

Baked Zucchini

Joyce Holste, Midlothian

- 4 fresh zucchinis
- 2 c bread crumbs
- ¼ c Parmesan cheese
- 1/3 c fresh basil
- 1 ½ t red pepper flakes
- 1 t pepper
- 1 t salt
- 1 T garlic powder
- 2 eggs

Wash zucchini, with rind on, slice lengthwise into thin strips. Breadcrumb mixture: mix breadcrumbs, Parmesan cheese, basil, red pepper flakes, pepper, salt, and garlic powder. In another bowl or plate mix and beat 2 eggs separately from above. Dip zucchini in egg mixture, and then roll in breadcrumbs mixture. Put on baking sheet, lined with parchment paper. Bake 450° for 15-20 minutes and flip halfway through baking. Serve with dip if desired.

Optional serving dip: 1/3 cup mayo, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, ½ teaspoon salt, and 1 teaspoon pepper.

Cynthia's Cottage Cheese Pancakes

Jackie Payne, Riverside

Mix together:

- ¾ c all-purpose flour
- 1 T sugar
- ¾ t baking powder
- ¼ t baking soda

Stir together and mix in:

- ¾ c 1-2% small curd cottage cheese*
- 2/3 c milk
- 2 lg egg whites or 1 large egg, beaten
- ½ t vanilla extract

Mix and then stir the ingredients together. Coat a skillet with 2 teaspoons oil and heat over medium heat. Drop the cottage cheese batter by scant ¼ cupfuls into the skillet, two or three at a time. When the bottoms are set and tops have small bubbles (about 1 minute), turn and cook until just firm in the center, 1-3 minutes. Add more oil to skillet as needed. I have never made these pancakes in a pancake and waffle maker. A cast iron skillet works very well and so would a non-stick skillet.

Serve with fresh fruit, fruit syrup, maple syrup, or a dusting of confectioners' sugar. These pancakes are very light, like little pillows. And they contain protein! Makes 8-10 pancakes.

*If cottage cheese is watery, drain it before using.

Easy Lentil Soup

Jackie P., Riverside

- 1 med onion, chopped
- 2 t olive oil
- 2-3 t cumin, to taste
- 1 c red lentils, rinsed and sorted
- ¼ t salt
- ¼-½ t red pepper flakes
- Water

This soup is very quick to make and very tasty. Chop onion, sauté in olive oil until soft, and then add cumin, to taste. Cook 30 seconds or less until you can smell the cumin. Then add red lentils, salt, red pepper flakes, and water to cover, adding as necessary. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for about 30 minutes, until the lentils are soft. Remove from heat and blend until smooth with an immersion blender. Serve with a squeeze of lemon juice.

NOTE: Add other ingredients like diced potatoes or carrots, chopped Swiss chard or other greens, chopped tomatoes, etc., or a tablespoon of rice to thicken the soup. It's a great way to use up little bits of leftovers from the refrigerator. Serves 4-6.

Italian Crescent Zucchini Pie

Wanda Bruinsma, Lynwood

- 4 c thin sliced fresh zucchini
- 1 c diced onion
- ½ t salt and pepper
- ½ t garlic powder
- 1 t Italian seasoning
- 2 T fresh parsley or 1 t dried
- 2 eggs
- 8 oz shredded Italian cheese
- 1 T butter or EVOO
- 2 t mustard of choice
- 1 can Crescent Rolls

Press one can roll into lightly greased 8x11-inch pan and pre-bake at 375° for 4 minutes. Spread 2 teaspoons mustard over the crescent crust, set aside.

Sauté zucchini and onion in 1 tablespoon butter or extra virgin olive oil for 8 minutes. Stir in salt and pepper, garlic powder, Italian seasoning, and parsley flakes. Blend 8 oz. shredded Italian cheese and 2 beaten eggs, and stir into zucchini mixture. Spread over crust. Bake 18-20 minutes, until set.

Jackie's Turkey Meatloaf

Jackie Paine, Riverside

- 2 slices fresh or stale bread of choice
- ½ c milk
- 1 med onion, chopped
- 1 small bunch parsley or substitute
- 1 pkg chopped spinach, thawed and well-drained
- 2 lbs ground turkey
- 2 large eggs, slightly beaten
- 1-2 t mild Hungarian paprika
- ½ t black pepper

Soak 2 pieces of bread in milk for 5-10 minutes. Chop onion and parsley or spinach, eggs, Hungarian paprika, and black pepper. Mix well by hand (or use a Kitchenaid mixer) until mixture is well blended. Shape into a rounded 12x4-inch loaf that is about 3 inches high on a parchment paper covered rimmed baking sheet. Smooth top and bake at 350° for 20-30 minutes, and then increase temperature to 450° and bake another 10 minutes until juices run clear and internal temperature is 165°. Baking time varies on how thick the meatloaf is.

Pistachio-Pudding Cake

Linda Tobias, Burbank

- 1 box Duncan Hines White Cake Mix (or any white cake mix that does NOT contain pudding in it)
- 2 small boxes (3.4 oz) of instant pistachio pudding
- ½ c water
- ½ c oil
- ½ c milk
- 5 eggs

Mix all ingredients in a large mixing bowl and beat on medium speed for approx. 2 minutes. Once completely mixed, pour into a greased bundt pan. Bake at 350° for 50-55 minutes. Top with powdered sugar if you like.

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Sweet Meatball Appetizer

Kathy Lesser, Chicago (This is my late husband's recipe, and everyone loves them!)

2 lbs ground beef	2 T grape jelly
2 eggs	½ c brown sugar
½ t salt	2 garlic cloves, minced
¼ t pepper	2 T onion, chopped
1 oz BBQ sauce (plain is the best one for this recipe)	½ t Tabasco sauce

Thoroughly mix the ground beef, eggs, salt, and pepper. Set aside. In a large pot, combine all the other ingredients. Roll mixture into 1-inch balls and drop into sauce, bring to a boil. Turn down and simmer for 40 minutes, until done. Makes about 45-50 meatballs. Enjoy!

Mike's Beef Pot Pie

Mike O'Brien, Argo Summit

2 lg bone in beef shanks	1 c cold water
2 c potatoes, peeled and diced	4 T corn starch
2 c sweet corn	2 T black pepper
2 c carrots, peeled and diced	2 T fennel seed
1 ½ c green peas	2 oz olive oil
1 ½ c green beans, chopped	2 oz soy sauce
1 c celery, diced	2 oz Worcestershire Sauce
1 med onion, diced	6 9-inch pie shells, deep dish; makes 3 pies
2-3 garlic cloves, diced	
3 T beef base or Bullion	

Mix together soy, Worcestershire, black pepper, and fennel, and marinate beef shanks for a few hours or overnight. Braise beef in olive oil in cast iron skillet until well browned, and save drippings. Remove from pan and cool.

Filling: Sauté onions, garlic, all vegetables in saved drippings until tender. Mix cold water and corn starch, add to filling and heat until thickened. Add beef base or bullion and mix well. Cut braised beef shanks from bone and dice well and add to filling mix. Fill 3 9-inch shells with mixture and top off with other pie shells, crimp edges to seal. Bake fresh in 350° oven for about 1 hour. Frozen in 425° oven for about 1 hour.

Variety Bean & Veggie Salad

Alexia Koliatsis, Arlington Heights

Salad:

1 can garbanzo beans, drained	3 green onions, sliced
1 can black beans, drained	Dash fresh garlic
1 can red kidney beans, drained	Dash parsley
1 jar pickled beets, drained	Few Greek olives
1-2 cucumbers, sliced	Few cherry tomatoes
3 stalks celery, chopped	You can add some feta or fresh mozzarella cheese if you wish.
½ red onion, sliced	

Dressing:

½ c olive oil	¼ c Ranch dressing
¼ c Balsamic vinegar	

Add all the salad ingredients to a large bowl and toss together. Add all the dressing ingredients to a separate bowl and mix well. Pour the dressing over the salad, ensuring the vegetables are coated. Eat and enjoy!

Parsley Red Potatoes & Creamed Fresh Peas

Joyce Holste, Midlothian

Potatoes:

2 lbs red potatoes	1/3 c butter, cubed
1-1½ t salt	2 T minced fresh parsley

Creamed Fresh Peas:

1 c peas, farm or garden-fresh	Salt & Pepper
2 T flour	Sugar, pinch to taste
1 T butter	Water

Milk

Potatoes: Cut eyes out of potatoes, no need to peel, and cut in quarters. Place in large saucepan; cover with water, add salt, and bring to a boil. Reduce heat, cover and cook until tender approx. 15 minutes. Drain. Add butter and parsley; toss until butter is melted.

Creamed Fresh Peas: Cook peas in enough water to cook, until slightly tender. Do not drain, add butter and stir. In small bowl, whisk together 2 tablespoons of flour and enough milk to remove all the lumps, making a creamy gravy consistency. Add salt and pepper to taste, and a little sugar if desired. Add mixture into peas and cook over medium-high heat until thick and bubbly, stirring tenderly, about 5 minutes or less.

Rhubarb Pie

Kathy Lesser, Chicago

2 10-inch pie crusts, unbaked	1 egg beaten
1 ½ c sugar	3 ½ c fresh rhubarb (use equal parts rhubarb and strawberries if desired)
2 ½ T cornstarch	

Slice rhubarb into 1-inch pieces and mix with cornstarch. Add egg and sugar, and mix well. Line pie plate with one pastry crust. Add filling. Cover with second pie crust. Seal edges and slit a few openings on top. Bake 30 minutes at 425° and then 15-20 minutes at 325°. Cool on wire rack before slicing. Enjoy!

Pumpkin Sour Cream Coffee Cake

Lynne Rine, Glenview

Streusel Topping:

2 c all-purpose flour	1 ½ t cinnamon
1 1/3 c sugar	¾ c (1 ½ sticks) butter, softened

Pumpkin Coffee Cake:

3 c all-purpose flour	2 c sugar
1 T pumpkin pie spice	3 large eggs
1 ½ t baking soda	1 T vanilla
1 t baking powder	1 can pumpkin puree (15 oz can)
½ t salt	1/3 c sour cream
¾ c (1 ½ sticks) butter, softened	1 c milk

Preheat oven to 350°. Grease 9x13-inch cake pan. Set aside. Start by making the streusel topping. In medium bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, and cinnamon. Add softened butter and stir with fork until crumbly. Set aside. Mix flour, pumpkin spice, baking soda, baking powder, and salt in medium bowl. Set aside.

In large bowl/stand mixer, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs until smooth, then stir in vanilla, pumpkin, and sour cream. Beat in flour mixture alternating with milk, until batter is well combined. Pour batter into prepared 9x13-inch cake pan. Top with streusel topping. Spread evenly and gently press onto top of cake with hands. Bake 60 minutes or until toothpick inserted into center comes clean. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Hot Honey Ultimate Queso

Cook DuPage Beekeepers Association

Hot Honey Ultimate Queso:

¾ c cooked shrimp, diced into ½-inch pieces	6 T local hot honey
¾ c cooked chorizo, crumbled into ½-inch pieces	cilantro leaves, as needed
6 T coarsely shredded jack cheese	12 c blue corn tortilla chips
	3 ¾ c Queso Base

Queso Base:

1 t sodium citrate	2 T Roma tomato, seeded and diced into ¼-inch pieces
1 c whole milk	¼ c roasted poblano pepper, peeled, seeded and diced into ¼-inch pieces
1 1/8 c coarsely shredded jack cheese	2 T fresh cilantro, chopped
1 1/8 c coarsely shredded sharp white cheddar cheese	

Hot Honey Ultimate Queso: Place a sauté pan on high heat. Add the cooked shrimp and chorizo pieces to the pan and heat through. Evenly distribute mixture between 6-8-oz. oven-proof casserole serving dishes. Ladle hot queso base over shrimp and chorizo. Top with jack cheese shreds. Brown the top of the queso in a salamander or cheese melter. To serve, drizzle queso with hot honey and garnish with cilantro. Place queso on serving dish and surround with blue corn tortilla chips. Serve immediately.

Queso Base: In heavy-bottomed sauce pan, combine sodium citrate and milk. Bring to a simmer over medium heat, but do not boil. Reduce heat to medium-low and gradually add the jack cheese and sharp white cheddar, whisk constantly. Be sure the cheeses are fully melted before the next addition. When all the cheese is added, the sauce should be smooth and glossy. Add the tomato, poblano pepper, and cilantro. Stir to combine. Hot hold until further use. Makes 6 servings.

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