salsa recipe if desired)
fresh lime juice

DIRECTIONS:

Mash the avocado with a fork and then stir all ingredients together until you've got guacamole.

Main / Side Dishes

Artichoke Risotto with Prosciutto and Hennepin

INGREDIENTS:

6 cups vegetable broth
3 tablespoons butter
3 tablespoons olive oil
2 shallots, chopped
16 oz. canned artichoke hearts
1 cup Arborio rice
½ cup Hennepin (a Belgian Saison / Farmhouse Ale made by Brewery Ommegang in NY)
4 oz. of Prosciutto ham, thinly sliced and diced
½ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese (about 2 ounces)
¾ teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
1 lemon, juiced

DIRECTIONS:

Bring vegetable broth to simmer in medium saucepan. Reduce heat to low, cover and keep broth hot. Melt butter with olive oil in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add chopped shallots; sauté 2 minutes. Add rice and stir to coat. Add Hennepin and simmer until liquid is absorbed, stirring frequently, about 8 minutes. Increase heat to medium-high. Add ¾ cup hot vegetable broth and simmer until absorbed, stirring frequently. Add the artichoke hearts and remaining hot vegetable broth ¾ cup at a time, allowing broth to be absorbed before adding more and stirring frequently until rice is just tender and mixture is creamy, about 20 minutes. Stir in Parmesan cheese, Prosciutto ham, chopped fresh thyme and lemon juice. Serve warm.

Beet & Greens Pasta

INGREDIENTS:

1 bunch of beets, diced, with greens
2-3 tablespoons olive oil
1 shallot, diced
a pinch of dried red pepper flakes
3 cloves of garlic, peeled and minced
1 cup chicken broth
juice of ½ a lemon
zest of 1 lemon
2 tablespoons chopped fresh herbs (parsley, basil, cilantro, dill)
salt to taste
½ pound angel hair pasta
fresh grated parmesan cheese

DIRECTIONS:

Peel and dice the beets. Dry and chop the beet greens; set aside. Put on a large pot of water to boil for the pasta.

Coat the bottom of cast-iron skillet or sauté pan with olive oil. Over medium heat cook the diced beets, shallot and red pepper flakes, stirring often, until the beets are almost tender. Add the garlic, stir and cook for 1 minute, then add the chicken broth and lemon juice. Bring to a simmer and cook until the beets are tender and the broth is reduced to a syrup-like consistency. If necessary, add more broth or water. Add the reserved, chopped beet greens, lemon zest, and chopped herbs. Stir and cover.

Meanwhile, cook the pasta in boiling water, following the package directions, until al dente. Drain. Once the beet greens have wilted, season to taste with salt, then toss the beet mixture with the drained pasta. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese.

Chicken and Artichoke Fricassee

INGREDIENTS:

1 ½ lemons
12 baby artichokes
6 cups water
2 tablespoons all purpose flour plus additional for dredging
2 teaspoons salt
1 bay leaf
2 tablespoons butter
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 chicken breast
3 chicken thighs
2 medium carrots, peeled, thinly sliced
2 large shallots, thinly sliced
2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme, divided
1 garlic clove, minced
¼ cup dry white wine
½ cup low-salt chicken broth
¼ cup sour cream

DIRECTIONS:

Fill large bowl with water. Squeeze juice from 1 lemon into water; add lemon halves. Tear outer leaves from 1 artichoke until only pale green leaves remain. Cut top ¾ inch from top; trim end of stem. Cut in half lengthwise. Rub cut sides of artichoke with lemon half; transfer to bowl with lemon water. Repeat with remaining artichokes.

Bring 6 cups water, 2 tablespoons flour, 2 teaspoons salt, and bay leaf to boil in large saucepan. Add artichoke halves and cook until just tender, about 5 minutes. Drain.

Melt butter with oil in heavy large deep skillet over medium heat. Cut chicken into bite-sized chunks. Sprinkle chicken with salt and pepper. Dredge chicken in flour, shaking off excess. Cook chicken until golden brown, about 4 minutes per side. Transfer chicken to plate. Add carrots and shallots to skillet. Sprinkle with salt and pepper. Sauté until vegetables begin to soften, about 4 minutes. Add 1 tablespoon thyme and garlic; sauté 1 minute. Add wine; bring to boil. Add broth and artichokes; bring to boil.

Return chicken to skillet, reduce heat to medium low, cover, and simmer 35 minutes. Whisk sour cream into sauce in skillet. Season with salt and pepper.

Coconut Lime Scallops

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound fresh scallops
1 cup coconut milk
2 scallions, finely chopped
½ cup sour cream
salt
freshly ground pepper
lime wedges
melted butter

DIRECTIONS:

Thread scallops on bamboo or metal skewers. Season with salt and pepper, brush with butter and squeeze fresh lime juice all over each. Combine sour cream, coconut milk and scallions; blend well. Grill scallops quickly over hot coals, approximately 1 minute on each side. Serve on a platter garnished with lime wedges and the sauce for dipping on the side.

Enchiladas

INGREDIENTS:

1 can black beans
1 small can diced green chilies
2 tomatoes, diced
1 bunch of scallions, diced
½ cup sour cream
a splash or two of Cholula Mexican hot sauce
1 large can hot enchilada sauce or 3 small cans (divided)
1 cup uncooked rice (I prefer brown)
½ - 1 pound ground beef, buffalo or soy crumbles (optional)
salt, pepper, crushed red pepper to taste
2 avocados, sliced, for garnish
a ¼ pound block of Monterey jack and/or cheddar cheese, shredded (divided)

DIRECTIONS:

Cook the rice according to package directions. Brown the ground meat or soy crumbles, if desired, with salt, pepper and maybe some taco seasoning. Combine beans, chilies, tomatoes, scallions, sour cream, Cholula, rice, meat and seasoning in a large bowl. Add a small amount of enchilada sauce and a small amount of shredded cheese to the rice mixture and mix together. Fill 8 tortillas with a large spoonful of rice mixture in each; roll up and place seam-side down in a deep baking dish (you'll probably need at least two baking dishes). Pour remaining enchilada sauce over the rolled up tortillas, covering all tortilla surface (these should be really saucy). Sprinkle remaining cheese over the top of the sauce-covered tortillas. Cover sheet with foil and bake approximately 25 minutes at 375. Remove foil and bake another 10 minutes. Let cool for at least 5 minutes and then serve each enchilada topped with a slice or two of avocado.

Fall Harvest Couscous

INGREDIENTS:

1 2-pound butternut squash, peeled, seeded and cut into 1/2-inch pieces
1 medium onion, thinly sliced
3 tablespoons olive oil
1/4 teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 teaspoon pepper
1 1/2 cups couscous
1 1/3 cups chicken or vegetable stock
1 tablespoon butter
1/3 cup dried cranberries
1/2 cup pecans, toasted
1/4 cup finely chopped flat leaf parsley
sea salt, to taste
ground pepper, to taste

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 425°F. Combine butternut squash, onion, olive oil, nutmeg, salt and pepper in large bowl. Spread on a rimmed baking sheet. Roast until squash and onion brown slightly, stirring occasionally, about 25 minutes. Allow to cool. At this point, butternut squash and onion mixture can be frozen and used at a later time if desired. Defrost in refrigerator for several hours or in the microwave before couscous prep.

Combine squash and onion mixture, stock, butter and cranberries in a large saucepan and bring to a simmer. Add couscous and cover. Take from heat and let stand for 10 minutes. Stir in pecans and parsley and season to taste with salt and pepper. Fluff with a fork and serve.

Five Minute Tomato Sauce

I'm very particular about the tomatoes I use in this sauce. Look for canned crushed tomatoes, some cans you will come across will say "with added puree" - this is also fine. I avoid diced tomatoes, pass on pureed, and skip whole tomatoes as well. Avoid the crushed tomatoes with added herbs, seasonings, etc. You want pure crushed tomatoes if possible. I also look for organic crushed tomatoes which can be tricky; I often come across the Muir Glen brand, it has added basil in it, but that one is actually fine. The San Marzano crushed tomatoes are great as well. Any leftover sauce keeps well in the refrigerator for three or four days.

INGREDIENTS:

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 ½ teaspoons crushed red pepper flakes
½ teaspoon fine grain sea salt
3 medium cloves of garlic, finely chopped
1 28-ounce can crushed red tomatoes
zest of one lemon

DIRECTIONS:

Combine the olive oil, red pepper flakes, sea salt, and garlic in a cold saucepan. Stir while you heat the saucepan over medium-high heat, sauté just 45 seconds or so until everything is fragrant - you don't want the garlic to brown. Stir in the tomatoes and heat to a gentle simmer, this takes just a couple minutes. Remove from heat and carefully take a taste (you don't want to burn your tongue). If the sauce needs more salt add it now. Stir in the lemon zest reserving a bit to sprinkle on top of your pasta.

Makes about a quart of tomato sauce.

Gnocchi

INGREDIENTS:

2 pounds Russet potatoes
1½ cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 large egg, lightly beaten

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat your oven to 400 degrees. Prick the potatoes all over with a fork, and bake them on a baking sheet for 45 minutes to one hour, or until they are fork-tender. For best results, turn the potatoes over halfway through the baking time. Let the potatoes cool slightly.
2. Peel the potatoes, and then pass them through a potato ricer, food mill or grate them over the large holes of a box grater into a large bowl. Add the lightly beaten egg and the salt to the potatoes and mix well with a wooden spoon.
3. Add the flour to the potatoes a little at a time, using only as much as you need so that the dough will not stick to your hands. When the flour has been incorporated, bring the dough together with your fingertips.
4. Dump the dough and any remaining floury bits onto a slightly floured surface. Knead the dough as you would bread dough. Press down and away with the heel of your hand, fold the dough over, make a quarter turn, and repeat the process. Knead for about three or four minutes.
5. Form the dough into a ball and then divide it into 6 smaller balls. On a lightly floured surface, roll out one of the six pieces using your fingertips into a long rope about ¾ inch thick. Cut the dough into 1 inch pieces.
6. You can cook the gnocchi as it is now, but traditional gnocchi has ridges. To create the ridges, press each piece of dough against the tines of a fork. With your finger, gently roll the pressed dough back off the fork. This takes a little practice. If you find the dough sticking to the fork, dip the fork in flour before you press the dough against it.
7. Place the gnocchi in a single layer on a lightly floured or parchment-lined dish. If you'd like to freeze them for later use, do so on this tray and once they are frozen, drop them into a freezer bag. This ensures that you won't have one enormous gnocchi mass when you are ready to cook them.
8. To cook the gnocchi, place them into a pot of boiling and well-salted water. After a few minutes the gnocchi will float to the top. Continue to cook for one minute then remove and set aside.

Grilled Halibut with Strawberry Avocado Salsa

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 ½ pints fresh ripe strawberries, washed, stemmed, hulled and cut into eighths
- 1 avocado, peeled and diced
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped red onion
- 2 scallions, chopped fine
- ½ red bell pepper, diced
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- 1 small jalapeño, sliced into thin rings (add more or less depending on desired heat)
- juice of 1 lime
- 1 tablespoon fresh orange juice
- 1 tablespoon chopped cilantro, more sprigs for garnish
- salt and pepper to taste
- 4 6-ounce fresh halibut steaks (tuna, swordfish or salmon may also be used)

DIRECTIONS:

In a bowl combine all the ingredients for the salsa. Adjust the seasoning with salt and pepper.

Brush the grill with oil and preheat to medium high. Season the fish with salt and pepper and cook on each side for 4-6 minutes until just opaque. Serve hot with salsa on top; garnish with cilantro sprigs.

Mac & Cheese

INGREDIENTS:

2 tablespoons butter
1 cup cottage cheese
2 cups milk
1 teaspoon dry mustard
a pinch of cayenne
a pinch of freshly grated nutmeg
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
1 pound sharp or extra-sharp cheddar cheese, grated
½ pound elbow pasta, uncooked.

DIRECTIONS:

1. Heat oven to 375 degrees and position an oven rack in upper third of oven. Use 1 tablespoon butter to butter a 9-inch round or square baking pan.
2. In a blender, purée cottage cheese, milk, mustard, cayenne, nutmeg and salt and pepper together. Reserve ¼ cup grated cheese for topping. In a large bowl, combine remaining grated cheese, milk mixture and uncooked pasta. Pour into prepared pan, cover tightly with foil and bake 30 minutes.
3. Uncover pan, stir gently, sprinkle with reserved cheese and dot with remaining tablespoon butter. Bake, uncovered, 30 minutes more, until browned. Let cool at least 15 minutes before serving.

Oven-Baked Parmesan French Fries

INGREDIENTS:

5 russet potatoes or sweet potatoes if desired
1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil
salt and freshly ground black pepper
1/2 cup grated Parmesan cheese

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Peel potatoes and cut into half-inch thick slices (lengthwise) cut again into 1/2-inch thick fries. Place the potatoes into a pot with cold water and 1 tablespoon of salt. Bring up to a gentle boil and simmer until a paring knife tip goes through easily (cooked about 3/4 of the way through).

Drain carefully and put in a bowl. Add olive oil, 1 tablespoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper. Add a pinch of Montreal steak seasoning if you like it. Toss well and lay out in 1 layer on nonstick baking sheet. Bake until light brown.

When brown, sprinkle with Parmesan and continue to bake until well-browned and crispy and the cheese is melted and caramelized, about 6 to 7 more minutes. Remove and let cool for 2 minutes. Serve.

Roasted Tomatoes and Cipollini Onions over White Beans

With Garlic-Rubbed Bread Cubes

INGREDIENTS:

1 pound cipollini or small boiling onions, blanched for one minute in boiling water, dropped in cool water and peeled

1 lb large cherry or mini-Roma tomatoes (mixed color cherry tomatoes look great in this; 4 cups)

1 teaspoon sea salt

A few tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil

1 ½-2 15-oz. cans cannellini beans, drained and rinsed

¼ cup slivered fresh basil leaves

DIRECTIONS:

Toss tomatoes with blanched and peeled onions on a baking sheet or large, shallow baking dish with salt and olive oil. The trick with the oil is to coat them well, and keep them from sticking, but not overdo it. Roast at 500°F, anywhere from 35-50 minutes, until they show brown patches and the tomatoes are falling apart.

Assemble the dish by placing the white beans at the bottom of a large bowl or large deep platter, scraping the tomatoes and all of their juices on top, and topping it with slivers of basil leaves.

Serve immediately. I like to throw a few garlic-rubbed bread cubes* in the bottom of a plate or small bowl and scoop the goods on top.

* Lately, I've been using 4 1"-thick slices of a large ciabatta loaf and partially drying them out in the oven, but use whatever bread you fancy or have around. (If I'm in more of a hurry, I'll toast them in the oven with the tomatoes, for just a minute or two.) When I take them out, I immediately rub both sides with a peeled, halved raw garlic clove. Then I cut them into cubes. You don't want them as hard as store-bought croutons, but a nice crunch is ideal for soaking.

Rosemary Apple Meatloaf

INGREDIENTS:

1 ½ pounds ground beef or turkey
1 egg
1 onion, shredded
1 cup shredded apples
¾ cup bread crumbs
1 tablespoon balsamic vinegar
1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
1 tablespoon Montreal seasoning
2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350. In a large bowl and with a gentle hand, mix together all ingredients EXCEPT the olive oil. Add some additional breadcrumbs if the mixture seems wet. Mold into a loaf and place in a standard loaf pan. Spread the olive oil over the top of the loaf (this keeps the moisture locked in) and place in the oven. Bake for about 40 minutes or until cooked through and the juices run clear. Allow to sit 5 minutes before slicing and serving.

Shrimp with Feta and Orzo

INGREDIENTS:

1 ½ cups orzo pasta
½ tablespoon butter
2 cloves garlic, chopped
1 ¼ pounds peeled and deveined shrimp
2 pints cherry tomatoes, halved
1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
½ tablespoon fresh thyme
½ tablespoon marjoram, chopped
4 oz feta cheese

DIRECTIONS:

Prepare orzo in boiling salted water as label directs. Meanwhile, in nonstick 10-inch skillet, melt butter over medium-high heat. Add minced garlic and sauté for one minute. Add shrimp, herbs, ½ teaspoon salt, and 1/8 teaspoon coarsely ground black pepper, and cook 3 to 5 minutes or until shrimp turn opaque throughout, stirring occasionally. Add tomatoes and cook 30 seconds, stirring. Remove skillet from heat. Drain orzo; toss with shrimp mixture and feta.

Zucchini and Basil Lasagna

INGREDIENTS:

2 cups fat-free cottage cheese

1 cup chopped fresh basil

1 large egg

4 cups chopped zucchini

½ cup chopped onion

2 cups spicy tomato pasta sauce

9 oven-ready lasagna noodles

1 ½ cups (6 ounces) shredded, part-skim mozzarella cheese

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°.

Combine first 3 ingredients in a food processor or blender and process until smooth.

Heat a large nonstick skillet coated with cooking spray over medium-high heat. Add zucchini and onion; sauté 5 minutes or until tender. Stir in sauce; remove from heat.

Spread ¼ cup zucchini mixture in bottom of a 13 x 9-inch baking dish coated with cooking spray. Arrange 3 noodles over zucchini mixture; top with one-third cottage cheese mixture, one-third zucchini mixture, and one-third mozzarella. Repeat procedure with the remaining noodles, cottage cheese mixture, zucchini mixture, and mozzarella.

Cover and bake at 350° for 45 minutes. Uncover and bake an additional 15 minutes or until lasagna is thoroughly heated.

Desserts

Apple Spice Cheesecake

Crust

1 ¼ cups crushed All Bran cereal
½ cup walnuts
¼ cup firmly packed brown sugar
¼ cup butter, melted

Filling

24 oz. cream cheese, softened
1 cup sugar
2 tablespoons flour
3 eggs
1 cup applesauce
½ teaspoon cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon freshly ground nutmeg

Heat the oven to 350. In a medium bowl combine all of the crust ingredients and press them into the bottom of a 9-inch spring-form pan.

In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese and sugar until smooth and creamy. Add the flour and blend well. At low speed, add the eggs one at a time, mixing until just blended. Add the remaining ingredients and beat until well blended. Pour this mixture into the crust-lined pan.

Bake at 350 for 50 to 60 minutes or until the center is set. Cool and then refrigerate for several hours or overnight.

Serving suggestion: remove from pan and top with chopped walnuts and drizzle with caramel.

Brownie Mosaic Cheesecake

Chocolate Crumb Crust

1 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups chocolate wafer or cookies crumbs (8 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. package wafers or chocolate cookies)
1/4 cup toasted hazelnuts, almonds, pecans or walnuts – blended or processed to a fine grind (optional)
7 tablespoons butter, melted

Combine wafer/cookie crumbs, nuts (if desired) and melted butter and press evenly onto bottom and sides of buttered 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch spring-form pan. Chill pan while preparing remainder of cake.

Brownies

2 oz. semi-sweet chocolate, chopped
1/2 cup butter
7/8 cup granulated sugar
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup all-purpose flour

Preheat oven to 350°. Butter 8-inch square pan and line with parchment paper; butter paper. In a 2-quart saucepan over low heat, melt together the chocolate and butter. Stir to blend, then stir in sugar. Remove pan from heat. Add the eggs, stirring constantly until well blended. Add remaining ingredients, stirring until smooth. Pour batter into the prepared pan and bake in the center of the preheated oven for 22-25 minutes, until a toothpick comes out just slightly moist rather than completely clean. The top should look shiny with a slightly crackled surface. Do not over bake; the brownies should be moist rather than dry. Cool in the pan on a rack for a few minutes, then invert and peel off paper. Cool brownies, then cut them into $\frac{3}{4}$ - to 1-inch squares for use in the cheesecake. You will have about 2 cups of loosely measured cubes. Add cubes to cake batter as directed below.

Cheesecake

3 8-oz. packages cream cheese, at room temperature
1 cup granulated sugar
1/8 teaspoon salt
3 large eggs
1 cup sour cream
1 teaspoon vanilla

Preheat oven to 350°. Attach the flat paddle to your electric mixer. In the large bowl of the mixer, beat the cream cheese until smooth and soft. Add sugar and salt and beat until mixture is very creamy and smooth. Stop the mixer and scrape down the beater and the inside of the bowl several times. Add eggs, one at a time, and beat after each addition. Add 1 cup sour cream and the vanilla and beat until well combined. Or you can use your food processor like I did and add ingredients in the order given, scraping bowl and processing

until smooth. Fold brownie cubes in very gently and pour mixture into prepared pan. Set filled pan on jelly-roll pan for ease in handling. Set cake in center of pre-heated oven to bake for 50 minutes, or until the top has a dull finish but is dry to the touch; the surface should move slightly when you tap the side of the pan, but it should not jiggle in waves as if it were liquid. Remove cake from oven and set on rack in a draft-free location to cool thoroughly. When completely cool, top with following glaze.

Ganache Glaze

3 oz. bittersweet chocolate, broken up, or ½ cup dark chocolate morsels

2 oz. butter

¼ cup heavy cream

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

1 tablespoon confectioners' sugar

Grind the chocolate into powder in the food processor, scald the butter and cream in a saucepan. With the machine running, pour the hot cream/butter mixture slowly through the feed tube onto the chocolate. Blend until completely smooth, stopping machine to scrape down sides once or twice. Add the extract and sugar and process until smooth. Spread over cheesecake while ganache is still warm. Chill until ready to serve.

Chocolate Stout Cake

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup stout (such as Young's Double Chocolate, or Rogue Chocolate or Left Hand Milk Stout)
1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsweetened cocoa powder (preferably Dutch-process)
2 cups all purpose flour
2 cups sugar
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons baking soda
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt
2 large eggs
6 tablespoons sour cream
6 ounces good semisweet chocolate chips
6 tablespoons heavy cream
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon freshly ground coffee

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease or spray a Bundt pan. Bring 1 cup stout and 1 cup butter to simmer in heavy large saucepan over medium heat. Add cocoa powder and whisk until mixture is smooth. Cool slightly.

Whisk flour, sugar, baking soda, and $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon salt in large bowl to blend. Using electric mixer, beat eggs and sour cream in another large bowl to blend. Add stout-chocolate mixture to egg mixture and beat just to combine. Add flour mixture and beat briefly on slow speed. Using rubber spatula, fold batter until completely combined. Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake cake until tester inserted into center comes out clean, about 35 minutes. Transfer cake to rack; cool 10 minutes. Turn cake out onto rack and cool completely.

Ganache:

For the ganache, melt the chocolate, heavy cream, and coffee in the top of a double boiler over simmering water until smooth and warm, stirring occasionally. Drizzle over the top of cooled cake.

Cocoa Cookies w/ Dark Chocolate Chips

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup unbleached all-purpose flour
1/4 teaspoon baking soda
1/8 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons (1/2 stick) unsalted butter
2/3 cup granulated sugar
1/3 cup light brown sugar
7 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
1/3 cup plain yogurt
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1/2 cup chocolate chips, preferably Ghirardelli brand, either semisweet or bittersweet
1/4 chopped nuts and/or 1/4 cup dries cherries (optional)

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone liner.

In a small bowl, whisk together the flour, baking soda, and salt.

Place the butter in a medium microwave-safe bowl, and microwave briefly, until just melted. Add the sugars and sift in the cocoa. Stir to blend well. The mixture will be somewhat thick and pasty, like wet sand. Add the yogurt and vanilla and stir to mix thoroughly. Add the dry flour mixture and stir to just combine. Add the chocolate chips (nuts and cherries too if you're using them) and stir to incorporate.

Drop the dough by generous tablespoons onto the prepared baking sheet. You should be able to fit about 8 or 9 cookies, nicely spaced, on a standard sheet pan. Bake for 9 to 11 minutes, or until the tops of the cookies have crackled slightly and look set. Transfer the sheet pan to a wire rack and cool the cookies on the pan for 10 minutes. Transfer them to the rack to cool completely. Repeat with remaining dough.

Fresh Mint Ice Cream

INGREDIENTS:

1 cup whole milk
¾ cup sugar
2 cups heavy cream
Pinch of salt
2 cups lightly packed fresh mint leaves
5 large egg yolks

DIRECTIONS:

Warm the milk, sugar, 1 cup of the cream, and salt in a small saucepan. [I usually put the pan over medium heat and stir occasionally until I see it start to steam.] Add the mint leaves, and stir until they're immersed in the liquid. Cover, remove from heat, and let steep at room temperature for 1 hour.

Strain the mint-infused mixture through a mesh strainer into a medium saucepan. Press on the mint leaves to extract as much of the flavor as possible, then discard the mint leaves. Pour the remaining 1 cup heavy cream into a large bowl, and set the strainer on top.

Re-warm the mint-infused mixture. [Again, I usually put it over medium heat, stirring occasionally, and watch for steam.] In a separate medium bowl, whisk together the egg yolks. Slowly pour the warm mint liquid into the egg yolks, whisking constantly; then scrape the warmed egg yolks back into the saucepan.

Stir the mixture constantly over medium heat with a heatproof spatula, scraping the bottom as you stir, until the mixture thickens and coats the spatula. [You can test it by running your finger across the spatula coated with custard. It's done when your finger leaves a definite trail that doesn't flow back together.] Pour the custard through the strainer and stir it into the cream. Stir until cool over an ice bath.

Chill the mixture thoroughly in the refrigerator, then freeze it in your ice cream maker according to the manufacturer's instructions.

Goat Cheese Cheesecake with Roasted Rosemary Pears

INGREDIENTS:

For the graham cracker crust:

- 32 honey graham sticks
- ½ cup sliced almonds
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

For the cheesecake:

- 2 (8-ounce) packages cream cheese, cut into pieces
- 3 (4-ounce) packages fresh goat cheese, crumbled
- 2 teaspoons finely grated lemon zest
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 ½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 ¼ cups sugar
- 4 eggs

For the roasted pears:

- 6 ripe but firm Bosc pears
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 4 tablespoons real maple syrup
- 1 cup pear juice, divided
- 2 sprigs fresh rosemary, crushed to release fragrance
- 2 teaspoons cornstarch mixed with 1 tablespoon water

DIRECTIONS:

Make the crust:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Process graham sticks in a food processor or blender until almost ground to a powder. Add almonds and sugar and process until almonds are chopped finely. Transfer crumb mixture to a medium-sized mixing bowl and pour in butter. Stir until crumbs are thoroughly moistened.

Press crumb mixture into the bottom of a 9-inch spring-form pan. Place pan on a baking sheet and bake until crust is golden brown and firm, about 10 minutes.

Make the cheesecake:

Reduce oven heat to 325°F. Place cream cheese, goat cheese, lemon zest, lemon juice and vanilla in a large mixing bowl. With an electric hand mixer, beat until just smooth, scraping down sides of the bowl as needed. In two or three additions, beat in sugar until mixture is creamy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating and scraping down sides of the bowl after each addition. Continue to beat until mixture is very smooth.

Pour batter into prepared crust. Bake until edges of cheesecake look set and the center is still soft and slightly jiggly, 50 to 60 minutes. Place pan on a rack to cool completely in the pan. Then cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight.

Increase oven temperature to 400°F. Halve pears. Scoop out core with a spoon or melon baller. Put butter, lemon juice, a tablespoon of maple syrup and ¼ cup of pear juice in a medium baking dish. Bake for a minute or two, just until butter melts. Swirl to mix ingredients, then place pears, cut side down, in dish along with rosemary sprigs. Bake for 15 minutes, then turn pears and baste with cooking liquid. Continue to bake another 5 minutes until pears are tender. Transfer pears to a plate to cool.

Place remaining pear juice and maple syrup in a small saucepan. Strain juices from baking dish into saucepan. Bring mixture to a boil. Stir in cornstarch-water mixture and cook, stirring, until mixture thickens slightly, about a minute. Transfer pear sauce to a small bowl to cool.

When cheesecake has thoroughly chilled, unmold from pan. Carefully cut into slices with a warm knife (dip knife in hot water and wipe dry). Stir cooled sauce with a whisk and serve sauce on the side with a pear half.

Mocha Truffles

INGREDIENTS:

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup heavy cream
1 tablespoon ground espresso
6 oz 70% cocoa chocolate, finely chopped
4 oz milk chocolate, finely chopped
 $\frac{1}{3}$ cup cocoa powder

DIRECTIONS:

1. Warm cream in a small saucepan over medium high heat, stir frequently until hot (about 3 min). Remove the pan from the heat, add the espresso and cover. Let steep for 10 minutes.
2. Strain cream into bowl and discard coffee. Return cream to pan and heat until bubbling around edges. Remove from heat
3. Put the chocolates in a medium bowl and pour the cream over them. Let sit 30 seconds then whisk until smooth. Spread the chocolate cream into a 9" pie plate. Refrigerate until hard, at least 1 hour but up to overnight.
4. Place cocoa powder on plate. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment.
5. Using melon baller, scoop out 30 spoonfuls of truffle mixture. Place them in a single layer on the baking sheets. Roll them between the palms of your hands to give them a round shape. You can refrigerate the truffles if they become too soft.
6. Roll the truffles in the cocoa powder. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate.

Orange Chocolate Chunk Cake

INGREDIENTS

½ pound unsalted butter at room temperature
2 cups sugar
4 extra-large eggs at room temperature
¼ cup grated orange zest (takes about 3 oranges)
3 cups all-purpose flour plus 2 tablespoons
½ teaspoon baking powder
½ teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon kosher salt
¼ cup freshly squeezed orange juice
¾ cup buttermilk at room temperature
1 teaspoon pure vanilla extract
2 cups good semisweet chocolate chunks

Syrup:

¼ cup sugar
¼ cup freshly squeezed orange juice

Ganache:

8 ounces good semisweet chocolate chips
½ cup heavy cream
1 teaspoon freshly ground coffee

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Grease and flour a 10-inch Bundt pan.
2. Cream the butter and sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer fitted with the paddle attachment for about 5 minutes, or until light and fluffy. Add the eggs, one at a time, then the orange zest.
3. Sift together 3 cups flour, the baking powder, baking soda, and salt in a large bowl. In another bowl, combine the orange juice, buttermilk, and vanilla. Add the flour and buttermilk mixtures alternately in thirds to the creamed butter, beginning and ending with the flour. Toss the chocolate chunks with 2 tablespoons flour and add to the batter. Pour into the pan, smooth the top, and bake for 45 minutes to 1 hour, until a cake tester comes out clean. Let the cake cool in the pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, make the syrup. In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, cook the sugar with the orange juice until the sugar dissolves. Remove the cake from the pan, set it on a rack over a tray, and spoon the orange syrup over the cake. Allow the cake to cool completely.
5. For the ganache, melt the chocolate, heavy cream, and coffee in the top of a double boiler over simmering water until smooth and warm, stirring occasionally. Drizzle over the top of the cake.

Peanut Butter Cup Cheesecake

INGREDIENTS:

CRUST:

2 cups chocolate cookie crumbs - (more if needed)
1 cup roasted unsalted peanuts -- coarsely chopped
½ cup unsalted butter -- melted
4 tablespoons golden brown sugar - (firmly packed)
1 pinch salt

FILLING:

4 packages cream cheese - (8 oz ea) -- room temperature
1 ½ cup golden brown sugar - (firmly packed)
½ cup creamy peanut butter
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
4 large eggs
¼ cup whipping cream
2 ½ cups Reese's Peanut Butter Cups in ¾" pieces

TOPPING:

1 bag semi-sweet chocolate chips - (12 oz)
4 tablespoons unsalted butter
¼ cup water

DIRECTIONS:

For Crust: Position rack in center of oven and preheat to 350 degrees. Butter 9-inch spring-form pan. Mix chocolate cookie crumbs, chopped peanuts, melted butter, brown sugar and pinch of salt in bowl until well combined. Press mixture evenly onto bottom and sides of pan. Bake until set, about 8 minutes. Set aside to cool. Reduce oven to 325 degrees.

For Filling: Using electric mixer, beat cream cheese and brown sugar in large bowl until smooth. Add peanut butter and vanilla extract and beat just until blended. Add eggs 1 at a time, beating just until blended after each addition. Add whipping cream and beat until smooth. Stir in peanut butter cup pieces. Pour filling into crust. Bake until sides of cake are set, but center still moves slightly, about 55 minutes. Cool cake in pan.

For Topping: Place all ingredients in microwavable bowl and heat at 50% power for 30 seconds. Stir. Continue to heat at 10 second intervals until chocolate is barely melted. Do Not Overheat. Stir until smooth and pour over top of cheesecake, spreading chocolate to edges. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Pear Burritos

INGREDIENTS:

4 medium ripe pears, peeled, cored, and cut into 1/4-inch thick slices
1 cup apple cider
1/4 cup granulated sugar
3 whole cloves
1 cinnamon stick
1 (2-inch) slice of orange peel
8 ounces fromage blanc, like triple crème or mascarpone
6 (10-inch) flour tortillas (I use whole wheat tortillas, but to make this uber decadent, try making it with crepes, recipe in the beginning of this book)
fresh mint leaves to garnish

DIRECTIONS:

Place the pears, apple cider, sugar, cloves, cinnamon stick and orange peel in a large saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer until the pears are crisp-tender, 4 to 5 minutes.

With a slotted spoon, remove the pears and set them aside. Discard the cinnamon stick, cloves and orange peel. Bring the reserved liquid to a boil and cook until the mixture reduces by half and is thick and syrupy.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper or aluminum foil. Place about 1/8 cup of the fromage blanc in the center of each tortilla and, with a flat-edged knife or spatula, spread the cheese into a 3-inch circle. Top with 3 or 4 pear slices then carefully roll up the burrito. Place seam side down on the prepared baking sheet. Bake for about 10 minutes, or just until the tortillas begin to brown. Remove to serving plates and spoon some of the reduced sauce over the burritos. Garnish with the mint leaves.

Pumpkin Bread Pudding

INGREDIENTS:

1½ cups whole milk (or 1 cup heavy cream plus ½ cup whole milk)
¾ cup canned solid-pack pumpkin
½ cup sugar
2 large eggs plus 1 yolk
½ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground ginger
1/8 teaspoon ground allspice
Pinch of ground cloves
2 tablespoons bourbon (optional)
5 cups cubed (1-inch) day-old baguette or crusty bread
¾ stick unsalted butter

DIRECTIONS:

While preheating oven to 350°F with rack in middle, melt butter in bottom of a 8-inch square baking dish. Once it is melted, take it out of the oven and toss bread cubes with butter, coating thoroughly. In a separate bowl, whisk together all the remaining ingredients. Pour them over buttered bread cubes in baking dish, stirring to make sure all pieces are evenly coated. Bake until custard is set, 25 to 30 minutes.

Pumpkin Butter

INGREDIENTS:

1 (29 ounce) can pumpkin puree, approx. 3½ cups (or roast and puree a sugar pumpkin)
¾ cup apple juice or cider
2 teaspoons ground ginger
½ teaspoon ground cloves
1 1/3 cups brown sugar
1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
juice of half a lemon

DIRECTIONS:

Combine pumpkin, apple juice/cider, spices, and sugar in a large saucepan; stir well. Bring mixture to a boil. Reduce heat, and simmer for 30 minutes or until thickened. Stir frequently. Adjust spices to taste. Stir in lemon juice, or more to taste.

Once cool, pumpkin butter can be kept in an airtight container in the fridge.

To preserve: Spoon hot pumpkin mixture into hot jars, filling to within ¼ inch from top. Remove air bubbles; wipe jar rims. Cover at once with metal lids, and screw on bands. Process in a boiling water bath for 10 minutes.

Pumpkin Couscous

INGREDIENTS:

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup canned pumpkin (or fresh pumpkin that has been roasted and pureed)
1 cup apple cider
1 tablespoons olive oil
 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon allspice
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cloves
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon ground ginger
1 cinnamon stick
1 cup couscous
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup pecans, toasted
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup golden raisins

DIRECTIONS:

Combine cider, cinnamon stick and olive oil a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Remove cinnamon stick and pour cider over dry couscous in a bowl. Cover the bowl and let sit for 5-10 minutes. Fluff with a fork and stir in pumpkin, spices, pecans and raisins. Serve a la mode if desired (tastes great with a scoop of Stonyfield Farms Vanilla Chai ice cream).

Pumpkin Pound Cake

INGREDIENTS:

2 ³/₄ cups sugar
1 ¹/₂ cups butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
6 eggs
3 cups flour
¹/₂ teaspoon baking powder
¹/₂ teaspoon salt
³/₄ teaspoon cinnamon
¹/₂ teaspoon ginger
¹/₄ teaspoon cloves
1 cup canned pumpkin

DIRECTIONS:

Preheat the oven to 350, spray a Bundt pan with cooking spray and dust it with flour. In a large bowl, beat the sugar and butter until fluffy. Add the vanilla and then the eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. In a small bowl, combine flour, baking powder, salt, cinnamon, ginger & cloves and mix well. Alternately add dry ingredients and pumpkin to the butter mixture, beating well after each addition. Pour the batter into the pan. Bake for 70 minutes (toothpick test it for doneness). Cool in the pan for 15 minutes, then completely on a serving plate.

Cocktails / Beverages

Classic Bloody Mary

INGREDIENTS:

1 ½ ounces vodka (grey goose orange adds an extra, subtle citrus kick)

½ cup V8 juice

2 teaspoons freshly squeezed lemon juice

Worcestershire sauce to taste

Cholula Mexican hot sauce to taste (Tabasco is typical, but I prefer the flavor of Cholula)

1 celery stick for garnish

1 lemon wedge for garnish

DIRECTIONS:

Combine the vodka, the V8 juice, the lemon juice, the Worcestershire sauce, the hot sauce, 1 cup ice cubes, and salt and pepper to taste, shake the mixture well, and strain it into a tall glass filled with ice cubes. Garnish the Bloody Mary with the celery stick and the lemon wedge.

Frozen Lemonade with Blackberry Puree

A slushy blend of sweetened fresh lemon juice and ice, this version includes blackberries, but you could use strawberries, raspberries or blueberries for equally tasty results.

INGREDIENTS:

1 ¼ cups plus 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice
1/3 cup fresh orange juice
¾ cup simple syrup
2 tablespoons honey
1 pint fresh blackberries, juiced (about 1/3 cup), plus more blackberries for garnish
4 ½ cups ice cubes
4 fresh mint sprigs

DIRECTIONS:

In a small bowl, stir together the 1 ¼ cups lemon juice, the orange juice and the ¾ cup simple syrup. Set aside.

In another small bowl, stir together the blackberry juice, the 1 teaspoon lemon juice and the 2 tablespoons honey. Set aside.

Put the ice cubes in a blender and add the lemon juice mixture. Blend until smooth.

Put 1 tablespoon of the blackberry puree into each of 4 glasses. Pour in the frozen lemonade, dividing evenly. Garnish each with a mint sprig and a few blackberries. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

Rogue Chocolate Stout Punch

INGREDIENTS:

per drink

12 oz cold Rogue Chocolate Stout

¼ cup sweetened condensed milk

1/16 teaspoon cocoa

1/16 teaspoon allspice

1/16 teaspoon cinnamon

DIRECTIONS:

In a small bowl whisk together the cocoa, allspice and cinnamon to remove any clumps.

Then pour the stout into a large cup (larger than you'd think, this will foam) and gently stir in the spiced condensed milk. Serve immediately.