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Margaret Armstrong's Julekage
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Nicole and JP's Wedding Margarita

Breakfast

Parmesan Potatoes

1 package frozen hash brown potatoes
1 onion, chopped, salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup melted butter
1/2 cup Parmesan cheese
Preheat oven to 350. Butter a 9 x 13 pan. Add frozen potatoes, salt, and pepper. Pour melted butter over the top, then the Parmesan cheese. Cover the dish with foil. Bake 45 minutes, then take off the foil; bake for another 45 min.

Creamy Hash Browns

2 lb. package of frozen hash brown potatoes, thawed

1 can cream of mushroom soup

1 can cream of chicken soup

8-ounce container sour cream

8-ounce package of grated cheddar cheese

1/2 medium onion, grated

Preheat oven to 350. Mix all ingredients together. Butter the bottom and sides of a 9-inch x 13-inch pan. Pour potato mixture into the pan; bake uncovered 1 hour.

Cheddar Hash Brown Casserole

3 cups half & half

1/2 cup butter

2 cups grated cheddar cheese, chopped green onions

(2 or 3) 1 tsp. salt

2 packages frozen hash browns (Irish style) (don’t thaw)

Layer potatoes, cheese, green onions in large baking dish. Melt butter, add to half & half, pour over potatoes. Sprinkle Parmesan cheese on top. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

Sunday Brunch Casserole

Back in the late 1970s, Grandma served Sunday brunch (attendance was as required as church). James Mark, Chris and Brian (the babies) were entertained by Grandpa who would make funny faces at the table while Grandma dished up the potatoes.

1/2 pound sliced bacon

1/2 cup chopped onion

1/2 cup chopped green pepper

12 eggs

1 cup milk

1 package frozen hash browns

1 cup cheddar cheese, grated

1 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. pepper

1/4 tsp. dill

Cook bacon in a skillet until crisp. Remove, drain, and crumble. In the drippings, sauté onion and green pepper until tender. Remove with a slotted spoon. Beat eggs and milk in a large bowl. Stir in hash browns, cheese, salt, pepper, dill, onion, green pepper and bacon. Transfer to a greased, 13 x 9 inch baking dish. Bake at 350, uncovered, for 35-40 minutes, or until a knife blade inserted near the center, comes out clean. Serves 6-8.

Sour Cream Coffee Cake

Mike’s department started having afternoon tea several years ago and each lab takes turns providing goodies. Most of the time Mike does his own providing, but once in a while I bake this coffee cake or Mom’s toffee bars; I always get requests for the recipes.

1 cup butter, room temp.

3 eggs, separated

3/4 cup sugar

1 cup sour cream (room temp)

1 tsp. vanilla

1 3/4 cup flour

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. baking powder

Sugar mixture for top and middle of coffee cake:

1 tsp. cinnamon

1/2 cup chopped nuts

1/4 cup brown sugar (packed)

Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Butter and flour a bundt pan. Beat egg whites until stiff, set aside. Cream butter and sugar together till fluffy; beat in egg yolks, one at a time. Add vanilla, sour cream, beat till blended. Sift together flour, baking soda and baking powder; add to butter mixture. Fold in egg whites. Sprinkle one-half the sugar mixture in the bottom of the pan; add half the batter, sprinkle batter with the rest of the sugar mixture; add remaining batter. Bake for one hour. Cool in pan for 10 min; then loosen sides with the blade of a table knife, turn cake out of pan onto a rack. Cool.

Rhodes Rolls

These were popular at Sunday brunches. Pat introduced them to the family and all the kids loved them.

2 dozen frozen Rhodes rolls (You can find them in the freezer section at the supermarket)

1 1/2 packages butterscotch pudding mix

3/4 cup brown sugar

1 stick butter

Line bottom of a buttered 9 x 13 pan with pecans or walnuts. Sprinkle with pudding mix, then place the rolls over the mixture. Melt butter and sugar, pour over rolls. Cover with foil, put in a cold oven overnight. Bake in the morning, 15-20 minutes at 350 degrees. Turn them onto a foil covered cookie sheet. The topping will be like caramel rolls.

Pumpkin Bread

This recipe comes from Mom's friend Donna DeVinck. It's a favorite of Nora and Emma.

1 can pumpkin (15 ounce size)

3 cups white sugar

4 eggs

1 cup oil

3 1/3 cups flour

1/2 tsp. baking powder

2 tsp. baking soda

1 1/2 tsp. salt (or less)

1 tsp. nutmeg

1 tsp. cloves

1 tsp. cinnamon

Grease and flour 3 medium loaf pans. Bake at 325 for 1.5 hours or till toothpick tests dry. Leave in pans for about 10 minutes. Take out to cool. Freezes well.

Mother's Graham Gems

I include this recipe for its historical value—it's from Margaret LeRoux's collection and is from her mother (Mary Bennett from County Armagh, Ireland), so that makes it the oldest LeRoux family recipe I found.

2 eggs, well beaten

1/2 cup melted butter

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 tsp. salt

1 cup sour milk or buttermilk

1 tsp. baking soda added to the sour milk

1 tsp. baking powder

1/2 cup graham flour added to 1 cup regular flour (You probably have to go to a health food store to get graham flour)

Mix all ingredients; pour into buttered muffin tins. Bake in a preheated 425 oven 15 minutes, until brown.

Kringle

This is a coffee cake recipe Mom got from Marie Johnson. It's a little tricky to make, but looks and tastes very impressive.

Melt 1/2 cup margarine or butter in a medium pot, stir in 1 cup flour and 2 T. water Spread on a cookie sheet in a rectangle. Bake at 350 for 5 minutes

While base is baking melt 1/2 cup butter or margarine with 1 cup water; bring to a boil. Add 1 cup flour, stir till absorbed, then add 3 eggs, one at a time, beating after each addition.

Add 1 tsp. almond flavoring.

Spoon this mixture onto baked crust, increase oven temp to 375, bake 45 minutes.

Frost with the following glaze:

1 1/2 cups powdered sugar

2 T. water

1 tsp. almond flavoring

Sprinkle with nuts or cherries if desired

Doughnuts

What I remember are the doughnut holes rolled in powdered sugar and being sent to Paulson's grocery store to buy lard ("put it on the account, Mr. Paulson") to fry them in. Since Mom's recipe makes no mention of how to fry the doughnuts, I consulted "Joy of Cooking;" if you have a copy, it's well worth reading. To summarize: deep frying is dangerous! You need a heavy, deep, flat-bottomed kettle at least 3 to 4 qt. size. Melt 3 pounds of lard over medium heat until the temperature reaches 375 degrees on a frying thermometer, or drop a cube of bread into the lard and time it for 1 minute. If it turns brown, the lard is hot enough. Do not let the lard get so hot it smokes. And finally, be careful when putting doughnuts into the hot lard—it will bubble up and you don't want it to spill over onto the burner. Then there's the issue of what to do with the lard after you're finished frying the doughnuts. Maybe you should just read this recipe for nostalgia, if you're an older LeRoux ponder Connolly's and the French doughnuts on Thursdays, sigh, and then go buy a dozen at your favorite bakery.

Make sour milk:

1 1/2 cups milk

1 1/2 tsp. vinegar

Let this sit (it will curdle) while you beat eggs and sugar together. Just before adding dry ingredients, put 1 1/2 tsp. baking soda into the sour milk to make it foamy (Be sure milk is in a container big enough to increase its size once the baking soda is added)

While making the dough, heat lard for frying in a large kettle.

Beat in large bowl of mixer:

3 eggs

1 tsp. salt

1 tsp. vanilla

1 1//2 T. lard, melted (substitute butter if this grosses you out)

Gradually add 1 1/2 cups sugar

1 1/2 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. nutmeg

Enough flour to make a soft dough—about 3 cups

Add alternating with the foaming sour milk

Flour your hands and gather dough up into a ball, (Joy of Cooking says to chill dough at this point so it's not so sticky. Mom didn't do this) place on a floured pastry cloth or large sheet of waxed paper. Take about half the dough and pat into a round, about 1/2 inch thick. Dip a doughnut cutter into flour and press firmly into the dough. Dip a pancake turner into the hot lard and then slide it under the cut doughnuts (the hole should stay behind) and gently slip them into the hot lard. Add doughnuts, one at a time at slight intervals, fry a few at a time or they won't cook properly. Doughnuts will rise to the top. Turn them over carefully to cook on the other side; this should take no more than about 3 minutes for each doughnut. When cooked, remove with a fork or tongs, place on paper towels to drain (Mom used flattened paper bags); after they're cool, dip into powdered sugar (Mom put powdered sugar in a bag and would let us shake the doughnuts.) Fry the doughnut holes separately; they don't take as long.

Cranberry Muffins and Butter Sauce

A Radtke family favorite

3 T. butter, melted

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup milk

1/2 can Carnation evaporated milk (save other half for sauce)

2 cups flour

2 tsp. soda

2 cups whole cranberries

Mix like muffins, bake 350 degrees for about 25 minutes Sauce 1/2 cup butter 1 cup sugar 1/2 can Carnation evaporated milk 1 tsp. vanilla Bring all ingredients to a slow boil, remove from heat, serve warm sauce over muffins.

Buttery Bubble Bread

1 package yeast

1 cup warm water

1/2 cup shortening

1/2 cup sugar

1 egg

1/2 tsp. salt

4-4 1/2 cups flour, divided

6 T. butter or margarine, melted

In a large mixing bowl, dissolve yeast in warm water. Add sugar, shortening, egg, salt and 1 cup flour. Stir in enough remaining flour to form a soft dough. Turn onto a floured surface, knead until smooth and elastic, about 6-8 minutes. Place in greased bowl, turning once to grease the top. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 1 hour. Punch dough down. Turn onto a lightly floured surface; shape into 1 1/2 inch balls. Dip balls into melted butter and arrange evenly in a greased 9 inch tube pan. Drizzle with remaining butter. Cover and let rise in a warm place until doubled, about 45 minutes. Bake a 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes, until golden brown. Cool 5 minutes, invert onto serving platter. Serve warm.

Nut Bread

This was the alternative to banana bread; a very different taste, but if you like walnuts, you'll like this.

1 cup brown sugar

1 egg

3 T. melted butter

1/2 tsp. salt

1 tsp. vanilla

1 cup sour milk (Place 1T. white vinegar in a one-cup measuring, fill with milk at room temperature-- heat in microwave for 15 seconds if milk is cold) 1 tsp. baking soda

2 cups flour

1 cup coarsely chopped walnuts

Beat egg and brown sugar together; add melted butter, salt and vanilla. Add baking soda to sour milk—it will foam and double in size, so pour milk into a larger container first. Add sour milk to

the egg mixture alternating with the flour. Stir in chopped walnuts. Pour into a buttered and floured loaf pan. Bake at 300 for 1 1/4 hours. Check by poking a toothpick into the center. If it comes out sticky, leave in oven for 5 minutes more, then test again. Turn nut bread out of baking pan onto a rack to cool. Cool completely before slicing. Slices better if made a day ahead, then wrap in plastic wrap or foil after completely cooled.

Banana Bread

A popular offering for morning or afternoon “come over for coffee,” back before Mom went to work at Lignell’s. (Sometimes she’d make both banana bread and nut bread). She sliced it very thin, then cut each slice in half and lined them up in a cascade down the middle of a serving plate. Bridgeman’s provided a ready supply of over-ripe bananas and banana bread baking made the whole downstairs smell wonderful. It’s the first recipe I remember making on my own when I had my apartment in Madison, probably because I wanted it to smell like home.

2 large or 4 small very ripe (almost black) bananas Peel and mash them in a bowl; set aside

Make sour milk: put 1/4 cup milk in a drinking glass (at least 8 oz) Add 1 tsp. vinegar; stir and set aside

Mix together 1/2 cup butter or margarine (room temp) with 1 1/2 cups of sugar in a mixer or use a hand mixer.

The original recipe says cream together, but I’ve never gotten this much sugar to be creamy with 1/2 cup butter)

Add two eggs, (Before breaking the shells, put them in a bowl in the sink and run hot water over them for a couple of minutes—gently—so you don’t break the shells—to take the chill off the eggs before you add them to the butter-sugar mixture. Beat—then it should have more of a creamy consistency. Add the mashed bananas; beat until they’re mixed in. Add 1 tsp. baking soda to the sour milk; stir. It should foam up almost to the top of the glass. If it doesn’t, dump out the sour milk mixture and start again. You may need to warm the milk a bit; if it doesn’t foam when you add the baking soda, the banana bread won’t rise.

Add a little of the foamy sour milk to the banana mixture, beat it in, then add 2 1/4 cups flour; add the flour in three batches, alternate with the sour milk mixture, so that you add flour last. At the very end, add 1/2 cup-1 cup chopped walnuts if you like.

Pour into a greased and floured bread pan. Bake at 350 for at least an hour. Test for doneness by poking the center with the blade of a thin knife or toothpick; if it comes out clean, it’s done. Sometimes it takes a lot longer to bake; keep testing every five minutes. Cool in the bread pan for 10 minutes, then turn the bread onto a rack. Best when made a day ahead. The loaf keeps, wrapped in plastic, for a week to 10 days if stored in the refrigerator.

Giant Curly Pancake

Mom loved this, but she hardly ever was successful at making it curl because she was too impatient to let the oven pre-heat before she put in the frying pan. She'd call me and complain that her pancake didn't puff up and curl; I'd explain why— unless the oven is really hot, the pancake won't curl— but she never remembered. The next time she'd try the recipe, the same thing would happen. I tried to make it for her whenever I came home to visit. It's probably the only thing I could do better than Mom.

1/2 cup milk

1/2 cup flour

2 eggs

T. butter, melted

dash of nutmeg

Juice of 1/2 small lemon

Powdered sugar

Preheat oven to 425. Place a 10-12 inch frying pan in the oven for about 5 minutes to preheat. (Or, instead, heat the frying pan on a burner set to medium, then add butter. As soon as it melts, add the flour, milk and egg mixture) While the pan is heating, beat eggs lightly in a bowl, add milk, flour, and nutmeg. Put the butter into the hot frying pan; as soon as it melts, pour in the batter, place pan back in the oven. Bake 15-20 minutes. Pancake will puff up and edges will curl. Remove from oven, pour lemon juice over the pancake and sift a couple tablespoons of powdered sugar over it. If you have a small frying pan, this recipe can be cut in half for an individual pancake. Emily asked for a curly pancake for breakfast almost daily when she was 3.

Hot Cereal for Two

Slow cooking oatmeal (or thick oats) and another hot cereal (7 grain, steel cut oats, Scottish oatmeal) totaling 2/3 of a cup

Dried cranberries

Peanut butter If you like rough textured oatmeal bring water to a boil first, if you like smooth oatmeal, add cereal to water and bring to a boil. Add salt. After bringing to a boil over medium heat, turn to low, keep covered and simmer for about 10 minutes. Add dried cranberries after about 6 minutes. When done take off the burner, keep covered and let it set for 3 to 5 minutes. Add peanut butter before serving if you like, (which all LeRouxs do).

Waffles

I don't think she ever made this size recipe; her waffle breakfasts required at least doubling or tripling the amounts.

1 cup flour

2 T. sugar

2 tsp. baking powder

dash of salt

1 egg yolk

1 cup milk

2 T. butter, melted

Mix all together, fold in one beaten egg white, Pour into waffle iron.

Grandma's Pancakes

This is a LeRoux classic, even though Fred reverted to Hungry Jack when he cooked for himself. I've impressed many of Mark and Emily's friends with homemade pancakes; you all have probably done the same with your kids' friends too. The secret is separating and beating the egg whites.

2 cups flour 4 tsp. baking powder

4 T. sugar dash of salt (I add either a dash of cinnamon or nutmeg)

4 T. melted butter

2 cups milk

2 eggs, separated

Sift together flour, baking powder, sugar, salt, cinnamon or nutmeg. Preheat pancake griddle. Melt butter in a medium size pan; (I add the milk once the butter is melted to warm it slightly) Beat egg whites till stiff but not dry; add milk-butter to dry ingredients, mix quickly just to incorporate the dry ingredients, then fold in egg whites.

Cream Biscuits

3 1/4 cups flour

3 tsp sugar

3 tsp bkg powder

2 tsp salt

1 pint heavy cream

Preheat your oven to 400 degrees.

The trick I've found to making super light and creamy biscuits is to be delicate with the dough, don't over stir or over knead. In a large bowl start with 3 cups of flour and mix in the rest of your dry ingredients, then add your cream. Using a rubber spatula stir the mixture until it just starts to form a shaggy dough. If the dough is too wet add the additional flour. On a floured workspace turn out the dough and pat it out. Fold the dough onto itself 5 to 10 times. Pat it out to about ½ inch thickness and cut into your preferred shape. Place the biscuits on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper and bake for 13-18 minutes or until lightly browned on top and bottom. Let these sit for 10 minutes until cool.

The Only Good Bagels in Seattle

1 c + 2 tsp ice water

2 Tbsp malt syrup

2 ⅔ cups bread flour (14.66 oz)

2 tsp instant yeast

2 tsp salt

For Boil:

8 cups water

1 Tbsp baking soda

1-2 Tbsp malt syrup

These take some prep, but they're the best bagels that can be found in Washington, at least north of Seattle.

In a food processor blend flour, yeast, malt syrup, ice water until combined. Let rest for 10 minutes. Add salt and blend for 90 seconds. Kneed the dough until it's workable and divide into 3.5 oz balls, place on baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Let rest for 15minutes. Roll out the dough into a snake then hold one end in place while you roll the other end down twisting it. Wrap the twisted dough snake around your hand pinching the ends together and rolling them to

connect. Do this for the remaining bagels, place back on baking sheet, cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate overnight.

The next day bring your water, baking soda and malt syrup to a boil and preheat your oven to 450 degrees. Boil your bagels for 20 seconds on each side then bake on parchment paper for 20-25 minutes.

This recipe is an altered form of this Babish recipe, they're chewy enough without the gluten powder, I can never get them to release from a wire rack, and flipping halfway doesn't seem to evenly brown so hasn't been worth the hassle. But take a look to see the twisting method which makes a huge difference.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZrJtpCTZk38&t=244s

Brunch Eggs

Jim makes this every Christmas Eve. He pops it into the oven Christmas morning and it bakes while the kids are unwrapping presents. The recipe calls for sausage but bacon is delicious too. This is a large recipe; there are always plenty of leftovers which is nice!

6 slices French bread, crumbled

1 lg. hot sausage, fried

8 oz. sharp cheddar, grated

1 onion, chopped

1 can chopped green chilies, drained

2 cup milk

1 tsp. prepared mustard

8 eggs, beaten

1 T. chili powder

Mix all ingredients together. Let stand in refrigerator overnight. Bake in greased 9x13 inch dish at 350 degrees for 1 hour.

Oatmeal Pancakes

2 cups quick-cooking oatmeal (regular old-fashioned works fine too; they'll just be chewier)

1 ½ cups milk (or alternative)

½ cup granulated sugar (feel free to adjust/experiment with brown sugar)

1 tsp. baking powder

2 eggs, well beaten

dash of salt

¼ tsp. cinnamon

go nuts and add nutmeg, cloves, allspice…

Mix all ingredients; beat into thin batter. Cook on greased griddle until done. Add milk if batter isn't thin enough.

Instant Pot Homemade Yogurt

Milk of choice (whole milk is best)

2-3 Tbsp plain yogurt -- Fage works very well; otherwise look for anything with lactobacillus bulgaricus, lactobacillus acidophilus, L. animalis and L. casei so your yogurt culture will self-perpetuate.

Fill your containers with milk up to 1 inch below the rim (I use a big almost half-gallon pyrex; you can also do jars or whatever will fit)

Pour 2 cups of water into the Instant Pot inner pot and place trivet in inner pot.

Carefully place container/jars on the trivet and close the Instant Pot.

Cover the jars loosely with aluminum foil, parchment paper or jar lids without screwing them on so steam won't drip down and make your yogurt watery. If you use parchment paper, you can wash it and reuse it many times!!

Set Instant Pot to 'Steam' for 1 minute.

Do a Quick Release to de-pressurize the Instant Pot.

Open the Instant Pot and remove jars when cool enough to handle. Using an instant thermometer to measure the milk's temperature, let milk cool to 110 degrees F. (or just until the outside of the container feels warm but not hot to the touch)

Set aside the cover--you'll use it again.

Remove skin (if present) from the top of the milk. (or leave it; I like it!)

Add your starter yogurt to each jar and stir well.

Add more milk if needed.

Place jars back on trivet.

Cover container again with whatever you used in step 4

Close the Instant Pot lid and set to 'Yogurt' mode for 8-18 hours. (the longer you leave it, the more sour it is)

Open the Instant Pot and move the jars to the fridge for a few hours to chill.

Scoop out 2-3 tbsp. Yogurt and put it in the freezer for your next batch! It will keep perpetuating for a long time. I refresh every 6-12 months or so.

German Pancake

½ stick butter

3 eggs

½ cup milk

½ cup flour

Melt butter in 9x13 pyrex pan (or dutch oven) at 400 degrees. Mix eggs, milk, flour, and a pinch of salt. Let sit for 10 minutes. Pour mixture into buttered pan. Bake until golden brown 20-40 minutes, dutch ovens take longer. Top with butter, syrup, powdered sugar, and lemon juice.

Sides

Peanut Butter Butter Sandwiches

Saltines. Peanut butter. Room temp salted butter. It's so much better than you'd think it would be.

Yorkshire Pudding

(Serve with roast beef)

I'm pretty sure Mom got this recipe from Shirley Anderson years after all of us left home; it's way fancier than anything she made for the roast beef dinners I remember.

1 cup flour

1/2 tsp. salt

1 cup milk

2 eggs

Beat all ingredients together with a rotary beater (egg beater) just until smooth (Overbeating will reduce volume). Put an 8 x 8 x 2-inch pan in the oven to heat. Remove roast beef, increase oven temp to 425, pour off 1/2 cup pan drippings and pour them into the pre-heated pan. Add batter, bake 35-40 min. Cut into squares and serve immediately.

Portobello Mushrooms on the Grill

Take the stems off large Portobello mushrooms.

Marinate them for half an hour in the following mixture:

balsamic vinegar (about 1/4 cup)

1/2 tsp. sugar

1 clove crushed garlic

1/8 cup sesame oil pepper to taste

Crumbled gorgonzola cheese

Put mushrooms cut side up on the grill over indirect heat (not directly over the coals) Baste with any leftover marinade, cover and grill for about 7 minutes. Flip them over and grill for about 7 more minutes, then flip again so cut side is up. Fill the cup with gorgonzola cheese; remove mushrooms from grill as soon as cheese melts.

Pissaladiere

This is the one party item that I really like to make. It looks great, tastes great and is great. How can you go wrong with huge amounts of onions, anchovies, and olives; preferably Greek. Start with a pastry crust, not a pizza crust recipe. I adapted Julia Child's pie crust recipe. It goes like this:

1 3/4 cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp. salt 1 stick butter

2 T. shortening

5 to 8 T. iced water

Dump flour into the food processor. Add butter, cut into very small pieces. Add salt and shortening. Then, run processor for about 4 or 5 short bursts to cut up the butter and mix the dry ingredients. Add 5 T. ice water and run machine 5 or 6 times. If the dough begins to mass on the blade (Julia's term) stop, if not, add more water one T. at a time. Repeat only if necessary. The dough should not be over-mixed. Now the fun begins. Take the dough out of the processor and break off small pieces and smash them into 5 to 6 inch chunks with the heel of your hand. (First clear off a space on the counter, or use a cutting board) This last part is called finishing the dough. It mixes the fat and flour. Pile up the pieces, pat them into a ball— don't handle the dough too much, though— and put it into the refrigerator, at least 2 hrs to a couple of days. You can also freeze it, then thaw it for a day in the refrigerator before rolling it out. You can also substitute any other pie dough (See the Martha Stewart pie dough recipe in the desserts

chapter) as long as you leave out any sugar. A sweet dough doesn't mix well with the rest of the ingredients.

Pissaladiere ingredients:

4 cups sliced yellow onions

4 to 6 T. olive oil

salt and pepper

1 tsp. or so dried oregano or thyme, or mixed dried herbs.

Two 2 oz cans flat anchovies (I usually split the fillets in half the long way)

2 dozen Mediterranean olives

About 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese

Cook the onions slowly in 4 T. olive oil, in a covered pan, stirring frequently over low heat until they are soft and thoroughly tender, but not browned. These can be cooked ahead and stored in the refrigerator for several days, or frozen.

Meanwhile, butter the bottom of a large cookie sheet, then rapidly roll out the chilled dough and cut off the excess. Fold the edges and crimp with a fork. Take a couple of forks and poke the dough all over until its full of little pock marks. This keeps it from bubbling up when it's baking. Again, you can refrigerate the pan with the spread out dough.

Just before baking, spread the onions over the dough. Then put the anchovies on in a pattern. I usually put them on diagonally about 5 inches apart so that they are in strips that criss-cross the onions. Put the olives on. I usually put one in the middle of each square made by the anchovies. Then sprinkle the herbs and Parmesan cheese on top and bake for 25 to 30 min in a preheated 425°F oven. Cut into squares before serving.

Nancy Berg Pickles

From Leslee: Grandma's childhood friend, Nancy Berg, was legendary for her fudge and her pickles. She generously shared both with our family and they were delicious. Unfortunately, I was never able to get her fudge recipe, but I did get her to show me how to make pickles. They are delicious and keep for months in the fridge.

From Marm: Mom knew how much I liked Nancy's pickles and she was determined to bring me a batch once when she and Dad flew to Worcester. Dad was equally adamant that she not bring them. But you know Mom wasn't going to let that stop her. When he wasn't looking, she tucked

a Tupperware container of the pickles into the tote bag she carried on board the plane and stowed it on top of Dad's sport coat in the overhead luggage bin. During the flight the Tupperware top came loose and pickle juice soaked into Dad's jacket. That set off bickering that continued for much of their visit. It was the last I saw of Nancy's pickles.

12 small cukes

2 onions

2 green peppers

1 red pepper

8 T pickling salt

Don't peel, but slice the cukes and onions, thinly. Combine with peppers in a large container and add 8 T. pickling salt. Let stand overnight. Drain well and pat dry between layers of paper towel. Do not rinse Mix 2 cups cider vinegar with 2 and one-half cup sugar Put pickle mixture in clean, boiled jars, half full. Pour cider mixture over the top. Cover and store in fridge.

Mashed Potato Casserole

2 cups hot mashed potatoes

1 large package cream cheese

1 small onion

2 eggs

2 T. flour salt and pepper to taste

1 can French Fried onion rings

Mix all ingredients except onion rings until blended; beat with mixer till fluffy. Pour into a buttered casserole, add 1 can French fried onion rings on top. Bake at 350 for 30-35 minutes.

Heavenly Carrots

This is from Mary LeRoux, a feature of Thanksgiving dinners from the times she volunteered her apartment as a meeting place for all of us when Mike and I drove over from Ames, Iowa. Carrots were a staple of her diet; she always had a jar of crinkle- cut, raw carrots, in her refrigerator. I think she lived on them (and Scotch).

4 cups cooked, sliced carrots

1 1/2 cups croutons

8 ounce block of Cracker Barrel sharp (or extra sharp)

Cheddar cheese, grated

1/4 cup light cream

2 eggs, beaten

1 1/2 tsp. Worcestershire sauce

salt to taste

Butter a 1 1/2 quart casserole. Mix together carrots, salt, cheese and croutons, place in casserole; mix together cream, eggs and Worcestershire sauce. Pour over carrot mixture.

Bake, uncovered, at 400 degrees for 20 minutes until browned.

Note from Marm: This recipe can be easily adapted. I've never found plain croutons, which the original recipe calls for; I've substituted seasoned croutons, but make sure they're the small variety. I usually increase the carrots to 6 cups, with 3 eggs and 1/2 cup cream, but I don't increase the amount of Worcestershire sauce.

Drunken Cranberries

(Safety note from JP: You're baking alcohol in the oven, you can easily blow off the door or create a fireball (I've done both on multiple occasions), so carefully vent your oven by opening it a crack for a few seconds every 20 minutes or so.)

I was surprised at Mom's fondness for this recipe, especially after the brandied cherries debacle (See desserts). She loved them, though, and they are by far much better looking and tastier than regular cranberries.

1 package cranberries, rinsed, cleaned

1 1/2 cup brown sugar

1/2 cup brandy Combine in a glass casserole.

Cover with foil, bake one hour at 350. Leftover and reheated drunken cranberries make a fine topping for waffles along with sour cream.

Update from JP: I've taken on making this for Thanksgiving so will double the recipe and add a dash of cinnamon and some freshly grated nutmeg. Then I'll cook 45 minutes covered, and then I'll take the cover off an cook for another 20 to 40 minutes or until the cranberries start to open up.

Deviled Eggs, Two Versions

This is how we use up all those Easter eggs. Cut them in half (after you shell them) and pop out the yolks into a bowl, chop finely with a fork or pastry cutter. Leslee then adds a thawed basil cube, Dijon mustard and mayonnaise. Marm adds a finely chopped green onion, a dash of curry powder, Dijon mustard and mayonnaise. The amounts are flexible—depends on how many eggs you have. Make a not too soft mixture and spoon it back into the hollowed out egg whites. Sprinkle with paprika and serve.

Crusty Potatoes

1 5-pound bag potatoes (Best to use small red russet potatoes). Scrub potatoes but don't peel them

1 stick butter

1 pound grated mozzarella cheese

1 container grated Romano or Parmesan cheese

Milk (about 3/4 cups)

6 cloves garlic (or a lot of powdered garlic)

Boil potatoes with olive oil and garlic cloves or garlic powder. Drain when they're tender enough to pierce through with a fork. Smash potatoes with butter and milk until you have a creamy consistency. Stir in the cheeses. Butter a large baking dish, put potatoes in it and bake in a 350 degree oven until brown and crusty (about 1 1/2 to 2 hours).

Lillis' (Famous) Bean Hot Dish

This is the favorite of all Mom's baked bean recipes.

1/2 pound bacon, cooked till crisp, drained, crumbled

1/2 pound ground beef, browned, drained

16 ounce can B &M baked beans

1 can kidney beans, rinsed and drained

1 can lima beans, rinsed and drained

1 can butter beans, rinsed and drained

3/4 cup ketchup

1/2 cup brown sugar

1-2 T. cider vinegar

1 tsp. mustard

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Mix everything except bacon together; Pour into a big casserole, sprinkle bacon on top. Bake, uncovered for 1 hour.

Mom's Baked Beans

This is the grandfather of the baked bean recipes, though I'm convinced the onion soup mix was a later addition. I remember eating baked beans in the 1950s before the onion soup mix craze swept the country. Following is Leslee's first-hand account of making of Mom's recipe.

2 pounds Great Northern white beans (dried).

Soak overnight in lukewarm water in a large Dutch oven or oven-proof pan with tight-fitting cover.

Bring to boil, boil 10-15 minutes, add 1 T. baking soda, cook five more minutes. This will boil over.

Drain beans, do not rinse.

Add to beans:

1 cup brown sugar

1 cup ketchup

1/2 bottle dark molasses

1 T. mustard

1 tsp. ginger

2 tsp. salt

1 envelope Lipton's onion soup mix

Dash of Worcestershire sauce

Fill kettle with water, mix well.

You can add a piece of salt pork, ham or bacon to this as well, or not, if you are going vegetarian.

Bake 6-8 hours at 250. Check every couple of hours to make sure the beans aren't too dry. Add more water if necessary.

Spinach and Bean Sprout Salad

1/3 cup salad oil (not olive oil)

1 T. sugar

1 T. soy sauce

3 T. red wine vinegar

1/2 tsp. mustard

1 red pepper (plain or roasted)

1 pound bean sprouts, rinsed and drained

1 bag fresh spinach

1/2 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced

Fresh ground pepper

Place spinach, peppers, bean sprouts and mushrooms in large salad bowl. Mix dressing ingredients together and pour over; toss salad. Let this sit for 20-30 minutes, then sprinkle with fresh ground pepper and serve.

Snicker Salad

This will go down in family history as the salad most requested by the youngest generation of LeRouxs.

1 small container Cool Whip

2 apples, peeled and sliced

3 bananas, peeled and sliced

4 Snicker bars, cut up or chopped in blender or food processor

Mix all ingredients together, spoon into a pretty bowl and serve. You can prepare up to 2 hours before serving.

Salad Nicoise (for two)

Good lettuce (baby spinach works best)

Grilled tuna steak, salmon, or chicken breast

4 or 5 baby red potatoes I avocado

Feta cheese (or Gorgonzola or blue) Cherry or Roma tomatoes Cooked green beans (optional) Put ingredients in a bowl. Add spices; fresh ground pepper, one of those all-purpose salt free blends, garlic salt etc. Add 3 tablespoons of balsamic vinegar to a small bowl. Slowly whisk in olive oil to this, (about 2 tablespoons).

Get you some crusty bread and a bottle of red wine and you got supper right there.

Ramen Noodle Coleslaw

1 package cole slaw mix, chopped fine

1/2 cup slivered almonds 1 package ramen noodles, break up noodles; discard flavoring packet

1/4 cup margarine.

Melt margarine in a skillet; add almonds and noodles. Cook over medium heat until light brown. Drain on paper towels. Keep at room temperature.

Combine salad dressing ingredients:

1/2 cup salad oil

1/4 cup vinegar

1/2 cup sugar

Toss with coleslaw and ramen noodle-almond mixture. Let sit for 30 minutes before serving.

Mushroom Salad

You may wonder where did this come from—a fresh mushroom salad? But after we all left home, Mom became a more adventurous cook and she loved anything with mushrooms in it.

1 pound fresh mushrooms, sliced

2 T. finely chopped onion

2 T. lemon juice

2 tsp. sugar

1/4 tsp. fresh ground pepper

1/3 cup whipped cream

1/4 cup sour cream

1/4 tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. dry mustard.

In a medium bowl (not metal) toss mushrooms with onions, lemon juice, sugar and pepper. Chill 30 minutes to 4 hours.

Beat whipping cream till soft peaks, not stiff. Stir together: sour cream, salt, dry mustard. Fold in whipped cream; fold mixture into mushroom mixture.

Serve on romaine leaves; garnish with ground pepper and tomato wedges.

Mom’s Potato Salad

“Nobody makes potato salad like your Mother,” Dad would say and I have to agree. Since she’s gone, I can give only general directions on how to do it. Leslee’s version comes the closest to Mom’s, but even she doesn’t follow a specific recipe.

Potatoes—a lot, at least 5 pounds (none of those fancy, red-skinned potatoes)

Boil with the skins on; cut in half if they’re large, don’t forget to salt the water while potatoes are cooking, boil about 6 eggs.

Drain potatoes and eggs and while they cool, chop celery—about three stalks.

When potatoes are cool enough to handle, peel them and cut into bite-sized pieces (with a paring knife and into a big bowl).

Peel and chop 5 eggs, reserve one of them for the top.

Add chopped celery and a small onion which you grate on top of the potatoes (be careful not to grate your knuckles too).

Grate about a half a cucumber (Mom said grating it kept it from repeating on you).

Then add enough mayonnaise to make it creamy, but not too wet.

Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate.

Just before serving, taste for saltiness—add more salt if necessary—and dryness. You may have to add more mayonnaise.

Decorate the top with the remaining egg: remove the yolk and chop it finely, cut the white to look like petals. Place the yolk in the center, with the egg white petals around it to look like a flower. Sprinkle with paprika.

Glorified Rice

Mom served this for ladies’ lunches. They all loved the strange combination of marshmallows, pineapple and rice.

Bring 2 1/2 cups water to boil in a medium pot. Add a dash of salt and 1 cup rice Bring to boil again, then put on the cover and turn heat to simmer. Cook 20 minutes, then cool.

Add:

1 large can pineapple chunks, drained .

3/4 package miniature marshmallows (colored) (Make sure rice is cool before adding marshmallows or they will melt).

Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Before serving, beat 1 pint whipping cream till stiff, fold into the rice mixture. Put into a fancy crystal or glass bowl, top with maraschino cherries.

Cranberry Jell-O Salad

1 package cherry Jell-O

1 cup boiling water

1 can whole berry cranberry sauce

1/2 cup finely chopped celery

1/4 cup chopped walnuts

1 cup sour cream

Dissolve Jell-O in boiling water, stir in cranberries, celery and walnuts. Fold in sour cream. Or, after dissolving Jell-O in boiling water, pour all the ingredients into a blender and turn on and off quickly once or twice to mix. You can make this in a ring mold (before pouring in the Jell-O mixture, take a square of paper towel, pour about a teaspoon of salad oil (not olive oil) onto it and rub all over the insides of the mold. Chill overnight. To unmold, wrap a wet dish towel around the mold, run a knife around the edge. Place serving plate upside down over the top of the mold, hold your breath, say a prayer and turn the mold over quickly. Repeat if necessary. Or, you can make it in a square pan and just cut squares of salad to serve.

Carrot Pineapple Jell-O Salad

1 package lemon Jell-O

1 small can crushed pineapple, drained (save the pineapple juice)

1 cup finely grated carrots

Make Jell-O according to the package directions, but instead of cold water, use the juice from the drained crushed pineapple, adding water if necessary to make 3/4 cup. Don’t use a full cup of cold water according the package directions.

Pour the Jell-O mixture into a square glass Pyrex dish. Gently stir in the grated carrots and crushed pineapple. Place in refrigerator until set. To serve, slice the salad into squares and place each square on a lettuce leaf. Drizzle with mayonnaise thinned with a little milk; sprinkle with paprika.

Biscuits

2 cups flour

4 tsp. baking powder

1/4 tsp. salt

4 T. butter

1 egg

3/4 cup milk

Mix flour, baking powder and salt. Sift together. Then add butter, cut in with a knife. Then beat egg and add to milk, add this to dry ingredients. Stir until a soft dough forms, put on baking board and pat out until 1/2 inch thick. Cut out biscuits and place next to each other on top of chicken mixture. Bake 25 minutes in moderate oven.

Mushroom Gravy

2 Tbsp butter

Yellow onion diced

2 containers of portobello or crimini (or both) mushrooms

½ cup sherry or marshalls wine

6 cloves garlic

2 Tbsp fresh thyme

Up to 2 cups vegetable broth

Salt & pepper

For roux:

4 Tbsp butter

¼ cups flour

Sauté onions in butter until soft. Add garlic and mushrooms and brown, then add fresh thyme. Deglaze the pan with sherry scraping all the brown bits.

In a separate pan on medium heat make a roux with 4 Tbsp butter and ¼ cup flour. Keep stirring you want it to brown, not burn, get it to where it smells like pie crust.

Add the roux to the mushroom mix and stir until thick. Use vegetable broth to thin out to desired gravy consistency. Add salt to taste.

Fancy Mushroom Toast

This makes a great appetizer, but we usually end up just having it for dinner.

6 tomatoes

8 cloves of garlic

Package of mushrooms

½ cup of sherry or marsala wine

Olive oil

Butter

Goat cheese

Crusty bread

Coat your tomatoes and garlic in a pan with olive oil and roast at 400 degrees until garlic has browned and tomato skin has blistered, about 20-40 minutes. When the tomatoes are done take them out and let them cool until you can remove the skin.

In a skillet saute the mushrooms with a Tbsp of butter until brown. Deglaze the pan with sherry. Add the peeled tomatoes and garlic and mash them with a large spoon until you get a rustic sauce. Simmer for 10 minutes. Add salt and pepper to taste.

To serve toast some bread and spread on some creamy goat cheese. Top with the Tomato mushroom mixture and enjoy.

Orange Hot Sauce

4 tomatoes halved

Yellow onion roughly chopped

4 cloves garlic

½ C arbol chilis

2 guajillo chilis

½ cup water

⅓ cup white vinegar

1 cup vegetable oil

1 ½ Tblsp salt

Roast the tomatoes and onion until almost blackened at 450 degrees. Remove stems of the chilis and saute them with garlic and a small amount of oil until garlic is soft and chilis are fragrant. Combine chilis, garlic, tomatoes, and onion in a blender add the water and vinegar and let sit for 10-15 minutes or until chilis have softened. Blend until pureed, then slowly drizzle in the oil until the sauce emulsifies and gets creamy. Add salt to taste.

Coconut Rice

Onion finely diced

3 Tbsp oil

2 cups rice

2 tsp sugar

2 tsp salt

1 1/2c vegetable stock

Saute the onions in oil, sprinkle with salt and cook until soft. Add rice make sure it’s well coated in oil. Pour in coconut milk and stock, bring to a boil then cover and reduce heat to low. Simmer for 20 minutes. When done add sugar and fluff the rice, stirring in lightly with a fork. Add salt to taste.

No Knead Bread

3 cups flour

2 tsp salt

1 tsp yeast

1 ½ cup warm water

Combine your ingredients in a large mixing bowl, cover with plastic wrap and let rise overnight or for 9 to 18 hours. When ready to bake preheat your oven and a dutch oven to 450 degrees. Transfer dough to parchment, shape your bread and cover with flour and plastic wrap. Let rest for 30 minutes then transfer dough to the hot dutch oven and bake covers for 45 minutes, then uncover and bake for 10-15 minutes

Watermelon Pickles

3lbs watermelon rind

3 cups water

3 cups white vinegar

½ cup kosher salt

2 ½ cups sugar

1 Tbsp chili flake

½ cinnamon stick

12 whole cloves

2 bay leaves

1 tsp whole black pepper corns

½ yellow onion diced

Peel your watermelon you want the inner rind not the outer green. You want thinner bite sized pieces, thicker cuts will take longer to pickle. Dice your onion. Divide the rind and onion into 4 mason jars. Combine the rest of the ingredients in a sauce pan and bring to a simmer making sure salt and sugar are dissolved. Distribute the pickling liquid into the jars making sure rind is covered. Lid the jars and refrigerate. Pickles should be ready to eat in 3-4 days, and good for at least 2-4 weeks.

Pretzles

1 ½ cup warm water

1 package yeast

1 Tbsp sugar

2 tsp salt

22 oz flour

2 oz butter

1 egg yolk

1 Tbsp water

Salt

10 cups water

⅔ cups baking soda

In a stand mixer bowl combine warm water, yeast, sugar, and salt in a bowl let proof for 5 minutes or until foamy. If you don't get foam then your yeast is dead an you'll have to start over. Add flour and butter then mix using a kneading attachment until the dough pulls away from the sides. Oil a clean bowl and drop the dough inside, cover with plastic wrap and proof until it doubles in size.

Preheat your oven to 450 degrees. In a large pot bring 10 cups of water and ⅔ cups baking soda to a boil. And make an egg wash using 1 egg yolk and 1 Tbsp water.

Lightly oil your hands and measure out your dough. At this point you can divide the dough into eighths roll them out with your hands and form pretzels. Or, if you're lazy and just want pretzel bites then roll out the dough into a long snake and cut into bite sized portions. Place these on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.

Drop your pretzels into the boiling water in batches, you only want to boil them for 30 seconds. When they're done boiling brush on the egg mixture and sprinkle with salt. Bake until dark golden brown 13-15 minutes. Serve with mustard or cheese sauce from the Morton's recipe.

Baked Mac and Cheese

6oz cheddar (reserve 2 oz for top)

4oz parmesan

1oz swiss

3oz cream cheese

½ onion finely diced

1 Tbsp Butter

1 cup heavy cream

(Optional) 1 Tbsp Sambal Oelek (garlic chili) sauce

½ cup Panko breadcrumbs

1 package of Cavatappi pasta

Cook pasta for 1-2 minutes (shouldn't be cooked all the way through). Combine bread crumbs and 2oz of cheddar set aside.

For cheese sauce:

Melt butter and sauté onion until tender. Add heavy cream and bring to a boil. Whisk in cheeses slowly. Add sambal sauce, if you have a stick blender, hand blend the mixture to make sure it's creamy.

Combine the sauce with pasta in a baking dish, cover with the breadcrumb mixture and bake at 400 degrees for 20 minutes or until lightly brown on top.

Note: This cheese sauce is amazing and a great dip for homemade pretzels.

Smoked Gouda Dip

2 blocks of smoked gouda

½ red onion finely diced

¾ cup - 1 cup Mayonnaise (depends on the amount of cheese

Shred the cheese, stir in onion, fold in mayo until it forms a dip. This recipe really couldn't be easier but it's sooo much better than you'd think. Serve with thin pretzels.

Spätzle

4 cups flour

8 eggs

½ c (unflavored) sparkling water

1 cup whole milk

(Note: you can substitute 1 ½ cup nonfat milk for whole milk and sparkling water)

Lemons

Combine flour and eggs, add sparkling water and milk, mix until there are no bubbles. It should come together as a thick cake batter. Use a spatula to beat well. Let stand in fridge for 10 minutes. Bring a pot of salted water to a boil. Using a spaetzle machine (who has one?) or a larger holed colander push the chilled batter through into the boiling water. Boil until they float.

This is basically German pasta, so it's very versatile. Our favorite way to eat it is tossed with butter, parmesan, and lemon juice. You can also put in a baking dish cover in breadcrumbs, or add mushroom gravy.

Mexican Rice

6 Tbsp veg oil

2 cup rice

1 onion diced

1 can El Pato tomato sauce

4 cup veg broth

Pinch of salt

Heat oil, add onion and salt, saute until soft. Add rice and stir until coated in the oil and onion. Stir in El Pato and veg broth bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low, cover and simmer for 20-25 minutes.

Cha Cha Cha Spinach and Mushroom Salad

Note: Original recipe has bacon (1 package) you cook it down saving the fat in the pan to saute mushrooms and onions instead of butter. Then crumble the bacon on top of the salad.

2 Tbsp butter

1 bunch scallions

10 whole white mushrooms (1 small box)

2 bunches or 1 bag spinach

¼ Cup sherry

1 Cup cream

½ Tbsp Worcester

2 Tbsp dijon mustard

2 Tbsp minced fresh basil

¼ tsp salt & pepper

2 Tbsp chopped parsley

2 Tbsp chopped cilantro

1 Cup grate parmesan

For Dijon sauce:

Combine cream, worschteser, dijon, basil, salt and pepper in small sauce pan. Warm over medium heat, simmer for 15-20 minutes stirring occasionally. Remove from heat, whisk for 1-2 min until thickens adjust seasoning as needed and set aside.

For salad:

Wash and dry spinach, transfer to a large bowl. In a skillet cook scallions and mushrooms in butter (or bacon fat) until lightly browned. Pour in sherry to deglaze pan, reduce to about half. Stir in the reserved dijon sauce. Add parsley, cilantro, salt and pepper pour over spinach, add parmesan and toss.

German Potato Salad

Potatoes 4-5 Yukon gold

1 white or yellow onion

2 C veg broth

1 ½ C veg or canola oil

Tbsp Sugar

2 Tbsp Dijon mustard

1 C vinegar (white or apple cider)

Salt & pepper to taste

Optional: Chopped parsley or chives

Boil potatoes until soft about 30 min. Let cool enough to handle. Peel and slice. Size onion and saute in oil. Heat veg broth, add remaining ingredients. Toss with onion and potato mixture.

Texas Cornbread

This is a favorite with Ryan and Ella. They love eating it with butter and honey. It is so fluffy that it is more like cake…but hey, who doesn't love cake! Enjoy a southern staple; this is perfect with chili.

1 cup yellow cornmeal

1 cup flour

¼ cup granulated sugar

4 tsp. baking powder

½ tsp. salt

¼ cup mayonnaise

1 egg, beaten

1 cup milk

¼ cup cooking oil

Mix all ingredients until well blended. Pour into greased 8x8 square pan. Bake at 425 degrees for 20 minutes or until light golden color. Knife inserted in center will come out clean.

Sidescornbread

Strawberry Spinach Salad

Every time Diana makes this salad, she is asked for the recipe. She discovered this recipe many years ago when asked to be a judge at the Poteet Strawberry Festival. It was such fun. It is amazing how many recipes have strawberries in them…delicious!

For the salad:

12 oz. fresh spinach, washed and torn into bite-size pieces

1 head Boston lettuce, washed and torn into bite-size pieces

1 pint fresh strawberries, sliced

½ cup pecans, chopped

Dressing:

1/3 cup raspberry vinegar

¼ tsp. salt

½ cup sugar

1 T. poppy seeds

2 tsp. dried instant minced onions

¾ cup vegetable oil

Make sure salad greens are thoroughly dry. Combine greens with strawberries and pecans.

For the dressing: Mix dressing well and add to greens just before serving.

Tip: Store dressing in a small Tupperware container and shake well before adding.

Vegetarian Collard Greens

Standard collards are a little too hammy for Nicole or other vegetarians. But with these you don't even miss the meat.

2 bags collard greens (washed well)

1 bag mustard greens

3 tomatoes

1 onion (diced)

1 jalepeno (diced)

4 cloves of garlic

32oz vegetable broth

16oz water

1tsp Salt

Pepper

Tapatio

Roast tomatoes and garlic in olive oil at 350° for about 20 minutes or until garlic is soft and brown and tomato skins has cracked. Let cool, and peel the tomatoes. In a big stock pot sweat onion. Add roasted tomatoes and garlic and mash them so there are no big chunks. Add greens, vegetable broth, jalapeno, and water. Bring to boil, then simmer for 60 min or until greens are tender and liquid is mostly reduced. Add salt to taste, pepper, and a few dashes of Tapatio for some extra heat and flavor.

Roasted Cabbage with Dijon Butter Sauce

A part of our St. Patrick's Day feast.

1 full head of green cabbage

For sauce:

3T melted butter

2T minced chive

1T Dijon

½t minced garlic

Pinch of salt and cracked pepper

For cabbage: Preheat oven to 450. Leave the cabbage core intact (this will help keep it from falling apart), but remove any wilted looking outer leaves. Cut into 1/8ths. Place on cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Drizzle with olive oil, salt and pepper. Bake for 10 min or until lightly browned, flip and bake another 8-10 min or until lightly browned.

For Sauce: Whisk ingredients until it forms a thick sauce.

Mains

Wild Rice Soup

This recipe has converted many people to the wonderful flavor of wild rice.

1/2-1 cup wild rice, cooked

1 medium onion, chopped

1 lb. fresh mushrooms

3 T. butter 1/4 cup flour

4 cups chicken broth

1 cup light cream

1/4 cup sherry

Parsley, salt, and pepper to taste

Cook wild rice; set aside. Sauté onion and mushrooms in butter. Cook till onion is soft. Add flour, stir to mix in. Add chicken broth a little at a time, stirring to incorporate the flour. Bring to a boil, simmer 1/2 hour. (Can make ahead at this point and refrigerate) Add cream and rice, simmer 1/2 hour. Just before serving, add sherry. Taste for seasoning, sprinkle with parsley before serving.

Mom’s Fresh Tomato Soup

1/2 cup chopped onion

1/2 cup chopped celery

Sauté in 4 T. butter in a medium sized sauce pan over medium heat.

Add: 2 cups peeled, chopped, fresh tomatoes, 1/2 tsp. baking soda, cook till thick.

Add 4 T. flour, cook for a minute or two.

Slowly pour in 4 cups milk, cream, or half and half. Add a dash of garlic salt, pepper and paprika. Simmer till heated through.

Dick’s Vegetable Soup

Dick made this soup for a camping trip we took when he came to visit Mike and me in Berkeley in 1978. He was supposed to be recovering from surgery, but Mike, Leslee and I dragged him up a mountain in Yosemite National Park. After a day on the trail with not much more than nectarines as nourishment, this soup tasted like heaven.

3 quarts water

2 cups peeled, diced carrots

2 cups peeled diced potatoes

2 cups chopped onions

2 cups green beans, (break off ends, snap into small pieces)

1 can kidney beans, drained and rinsed

2 cloves garlic, chopped

1/2 can tomato paste (freeze the other half in the can)

1 T. dried basil (or a frozen basil cube)

1 cup Parmesan cheese 1/4 cup olive oil

Directions: Boil carrots, potatoes, onion in salted water for 30-40 min. Add green beans and kidney beans; cook for 15 minutes, until green beans are cooked, but still a bit crunchy. (You can do this up to a day ahead; refrigerate, then bring to a simmer before next step.)

In a separate, small bowl, mix the tomato paste, olive oil, garlic, and basil. Add a bit of the soup broth to thin the mixture, then stir into soup. Serve with French bread and more Parmesan cheese.

Fred’s Soup

When Grandpa was on his own in the kitchen, he came up with this recipe. He was pretty proud of himself. I always got a phone call when he was making it.

1 pound ground beef

16 ounce can tomatoes

1/3 cup ketchup (his secret ingredient)

1/3 cup barley

3 carrots, sliced thin

3 stalks celery, sliced thin

1 1/2 tsp. basil dash of garlic powder

1/2 tsp. pepper

1 tsp. seasoned salt

1 bay leaf

Brown ground beef in a large sauce pan, drain fat. Add 6 cups water and the rest of the ingredients. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer one hour. Even better the next day.

Tan Tan Noodles

Cooked spaghetti

Slivered green onions—2-3 or more

1 cucumber, peeled, seeded and cut into matchstick size pieces

1/2 cup peanut butter (all-natural is best)

1/2 cup soy sauce

3 T. sugar

1/4 cup white wine

1/4 cup sesame oil

hot chili oil or red peppers

garlic powder

rice wine vinegar

Cook one package of spaghetti to al dente. While spaghetti is cooking, mix peanut butter, soy sauce, sugar, sesame oil, chili oil or red peppers to taste, garlic powder, wine in a large bowl (This is the bowl you'll use to serve the noodles) Add a few sprinkles of rice wine vinegar to make a smooth mixture. In a separate bowl, place the cucumber; cover with rice wine vinegar. Drain spaghetti, pour into the large bowl, toss to mix with peanut sauce; top with cucumbers and green onions.

Sweet and Sour Chicken

You all have your own Chinese recipes but this one is fairly simple, and can be adapted to your likes. I always try to add fruit and nuts to this recipe.

2 boneless chicken breasts cut in bite size strips.

Sliced onion

Green or red or yellow peppers in strips

Broccoli or snow pea pods (or both)

Nuts (cashews, almonds, walnuts or peanuts, even dry roasted will do)

Pineapple chunks or mango sliced

Rice or noodles

Mix 2 tablespoons of soy sauce with one tablespoons of cornstarch. You can add some garlic chili-paste or some other sauce or spice you like. Add the chicken, mix well and let it marinate for at least 30 minutes. In the meantime, cut up your vegetables. Cook your rice or noodles. Here is a tip. Broccoli and snow peapods can be precooked by bringing some water to boil adding one or the other to the pot, cover the pot, take off the burner and let it set for 3 or 4 minutes. Drain, place paper towels on a plate and put on the towels and cover with another paper towel. Heat wok to medium high and add oil. Cook onions, peppers first, and adding nuts when halfway through. Place back in bowl they were in. Add more oil to wok and add the chicken cooking and stirring often with wooden spoons until done. Add onions, peppers, nuts, broccoli or snow pea pods. Turn the heat down to medium low. Add fruit, add sauce (sweet and sour or any sweet chili sauce). Cook for about another

Spaghetti Marco Polo

1 pound spaghetti (or linguine or any of the long varieties)

1 cup walnuts, (toast lightly first, then chop)

1 cup black olives, sliced

1/2 cup chopped pimento (or roasted red peppers)

1 cup fresh parsley, chopped

1/2-1 cup fresh basil, chopped

3 cloves garlic, minced

olive oil for sautéing and about 1/4 cup for pasta

2 cups (or more) Parmesan cheese, grated

Cook spaghetti in a kettle of boiling water. While it's cooking sauté garlic in a small amount of olive oil. When pasta is finished cooking, drain, pour back into kettle and add rest of the ingredients, toss together. Serve with more Parmesan and fresh ground pepper. You can increase or decrease the amount of any of the ingredients; this is a very flexible recipe.

Spaghetti Carbonara

Canadien bacon, garlic, onions,(peppers, mushrooms, optional) sun dried tomatoes, roasted pine nuts, two eggs, pasta of your choice, fresh parsley. The original calls for a few red pepper flakes, but fussy LeRoux children rejected the idea. We used tri colora farfalle as it was novel and the kids liked the shape, and ate it all. Plenty Parmigiano Reggiano.

We use Canadian (the French way to spell, learnt from reading it off of the boxcars we so frequently were stopped by going over to Margaret LeRoux's house) bacon. This cuts down on the fat from regular bacon.

Directions:

Fry up garlic; amount is up to you.

Add onions. Add shrooms, sun dried tomatoes and peppers. Cook for as long as you want. Remove from pan, keep warm. Add bacon and fry. Bacon doesn't have to cook that long as it is usually precooked. As most knowledgeable and experienced cooks are already cooking the pasta, drain when finished. Immediately pour into a big bowl, add beaten eggs, toss in pasta (like you're tossing a salad) as necessary, add garlic, veggies, sun dried tomatoes, copious amounts of cheese, bacon, and the pine nuts, and a bit of fresh parsley. Stir like crazy and add any amount of egg to make things come together. Add another handful of cheese, scream at the top of your lungs that "It's ready, let's eat!!" Screaming was necessary as the kids were always listening to MTV which was up to at least 100 decibels.

Mom’s Spaghetti and Meatballs

Pretty good for not being Italian.

2 pounds ground beef

1 clove garlic, minced

1 onion, chopped

Cook onion and garlic in a little oil until soft.

Mix into ground beef along with:

2 cups bread crumbs

1 egg

seasoning: salt, pepper, oregano, basil, etc. to taste

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Form into balls and brown in a skillet with enough oil to keep them from sticking. Cook for about 5 minutes on one side, then carefully turn. Add oil as you turn the meatballs; continue until all sides are browned.

Sauce:

1 #2 size can tomatoes

2 small cans tomato paste

2 cups water (Pour some of the water into the empty tomato paste cans to get the rest of the paste)

1 T. sugar

1 bay leaf

salt, pepper and other seasonings to taste

Drain oil off meatballs, pour sauce over them. Cover and simmer one hour.

Lou’s Spaghetti and Meatballs

Make Meatballs:

1 lb. ground beef and 1/2 lb. of ground pork

1/2 of onion chopped (I use about a 4th)

salt, pepper, allspice, cinnamon, garlic powder, parsley

grated parmesan or asiago cheese

1 egg

Mix together with hands and rub hands with Mazola Oil. (the only oil that Dad thought existed.) Fry them up and set on the side. Now, this is where Dad would leave all the grease in the pan. He usually made his meatballs small. Sometimes Dad would use pork chops as a base and cook them in the sauce until they almost fell off the bone. I usually use Italian sausage, although I fry it up first and get the grease out, then stick the sausage in the sauce for flavor. Don’t forget those chopped chicken gizzards and livers that he would put in the sauce. As gross as it was, it made for good flavor. Sometimes he just stuck them in whole and then fished them out when the sauce was done.

Sauce:

Chop up a half of onion again and add either chopped garlic or whole (3 or 4 cloves) and pick it out later. He added a little more Mazola oil at this stage too. Fry them up but don’t let them turn brown. (If you use pork chops you can brown them at this point too, but do that first before you add the garlic and onion).

2 big cans of tomato puree or tomato sauce are added. Sometime he would use the whole tomatoes and blend them before putting them in the pan. (I don’t know exactly what size cans) put in a cup of water, 4 cloves, allspice, cinnamon, 2 bay leaves, fresh parsley and oregano (small amount of oregano) Dad would just tell me a dash of this or that. He never gave me the exact amount of spices.

Simmer for 1 hour and watch for thickness, keep stirring.

After 1 hour add a small can of tomato paste,

2 cups of water and grated parmesan cheese (stir).

Simmer for a 1/2 hour and then add the meatballs again.

Simmer it until the sauce gets thick 30 to 45 minutes.

Make sure you keep the cover on the pan throughout, except for the last half hour; take the cover off so any extra liquid gets boiled off.

Pick out all the gross things before serving.

I like to add bread crumbs to my meatballs, I don't think he did. It probably doesn't matter.

Sloppy Joes

This is not, unfortunately, the same recipe as Marie Whitaker's from the Sloppy Joe lunches at Cathedral High School. That recipe undoubtedly died with her.

1 pound ground beef

1 large onion, chopped

1/2 cup ketchup

1/2 cup water

1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce

2 stalks celery, chopped

Put ground beef and onion into a large skillet, break meat up into small chunks. Brown over medium heat, drain off excess fat. Add the rest of the ingredients, cover and cook at a simmer for 20-30 minutes. Serve on hamburger buns. This will never be as good without Connolly's buns.

Skillen Noodles and Peas

A big improvement over tuna-potato chip hot dish!

1 8 ounce package fine noodles (can substitute vermicellli; if so, break up noodles into small pieces)

1/2 cup chopped onion

1 clove garlic, minced

4 T. butter (can substitute cooking oil)

1 can tuna, drained

salt and pepper to taste

1 cup light cream or half and half

1 can chicken broth

1 small package frozen peas

Melt butter/oil in skillet, add noodles, garlic and onions. Cook, stirring frequently, until noodles are golden brown. Add rests of the ingredients (except peas), cover, and cook 10-15 minutes, until noodles are tender. Add peas, stir to break them apart, cover and cook 5 minutes, until peas are thawed.

Shrimp Creole

Mom got this recipe from Toni McCabe; she was a pharmacist—a woman pharmacist back in the 50s!– at Lignell's. She and her husband Paul were great friends of Nan and Pop.

1 pound shrimp (thaw if frozen)

1/2 large onion, chopped

1 large clove garlic, minced

Sauté onion and garlic in a small amount of olive oil in a large saucepan.

Add:

2 stalks celery, chopped

1 large can tomatoes (chopped)

dash of salt, pepper and sugar

1/2 tsp. thyme

1 bay leaf

dash of Tobasco

Cook sauce at least 10 minutes. (Can be made ahead of time, refrigerated and reheated)

Add shrimp just before serving, heat till hot. Serve over cooked rice.

Salmon Pasta

1 package pasta (rigatoni, penne, fettuccini, fusilli)

1 can black olives, sliced

1 pint container cherry or grape tomatoes

2 red peppers, chopped

1 lemon, cut in half and squeeze juice from it

1/4 cup olive oil (approximate)

3 garlic cloves, minced or about 1/2 tsp. garlic powder

oregano—lots of fresh, chopped leaves or about 1 T. dried

6 cups white wine

Capers (any amount to your liking)

Parmesan cheese, grated (at least 1 cup to 1/2 pound or more)

Leftover cooked salmon or a package of smoked salmon

Boil the pasta in a large pot. While pasta cooks, sauté peppers and garlic (if using minced) in olive oil in a skillet.

Place tomatoes in a colander and when the pasta is cooked pour it into the same colander to drain. In the pasta cooking pot, bring wine and lemon juice to a boil, add rest of ingredients (except salmon, capers and cheese) and mix well. Lastly, add salmon, capers and Parmesan cheese, pour onto a serving dish. Have more cheese to add when you serve it.

Rigatoni

This is my revision of a dish my friend Marie made in New Jersey back in the mid-1970s. I think every LeRoux household now has a version. When you can make it with fresh tomatoes and basil, it’s by far, one of the best one dish meals you’ll ever eat.

4 cloves garlic, minced

1 each: green and red pepper; you can also add a yellow pepper

for more color

1 cup (at least) fresh basil leaves, torn into small pieces

1 pound mozzarella cheese, cubed (whole milk mozzarella, if you can afford the fat,

tastes much better than skimmed in this dish; try fresh mozzarella for an even better

flavor)

1/4 to 1/3 cup olive oil

1 pound rigatoni noodles, cooked al dente

6-8 tomatoes (Fresh, garden tomatoes are the best, but if you have to buy them in the supermarket, plum tomatoes are an acceptable substitute. If you're using plum tomatoes, you'll need 6-8 of them)

Salt, fresh ground pepper

This is best when made in the morning to serve for dinner.

The ingredients need to be mixed together at room temp. for at least 3 hours.)

Sauté garlic in 1-2 T. olive oil over very low heat for a few minutes, till limp (You want to cook it long enough to lose the raw taste, but not enough to brown it.) While the garlic is cooking, cut the peppers into match stick size pieces. Next, cut tomatoes into quarters, then into pieces small enough to be forked with pasta and peppers. Wash basil; dry with paper towels, then tear into small pieces.

Mix garlic, tomatoes, peppers, basil and remaining olive oil in a large bowl, add salt sparingly and fresh ground pepper liberally, cover and let sit all day or at least 3 hours.

While water for pasta is boiling, cube the mozzarella cheese; add to tomato mixture. If mixture seems dry, add a bit more olive oil. When pasta is al dente, drain and then add to bowl (Or add tomato mixture to the drained pasta pot if it's bigger) stir to mix ingredients, cheese will soften or slightly melt. Serves 6 hungry pasta lovers, when accompanied by bread and a salad.

Porcupine Meatballs

The older LeRoux children remember having these for supper; they were also a favorite of Nora and Emma's when Grandma made them.

1 pound ground beef

1 onion chopped

salt, pepper

Mix together with:

1/3 cup raw rice

2 tsp. baking soda

1/2 cup milk

Mix ingredients together; form into balls, Place in a casserole dish, pour a can of tomato soup, or tomato sauce over them. Cover with foil. Bake 35 minutes at 400 degrees; take cover off, bake 35 minutes, uncovered at 350 degrees.

Plymouth Steak

This is a recipe I passed along to Mom; she and Dad really liked it.

2 pounds round steak; sprinkle with salt, pepper and about 1 T. flour,

Brown on both sides in 2-3 T. butter or margarine in a Dutch oven or big sauce pan.

Mix together:

2 onions, sliced

1 green pepper, cut in strips

1 can chopped tomatoes

1 cup cranberry juice

1/2 can cranberry sauce

2 T. cider vinegar

Pour over the browned round steak, cover pan, simmer on stove top for 2 hours, adding more cranberry juice if necessary. Alternately, you can bake this in a 325 degree oven for 2 hours, or if you cut the meat into smallish pieces, it also can cook all day in a crock pot.

Parmesan Oven Baked Chicken

I learned to make this when I was a homesick college student in Madison, adopted by the Minnich family. Julie Minnich was an amazing cook; this was one of her simpler recipes. Many years later, it was one of Mark and Emily's favorite supper dishes.

1 quartered chicken, (as called for in the original recipe; now that boneless chicken breasts are so available, I just use those) Wash, pat dry, set aside.

Mix together on a dinner plate:

1 cup Parmesan cheese

1 cup fresh bread crumbs (Process in food processor till fine)

1 T. dried parsley, or any other green herb of your choice

Dash of pepper

Melt in a frying pan:

6 T. butter or margarine

1 clove garlic, minced (cook in the melted butter)

Add: juice of 1/2 lemon, 1 heaping tsp. Grey Poupon mustard; stir to mix

Preheat oven to 375 degrees

Take chicken, one piece at a time, dip into butter, garlic, lemon juice-mustard mixture, then roll in bread crumb-cheese mixture. Place on a cookie sheet.

Continue with rest of chicken.

Bake for 30-45 minutes, till coating is golden and chicken is cooked through.

Oven Chow Mein

Another classic hot dish.

1 pound ground beef

1 medium onion, chopped

1 cup celery, chopped

1 can chow mein noodles

1 can tomato soup mixed with one can of water

Brown ground beef with onion; drain. Add to rest of ingredients and pour into a large, buttered casserole. Bake, uncovered at 325 for 45 minutes.

Hot Dish

This recipe originated from one of the other mothers who brought it to a Cathedral School potluck dinner. In the old-old days, families would gather in the parish hall for supper, (the Moms brought hot dish, jello salad or bars) then after supper, the parents would meet while we kids ran through the tunnel over to the school gym to watch a movie. (On a screen with a projector, not a video.)

2 pounds ground beef

1 cup chopped celery

1 large onion, chopped

1 can cream of mushroom soup

1 can cream of chicken soup

4 ounce can mushrooms, drained

2 soup cans water

1/2 cup soy sauce

1 cup raw rice

Brown meat and onion in a skillet. When cooked, combine with rest of ingredients in a large, buttered casserole dish. Bake, uncovered, for 2 hours at 325 degrees.

Greek Style Shrimp

I adapted this from a NY Times cookbook many years ago. It’s been one of my favorite dinner party recipes because I make it ahead and just reheat it before serving and everyone loves it.

2 cloves garlic, minced

4-5 green onions, chopped (include some of the green tops)

1 large can chopped or kitchen ready tomatoes

1/2 tsp. sugar

salt, pepper to taste

your choice of herbs: oregano, basil, rosemary to taste

2 pounds shrimp, medium size, peeled, but not cooked

2 T Sambuca liqueur (buy one of those tiny bottles)

2 T. brandy (you probably have this on hand)

1/2 pound feta cheese, cut into cubes

Greek or black olives, pitted (about 1 cup)

Fresh parsley, chopped, for garnish

1 lb. orzo, cooked till al dente

Sauté garlic and onion in a small amount of olive oil, at low heat, just till softened. Add tomatoes, seasoning, and cook, uncovered for about 20-30 minutes. Meanwhile, sauté shrimp in a mixture of 1T butter, 1 T olive oil over medium high heat. (You may have to do this in two batches). Shrimp are cooked when they turn pink. Add Sambuca and brandy; flame it and cook till flame burns off. (You don't have to do this, but it's showy) Add shrimp and liquid to tomato mixture. (At this point you can refrigerate for a few hours or overnight.) Re-heat over low heat. Just before serving, add feta cheese and olives. Serve over orzo, garnished with parsley. Serves 6

Fish Tacos

Chris made these for dinner when Tricia and Toby were home on leave and I was out visiting Mark. We all crowded around the dining room table in Chris and Zava's apartment in Seattle and feasted on them. I was very impressed with Chris' technique and gratified to see the LeRoux ability to put on a fabulous meal on the spur of the moment shows no signs of waning in the next generation!

Tacos:

1/2 large onion (chopped)

1/2 cup cilantro

2 jalapeno peppers (seeded)

1 1/4 cup cotija cheese (crumbled) (substitute Monterey jack)

2 tomatoes (chopped)

1/4 cup olive oil

1 orange

1 large lemon

3 limes

1 1/2 pounds fresh salmon (substitute your favorite fish)

1 package of fajita size tortillas

salt & pepper

Directions:

Start by lighting up the grill. Charcoal works best, but we all know that. Substitute gas when in a hurry. Then marinade the fish: Combine about half the chopped onions, a healthy pinch of cilantro, olive oil, juice of the lemon, orange, and 2 of limes, salt and pepper to taste.

Whisk in a bowl. Season fish with salt and pepper. Place fish in a casserole dish and pour on marinade. Leave fish in marinade for about 15-20 minutes tops.

While fish marinades, start the slaw. Mix sugar, celery seed and milk into mayonnaise. Add cider vinegar and whisk until smooth. Add cabbage. Toss together. Fold in dried cranberries and citrus zest. Store in a cool place.

The sour cream is quick. Add the taco seasoning to the tub of sour cream. Mix together. Or, if you found the chipotle peppers, take the peppers from the can and place into a food processor. Blend into a paste. Add paste to sour cream.

Take fish out of the marinade and place skin side down on the hot grill. Cooking time will vary depending on the fish and how thick your cuts are. Just cook until fish starts to flake. Remove from grill. Squeeze the remaining juice from the 3rd lime onto the hot fish before serving.

Assembly is easy. Spread thin layer of sour cream on warm tortilla. Add chunks of grilled fish. Garnish with remaining onions, cilantro, tomatoes, jalapeno peppers, and cheese. Add coleslaw. Enjoy.

Dumplings

Make these and cook on top of chicken stew. Leslee's secret ingredient to chicken stew is some teriyaki sauce.

1 cup flour

2 tsp. baking powder

1/4 tsp. salt

1 egg, added to a half cup measuring cup.

Add milk to fill to top of cup. Mix egg and milk together; add to flour and baking powder mixture. Add some more milk if necessary, but keep batter stiff. Drop on top of boiling liquid. Cook for 10 minutes covered, but put a dishtowel under the cover, so liquid from stew gets absorbed into towel and does not drip back down into dumplings. Cook another 10 minutes uncovered.

Cousin Jack's Pasties

This recipe comes directly from Margaret's old cookbook and follows the tradition of UP style pasties with no rutabagas. Pasties from northern Wisconsin usually have them.

3 cups flour

3 T. lard

3 cups suet chopped fine

salt, raw potatoes, onions and butter

2 pounds sirloin steak, cut up fine

water

Take flour, lard, salt and suet and mix thoroughly through hands. Mix as smooth as possible. Then add enough water to form a ball, so that you can roll out on board and form into pasties. This amount will make four large pasties.

When you roll out crust, place layer of sliced raw potatoes, then some chopped onion, butter, pepper, salt and chopped meat. Add a good tablespoon of water and a little flour sprinkled on top before covering pasties. Then cover over and form pasties. Punch holes over top with a fork. It takes about one hour to bake in rather hot oven.

(Note from Marm: these directions are a little sketchy; I'd guess baking temp to be 375)

Mom's Chili

1 pound ground beef

1 onion, chopped

1 clove garlic, minced

1 T. chili powder (Dick will want to add chipotle)

1 green pepper, chopped

1 can tomatoes, chopped

1 can kidney beans, drained

Dash of salt, pepper, powdered cloves, red pepper

1 bay leaf

Brown ground beef, onion and garlic in large saucepan. Drain the fat, and add rest of the ingredients. Cover and simmer. (Best made a day ahead, refrigerated and reheated)

Old Fashioned Chicken Pie

4 T. butter

5 T. flour

1 cup milk

1 cup chicken stock

1/2 cup cream

1 tsp. salt

1/4 tsp. paprika

2 cups cooked chicken

1/2 cup chopped celery

1/2 cup chopped green pepper

1/4 cup cooked rice

Melt butter, add flour and when blended, add milk, chicken stock and cream. Cook until creamy, stirring constantly. Add rest of ingredients and pour into a buttered, shallow baking dish. Cover with biscuits.(See recipe below) Bake in moderate oven (350 degrees) for 25 minutes.

Cheese Soufflé

The first time we had soufflé was at the LeRoux family house in Lakeside. Margaret raved about cheese soufflé on one of her visits and I asked if she would make it for us. She later had the whole family over for dinner to show it off. I remember being very impressed at the sight of the puffy top of the baked soufflé.

4 T. butter

4 T. flour

1/1/2 cups hot milk

1/2 tsp. salt

dash of paprika and pepper

1 cup grated cheese (sharp cheddar, gouda or Swiss)

6 eggs, separated

1 can Spanish style tomatoes, heated

Melt butter in top half of double boiler, (water in lower half should be at a simmer) Add flour and blend. Add hot milk, salt, pepper and paprika. Cook until smooth and thickened, stirring constantly. Take off heat and add cheese, stirring until cheese melts and mixture is smooth.

Beat egg yolks and add, stirring well to mix them in. Set mixture aside while you beat egg whites till stiff. Fold beaten egg whites into egg-cheese mixture and pour into an unbuttered one-quart casserole. Bake in a pre-heated oven (325 degrees) for one hour. Do not peek while it is baking. Serve at once; soufflé will soon collapse Bring it to the table and spoon soufflé onto plates. Serve Spanish style canned tomatoes as sauce for soufflé.

Cheese Fondue

How could any of the five us forget fondue nights? Dueling forks—one in the hot oil for meat, another spearing bread for cheese fondue. Accompanied by a potato side dish to fill up “the boys.”

8 oz. Gruyere cheese (about 2 1/2 cups)

8 oz. Swiss (about 2 1/2 cups)

1 T. flour

1 1/4 cups dry white wine

1 garlic clove, smashed

2 tsp. kirsch (Clear cherry brandy) You can substitute wine or sherry. I’m sure Mom never used kirsch.

1 French bread baguette

Mix cheeses and flour in medium bowl. Bring wine and garlic to a simmer in heavy medium size saucepan. Remove garlic. Gradually mix in cheese by handfuls, stirring until melted and smooth. Stir in kirsch. Transfer to fondue pot, serve with bread and skewers for dipping.

Baked Spareribs with Bar-B-Q Sauce

After Teresa died, Margaret took over the cooking. One of her specialties was barbecued spare ribs served with sauerkraut.

4 pounds spareribs

Flour well and brown in skillet with plenty of butter

Make sauce of the following:

1 large bottle of ketchup

Fill the empty bottle with water and add to ketchup

Grind in a meat grinder (or Cuisinart):

1 large green pepper

1 large onion

Add to ketchup along with 2-4 T. horseradish.

(I would add a tablespoon or more of Worcestershire sauce)

Boil sauce for 10 minutes.

Put spareribs in baking pan, pour sauce over and bake in a low oven (probably 325 degrees) basting frequently. Add more water if needed. May take 3 to 4 hours.

Apple Cider Stew

My friend Karen Kolb made this for us when we brought Emily home from the hospital. I made it when Mom, Dad & Leslee came to visit a couple weeks later and it's been a family favorite ever since.

2 pounds beef stew meat

Cut beef into cubes. Heat 3 T. oil in a Dutch oven, or stewpot. Sauté beef till brown on all sides. Season with salt and pepper.

Add:

3 T. flour, cook for a minute or two, until the flour is slightly browned.

1 tsp. thyme

4 potatoes, peeled and cut into bite size pieces

2 onions, cut into small chunks

4 carrots, peeled and sliced

Stir in:

3-4 cups apple cider

1/2 cup water

3 T. cider vinegar

2 celery stalks, sliced thin

Bring to a boil, then simmer, covered with the top ajar for 2 hours or more, until meat is tender.
*About an hour before serving, add celery stalks.

*You can also cook this all day in a crock pot.

Chop Suey

From Leslee: Every New Year's Eve I make chop suey because Grandma Lillis always made chop suey on New Year's Eve. She did it because her mother did it. Family tradition lives on.

She also made it other times of the year. In fact, chop suey was the last family meal she ever made. Grandpa helped her chop up the ingredients, and they put it all together on a Sunday night. Paul and the girls and I were going to eat it with them Monday night.

But Grandma wasn't feeling well and ended up in the hospital on Monday. I visited her and wanted to stay with her during her dinner, but she insisted I go to Grandpa's and eat the chop suey, which I did, and it was wonderful. I took leftover chop suey home in a Cool Whip container.

Grandma died the next day.

Six years later, I still have the Cool Whip container in the corner of my freezer. Someday, I know I will have to toss it out, but I will still make her recipe every New Year's Eve, and remember what a good cook, and a good Mom, we were lucky to have.

3 pounds beef stew meat, with 1 pound pork, cut in cubes

Brown meat in a big stew pot over high heat, liquid will bubble out of it. Cook off all juices. Then cover meat with water, and cook all liquid off again.

Add enough beef broth to cover meat, about a half-pot of liquid. Add several tablespoons of soy sauce and a 1/2 bottle of molasses.

Add one large, chopped onion and 1 cup chopped celery, fresh mushrooms. Bring to a boil, cook five minutes. Add one can water chestnuts, 1 can bean sprouts, drained.

Bring to boil, boil five minutes. Turn off heat. Thicken with a mixture of 1/2 cup cornstarch dissolved in 1 cup water. Then bring to boil again. This is best made a day ahead, refrigerated overnight and reheated. Serve over rice and top with crispy noodles.

Chicken Schnitzel

2 chicken breasts

2 cups Flour

4 eggs

2 tsp dijon mustard

2 cups panko breadcrumbs

Garlic powder

Onion powder

Salt & pepper

½ to 1 cup Vegetable oil

Butterfly your chicken breasts then place on a sheet of plastic wrap and cover with another sheet of plastic wrap. Pound them with a meat tenderizer or rolling pin until it's about ¼ inch thick. Season chicken with salt and pepper.

Prepare your coating assembly in 3 separate wide bowls. In the first add flour, salt, pepper, onion powder, garlic powder. In the second add eggs and dijon whisked together. In the third add panko with additional salt, pepper, garlic, and onion seasoning. Dip the chicken in each of the three bowls making sure to cover both sides at each stage. Set aside on a drying rack.

In a sauce pan add enough vegetable oil so that it's about ¼ inch deep and on medium heat bring up to 350 degrees, if you don't have a thermometer you can test with a small mixture of egg and panko it should bubble immediately but not burn in seconds. Fry chicken for 3-5 minutes until golden brown on both sides. Let rest for a few minutes on a plate lined with paper towel.

Serve with slices of lemon and your favorite German sides.

Peapod Soup

¾ onion

4-6 garlic cloves

1 tsp thyme

Pepper

Salt

Pods from 1lbs peas

4 cups veg stock

Olive oil

Basil

Sour cream

We love fresh peas in the summer, but it always felt like such a waste to just compost all the pods. Saute the onion and garlic until soft. Add the peapods, vegetable stock, thyme, salt and pepper and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer for 45 minutes. Let cool then in batches blend the soup being careful to not let the peapods clog your blender. Strain the soup and refrigerate overnight or eat immediately. When ready to eat, finish it with a couple drops of good olive oil, sour cream, and chopped basil.

NOLA Barbeque Shrimp

Not like any other barbeque you've had, but sooo delicious.

2 Tbsp olive oil

½ onion

2 Tbsp garlic

3 bay leaves

3 lemons (juice and zest)

2 cups water

½ cup Worcestershire

¼ cup white wine

2 Tbsp Cajun seasoning

(Optional shrimp shells)

For the final dish:

1 lbs shrimp deveined

2 cups cream

2 Tbsp butter

1 Tbsp chives

1 Tbsp cajun seasoning

For seasoning:

2 ½ Tbsp paprika

2 Tbsp salt

1 Tbsp pepper

1 Tbsp onion powder

1 Tbsp cayenne

1 Tbsp oregano

1 Tbsp Thyme

2 Tbsp garlic

Start by deshelling and cleaning your shrimp, you can use the shells in the sauce, or you can use frozen shrimp thawed in salt water, it's still delicious.

Saute onion and garlic until soft in large sauce pan. Add bay leaves, lemon zest and juice, water, Worcestershire, Cajun seasoning, wine, water, and shells. Bring to a boil for 30 minutes. Strain everything into another sauce pan then bring the liquid back to a boil. You need to reduce this to a thick syrup about 4-5 Tbsp worth, which can take 15-20 minutes stirring occasionally. As it gets more reduced you need to pay more attention to make sure it doesn't burn.

To make the final dish, coat shrimp in some Cajun seasoning and saute in 1 Tbsp butter until cooked. Set aside shrimp, add cream and barbeque sauce, stir and bring to a simmer. Once heated add another Tbsp butter, whisk. Pour the sauce over shrimp and garnish with chopped chives. Serve with crusty French bread.

Not Taco Bell Crunchwraps with Fire Sauce

We realized that the only reason we were going to Taco Bell was to get their fire sauce, the food just made us depressed. Now that we have the recipe for their hot sauce we never have to go to Taco Bell again.

Fire sauce:

1 6oz can of tomato paste

3 cups water

3 Tbsp vinegar

3 T canned pickled jalapeno finely minced

1 Tbsp chili powder

1 Tbsp dried minced onion

2 tsp salt

2 tsp corn starch

1 tsp cayenne

1 tsp sugar

¼ tsp onion powder

Dash garlic powder

Crunchwraps:

Shredded lettuce

Fritos jalapeno cheese dip

Veggie crumbles (or ground beef)

Onion finely diced

Taco seasoning

Diced tomatoes

Corn tortilla chips

Large flour tortilla

Refried beans

Shredded cheese

Sour cream

For fire sauce:

Combine all ingredients in large sauce pan. Bring to a boil for 3 minutes. Let cool. Easy peasy.

For crunchwraps:

Saute finely diced onion with vegetable oil and a pinch of salt, cook until carmelized. Brown your veggie crumbles (or ground beef). Sprinkle in taco seasoning and set aside. Make sure your beans are warm and your other fillings are prept. Then you’re ready for assembly. On a large flour tortilla start layering your ingredients, we go: beans, meat, fire sauce, cheese dip, crumbled tortilla chips, lettuce, tomatoes, sour cream, shredded cheese. You then fold the outer layers of

the tortilla in to form your crunchwrap and heat in a skillet hole side down (the shredded chese should keep the fillings from falling out) for 2-3 minutes until brown, flip it then brown the other side.

NOTE: Now that you've got fire sauce you can also make some delicious spicy enchiladas. To make enchilada sauce we use 2 cups vegetable stock and 1 ½ cup fire sauce, then reduce that by about half until it reaches a sauce consistency. We then dip corn tortillas into the sauce for 30 seconds, fill with cheese and place into a pyrex dish. Once enchiladas are prepped we pour the remaining sauce over the platter and sprinkle with cheese, then bake at 350 degrees for 15-20 minutes or until cheese is mealty.

Oven Ribs

I love ribs, but have never had a smoker. Thankfully this recipe works for even the smallest apartment kitchen, it's easy and it gives you the time to make all the delicious sides to go with it. It started out as a recipe from Alton Brown and has been modified over the years, but watch his video to see exactly how to fold the foil around the ribs.

https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/who-loves-ya-baby-back-recipe-1937448

For rub:

8 brown sugar

4 blackening

3 salt

1 chili powder

1 black pepper

½ pepper

½ cayenne

½ onion powder

For braise

24 oz can cider

2 tsp apple cider vinegar

2 tsp worcester

1tsp honey

2 cloves of garlic

2 racks of baby back ribs

Start with making your rub. You want it to be saltier and sweeter than the traditional blackening, but you can alter it to your taste.

Trim the ribs of any excess fat and then you're going to want to place on a sheet of foil the cover generously with the rub on both sides. After covered in the rub, fold the foil carefully around the ribs so they're wrapped up, but leave one side opened up. Place both racks of ribs on a cookie sheet and refrigerate overnight.

When ready to cook, combine the ingredients for the braise and microwave for 30 seconds to a minute until honey is dissolved. Pour the braising liquid into the foil making sure that each rack gets half of it then close up the foil so the ribs are now airtight in foil. Slant the cooking sheet to make sure the liquid gets dispersed to all sides of the ribs. Cook at 125 degrees for 2 ½ - 3 hours. Check them for doneness the bone should wiggle but not come loose.

After they're cooked, open up the foil pouch and pour the liquid into a sauce pan, bring to a boil and reduce by ¾ or until it's formed a barbeque sauce. When the sauce has thickened up and the ribs cooled you can either glaze the ribs and put under a broiler for 1-2 minutes, make sure they don't burn.

Note: Ribs are great, but they're messy. An easier and cleaner way to enjoy this is to keep cooking the ribs for 4-5 hours until the bone easily slides out. Prepare the glaze the same way, but while that's reducing debone and shred the meat. Then add the sauce to have the best pulled pork sandwiches ever.

Sriracha Butter Shrimp

2 Tbsp Butter

6 Tbsp Sriracha

3 cloves garlic

1lb shrimp

Mint

Basil

Lemon zest

Whip 2 Tbsp butter with 6 Tbsp Sriracha. Melt in skillet. Saute 3 cloves minced garlic. Add 1 lb shrimp. Just before done add Tbsp each of mint, basil, and lemon zest.

Vegetarian Chili

1 Red pepper diced

1onion finely chopped

2 cloves garlic, minced

1 package (12oz) soy crumbles

2 Tbsp chili seasoning (see below)

1 can kidney beans

1 can diced tomatoes

1 can tomato paste

½ cup chopped cilantro

1 jalapeno

Shredded cheddar

Sour cream

Sautee pepper, jalapeno, onion, and garlic. Stir in soy crumbles and chili seasoning. Add beans, tomatoes, and cilantro. Pour in some water (about a ¼ cup) to get the right consistency. Cover over low heat stirring occasionally for 20 minutes. Serve chili topped with cheese and sour cream, goes great with cornbread.

For chili seasoning:

2 Tbsp chili powder

2 Tbsp cumin

2 tsp paprika

2 tsp oregano

1 tsp garlic powder

1 tsp onion powder

Impossibly Easy Taco Pie

This recipe is great for those busy school nights with only 15 minutes of prep time to spare! It is a good alternative to our Tuesday Taco Nights.

1 lb ground beef or turkey

1 medium onion, chopped (½ cup)

1 envelope (1.25 oz) taco seasoning mix

1 can (4.5 oz) green chilies, untrained

½ cup Bisquick

1 cup milk

2 eggs

1 medium tomato, chopped (¾ cup)

½ cup shredded Colby-Monterey Jack or cheddar cheese

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Spray 9-inch glass pie plate with cooking spray. In a skillet, cook meat and onion over medium-high heat until done; drain. Sprinkle taco seasoning mix over meat mixture. Spread in pie plate. Top evenly with chilies. In medium bowl, stir Bisquick mix, milk, and eggs with wire whisk until blended. Pour into pie plate. Bake 25 minutes. Top with tomato and cheese. Bake 8 to 10 minutes longer or until cheese is melted. Let stand 5 minutes before serving. (6 servings).

Note: This pie is also perfect for potlucks. Simply double the ingredients and use a 13x9 inch glass baking dish. Bake 30 minutes, top with tomato and cheese, then bake 8 to 10 minutes longer.

Navao Stew

2 medium sweet potatoes

2 red or green bell peppers

1 large onion

4 garlic cloves, minced

2 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 tablespoon ground cumin

1 teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon black pepper

1 15-ounce can of tomatoes

1 tablespoon canned chipotles in adobo sauce

½ cup chopped fresh cilantro (optional)

1 15-ounce can of butter beans or black beans, drained (I didn't actually drain 'em to give

the stew a little more liquid; you can also make your own from dried)

flatbread (tortillas, lavash, pita, whatever…)

plain yogurt (optional)

Preheat the oven to 450. Lightly oil a baking sheet. Peel the sweet potatoes and cut into 1-inch cubes. Stem and seed the peppers and cut into 1-inch pieces. Peel the onion and cut it, stem to root end, into thin wedges. In a bowl, toss the vegetables with the garlic, oil, cumin, salt and pepper. Spread on the prepared baking sheet and roast in the oven for about 10 minutes. Stir and continue to roast for another 10 to 15 minutes, until the sweet potatoes are tender but not mushy. While the vegetables roast, puree the tomatoes, chipotles, and cilantro in a blender until smooth. Set aside. When the vegetables are tender, put them into a 2 to 3-quart baking dish, stir in the tomato-cilantro sauce and the beans, and return to the oven until hot, about 10 minutes. A few minutes before serving, warm the bread in the oven. Serve the stew in bowls stopped with yogurt or sour cream, with warm flatbread on the side.

Adzuki Bean and Carrot Stew

INGREDIENTS

2 tablespoons sesame or olive oil

1 large yellow onion, chopped

Chopped garlic (not in original recipe, but why not?)

1/2 teaspoon salt

5 (1/2–inch) slices ginger…I slice them thinner and leave them in

1 cup adzuki beans, soaked in 2 cups water overnight

8-12 cups water (depends on if you want thicker stew vs. brothy soup...I usually do 10-12)

4 large carrots, peeled if you want (I don't) and cut into 3/4–inch slices

3 tablespoons tamari or naturally brewed soy sauce

2 tablespoons brown rice vinegar

1/2 cup minced parsley, for garnish

*I also add spices…cayenne, cumin, oregano, basil, chili powder…go nuts)

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium heat. Sauté onion, salt, and ginger slices for a couple of minutes.

2. Drain and rinse the adzuki beans. Add to the pot with the water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to a simmer, and cook with a cover for 45 minutes. Open the lid and lay carrots on top of beans, cover pot again, and cook for another 20 to 30 minutes, until beans are tender and carrots are soft and cooked down. Or skip this step and just soak the beans for a few hours. Adzuki beans don't need more than 2, but you can soak them overnight. If you have an instant pot, throw 'em in dry and pressure cook for 45 minutes and it'll be perfect.

3.Stir the stew to mix the carrots and adzuki beans. If not thick enough, simmer uncovered until it's as thick as you like it. Stir in tamari and rice vinegar. Remove ginger slices before serving (or just leave them; delicious), and add a sprinkle of parsley to finish.

I've mixed cooked barley and brown rice in this...it's awesome.

Shephard-less Shephard's Pie

For Mashed potatoes:

1 ½ lbs russet potatoes peeled

¼ C half and half

2 oz unsalted butter

Salt & pepper

1 egg yolk

(or 2 packages of TJs frozen mashed potatoes)

For Pie Filling:

Pad of butter

1 (10oz) package mushrooms (finely diced)

1 (12oz) package veggie crumbles

1 diced onion

2 carrots (diced)

2 cloves garlic (diced)

2 tsp tomato paste

1C vegetable broth

1 tsp Worcestershire sauce

2 tsp rosemary (diced)

1 tsp thyme (diced)

½ C corn

½ C English peas

Salt & Pepper

2 C Irish cheddar shredded (for topping)

For the potatoes: If you must make everything from scratch, boil potatoes until fork tender, then drain. Let them cool, but peel them when still warm. Melt butter in microwave and add to half-and-half, mix in as you mash potatoes. Add egg yolk, stir to combine and set aside.

Note: Save yourself some time and just use good quality frozen mashed potatoes (like the frozen rounds you get at Trader Joes) the potatoes aren't the main focus here, especially when you're covering them in cheese.

For the pie:

Preheat oven to 400.

Heat saucepan to medium heat, melt butter and start browning mushrooms. Cook these down considerably until there's no real moisture remaining, then add onion and cook until soft. Turn heat up to medium/high, then add the carrot, you want to caramelize the outside a bit, but don't want it to get totally mushy. Add veggie crumbles and garlic cook until warmed through. Coat mixture in flour and add Worcestershire, rosemary, and thyme. Add vegetable broth, bring to a boil and reduce until mixture's thickened. Add the corn and peas stir and transfer to a baking dish.

If you want to make this pretty you can put your mash potatoes in a piping bag and neatly cover the mixture in potato puffs, but who's got time for that? Once you've got the whole mixture covered in mashed potatoes sprinkle on the cheddar. Bake for 20 min or until cheese is melted and slightly brown. Remove and let cool before serving.

Sweets

Pie Crust

Sorry, no directions on what to do with dough once you mix it; this is typical of the old family recipes. See Martha Stewart pie crust recipe for more explicit directions.

1 1/2 cups flour

1/2 tsp. salt

4 T. shortening

Rub through your hands until it forms a ball. Then add not quite a half-cup of water. Mix well. This is enough for a double crust.

Pie Crust a la Martha Stewart

With apologies to Mom; your daughters never learned to make pie dough by the “feel” of it as you did. Even though you tried to teach us and even made crusts for me to freeze when you came to visit, our attempts to duplicate your recipe were never successful. Our adaptation of Martha’s recipe is a good substitute, though not as flaky as Mom’s.

2 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

1 tsp. salt

1 cup (2 sticks) butter, chilled and cut into small pieces

1/4 to 1/2 cup ice water

In the bowl of a food processor, combine flour and salt. Add butter, and process until it’s crumbly, less than 15 seconds.

Pour the water over the flour mixture, then turn on the food processor. Pulse until dough holds together without being wet or sticky; be careful not to process more than 30 seconds. To test, squeeze a small amount together: If it is crumbly, add more ice water, 1 tablespoon at a time.

Divide dough into two equal balls. Flatten each ball into a disk, and wrap in plastic. Transfer to the refrigerator, and chill at least 1 hour. Dough may be stored, frozen, up to 1 month. Makes 1 double-crust or 2 single-crust 9- to 10-inch pies.

Superb Chocolate Pie

I found this among Mom's recipes in Mary LeRoux's handwriting, and even though I don't remember eating it, I include it because Mark loves chocolate pie.

In the top of a double boiler over medium heat place the following:

1 16 oz package chocolate chips

2 1/2 T. water

1/4 cup sugar

(Check the size of the chocolate chip package; many are now 12 oz instead of 16. If that's the case, reduce the amount of water to 1 T.)

Stir occasionally until chocolate melts and mixture is smooth. Remove from heat and cool.

Add:

4 egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition

1 tsp. vanilla

Beat 4 egg whites till foamy, then gradually beat in 1/4 cup sugar. Beat until stiff peaks form. Fold a small amount of this mixture into the chocolate mixture, then fold in the rest of the egg whites. Pour chocolate mixture into a baked pie shell or graham cracker crust. Chill overnight. Serve with whipped cream.

Mary's Pecan Pie

When we had Thanksgiving dinner at Mary's apartment, this was her contribution. Think of all the work that went into that meal—Mom baking the turkey all night, wrapping the roasting pan in layers of newspaper and placing it in the trunk for the three hour drive to Minneapolis (not to mention all the side dishes she made too). The thought of that turkey incubating for so many hours makes Mike wonder how we all survived. I think the combination of all that goodwill from being together, not to mention the alcohol, saved us from food poisoning.

3 eggs

3/4 cup sugar

1/4 pound butter, melted

1 cup dark corn syrup

1 cup pecans

Beat eggs till light, slowly adding rest of ingredients, except pecans.

Pour into and unbaked pie shell, bake 40 minutes at 300. Remove pie from oven and place pecans on top. Return pie to oven and bake at 350 for 15-20 minutes. Serve with whipped cream.

Lemon Pie Filling

I found this recipe among Margaret LeRoux's collection. It's Nora LeRoux's recipe.

6 eggs separated (Keep out 2 egg whites; see below)

Beat egg yolks until light in the top of a double boiler (Have water in bottom half at a low boil)

Add:

1 cup sugar

A good sized piece of butter

Juice and rind of 1 lemon

1 scant tsp. cornstarch and 1 scant tsp. flour mixed very smooth in a little milk

Stir constantly till mixture thickens.

Take off heat, let cool for a few minutes while you beat 2 of the egg whites till stiff.

Save the other 4 for meringue.

Fold egg whites and lemon rind into pie filling mixture. Pour into a pre-baked pie crust, top with meringue and bake in a hot oven till meringue is browned.

Lillis' Lemon Meringue Pie

This recipe and Lemon Pudding/Mousse are identical except for the very last step. When you're making Lemon Meringue Pie, this recipe makes enough filling for a 9 inch pie shell.

Juice of two large lemons

1 1/2/ cups water

1 T. butter (if using unsalted butter, add a dash of salt)

1/2 cup sugar mixed with

3 T. cornstarch—mix thoroughly to blend sugar and cornstarch

4 eggs, separated

8 T. sugar

1 9-inch pie shell, baked

Juice the lemons, pour juice into a medium size saucepan. Pour the 1 1/2/ cups water into the lemon juicer to get all the rest of the juice. Add to lemon juice in saucepan. Add butter, egg yolks and sugar-cornstarch mixture. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly till it comes to a boil and begins to thicken. Take off heat, cool slightly while you beat the egg whites with a mixer at high speed till foamy, then gradually add sugar, 2 tablespoons at a time. Keep beating until a thick meringue forms. Pour the lemon filling into the pie shell, top with the meringue. Make sure the spread it to the very edges of the pie crust to seal the top (otherwise it shrinks away from the edges while baking). You can make it look fancy by swirling the back of a spoon or a knife blade through the meringue to make peaks. Bake at 425 for 5-8 minutes until meringue is delicately brown.

Butterscotch Pie

This was one of those “everyday” desserts I remember from the years before Mom went to work at Lignell’s. Reading through this complicated recipe now, it’s no wonder she hardly ever made it after 1960! Today, it’s worth making for a special occasion, though; it’s really good.

Make a graham cracker crust:

1 1/2 cups crushed graham crackers

1/4 cup powdered sugar

6 T. melted butter

Mix together and pat into a 9 inch pie pan. Bake at 375 for 6-8 minutes, until edges are browned.

Pie filling:

2/3 cup brown sugar (packed)

5 T. cornstarch

1/2 tsp. salt

2 1/4 cups milk

4 egg yolks, slightly beaten

2 T. butter

1 1/2 tsp. vanilla

4 egg whites

1/2 cup sugar

Combine brown sugar, cornstarch and salt in a medium size saucepan over medium heat. Gradually add milk, mixing till blended. Bring mixture to a boil, stirring constantly, then reduce heat and cook until thick and smooth, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat. Stir several spoonsful of mixture into beaten egg yolks; mix well. Pour this mixture back into the brown sugar mixture. Put onto medium burner and cook, stirring constantly, until thick, about 5 minutes. Pour filling into baked pie crust.

Beat egg whites until foamy and gradually pour in sugar beating until blended. Continue beating until mixture stands up in stiff peaks. Spoon meringue onto pie filling, spreading to the edge of the pie crust. Make several peaks of meringue. Bake at 425 for 5-8 minutes until meringue is delicately brown.

White Fluffy Frosting

This makes a very light, not too sweet frosting, enough for a 9 x 13 inch pan or two layers.

1/3 cup shortening

1/3 cup margarine (This is what the original recipe calls for; I made it recently with just butter and it was really good)

2 egg whites

2 cups powdered sugar

1/2 tsp. vanilla

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. cream of tartar

Put all ingredients in a deep, small, bowl. Beat at highest speed of mixer for 10-15 minutes.

Seven Minute Frosting

Notation on this old recipe from Mom's collection says, "very good"

1 2/3 cup granulated sugar

5 T. water

1/2 tsp. cream of tartar

2 egg whites (not beaten)

Mix all together and put in top of double boiler (water boiling in lower pot) and beat for seven minutes.

Marian's Chocolate Boiled Frosting

One of Mom's longtime friends, Marian Norfolk, passed this recipe along. I remember eating it on marble cake.

2 squares unsweetened chocolate

1 1/2 cups sugar

1 T. milk

2 T. Crisco

2 T. butter (If I were making it today, I'd use 4 T. butter instead and skip the Crisco)

1 T. white corn syrup

1/2 tsp. salt

Put all ingredients into the top of a double boiler, Heat over low temperature (water in bottom pot should be simmering) until chocolate melts. Turn up heat until mixture begins to boil. Boil one full minute, then take off heat, cool for a few minutes, beat 3-4 minutes with electric mixer until it's of spreading consistency.

Caramel Frosting

I found this in Margaret LeRoux's collection and was intrigued—it's unusual to find this flavor.

1 1/2/cups brown sugar

3 T. butter

3 T. cream dash of salt

1/2 tsp. vanilla

Mix together in a saucepan over medium heat; cook, stirring, until mixture comes to a boil. Boil one minute, not stirring. Cool and spread on cake

Brown Sugar Filling

Mom made this to put between layers of white cake that was frosted with boiled frosting. It was Pop's favorite and she made it for his birthday every year.

3/4 cup brown sugar

2 egg yolks

4 T. water

Dash of salt

3 T. butter

1/2 cup chopped walnuts

Mix all together in a medium saucepan; boil till it thickens. Cool, add chopped walnuts.

Previous

White Nut Cake

Another from the Margaret LeRoux collection.

The notation on the recipe says “Nora’s,” so I’m assuming it’s from Dad’s/Grandpa’s mother.

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup butter

Pinch of salt

Whites of 3 eggs, beaten stiff

1 1/2 cups flour (1/2 cake flour, 1/2 regular flour)

1 cup chopped walnuts (mix in with flour)

1 tsp. vanilla

1/2 cup milk

3 tsp. baking powder

Cream butter and sugar—not too much, then add egg whites, flour, milk, baking powder last. Pour into a greased loaf pan. Bake 35 minutes in a moderate (350) oven.

White Cake

This is from Margaret’s collection of old LeRoux family recipes. Try it with Brown Sugar Nut Filling or the lemon filling from Mom’s Lemon Meringue Pie recipe and frost with Boiled Frosting or White Fluffy Frosting.

1/2 cup butter

1 cup sugar, divided

1 tsp. almond flavoring (you can substitute 1/4 tsp. nutmeg)

1 cup milk

3 tsp. baking powder

2 1/2 cups cake flour (not regular flour)

3 eggs, separated—use only the whites

Add flavoring to milk; sift flour and baking powder (and nutmeg, if using) together. Cream butter and 1/2 cup sugar in large bowl of mixer until light and fluffy. Add milk and flavoring mixture alternating with flour mixture. Beat egg whites separately till foamy, gradually adding the other 1/2 cup sugar; keep beating till stiff peaks form. Fold egg white mixture into cake batter. Pour batter into two 8 or 9 inch layer pans that have been buttered and floured. Bake at 350 for 30-35 minutes. Test after 30 minutes with a toothpick in the center. If it comes out clean or even with a few crumbs, cake is done. You could bake this in a 9 x 13 inch pan instead.

Rhubarb Cake

Another good use for excess rhubarb.

1/2 cup butter/margarine

1 cup sugar (original recipe calls for

1 1/2 cups, but that seemed too sweet to me)

1 egg

Cream the above

Make 1 cup sour milk (Add 2 tsp. apple cider vinegar or white vinegar to the milk). Pour the sour milk mixture into a 2 cup measuring cup or a bowl, Then add 1 tsp. soda to the sour milk; it will foam and almost double in size.

Add the sour milk mixture to the creamed butter, alternating with 2 cups flour (First a little sour milk, beat it in, then 1/2 cup of flour, beat again, continue and end with flour)

Mix 2 cups chopped rhubarb with 1/2 cup sugar, and 2 T. flour. Add to cake mixture. Pour into a buttered and floured 9 x 13 inch pan; sprinkle the top with a mixture of 1 cup brown sugar and 1 tsp. cinnamon. Bake at 350 for 45 min.

Pineapple Upside Down Cake

This is another one of those recipes from way back. I remember picking most of the pineapple off because I thought it was too sweet, but I never refused the whipped cream.

1/2 cup butter

1 cup brown sugar

1 large can crushed pineapple-drain in a colander

Melt butter in a skillet (Make sure it's one that can bake in the oven) Add brown sugar, stir to dissolve, then add drained crushed pineapple. Set aside.

1/4 cup butter

3/4 cup sugar

1 egg

1 1/2 cups flour

2 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 cup pineapple juice (from drained pineapple)

Cream butter and sugar, add egg, beat; add pineapple juice, then dry ingredients. Pour batter into skillet containing brown sugar-pineapple mixture. Bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Cool for about 5 minutes, then run a knife around the outside edge of the cake, place a serving plate upside down on top of the skillet. Flip it onto the plate. Rearrange pineapple on top and sides, if necessary. Serve warm or cooled with whipped cream.

(You can make this fancier looking by using pineapple rings instead of crushed pineapple and put a halved maraschino cherry in the middle of each ring).

Hot Fudge Cake

This is another one of those recipes from way back. I remember picking most of the pineapple off because I thought it was too sweet, but I never refused the whipped cream.

1/2 cup butter

1 cup brown sugar

1 large can crushed pineapple-drain in a colander

Melt butter in a skillet (Make sure it's one that can bake in the oven) Add brown sugar, stir to dissolve, then add drained crushed pineapple. Set aside.

1/4 cup butter

3/4 cup sugar

1 egg

1 1/2 cups flour

2 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 cup pineapple juice (from drained pineapple)

Cream butter and sugar, add egg, beat; add pineapple juice, then dry ingredients. Pour batter into skillet containing brown sugar-pineapple mixture. Bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Cool for about 5 minutes, then run a knife around the outside edge of the cake, place a serving plate upside down on top of the skillet. Flip it onto the plate. Rearrange pineapple on top and sides, if necessary. Serve warm or cooled with whipped cream.

(You can make this fancier looking by using pineapple rings instead of crushed pineapple and put a halved maraschino cherry in the middle of each ring).

German Oat Cake

This is another one of those recipes from way back. I remember picking most of the pineapple off because I thought it was too sweet, but I never refused the whipped cream.

1/2 cup butter

1 cup brown sugar

1 large can crushed pineapple-drain in a colander

Melt butter in a skillet (Make sure it's one that can bake in the oven) Add brown sugar, stir to dissolve, then add drained crushed pineapple. Set aside.

1/4 cup butter

3/4 cup sugar

1 egg

1 1/2 cups flour

2 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 cup pineapple juice (from drained pineapple)

Cream butter and sugar, add egg, beat; add pineapple juice, then dry ingredients. Pour batter into skillet containing brown sugar-pineapple mixture. Bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Cool for about 5 minutes, then run a knife around the outside edge of the cake, place a serving plate upside down on top of the skillet. Flip it onto the plate. Rearrange pineapple on top and sides, if necessary. Serve warm or cooled with whipped cream.

(You can make this fancier looking by using pineapple rings instead of crushed pineapple and put a halved maraschino cherry in the middle of each ring).

Dick’s Birthday Rum Cake

This is another one of those recipes from way back. I remember picking most of the pineapple off because I thought it was too sweet, but I never refused the whipped cream.

1/2 cup butter

1 cup brown sugar

1 large can crushed pineapple-drain in a colander

Melt butter in a skillet (Make sure it’s one that can bake in the oven) Add brown sugar, stir to dissolve, then add drained crushed pineapple. Set aside.

1/4 cup butter

3/4 cup sugar

1 egg

1 1/2 cups flour

2 tsp. baking powder

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 cup pineapple juice (from drained pineapple)

Cream butter and sugar, add egg, beat; add pineapple juice, then dry ingredients. Pour batter into skillet containing brown sugar-pineapple mixture. Bake at 350 for 30 minutes. Cool for about 5 minutes, then run a knife around the outside edge of the cake, place a serving plate upside down on top of the skillet. Flip it onto the plate. Rearrange pineapple on top and sides, if necessary. Serve warm or cooled with whipped cream.

(You can make this fancier looking by using pineapple rings instead of crushed pineapple and put a halved maraschino cherry in the middle of each ring).

Lillis' Chocolate Cake

1/2 cup shortening (or margarine or butter)

1 1/2 cups sugar

2 eggs

1/2 cup sour milk (3/4 tsp. vinegar added to milk)

1/2 tsp. baking soda

2 squares unsweetened chocolate—place in a small bowl

1/2 cup boiling water (pour boiling water over chocolate, set aside to melt)

1/2 tsp. salt 1 tsp. vanilla

2 cups flour

Cream shortening and sugar; add eggs, beat well, then salt and vanilla, next melted chocolate-water mixture, mix well. Put sour milk into a one-cup measuring cup, add baking soda so mixture foams up. Add flour to egg mixture, alternating with sour milk-soda mixture, ending with flour. Pour batter into a greased and floured 9 inch baking pan. Bake at 350 degrees 20-25 minutes. (Test with a toothpick after 20 minutes—if just a few crumbs stick, take out of oven.

Toffee Bars

If any one dessert says “Mom” to me, this one does. She could make toffee bars without consulting a recipe—and often did. They were and still are the all-purpose “last minute dessert.”

1 cup butter

1 cup brown sugar (packed—light or dark or a mixture of the two)

1 egg, slightly beaten

2 tsp. vanilla (at least) dash of salt

2 cups flour 4-5 Hershey bars, broken into small pieces or 6 oz package chocolate chips

Preheat oven to 350. Melt butter and sugar together in a large sauce pan, stirring to mix sugar into butter. When mixture comes to a boil, remove from heat, add 1/2 cup flour, vanilla, salt; stir till mixed. Stir in egg, then add the remaining 1/2 cups flour. Pat onto a large cookie sheet. Bake for 13 minutes. Take out of oven, sprinkle Hershey bars or chocolate chips on top, then return cookie sheet to oven for just a minute to melt the chocolate. Spread with a knife. Cut into squares while still warm, remove from cookie sheet onto a rack.

Rice Krispie Treats

This dessert came into popularity about the same time I started taking an interest in cooking and talking on the phone. Once I started a batch just before Mary Erickson or Mary Hadley called. While the marshmallows and butter melted in a pot on the stove, I yakked on the phone, sitting on the floor between the kitchen and dining room, paying no attention whatsoever to the melting marshmallows. They burned so badly it took about a week of soaking before I could pry the mess out of the pot.

In a large pot, melt 1/4 cup butter over low heat

Add 1/2 pound marshmallows, stir till melted

Add a dash of salt

Pour in 3 cups Rice Krispies Mix all together, pat into a buttered 9 inch square pan.

We usually doubled this recipe and put it in a 9 x 13 inch pan.

Rhubarb Bars

“The boys” will remember stealing rhubarb from Mrs. Rask’s garden. She often gave Mom enough to make pie or bars.

1 cup flour

5 T. powdered sugar

1/2 cup butter

Mix like pie dough, pat into a 9 x 13 pan, bake at 350 for 10-12 minutes

Mix together:

2 beaten eggs

1 1/2 cups sugar

1/4 cup flour

2 1/2 cups chopped rhubarb

Dash of salt

1 tsp. vanilla

Pour mixture over crust. Bake 45 minutes to 1 hour at 350 degrees.

Judy’s Lemony Bars

“The boys” will remember stealing rhubarb from Mrs. Rask’s garden. She often gave Mom enough to make pie or bars.

1 cup flour

5 T. powdered sugar

1/2 cup butter

Mix like pie dough, pat into a 9 x 13 pan, bake at 350 for 10-12 minutes

Mix together:

2 beaten eggs

1 1/2 cups sugar

1/4 cup flour

2 1/2 cups chopped rhubarb

Dash of salt

1 tsp. vanilla

Pour mixture over crust. Bake 45 minutes to 1 hour at 350 degrees.

Lillis' Lemon Bars

This is my personal favorite of all the bars. I've doctored the original recipe so that it has more lemon juice—makes a tangier lemon taste.

2 cups flour

1/2 cup powdered sugar

1 cup cold butter, cut into tablespoon size pieces

4 large eggs

1 1/3 cup sugar

7 T. lemon juice

4 T. flour

1/2 tsp. baking powder

Preheat oven to 350. Butter and flour a 9 x 13 inch baking pan. Put flour and powdered sugar into food processor; process briefly to mix. Add butter; process until mixture is fine and crumbly. Pour into prepared baking pan. Pat firmly to make a crust. Bake 20-25 minutes until light golden brown.

While baking, add eggs to food processor bowl (You don't have to wash it after the flour mixture). Process briefly; add sugar; process again. Add lemon juice, process again, then add flour and baking powder; process to mix. When crust is ready, pour egg mixture over it, place

pan back in oven and bake an additional 20-25 minutes. When cool, sift powdered sugar over the top; cut into squares.

Del's Spice Bars

This was from one of Elsie's friends or else she was a sister-in-law. Elsie served spice bars for "coffee;" the recipe has ingredients she used a lot: dates, spices and coffee.

1 cup shortening (I would use butter)

2 cups brown sugar

3 eggs

1 cup cold coffee—dissolve

1 tsp. baking soda in the coffee

1 tsp. vanilla

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. cinnamon

1/2 tsp. ginger

1/2 tsp. nutmeg

1 cup chopped walnuts

1 1/2 cups chopped dates

2 1/2 cups flour

Like so many of Elsie's recipes, this has no directions. I'm guessing you cream the shortening and sugar and mix in the rest of the ingredients. The recipe does say to bake at 350 for 20-25 minutes. Try a 9 x 13 pan.

Frost with powdered sugar frosting: Cream 4 T. butter with 1 cup sifted powdered sugar, dash of salt, 1 tsp. vanilla, 1 -2 T. milk, beat till smooth (you may have to add more milk or powdered sugar)

Fudge Squares

Before brownies were trendy, our Mom made Fudge Squares.

1/2 cup shortening

1 cup sugar

3 eggs unbeaten

2 squares of chocolate (melted and cooled)

1 cup flour (sifted first)

1 1/2 tsp. vanilla

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 cup nuts

Cream sugar and shortening; beat in eggs one at a time. Mix in melted chocolate, vanilla and salt. Stir in flour, then add nuts. Pour into a buttered and floured 9 inch or 8 inch pan Bake 350 oven 25 or 30 minutes.

Frosting:

2 T. butter

2 T. cream

2 squares unsweetened chocolate

1 1/2 cups powdered sugar (sifted)

Dash of salt

1 tsp. vanilla

In a small pan, heat butter and cream until hot. Then add chocolate (cut into small pieces) after taking off stove. Stir until chocolate melts. Add powdered sugar and vanilla. Frost fudge squares when cooled.

Chocolate Mint Bars

These were among desserts served to the “Club” ladies, Mom’s bridge playing friends. On “Club” nights we’d sit at the top of the stairs to listen in. Usually “the boys” would refuse to quiet down and go to sleep, so Mom would run upstairs, holler and swat some fannies, then go back downstairs and play hostess as if nothing happened.

2 squares unsweetened chocolate, melted and cooled

1/2 cup butter

1 cup sugar

2 eggs

1/4 tsp. peppermint extract

1/2 cup sifted flour

1/2 cup chopped walnuts

Cream butter and sugar, add eggs, beat well, then chocolate; beat again till blended. Add peppermint extract, then flour and nuts. Stir till it’s all mixed in. Pour into a buttered and floured square baking pan (8 x 8 inches) Bake at 350 for 20-25 minutes. Test for doneness by sticking a toothpick in the center. If a few crumbs stick to it, bars are done.

Cool bars on a baking rack.

Make filling:

2 T. soft butter

1 cup sifted powdered sugar

Dash of salt

3/4 tsp. peppermint extract

1 T. cream

Beat or stir butter and powdered sugar together, add salt, peppermint extract and cream. Beat till smooth. (You may have to add more cream) When bars are cooled frost with the filling.

Glaze:

Melt 1 square of unsweetened chocolate with 1 T. butter, mix together to blend, cool slightly. Dribble glaze over filling, tilting pan back and forth to cover. Cool and cut into small squares if you're a bridge lady; the rest of us can super size them.

Julie's Brownies

Julie Mattila Montgomery was born three months before Leslee and grew up with her across the street in the flamboyant Mattila household. This collection wouldn't be complete without a contribution from her. Julie made these brownies and a wonderful hot dish dinner for us when Mom died. After spending so much time with Leslee, she knows the way to help the LeRoux family deal with crises as well as celebrations is with food.

4 eggs

1 cup sugar

1 cup flour

1 stick butter or margarine, softened

1 16-ounce can Hershey's syrup

1 cup nuts (optional)

Cream butter, sugar and eggs. Add syrup, flour, nuts. Pour into well greased and lightly floured 9 x 13 inch or 15 x 10 inch pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 25-30 minutes.

Tapioca Pudding

This one's for Leslee!

4 cups milk

1/3 cup minute tapioca

1/2 cup sugar

1/4 tsp. salt

1 tsp. vanilla

2 eggs

Put milk in double boiler and add tapioca and salt and stir for about 5 minutes. Let this continue to cook while you are beating your eggs thoroughly. Add sugar to eggs. Then take out a little of the milk and tapioca mixture and stir into egg and sugar. Then pour sugar mixture into milk and tapioca mixture in the double boiler and stir constantly till thick.

Pistachio Dessert

This was a dessert Mom liked to bring to family gatherings, before Snicker Salad replaced it in popularity.

2 3-ounce packages of pistachio pudding

1 quart vanilla ice cream (leave out to get soft)

1 1/2 cups milk

45 Ritz crackers, crushed (one whole sleeve of crackers)

3/4 cup butter

Mix the crushed crackers with melted butter to make a crumb crust. Pat into a pie pan. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 minutes.

Beat pudding with milk, add ice cream and mix well. Pour onto the cooled crust and top with Cool Whip and refrigerate 6 hours or overnight.

Mom’s Lemon Pudding Mousse

Mom called this just lemon pudding, and it’s very easy to make but it’s such an impressive dessert I re-named it lemon mousse.

Juice of two large lemons

1 1/2/ cups water

1 T. butter (if using unsalted butter, add a dash of salt)

1/2 cup sugar mixed with

3 T. cornstarch

4 eggs, separated

6 T. sugar

Juice the lemons, pour juice into a medium size saucepan. Pour the 1 1/2/ cups water into the lemon juicer to get all the rest of the juice. Add to lemon juice in saucepan. Add butter, egg yolks and sugar-cornstarch mixture. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly till it comes to a boil and begins to thicken. Take off heat.

Beat egg whites with a mixer set on high till foamy. Gradually add 6 T. sugar, a little at a time, and keep beating until a thick meringue results. Take a small amount of meringue and mix into lemon filling, then fold in the rest of the meringue. Spoon into goblets or small dishes; cover with plastic wrap and chill at least 2 hours.

Vanilla Crème brûlée with Raspberries

This dessert makes me temporarily forget my chocolate addiction. It qualifies as a LeRoux food because it's so easy to make and because Mike, Mark and Emily love it. The bruléing also satisfies the pyro-fascination of so many LeRoux family members. Get yourself a little blow torch and have fun.

6 tsp. raspberry jam

Fresh raspberries—about a pint

6 large egg yolks

6 T. sugar

1 T. vanilla

1 1/2 cups whipping cream

Brown sugar

Preheat oven to 325°F. Spread 1 teaspoon jam over bottom of each of six small, oven-proof custard cups. Press 4-6 berries, placed on their sides, into jam in each dish. Reserve remaining raspberries for garnish.

Whisk yolks and 6 tablespoons sugar in medium bowl to blend. Add vanilla. Gradually whisk in cream. Divide mixture among dishes. Arrange dishes in 13x9x2-inch baking pan. Pour enough hot water into pan to come halfway up sides of dishes. This is easier if you put the pan in the oven first, then carefully add the water. Bake custards until set in center, about 40 minutes. Place pan on a heat-proof surface. Cool custards in water 30 minutes. Remove custard dishes from water; chill overnight, or at least several hours. When ready to serve, sprinkle brown sugar on top of each custard. Carefully melt/caramelize the sugar with a small blow torch. Or, place dishes on small baking sheet and broil in the oven until sugar just starts to caramelize, rotating

sheet for even browning, about 2 minutes. Chill until topping hardens, about 2 hours. Or serve immediately. Garnish with reserved berries if you like.

Mom's Chocolate Sauce

Note from Marm: I made this recently and decreased the amount of sugar to 1/2 cup; it was still pretty sweet.

1 T. butter 1 square baking chocolate

2 T. white Karo syrup

1/2 cup water

Melt all ingredients over medium heat until it starts to boil and thickens.

Mix 7/8 cup of sugar with 2 T. flour, mix flour and sugar well. Add to chocolate mixture and let boil by itself (don't stir) for about 15 minutes.

Chocolate Fondue

Recreate Fondue Night and have your own fondue fork duel; serve this for dessert along with the cheese fondue recipe.

2 T. honey or light corn syrup

1/2 cup light cream or half & half 1 bar (8 3/4 ounce or 9 ounce) milk chocolate, broken into pieces

1 tsp. vanilla

2 T. brandy

Heat honey and cream, add chocolate pieces, stirring constantly until chocolate melts. Stir in vanilla and brandy. Pour into ceramic or metal fondue pot. Dip any or all of the following:

sliced bananas

strawberries

cubes of yellow or angel food cake

The Infamous Cherries Jubiliee

On Christmas Eve 1969 this dessert almost set the dining room on fire.

Mom chose the recipe because it was intended to be an easy but fancy dessert— cherries marinated in a small amount of brandy, heated, then flamed and served over scoops of ice cream. Early in the day, she put the pie filling in a pyrex bowl, added about a tablespoon of brandy, covered it and left for the Christmas Eve rush at Lignell's. Later in the day, I admit to adding an extra splash of brandy because I figured she hadn't put in enough to make it interesting. I'm pretty sure Denis and Jim made a brandy contribution and probably so did Dad. Later that evening (after the ham and jello salad were cleared and Art Moin's two-pound box of Russell Stovers candies handed around the table,) Mom brought in the cherries jubilee sauce and lit it. The flames were most impressive and certainly bigger than she expected. There were several guilty looking faces at the table. We were so naïve, we didn't realize the flames would burn off the alcohol. But it still made a pretty good topping for the ice cream.

1 can cherry pie filling

Brandy

Vanilla ice cream a fire extinguisher (just kidding)

Mom's Biscuits or Shortcakes

Leslee says, use these for strawberry shortcake; at Marm's house, sometimes we eat shortcakes straight from the oven for breakfast

2 cups flour

4 tsp. baking powder

dash of salt

1/2 stick of butter

2 T. sugar (cut down on sugar if you don't want sweet biscuits) (Note from Marm: I use 1/3 to 1/2 cup sugar to make a sweet biscuit; I also add a dash of cinnamon)

Cut all ingredients together like pie dough (You can also do this in a food processor)

Break one egg into a 1 cup measuring cup, stir it with a fork to break up the yolk, add enough milk to fill to top. Mix this in with dry ingredients, but do not over mix. Drop by spoonful on greased cookie sheet.

Bake 375 for 15-20 minutes, until golden brown.

Bananas Foster

At dinner for Tricia and Toby, home on leave from Iraq in May 2004, Chris impressed all of us with this flaming dessert. Following is his recipe and instructions.

4 ripe bananas (peeled, halved, sliced length wise)

1/2 cup brown sugar (dark/light, whatever you have)

3 T. butter

1/2 cup shredded coconut

Dark rum

1/3 cup water

French vanilla or coconut ice cream

Heat large iron skillet (regular frying pan will work) on medium low. Add coconut. When you start to see browning, remove coconut from the skillet into a bowl. Add butter to skillet. Turn up heat to about medium. Once butter starts to melt, add brown sugar and water. Dissolve sugar. Add the bananas and cook for about a minute or two. Remove the skillet from the heat for just a second and add the rum. I recommend two healthy pours. Put the skillet back on the heat, be careful of flames. If no flame appears when you add the skillet back to the heat, take a match and light it over the skillet to burn off the alcohol. Watch your eyebrows. Continue cooking the bananas until tender. Remove from heat. Scoop ice cream into bowls. Add banana mixture on top. Sprinkle with coconut. (Serves 4-6)

Apple Crisp

This is a typical Mom recipe: simple, easy to put together and absolutely delicious.

Fill a 9 x 13 inch pan almost to the top with sliced apples. (Peel if you want to; you don’t have to) Sprinkle apples with 3/4 to 1 cup sugar and 1 tsp. cinnamon Make topping:

2 cups flour

2 tsp. cinnamon

1 1/2 cups brown sugar

8 T. butter (1 stick)

Mix topping ingredients together in a bowl with a pastry cutter (like pie crust),or do it in a food processor, then sprinkle topping over the apples in the pan. Pat the topping firmly with your hands so that it looks like a crust. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 45-60 minutes.

(You can easily cut this recipe in half; use an 8 or 9 inch square baking pan or even a pie pan)

Ting-a-ling

The handwriting on the original recipe looks like mine; I remember making these as a when I was still in grade school. It's a no-cook recipe perfect for kids. 4 cups Chow Mein noodles

The original recipe says: a 39 cent Hershey bar. (I checked and today, a large, 6 ounce bar is $1.99—is that inflation or what?) You could also use 1/2 package (12 ounce) of chocolate chips.

Melt chocolate in top of double boiler over medium heat in a pan large enough to hold Chow Mein noodles. When chocolate is melted, add chow mein noodles, stir till they are coated. Drop from tablespoon onto a cookie sheet lined with waxed paper. Don't lick fingers until you are finished. Chill.

Reliance Fudge

One of the first "tricky" recipes I learned. Unlike its name, this recipe is not at all reliable. It's not easy to get a creamy texture, especially if you make it when the weather is the least bit humid. Most of the time it comes out sugary, but the flavor is still good.

2 squares baking chocolate

3/4 cup milk

2 T. butter

1 T. white Karo syrup

2 cups sugar

Heat milk, chocolate, butter and syrup until mixture starts to thicken. Add sugar until dissolved. Boil slowly until a soft ball forms in cold water.

Cool in refrigerator, 15 minutes. Beat with electric mixture until shiny gloss disappears, add vanilla and nuts. Pour in buttered pan.

Divinity

I found this in Margaret's collection of old family recipes. I don't remember ever eating it, but she always had homemade candy around.

2 3/4 cups sugar

3/4 cup white corn syrup

3/4 cup water

2 egg whites

1 tsp. vanilla

3/4 cup chopped walnuts

Cook sugar, syrup and water in a medium sauce pan over medium heat about seven minutes until it "hairs" well (Dip a spoon into the mixture and let a thin stream of the sugar mixture drip off it. If it's cooked enough you'll see a tiny "hair" of syrup separate from the mixture as you pour. Another test is to drop a little of the mixture into a cup of cold water; it should form a soft ball. Or if you're more precise, cook until 240 degrees F on a candy thermometer. Do not scrape pan while boiling sugar.

With an electric mixer, beat egg whites well and then gradually pour 2/3 of the sugar syrup mixture over the beaten egg whites, continue to beat until mixture is creamy. Continue cooking the sugar mixture until it forms a very firm ball when a small amount is dropped into cold water. Then, pour it into the egg whites, while beating with mixer. Add vanilla and nuts. Drop by spoonful onto waxed paper. Do not make this in rainy weather or the sugar mixture will not "hair."

Date Rocks

I found this in Margaret's collection of old family recipes. I don't remember ever eating it, but she always had homemade candy around.

2 3/4 cups sugar

3/4 cup white corn syrup

3/4 cup water

2 egg whites

1 tsp. vanilla

3/4 cup chopped walnuts

Cook sugar, syrup and water in a medium sauce pan over medium heat about seven minutes until it “hairs” well (Dip a spoon into the mixture and let a thin stream of the sugar mixture drip off it. If it’s cooked enough you’ll see a tiny “hair” of syrup separate from the mixture as you pour. Another test is to drop a little of the mixture into a cup of cold water; it should form a soft ball. Or if you’re more precise, cook until 240 degrees F on a candy thermometer. Do not scrape pan while boiling sugar.

With an electric mixer, beat egg whites well and then gradually pour 2/3 of the sugar syrup mixture over the beaten egg whites, continue to beat until mixture is creamy. Continue cooking the sugar mixture until it forms a very firm ball when a small amount is dropped into cold water. Then, pour it into the egg whites, while beating with mixer. Add vanilla and nuts. Drop by spoonful onto waxed paper. Do not make this in rainy weather or the sugar mixture will not “hair.”

Ginger Cookies

A recipe more for memory’s sake than actual baking; “the boys” and I remember eating these fat, soft cookies, but I can’t imagine any of us today making cookies with lard. If you want to try these, use a mixture of butter and margarine.

Pinch of salt

1 cup sugar

1 cup lard Cream these ingredients fairly well

2 eggs (add to the mixture and beat well) 1 cup molasses (dark)

4 T. vinegar

2 tsp. baking soda dissolved in 1/4 cup hot water

1 1/4 tsp. (heaping) ginger

Add enough flour (about 4 cups) to make a dough stiff enough to handle and roll out on a board. Sprinkle sugar over top of cookies before baking. (Tressa’s cookies were big— and thick—maybe use a glass as a cookie cutter— and soft.)

Bake in moderate oven. (I would try 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes, maybe more, depending on how thick your cookies are. You'll have to experiment with baking time, since she didn't leave us directions.)

Sugar Cookies

These were big as saucers and soft—very different from Nan's sugar cookie recipe, but very good on their own. I remember eating them on the sun porch at Pappy's house.

1 3/4 cup sugar pinch of salt

3/4 cup butter

Cream these ingredients together

Add 2 eggs, beaten

Mix 1 tsp. baking soda into 1/2 pint sour cream; add to butter mixture. Add lemon flavoring, a very little, as it will make the dough tough (I'd use 1/8 or1/4 tsp.)

Add 3 tsp. baking powder

Flour to make dough stiff enough to roll out (at least 3 cups; probably more).

Roll cookies out on a floured cloth. Sprinkle cookies with sugar. Bake in moderate(350) oven. Check after 5 minutes; they may take 10 minutes.

Oatmeal Cookies

These were the original "everyday" cookies, to distinguish them from the fancy cookies Mom, Nan, Elsie and Vi would make for Christmas. Yes, there was a time when we were very young, when Grandma would have milk and cookies for us after school.

1 cup margarine

1/2 cup white sugar

1/2 cup brown sugar

1 tsp. baking soda dissolved in 1/4 cup hot water

1 tsp. vanilla

1/2 tsp. salt

1 cup flour

3 cups oatmeal

1 cup walnuts, chopped

Cream margarine and sugars, stir in hot water with baking soda. Add salt, vanilla, then beat in flour. Stir in oatmeal and nuts. Drop from teaspoon onto cookie sheet. Bake at 375 for about 10 minutes. Cool on racks. You can make these fancier by toasting the walnuts first, or adding raisins, chopped dates or coconut to the oatmeal batter.

Million Dollar Cookies

I remember how hard it was for me to press these cookies flat when I was first learning to make them, dipping the bottom of a glass into a small mound of sugar (I've learned over the years to rub a tiny bit of cookie dough on the glass bottom first, so the sugar sticks) then pressing the glass down firmly and steadily onto a little ball of cookie dough so that it spreads and bakes evenly. Once I got the hang of it, they were easy to make, and they taste impressively fancy. If you press hard and make the cookies thin, they practically melt in your mouth when you eat them.

1 cup butter, softened

1/2 cup white sugar

1/2 cup light brown sugar

1/4 tsp. soda

1/2 tsp. salt

2 cups flour

1 egg

2 tsp. vanilla

1/2 cup walnuts, toasted and chopped

1/2 cup sugar

Cream butter and white sugar together; add brown sugar, continue mixing. Add egg; mix till blended.

Sift dry ingredients together; add to butter mixture. Stir in vanilla and nuts.

Chill dough for 2 hours. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Spoon out teaspoon size amounts of dough; roll into a ball and place on ungreased cookie sheet at least 1 1/2 inches apart. Place remaining 1/2 cup sugar on a small saucer; rub a very small amount of the dough onto the bottom of a glass to make the sugar stick. Dip the glass into the sugar, then press down firmly on balls of dough to flatten. This works better if the glass bottom is flat. Bake cookies for 10-12 minutes until light brown around the edges. Cool on baking racks.

Truffles

(From the former Cocolat Bakery in Berkeley)

Mike and I used to buy these and share them—the original truffles were almost as big as golf balls and sold for a couple dollars each. After we moved to Chapel Hill, I read an article in the paper about Cocolat (now unfortunately out of business) and it included the recipe. I adapted the original recipe, and I make them smaller. One important note: use the best chocolate you can find. Trader Joe's has blocks of bittersweet chocolate that are excellent, or if you can find Ghiradelli chocolate, that's good too.

1 cup (1/2 pint) whipping cream

10 oz. semi-sweet/bittersweet chocolate, chopped into small pieces

3 T. unsalted butter (cut into small pieces)

1/8 cup rum, brandy or other liqueur

14 oz. semi-sweet chocolate (or 10 oz semi-sweet; 4 oz unsweetened)

Chop the first 10 oz. chocolate into small pieces. Set aside. Heat cream over medium heat just until it comes to a boil. Remove from heat, add the butter, stir until it's almost melted, then add chopped chocolate, stir until melted. (If butter and chocolate don't melt, put back on the heat very, very briefly) Mixture should be thick and smooth like pudding. Pour into a bowl, whisk in the liqueur, cover and refrigerate overnight.

Next day, form teaspoon size amounts of the chilled chocolate mixture into balls, place on cookie sheet covered with waxed paper. (Use two pieces of waxed paper, each covering about half the sheet) Place into freezer and leave at least six hours or until solidly frozen.

Melt remaining chocolate in a double boiler,(See notes on ingredients for directions on how to make a double boiler) then pour about half of it onto a dinner plate. Remove half the frozen chocolate balls from the freezer and dip them, one at a time into the melted chocolate. Be sure to use one hand for dipping, the other stays clean for picking up chocolate balls from the tray. Otherwise, you just have a big mess. If melted chocolate starts to harden, put it back into double boiler and re-melt. Any leftover chocolate can be re-melted to use as coating for other batches of truffles. Store truffles in layers separated by waxed paper in a cookie tin or plastic container with a tight fitting cover in the refrigerator. They keep at least a month and are a yummy dessert with champagne on Valentine's Day.

Frystekake

A Radtke family Christmas tradition, but it is good anytime of year.

1 and 3/4 stick of butter

1 cup sugar

2 egg yolks

1/4 cup cream or half and half

2 1/2 cups flour

2 tsp. baking powder

Filling:

1 and 1/2 cups ground almonds (chop up whole almonds, with skins on, in a food processor until they are finely chopped)

1 cup powdered sugar

1/2 tsp. baking powder

2 egg whites

About 1/4 cup of brandy, enough to make this a spreadable paste

Cream butter and sugar, add egg yolks and cream. Mix in flour and baking powder. This is very stiff dough. Use a mix master, not a hand beater. Divide the dough in half. Press half in a well-buttered, floured 9-inch spring form pan. Spread filling mixture over the top. Roll strips of remaining dough over the filling in a crisscross manner. (Call Leslee, Nora or Emma and ask them how to do this.) Roll a long piece and press all around the edge of the pan to secure the

smaller pieces. Bake on a cookie sheet in a 325 degree over for an hour. Cover with foil if it gets too brown.

Margaret Armstrong's Julekage

Grandma's good friend and Leslee's godmother always brought Julekage to the LeRoux house at Christmas. She would bake small loaves and give them to her friends at the holidays. I loved turkey sandwiches on her Julekage, with mayonnaise and cranberries.

Years ago, I had Grandma and Margaret come over to my house so I could learn how to make Margaret's Julekage. Now I make it every Christmas, usually a day or two before Christmas Eve, when I get out to the farm. It takes a whole day. This recipe is big and sticky and hard to handle, but it is worth it, because every year I get to have my turkey sandwich on Julekage, with mayonnaise and cranberries. It is also great toasted, with butter and if you are Norwegian, or married to one, add a little gjeost. It's yummy and it tastes like Christmas.

4 cups milk (1 can evaporated milk is included in the four cups)

1/2 cup butter

2 cups sugar

3 tsp. salt

Heat together in sauce pan until butter melts.

Cool to approximately 130 degrees.

Pour into large metal bowl and whisk in three packages of fast-rising yeast.

Whisk in 2 eggs and 4 cups flour.

Cover and let rise in warm place until mixture doubles in size.

Chop up one container of red and one container of green candied cherries and add to mixture.

Stir with wooden spoon and add 1 and 1/2 tsp. cardamom and enough flour so dough is easy to handle, about 6 to 7 cups. Knead in bowl, roll into loaves, put in bread pan and let rise again until the dough reaches the top of the pan.

This usually makes five to six loaves. Once cooled, they can be wrapped in foil and frozen. Or make several small loaves and give them away as Christmas presents.

Bake 375 degrees for 40 minutes.

Sugar Cookies

This makes enough cookies to fill several tins. You can cut this recipe in half and still have plenty. It's easy dough to work with and has such a good flavor. You can roll them out thin and they're very delicate—decorate them with colored sugar, or Pop's preference, caraway seeds, before baking. Or, you can roll them out thicker and decorate after baking with powdered sugar frosting. Be careful not to use too much flour when rolling them out, or the cookies will be tough.

2 sticks butter (don't substitute margarine)

3 cups flour

1/2 tsp. baking soda

1/2 tsp. baking powder

Cut together like pie dough—or mix in food processor

Add:

2 beaten eggs

3/4 cup sugar

2 tsp. vanilla (The original recipe calls for 1 tsp., but splurge and add more; it improves the flavor) Mix or stir till it all holds together; it's a semi-firm dough.

You can use immediately--roll out small amounts on a floured pastry cloth or waxed paper and cut out with cookie cutters (Dip them in flour first). Or, you can wrap the dough in plastic and chill in refrigerator for up to a week. Be sure and let the dough warm up to room temperature before rolling out. You can gather the leftover scraps (after cutting them with cookie cutters) and add them to the dough for rolling out.

Bake at 350—start watching them after 5 minutes—depending on how thick you roll them they can bake from 7-10 minutes.

Norwegian Krumkake

You'll have to buy or borrow a krumkake iron for these cookies. They're easy to make—like waffles. Recipe courtesy of Bea Ojakangas

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup (1 stick) butter, melted

2 large eggs

1 cup milk

1 1/2 cups all-purpose flour

In a medium bowl, cream the sugar with the butter. Beat in the eggs until the mixture is light and lemon colored. Beat in the milk and flour until blended and smooth. Let stand 30 minutes. Spray the krumkake iron lightly with nonstick spray; preheat as directed. Open the iron; spoon 1 heaping teaspoon batter onto center of the hot iron. Close iron. Bake about 30-40 seconds until the cookie is lightly browned. Insert the tip of a knife under the cookie to remove from the iron; roll the hot cookie into a cigar or cone shape. (Krumkake iron comes with a form for rolling) Cool on a rack. Cookies become crisp as they cool. Repeat with remaining batter. Batter will thicken as you use it; add water a tablespoon at a time as necessary to thin it to the consistency of thick cream. Store the baked cookies in an airtight container. They can be kept frozen for several weeks.

Molasses Kringles

Molasses Kringles—Nan These cookies appeared every Thanksgiving—in addition to the pies—Pop loved them, so did Dad. They're a Christmas cookie staple for Leslee and me. We sprinkle the tops with red and green sugar.

3/4 cup butter

3/4 cup sugar

4 T. molasses

1 egg

2 1/4 cups flour

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. cinnamon

1 tsp. ginger

1/2 tsp. salt

1/2 tsp. cloves

Cream butter and sugar; beat in molasses, then the egg. Sift dry ingredients together; mix into butter mixture. Cover and chill at least 2 hours, or overnight. When ready to bake, preheat oven to 375 degrees. Break chilled dough off into tablespoon size bits; roll into balls, place on cookie sheet about 1 1/2 inches apart. Press down on dough balls with a fork to flatten and make a hatch pattern. Sprinkle with white sugar or colored sugar. Bake for 8 min. Cool on racks.

Mexican Wedding Cakes

These are Nan's recipe for powdered sugar coated Christmas cookies. As with most of her recipes there's not much direction. Fortunately these cookies are almost foolproof.

1/2 pound margarine or butter

6 heaping T. powdered sugar Additional powdered sugar for rolling cookies after baked

2 cups flour

2 tsp. vanilla

2 cups chopped nuts

2 tsp. water

Food coloring if desired.

Cream butter and sugar together. Add rest of ingredients. At Christmas, Mom would take some of the dough and mix in green food coloring, another portion would get red food coloring. Drop from teaspoon onto cookie sheet. Bake at 300 degrees for 30-35 minutes. After cookies have cooled for at least 5 minutes, pour about a cup and a half of powdered sugar onto a large plate. Roll cooled cookies in powdered sugar before storing in cookie tins.

Cinnamon Sticks

The dough for these fabulous cookies is ridiculously easy to make; the tricky part is rolling them by hand. When you make them, stay with process from start to finish—don't chill the dough or it will become impossible to work with. The finished cookies literally melt in your mouth and will disappear from the cookie tin.

1 cup butter

2 cups flour

1/2 tsp. cinnamon

5 T. sugar

Cream butter and sugar. Mix cinnamon with flour, gradually add to butter-sugar mixture. You should have a soft dough that holds together well. It should feel like soft play-dough. Move to a clean, flat surface for rolling. Roll dough on a sheet of wax paper (slightly larger than the size of a sheet of paper). Take a small handful of dough—about 2-3 tablespoons— make a ball in your hands, then place it on the waxed paper. Roll it back and forth, lightly pressing with your fingers to make a cylinder about the thickness of a cigar. Then cut at an angle to get pieces about 2-2 1/2 inches long. You'll have to experiment with the amount of dough to roll—you want enough to get several pieces, but not so much that the cylinder chapter-4.indd 64 10/28/05 6:03:36 AM 65 Cookies and Candy becomes unwieldy. Places pieces on a cookie sheet—they don't spread much, so you can get a lot on one sheet. Bake at 350 for about 15 minutes. These cookies shouldn't get too brown. If you're using a dark sheet, baking time will be shorter. Remove from cookie sheet and cool on a rack for about 3-5 minutes. Take about 1/2 cup sugar and pour onto a dinner-size plate. Add a generous shake of cinnamon; mix it in thoroughly. Then roll cookies in the cinnamon sugar.

Berliner Kranser

We all loved these; they were among the bounty of cookies Elsie, Nan and Mom baked in the years before Nan moved to California and Mom went to work at Lignell's and didn't have time for Christmas cookies. I remember helping Elsie stock her multi-level cookie plate. She'd send me to the stacks of cookie tins in the back hall of her kitchen, where the cold air helped keep the cookies fresh for weeks.

1/2 pound butter

3/4 cup powdered sugar

2 raw egg yolks (save the whites, beat till frothy)

2 hard boiled egg yolks chopped fine

3 cups flour Coarse sugar (also called pearl sugar)

Cream butter and powder sugar together. Crumble in cooked yolks. Beat in raw yolks, add flour. Mix till it all comes together into a workable dough. Roll a small piece of dough into a rope, using your fingertips on a piece of wax paper. Twist rope into a small wreath shape, crossing the ends over each other. (Call Leslee, Nora or Emma and ask them what this means.) Dip the wreaths into frothy, beaten egg white, then into coarse sugar. Bake cookies at 350 for about 10 minutes. Take out before they get brown. These should be fairly light in color.

Vanilla Ice Cream

2 cups half and half

1 cup heavy whipping cream

1 C (minus 2 Tbsp) sugar

2 Tbsp peach preserves (this will not make your ice cream taste like peach)

1 vanilla bean split

Split the vanilla bean down the center and then scrape the seeds add the seeds and pod to the rest of the ingredients in a sauce pan. On medium to low heat bring to 170 degrees stirring occasionally. If you don't have a thermometer bring it until steaming and you see the first bubble, but DO NOT let the mixture boil. Remove from heat and cover. Once cooled to room temperature store in refrigerator overnight. Remove vanilla bean husk and churn using your ice cream machine's instructions.

NOTE: This makes a great base for all sorts of ice creams. Skip the vanilla pod and add chopped pistachios. Replace vanilla beat with a few teaspoons of mint extract, green food coloring, then add shaved chocolate while churning for mint chip.

JP's Birthday Carrot Cake

6 Cups grate carrots

1 Cup brown sugar

1 Cup raisins

4 eggs

1 ½ cups white sugar

1 cup veg oil

2 tsp vanilla extract

1 cup crushed pineapple, drained

3 cups all-purpose flour

1 ½ tsp baking soda

1 tsp salt

4 tsp ground cinnamon

1 cup chopped walnuts

In a medium bowl, combine grated carrots and brown sugar. Set aside for 60 min, then stir in raisins.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 10 inch cake pans.

In a large bowl, beat eggs until light. Gradually beat in the white sugar oil and vanilla. Stir in the pineapple. Combine the flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon, stir into the wet mixture until absorbed. Finally stir in the carrot mixture and the walnuts. Pour evenly into the prepared pans. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes in the preheated oven, until cake tests done with a toothpick. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan. When completely cooled, frost with cream cheese frosting and decorate with copped walnuts.

For cream cheese frosting:

Stick of softened unsalted butter

8 oz brick full fat cream cheese

1 tsp vanilla extract

¼ tsp salt

4 cups powdered sugar

Use electric or stand mixture to combine butter and cream cheese, until lump free. Add vanilla and salt. With mixer on low gradually add sugar until completely combined.

Mama Oma’s Lemon Cake

(Comes from Nicole’s Oma)

6 Cups grate carrots

1 Cup brown sugar

1 Cup raisins

4 eggs

1 ½ cups white sugar

1 cup veg oil

2 tsp vanilla extract

1 cup crushed pineapple, drained

3 cups all-purpose flour

1 ½ tsp baking soda

1 tsp salt

4 tsp ground cinnamon

1 cup chopped walnuts

In a medium bowl, combine grated carrots and brown sugar. Set aside for 60 min, then stir in raisins.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 10 inch cake pans.

In a large bowl, beat eggs until light. Gradually beat in the white sugar oil and vanilla. Stir in the pineapple. Combine the flour, baking soda, salt, and cinnamon, stir into the wet mixture until absorbed. Finally stir in the carrot mixture and the walnuts. Pour evenly into the prepared pans. Bake for 45 to 50 minutes in the preheated oven, until cake tests done with a toothpick. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pan. When completely cooled, frost with cream cheese frosting and decorate with copped walnuts.

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Apple Crisp

This is a typical Mom recipe: simple, easy to put together and absolutely delicious.

Fill a 9 x 13 inch pan almost to the top with sliced apples. (Peel if you want to; you don't have to) Sprinkle apples with 3/4 to 1 cup sugar and 1 tsp. cinnamon Make topping:

2 cups flour

2 tsp. cinnamon

1 1/2 cups brown sugar

8 T. butter (1 stick)

Mix topping ingredients together in a bowl with a pastry cutter (like pie crust),or do it in a food processor, then sprinkle topping over the apples in the pan. Pat the topping firmly with your hands so that it looks like a crust. Bake in a 350 degree oven for 45-60 minutes. (You can easily cut this recipe in half; use an 8 or 9 inch square baking pan or even a pie pan)

Pat's Saltine Cracker Candy

Jim's mom would make this for her children when they were growing up. It only uses a few ingredients and is so incredible! Diana makes it every year during the Christmas season. It freezes well and is great for all those holiday parties.

35 saltines

1 cup butter, cubed

1 cup packed brown sugar

2 cups semisweet or milk chocolate chips

1 cups chopped pecans or other nuts, toasted (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 15x10x1 inch baking pan with foil. Grease foil. Arrange saltines in a single layer on foil. In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Stir in brown sugar. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 3-4 minutes or until sugar is dissolved. Spread evenly over crackers.

Bake 8-10 minutes or until bubbly. Immediately sprinkle with chocolate chips. Allow chips to soften for a few minutes, then spread over top. Sprinkle with toasted pecans or other nuts (optional). Cool slightly. Refrigerate, uncovered, 1 hour or until set. Break into pieces. Store in an airtight container. Yield: about 2 pounds.

Note: To toast nuts, bake in a shallow pan in a 350 degree oven for 5 -10 minutes or cook in a skillet over low heat until lightly browned, stirring occasionally.

Lacy Cookies

Melt 1/2 C butter

Add:

1C white sugar

2 heaping TBS flour

1 tsp baking powder

1/4 tsp salt

1C quick oats

2 tsp vanilla

1 egg

Drop by 1/2 tsp on parchment paper. Bake at 325 for 8-10 minutes. Cool and store in a dry place.

Drinks

Mango Michelada

2oz mango puree

1 mexican beer (tecate is my go-to)

½ lime juiced

Pinch of salt

Dash of tapatio

Combine mango puree, lime juice, salt, and tapatio in a large beer glass. Slowly pour in your beer, careful to not let it foam too much.

Carrot Ginger Shrub

¾ cups turbinado sugar

1 ½ cups apple cider vinegar

4 carrots

1 medium ginger root peeled

2 orange juice and rind

1 lemon rind

Blend the sugar, vinegar, carrots, orange juice, and ginger together. Pour into a jar with the orange and lemon rind that have been scrapped of pith. Store in a cool dark place for one week shaking the mixture once a day. Strain through fine cheese cloth or mesh strainer. Refrigerate for up to a month. Use like any other shrub adding about 1oz shrub to 3oz drink of choice.

Jammy Whiskey Sour

2 oz whiskey

1 tsp citrus marmalade

1 oz lemon juice

½ oz 2:1 simple syrup

½ oz egg white (optional)

Dash angostura biters

This works really well with orange marmalade, but if you can find Sicilian lemon marmalade at Cost Plus it's even better. The egg white here is optional, it makes a much creamier drink that you want to have in a coup neat. In a shaker (no ice) combine whiskey, marmalade, lemon juice, simple syrup, and egg white. Dry shake that to fluff up the egg white, then add your ice. Shake. Double strain through a fine mesh strainer into a chilled coup glass top with a dash of bitters.

Note: you can forgo the egg white and dry shaking and just shake with ice, pour into a rocks glass with ice and top with bitters. It's still really good.

Cranberry Apple Shrub

½ cups cranberries

1 medium apple

2 rosemary sprigs

10-15 sage leaves

1 ½ cup apple cider vinegar

¾ cup turbinado sugar

1 lemon rind

1 orange rind

In a blender puree all ingredients except for the citrus rinds. Make sure the rinds are scrapped of the white pith and add them to a large mason jar. Add the puree, screw the lid on and give it a good shake. Store the mixture in a cool dark place for one week giving it a shake once a day. After a week strain the mixture through fine cheese cloth, a fine mesh colander, or a nut milk bag. Refrigerate your shrub for up to a month. It makes any drink extra good, some common uses are to add about 1oz of shrub to 3 oz of prosecco (or sparkling water).

Sangria

1 bottle spanish red wine (or anything in the $10ish dollar range that's fruity and doesn't have too many tannins)

¾ cup Grand Marnier

1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

1 tsp bitters

1 oz 2:1 simple syrup

Apples diced

Berries

Orange slices

In a pitcher add your ingredients and give it a stir and chill. This is good immediately, but the fruit takes a little time to get boozy.

Painkiller

For cream of coconut:
1 13.5 oz can of coconut milk

¼ tsp salt

13.5 oz 2:1 simple syrup

(can be replaced with Coco Lopez cream of coconut)

For drink:

1 oz cream of coconut

2 oz pusser's rum (or a good rum, go navy strength for added kick)

4 oz pineapple juice

1 oz orange juice

Grated nutmeg

Making your own coconut cream makes a big difference, but you can substitute for Coco Lopez. Simple syrup is 2 parts sugar, 1 part water, heat until sugar dissolves then cool. Once you have your simple syrup just blend that with coconut milk and salt until well combined.

For the drink:

Shake ingredients with ice then strain into your favorite tiki glass filled with crushed ice. Grate some fresh nutmeg on top and enjoy.

Roasted Blueberry and Basil Margarita

For syrup:

1 cup blueberries

1 bunch basil

½ cup sugar

½ cup water

For drink:

1.5 oz Tequila

2 oz lime juice

2.5 oz blueberry syrup

2 oz grand marnier

Wash blueberries and place them on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper, sprinkle on some salt and bake at 400 degrees for 10-15 minutes or until blueberries have opened and roasted slightly.

While you're waiting on the berries make a basil symple syrup by combining sugar and water in saucepan with the basil leaves. Bring that mixture to a boil then let cool and strain.

Combine blueberries and basil syrup in a blender and puree. You can strain this if you don't like the chunks, but who's got time for that? This syrup will last for a week, but once you start using it it's going to go fast.

JP and Nicole's Wedding Arnold Palmer

1 part bourbon

2 parts black tea

2 parts lemonade

This was the other drink that got people dancing. Mix together and garnish with berries, mint, and lemon slices.

Not So Old Fashioned

This is my go-to drink for filling up a to-go mug and going on a snowy hike.
1 sugar cube

3 or more dashes of Angostura Bitters

2 slices of a Cara Cara orange with peel (1 for muddling, 1 for garnish)

2 Luxardo or maraschino cherries (1 for muddling, 1 for garnish)

2oz Rye

Dash of sparkling water

Ice

In a Rocks glass add your sugar cube and douse it with at least 3 dashes of your bitters. Drop in 1 slice of the orange and one cherry and add just a splash of sparkling water. Muddle together. Add your Rye and fill ice to the brim. Stir. You can strain it if you want it neat, but who's got the time? Garnish with a good cherry and orange slice and enjoy.

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Frozen Lemonade

This is a great non-alcoholic drink or you can swap the water for booze (vodka or tequila work well).

6oz lemon juice strained

3oz agave

3oz sparkling water (Canada dry lemon lime)

Ice

Tajin

Add lemon juice, agave, and sparkling water to blender, fill with ice, blend, pour, and top with a sprinkle of Tajin.

Note: If you want a creamier drink you can leave the pulp of the lemon juice. And if you want to swap the Sparkling water for tequila or vodka, that's good too.

Negroni Sbagliato

2oz Campari

2oz Sweet vermouth

4oz Sparkling wine

Garnish with orange

Fill glass with ice add Campari, sweet vermouth, sparkling wine, and a squeeze from an orange slice. Stir.

Note: If you want something stronger the classic Negroni is 2oz Campari, 2oz Sweet Vermouth, and 2oz gin, but the gin can be replaced with just about anything, tequila is especially nice.

Nicole and JP’s Wedding Margarita

2 oz tequila

1 oz grand marnier

¾ oz agave syrup

¾ oz lemon

¾ oz lime (or skip lemon and do 1.5oz lime)

So we were making these by the gallon but the ratio works for smaller amounts. Combine ingredients in a cocktail shaker with ice shake. Rim a rocks glass with salt, fill with ice. Strain shaker into glass. Drink 6 of them.