

2013

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[COOKBOOK: OMNOMNOM]

A collection of recipes I've created over the years.

Introduction

In 2013 one of my resolutions was to create a cookbook full of recipes I enjoy. I obtained most of these recipes online. I have adjusted some of the recipes where I thought they could use improvement. I have personally tested all of these recipes. I would recommend reading the preparation instructions before going out and purchasing the items necessary for the recipe, as some ingredients are optional. I've given little summaries and anecdotes about the recipes in the beginning to give you a taste for what you might be up against (whatever in this cookbook I end sentences with prepositions; deal with it). I've also tried to include pictures whenever possible so you can get an idea as to what the final product might look like. I hope you enjoy!

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Glossary of Terms

It occurred to me that in reading this you may encounter some terms you might not be familiar with.

- The term “shit” is usually referring to the list of ingredients I’ve mentioned (or sometimes it’s used in other ways, feel free to use context clues to deduce the meaning).
- The tilde symbol “~” means about (ex. ~2 cups).
- The phrase “To taste” means taste it and add more shit (see above) if you feel it necessary.
- In general, when I use the phrase “pepper” I am referring to “Ground Black Pepper” unless I state otherwise it should be deduced that this is what I mean.
- Similarly “Salt” refers to common table salt (kosher usually in my house or sea salt). I know the taste differs but not substantially enough for me to care or for it to affect the recipe.
- The word “Optional” means that normally I don’t use it, or I believe the recipe is just as good without it. For example, who has time to keep a fresh stock of Cilantro in their homes? Not me, so I rarely use it when the recipe calls for it.
- Anything that has a ~~strike through~~ is a step I don’t usually take.

Appetizers: Introduction

In general I don't make a lot of appetizers when I'm cooking, I'm more of an entrée desert kind of guy so this section is a bit sparse. Generally, these are easy and can be prepared quickly.

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Appetizers: Homemade Tortilla Chips



Quite simple to make and there are 3 ways to do this. Normally I just bake them; it's healthier and easier than deep-frying.

You'll need:

- Soft Flour Tortilla shells - I usually buy whichever one looks the most authentic (has Spanish written on the packaging). They should feel a bit moist to the touch.
- Salt (optional)
- Lime Juice (optional)
- ~3/4 – 1-cup canola, grape seed, or corn oil (high smoke point oil). (optional)

Preparation (baking):

Set the oven to 350° F. Slice the shells into the desired shape (triangle, don't be too creative here). Line a baking tray with tinfoil (aluminum foil?).

Place triangle tortilla shells on aforementioned tray in a single layer, and sprinkle with salt (I use Kosher salt or sea salt usually although this is optional)

After 5-7 minutes remove tortillas and turn them over and re-salt; you can also sprinkle lime juice over the chips at this point for that "hint of lime flavor" we all crave. Cook them for another 6-10 minutes and remove from oven (they should be a golden brown color).

You can test them by placing them delicately in your mouth hole and moving your jaw in an up and down motion, (they should be crispy, if they aren't put them back in the oven).

Appetizers: Homemade Tortilla Chips (cont...)

Preparation (Deep frying):

The tortilla chips will fry better if they are a bit dried out first. Either leave the whole tortillas out overnight, exposed to air so they are stale the next day, or dry them out a bit in the oven or microwave. To dry them in the oven, lay them out in a single layer on a baking sheet and put them in a 350°F for 5 minutes or a 200°F oven for 10 minutes. Alternatively, lay them out in a single layer (working in batches) on a paper towel in a microwave oven and microwave them for 20 to 60 seconds; depending on how strong your microwave is and how many tortillas you are drying. You don't want them crisp at this point, just as dry as they would be if you left them out overnight.

Pour oil into a medium skillet to a depth of 1/8 to 1/4 of an inch. Heat the oil on medium high heat until a small piece of tortilla placed in the oil sizzles, about 350°F. Do not allow the oil to get so hot that it smokes. (If that happens, move the pan off the heat immediately.)

Place a paper towel onto a large plate and have several other paper towels ready. Place a handful of tortilla triangles into the hot oil, in a single layer. Use metal tongs or a metal slotted spoon to distribute the tortilla triangles so that they aren't overlapping and so that all sides get coated with oil. Fry for approximately 2 minutes until the chips just begin to color and they are firm, no longer pliable. Use tongs or slotted spoons remove the chips from the oil to the paper-towel-lined plate. Sprinkle with salt. Place another paper towel over the top of the chips to be ready for the next batch.

Appetizers: Restaurant Style Salsa



Chips and salsa is one of my staples. I LOVE this salsa recipe; the salsa can be quite hot though so beware. You won't need to buy salsa again once you've mastered this recipe; or chips for that matter. Honestly when I'm making this I don't follow the recipe exactly and do it more by feeling and taste. I also don't usually add sugar or Cilantro. Finally habanero can be added instead of Jalapeno and you can add more peppers if you want it hotter. This Salsa should last at least a week (if it lasts that long).

You'll Need:

- 1 can (28 ounce) Whole (or diced) Tomatoes with juice
- 2 cans (10 ounce) Rotel (diced tomatoes and green chilies)
- ¼ cup chopped onion
- 1 clove Garlic (minced)
- 1 whole Jalapeno (Sliced thinly keeping the seeds)
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground Cumin
- ½ cup Cilantro (More to taste)
- ½ whole Lime juice

Preparation:

Combine all the shit I listed above in a food blender (or processor). Pulse until you get the consistency you want – 12-15 pulses is what I do. Refrigerate for about an hour and serve.

Appetizers: Josh's Nachos



This is a recipe I created one night when I was bored, it was quite good so I decided to include it here. I didn't bother to include any actual measurements because I do it by sight (when it looks good, I eat it).

You'll Need:

- Chips and Salsa (for best taste use recipes above)
- Mozzarella (or cheddar) cheese
- Pepperoni (optional) – for boss status
- Sour Cream (optional)
- Vanilla Chobani Greek Yogurt (optional)

Preparation:

Place chips on a plate, cover them with cheese until you can no longer see chip. Pour salsa over the cheese and place pepperonis over the salsa. Place in the microwave until the cheese has melted (probably like 60-90 seconds). Pour sour cream sparingly over the whole thing. I feel like I'm forgetting something... oh, the Greek yogurt, just go ahead and throw that shit out; it's disgusting.

Appetizers: "Lame" Guacamole

Playing on the chip theme Guacamole is solid too (as long as you like green foods). Please note, this recipe is not as good as the next one.

You'll Need:

- 3 Avocados – peeled, pitted and mashed
- 1 lime, juiced (or just lime juice to taste)
- 1 teaspoon Salt
- ½ cup diced onion
- 3 tablespoons chopped Cilantro
- 2 tomatoes (or one doesn't matter much) diced
- 1 clove of garlic minced
- 1 pinch of cayenne pepper (optional)

Preparation:

In a medium bowl, mash together the avocados, lime juice, and salt. Mix in onion, cilantro, tomatoes, and garlic. Stir in cayenne pepper. Refrigerate 1 hour for best flavor, or serve immediately.

Appetizers: Guacamazeballs

This recipe is remarkably good. Full of flavor and can be stored for at least 3 days if it lasts that long.

Protip: Guacamole can be stored in the fridge and won't turn brown if you push the cling wrap tight against the guac so there is no air to oxidize the guacamole.

You'll Need:

- 6 Avacados (I used 3 when I made this)
- 1 red onion diced
- 1 white onion diced
- 2 cloves garlic minced
- 2 tsp chipotle powder (this is important)
- 1.5 tbsp cilantro
- 2 tsp salt
- 2.5 limes, juiced (or lime juice)
- ~~½ orange, juiced~~ (ehhh)
- ½ habanero pepper, minced (I used a whole one)
- ~~¼ serrano pepper minced~~ (Wegmans didn't have these when I was there...see above)
- 2 tomatoes, cubed

Preparation:

Mix that shit together; gently fold in tomatoes. I put all this shit in the blender and then added the tomatoes but do what you do.

Cover with cling wrap so NO air touches the guacamole. Refrigerate for 2 hrs. Before serving.

Remove from fridge and shower in that shit.

Appetizers: Spicy Peanuts

This recipe I found on youtube and I really enjoyed it. The woman who made the video is a bit of a nut (mind the pun) but her peanuts were dope. I usually keep these in my car to snack on when I'm driving. Please keep in mind these are spicy also if you are allergic to peanuts you probably shouldn't eat them (but I'm not a doctor so do what you like).

You'll Need:

- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 cups unsalted peanuts (other nuts work too if you prefer ie cashews)
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- ¼ ground red pepper (cayenne)
- ½ teaspoon garlic salt (or ¼ teaspoon salt, ¼ teaspoon garlic powder which is what I do)

Preparation:

Heat the oven to 300° F.

In a large mixing bowl, combine all of the ingredients listed above. Mix until all the peanuts are well coated. Place into a single layer on a pyrex dish.

Place the dish into the oven for 10 minutes, take out, and stir the peanuts. Then place the peanuts back into the oven for another 10 minutes (20 minutes total cook time).

Place a few paper towels onto a plate, pour the peanut mixture over the paper towels, and use the paper towels to dry the peanuts. I normally then place them in a jar and take them with me.

Condiments/Deserts: Introduction

I hope to flush this section out better in the future. In the next edition, I will include some smoothie recipes that you should all try because they are fantastic.

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Condiments/Deserts: Bleu Cheese Dressing



This recipe goes great on salad, steaks, and burgers. The problem is that I don't usually eat salads, steaks, or burgers so the dressing tends to go bad because I don't use it (although it does last at least a week).

You'll Need:

- 2½ ounces Bleu Cheese
- 3 tablespoons buttermilk
- 3 tablespoons sour cream
- 2 tablespoons mayonnaise
- 2 teaspoons white wine vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon sugar
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt (to taste)
- Pepper (to taste)

Preparation:

In a small bowl, mash bleu cheese and buttermilk together with a fork until mixture resembles large-curd cottage cheese. Stir in sour cream, mayonnaise, vinegar, sugar, and garlic powder until well blended. Season to taste with salt and pepper.

Condiments/Deserts: Pesto Sauce

You'll Need:

- 2 cups olive oil
- 2 cups fresh parsley leaves
- 4 garlic cloves
- ½ cup pignoli (pine nuts)
- 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup freshly grated pecorino or Romano cheese
- ½-cup lemon juice – this may be too much for some.
- 2 firmly packed cups whole fresh basil leaves

Preparation:

Put all the ingredients except the basil into the blender and grind thoroughly. Then add the basil and grind until a creamy texture is achieved. No cooking is needed.

Condiments/Deserts: No-Bake Peanut Butter Bars

This great recipe is dumb simple and tastes like Reese's but better.

You'll Need:

- 1 cup and 4 tbsp. peanut butter (I prefer creamy in this recipe)
- 1 cup of butter
- 2 cups of smashed up vanilla wafers
- 2 cups powdered sugar
- 1.5 cups milk chocolate chips

Preparation:

Smash up vanilla wafers into crumbs. I put a few handfuls into zip lock bags and smashed them up with a rolling pin until I had enough to fill 2 cups. Melt butter. Mix butter, vanilla wafers, powdered sugar, and 1 cup of peanut butter together. Press that mixture into a 9x13 inch pan.

Next, put your chocolate chips and remaining 4 tbsp. of peanut butter into a bowl and put it into the microwave. Stir every 30 seconds until melted. Pour over peanut butter layer. Refrigerate for 1 hour!

Entrées: Introduction

So this is really the meat (no pun intended) of this cookbook. I tend to eat many types of pasta with a fair variety of red meat and poultry. The pasta section should be self-explanatory. The meat section is everything else I eat that doesn't have pasta in it.

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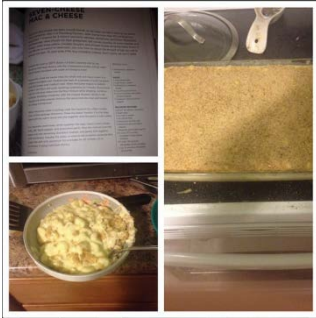
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Entrées: Pasta: 7 Cheese Mac and Cheese



I found this great recipe from the founding farmer's restaurant cookbook. It's rich and it is a lot more work than many of the other recipes in this book. However, the effort is well worth it.

You'll Need:

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter

For the Sauce:

- 3 cups Whole milk
- 2 cups heavy cream
- 5 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ¾ cup (3 ounces) shredded smoked gouda
- ¼ teaspoon ground white pepper (optional)

Macaroni Mixture:

- 1lb dry elbow macaroni
- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper
- 1 teaspoon granulated garlic
- 2½ (10 ounces) shredded white cheddar cheese
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded mozzarella
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded asiago
- 1½ cups (6 ounces) shredded Gruyere
- 2/3 cup (2.5 ounces) shredded Muenster

Topping (optional):

- ¼ cup unsalted butter
- 1½ cups panko bread crumbs (This is too much, I use 1 cup)
- 2½ tablespoons finely sliced fresh chives (optional)

Entrées: Pasta: 7 Cheese Mac and Cheese (cont...)

Preparation:

Heat oven to 325°F (I usually do this step much later). Butter a 3-quart casserole dish with the 2 tablespoons of butter and set aside (I don't ever do this, the recipe has enough butter). Fill a 6-quart saucepan with water and bring to a boil.

Meanwhile make the sauce: Heat the whole milk and heavy cream in a medium saucepan over medium-low heat. In a separate 2-quart saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. When the butter begins to bubble, whisk in the flour and cook, whisking constantly, until the mixture thickens. Whisk in the Gouda and white pepper. Remove the sauce from the heat and transfer to a large mixing bowl.

When the pasta water is boiling, cook the macaroni, (they claim it should be al dente but I hate al dente pasta). Drain the pasta. Transfer it to the large bowl with the warm sauce and mix until the pasta is well coated.

In a separate, small bowl, whisk together the eggs, heavy cream, whole milk, salt, black pepper, and granulated garlic. Pour this mixture over the pasta, add the remaining shredded cheeses, and gently fold together until combined. Transfer the pasta mixture to the buttered casserole dish. Cover the dish with aluminum foil and bake for 20 minutes.

~~While the macaroni bakes, prepare the topping: Melt the butter in a medium sauce pan over medium heat; stir in the panko and salt until the bread crumbs are coated. Remove from the heat. Remove the macaroni from the oven, discard the foil, and sprinkle the buttered breadcrumbs evenly over the top. Return the dish to the oven, uncovered, and bake for an additional 5 to 10 minutes, until the bread crumbs are golden brown. Remove the dish from the oven let it rest for 5 minutes, then sprinkle the chives over the top and serve.~~

Entrées: Pasta: Buffalo Chicken Mac and Cheese



This is a wonderful recipe but like the one before this, it does require a fair amount of work. Thankfully, it's easy to get rotisserie chicken that makes this whole recipe possible.

You'll Need:

- 7 tablespoons unsalted butter
- Kosher salt
- 1 pound elbow (I used shell) macaroni
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 stalks celery, finely chopped
- 3 cups shredded rotisserie chicken
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- ¾ cups hot sauce (franks red hot)
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 2½ cups half and half
- 1 pound yellow sharp cheddar cheese, cut into 1 inch cups (~3½ cups)
- 8 ounces pepper jack cheese, shredded (~2 cups)
- 2/3 cup sour cream
- 1 cup panko breadcrumbs (optional)
- ½ cup crumbled blue cheese
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley

Entrées: Pasta: Buffalo Chicken Mac and Cheese (cont...)

Preparation:

Heat oven to 350 F and ~~butter a baking dish~~. Bring a large pot of salted water to boil; add the pasta and cook ~~until al dente~~, about 7 minutes; drain.

Meanwhile, melt 3 tablespoons butter in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onion, celery and cook until soft, about 5 minutes (usually longer). Stir in the chicken and garlic and cook 2 minutes, then add ½-cup hot sauce and simmer until slightly thickened, about one more minute.

Melt 2 tablespoons butter in a saucepan over medium heat. Stir in the flour and mustard with a WOODEN spoon until smooth. Whisk in the half-and-half, then add the remaining ¼-cup hot sauce and stir until thick, about 2 minutes. Whisk in the cheddar cheese and pepper jack cheeses, then whisk in the sour cream until smooth.

Spread half of the macaroni in the prepared baking dish, and then top with the chicken mixture and the remaining macaroni. Pour the cheese sauce evenly on top.

Put the remaining 2 tablespoons butter in a medium microwave-safe bowl and microwave until melted. Stir in the panko, bleu cheese and parsley. Sprinkle over the macaroni and bake until bubbly, 30 to 40 minutes. Let rest 10 minutes before serving.

Entrées: Pasta: Baked Ziti



This recipe is a bit of an amalgamation between a few recipes I found online.

You'll need:

- 1lb Ziti
- Olive oil
- 1lb bulk ~~Italian Sausage~~, ground beef or ~~pork~~.
- 3-4 garlic cloves, chopped
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp fresh ~~rosemary~~ (or basil), minced.
- 1 Tbsp. Italian seasoning (1 tsp dried Oregano, 1 tsp Dried Basil, ½ Dried Thyme)
- ½ tsp Red Pepper flakes
- 1 jar (~32 oz.) marinara sauce (I prefer San Marzano)
- 6 oz. Mozzarella cheese (I usually just cover the pasta)
- 1½ cup Sour Cream
- ~6 slices of Provolone cheese.
- 1 cup grated Parmesan or pecorino cheese. (optional)
- A bunch of Pepperoni (optional)

Preparation:

Bring a large pot of water to boil. Add salt or oil to keep the ziti from sticking. Once the pasta is ~~Al dente~~ cooked drain the pasta through a colander.

While you're waiting for the water to boil, pour a tablespoon of Olive oil into a large sauté pan on medium-high heat. When the Oil is hot, add ground meat. Brown well. If you're using ground beef, add some salt.

Entrées: Pasta: Baked Ziti (cont...)

When the meat is mostly browned, add the onions and stir well to combine. Sauté everything until the onions are translucent and beginning to brown, about 4-5 minutes. Add the garlic, rosemary or basil, Italian seasoning and red pepper flakes and stir to combine.

Cook 1 minute, then add the tomato sauce and stir well. Bring to a simmer.

Preheat the oven to 350° F. ~~Spread a thin layer of sauce in the bottom of a baking pan.~~ In a large bowl combine Sour cream, ziti, and sauce mixture until you no longer can differentiate between the sour cream and sauce. Pour half of this mixture into your baking pan and place pepperoni's covering the pasta, then lay provolone cheese on top of the pepperoni's until the pasta is covered. Pour the rest of your ziti sauce mixture on top of this and top with pepperoni and Mozzarella cheese (until you can no longer see pasta). Then take your Parmesan cheese and sprinkle over top of the whole thing.

Place this pan of glory into the oven for about 20 minutes (or until the top is nicely browned and the pasta is a bit crunchy).

Entrées: Pasta: Pasta and Ricotta alla Romana



Another fantastic recipe from the North End Italian cookbook. This recipe is hella simple and is delicious.

You'll Need:

- ½ lb fine linguine or spaghetti
- ½ lb fresh plum tomatoes, or 1 cup canned plum tomatoes
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 garlic clove
- 3 tbsp minced fresh basil
- ¼ cup chopped fresh Italian parsley
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1 cup ricotta cheese
- 3 tbsp freshly grated parmesan cheese

Preparation:

Fill a large pot with 3 quarts of salted water and start heating it for the pasta. Remove the hard portion of the fresh tomatoes near the stem. Chop the tomatoes until you have 1 cup. Reserve the juice in another cup. If you are using canned tomatoes, squeeze them to eliminate the seeds, and reserve the juice.

When the water is rapidly boiling, add the pasta. Cook until tender or al dente, about 6-10 minutes. While the pasta is cooking, heat the olive oil in a saucepan. Push the garlic through a garlic press into the oil, or mince it and add it to the oil. Sauté for 1 minute on medium-low heat. Now add the chopped tomatoes, basil, parsley, salt, and pepper. Cook until the mixture is reduced to a sauce consistency. Add the reserved tomato juices if the sauce looks drier than you like.

Drain the cooked pasta thoroughly. Return the pasta to the pot. Stir in the ricotta into the hot pasta, tossing with a wooden spoon. Pour in the hot tomato sauce and toss again. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and serve at once. This produces a thick, cheesy dish.

Entrées: Pasta: Pasta Con Piselli E Formaggio

Yet another fantastic recipe from the North End Italian cookbook.

You'll Need:

- 1 lb. fresh egg noodles (like tagliarini)
- 4 quarts boiling salted water
- 3 cups fresh shelled peas (or frozen petite peas thawed)
- 2 tbsp. butter
- 1/8 tsp nutmeg
- 2 cups whipping cream
- 1 egg, beaten
- 1 cup freshly grated parmesan cheese, plus additional for topping



Preparation:

Bring 4 quarts of salted water to a rapid boil over high heat. Drop noodles into the water. When water again comes to a boil, cook noodles for 2 minutes, then add the fresh peas and cook 5 minutes longer. If you are using frozen peas, cook only 2 minutes. Drain noodles and peas.

Using a wide, heavy skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Add nutmeg and 1.5 cups cream; stir using a wooden spoon. When cream is warm, add pasta and peas and bring to a boiling point. Remove pan from heat and stir in the beaten egg.

Add the 1 cup grated cheese and stir mixture until well blended. Add more cream if sauce seems too thick. Sprinkle with more grated cheese and an extra dash of nutmeg. Serve immediately.

Entrées: Pasta: Crockpot Garlic Pesto Chicken in a Tomato Cream Sauce

I found this recipe online, as I recall it was quite rich and creamy which created a nice texture. Honestly though it wasn't as fantastic as the name might suggest.

You'll Need:

- ¼ bottle of Lawry's Herb and Garlic Marinade with lemon juice
- 6 Tbsp. of pesto
- 2¼ cup Olive oil
- 3 boneless chicken breasts
- 8 ounces of pasta
- 2-3 cloves of chopped garlic
- ½ cup Chicken Broth
- 8oz Tomato sauce
- 1 cup of half and half cream
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

For the Chicken: Cut chicken into 2" pieces. Pour Lawry's marinade, ¼ cup of olive oil and 3 tbsp. pesto on the chicken pieces. Marinate over night. Toss in the crockpot on low for 6-8 hours.

For the Sauce: Cook the pasta. Heat the olive oil and the garlic and sauté lightly. Add the pesto and chicken broth until it has cooked down. Add tomato sauce and then the half-and-half. Simmer for 5 minutes. Add in the pasta. Add flour one Tablespoon at a time if the sauce is too thin. Serve with chicken atop Pasta.

Entrées: Meats/Poultry: Easy Slow Cooker Pulled Pork



I don't eat a lot of pork but this recipe is fantastic. The pork will be falling off the bone if you do this correctly. It's super easy to make and can feed many people.

You'll Need:

- 2 Medium yellow onions, thinly sliced
- 4 medium garlic cloves, thinly sliced
- 1 cup chicken stock or low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tbsp. packed dark brown sugar
- 1 tbsp. chili powder
- 1 tbsp. Kosher salt, plus more as needed
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ¼ tsp ground cinnamon
- One (4.5-5lb) boneless or bone-in pork shoulder (aka pork butt), twine or netting removed.
- 2 Cups BBQ sauce (optional) (maybe more)

Preparation:

Place the onions and garlic in an even layer in the slow cooker and pour in the stock or broth. Combine the sugar, chili powder, salt, cumin, and cinnamon in a small bowl. Pat the pork with dry paper towels. Rub the spice mixture all over the pork and place the meat on top of the onions and garlic. Cover and cook until the pork is fork tender, about 6 to 8 hours on low.

Turn off the slow cooker and remove the pork to a cutting board. Set a fine-mesh strainer over a medium heatproof bowl. ~~Pour the onion mixture from the slow cooker through the strainer and return the solids to the slow cooker. Set the strained liquid aside.~~

If the pork has a bone, remove it and discard it. Using 2 forks, shred the meat into bit-sized pieces, discarding any large pieces of fat. Return the shredded meat to the slow cooker, add the BBQ sauce (I prefer Dinosaur BBQ sauce, or Uncle Ralphy's), if using and mix to combine. ~~If you're not using BBQ sauce, use a spoon to skim and discard the fat from the surface of the strained cooked liquid, and then add ¼ cup of the liquid at a time to the slow cooker until the pork is just moistened.~~ Taste and season with salt as needed.

Entrées: Meats/Poultry: Chicken Fried Rice



Basic chicken fried rice that you'd get at a Chinese restaurant. This recipe is good as is but I'd like to refine it a bit more in the coming year, I don't think it has enough flavor.

You'll Need:

- 4 cups cold cooked rice
- 8 ounces cooked chicken, chopped
- 2 eggs (more if desired)
- ½ cup green peas
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 green onion, diced (optional)
- Light Soy Sauce (add to taste)
- Salt (to taste)
- Pepper (to taste)
- Oil (Canola or vegetable) for stir-frying, as needed.
- Oyster sauce (to taste)(optional)

Preparation:

Beat the eggs lightly with chopsticks (a fork also works), add a dash of salt.

Heat wok and add oil. When oil is ready, pour ½ the egg mixture into the wok and cook over medium heat, turning over once. Cook the other half the same way. Cut the egg into thin strips, and save for later.

Stir fry the onion on high heat for a few moments, remove and set aside. Do the same for the green peas.

Add oil, turn down the heat to medium and stir-fry the rice. Add the soy sauce, salt, pepper and oyster sauce. Add the chicken, onion and green peas and combine thoroughly. Serve chicken fried rice with the strips of egg on top and the green onion as a garnish.

Entrées: Meat/Poultry: Chicken Biryani



A fantastic recipe I found online. Like the seven-cheese mac and cheese, this recipe can be a bit expensive but you'll be able to re-use the spices later on as well. Also, do yourself a favor and buy the spices from the international aisle at your grocery store. You'll get more spices and it'll be cheaper than buying that McCormick stuff they sell. This recipe does require some forethought because you will need to marinate the chicken for 2-24 hours.

You'll Need:

Meat Marinade:

- ~1lb boneless chicken breast.
- ~3.5oz plain yogurt
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- One chili chopped (optional – fresh is best, dry is also okay).
- Juice of 1 lemon
- 2 tsp coriander powder
- ½ tsp cumin powder
- ½ tsp ground Cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp Turmeric
- 1 tsp salt (to taste)
- 1 tsp pepper (to taste)

Rice Mixture:

- 1 cup of milk (whole milk)
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1½ cups basmati rice, washed
- 2 bay leaves
- A handful of mint leaves (dried okay, fresh is best)
- 1 tsp cumin seeds
- 2 green cardamoms
- 3 cms of cinnamon sticks
- 12 peppercorns
- 6 cloves
- A pinch of Saffron strands (optional)
- Pinch of mace
- 2 tsp salt (to taste)
- Oil/ghee (I used veggie oil)

Preparation:

Entrées: Meat/Poultry: Chicken Biryani (cont...)

Dice the chicken and place it in a bowl. Add Yogurt and the other dry ingredients and place in the fridge for at least 2 hours (more is better).

Wash the rice and add all of your spices to a large pot. Add 4 cups of water and 2 tablespoons of oil. Bring the water to a boil, and then simmer for 5-8 minutes (with lid on). You only want to cook the rice to ~50% done. If it's fully cooked, you'll get mushy biryani.

While the rice is cooking, infuse your milk with saffron. Warm milk in the microwave for about 1 minute, then add the saffron and stir, it'll start to turn a golden color that's typical of saffron. The more saffron, the richer the color (and the poorer you become!).

Slice the onions and fry them in plenty of oil (veggie oil is what I used) until they are crispy.

This dish requires the use of what is known as "Dum cooking" where you layer your ingredients for cooking purposes. Place the marinated meat on the bottom of a large pot and place the rice on top of that. Pour over 3-4 tablespoons of oil and then pour over your saffron infused milk. Finally lay the onion on top. Add the lid and turn the stove up to high for 10 minutes, then reduce to a very low heat for a further 20 minutes. Don't rush things otherwise, the rice may not be cooked.

Entrées: Meat/Poultry: Cashew Chicken



This recipe is solid if you enjoy cashews and chicken. Standard stuff to be honest. Be careful not to burn the cashews.

You'll Need:

- 3 tbsp. peanut oil
- 1 lb seasoned chicken breast strips for stir fry
- 1 cup unsalted cashews
- 3 cloves garlic minced
- ½ inch piece fresh ginger
- ½ cup Asian classics stir-fry sauce
- 1 green onion, trimmed

Preparation:

Heat 1 Tbsp. peanut oil in stir-fry pan on high; add half the chicken. Cook, stirring occasionally, 3-4 min, until chicken is browned and cooked through. Remove chicken; transfer to clean dish. Add 1 tbsp. peanut oil to pan on high; repeat with remaining chicken. Remove chicken; transfer to clean dish; set aside.

Add remaining tbsp. oil to pan on low; add cashews. When cashews begin to brown, add garlic and ginger. Cook stirring, on med-low 3 min, without browning garlic.

Add sauce; increase heat to high. When sauce begins to boil, return chicken to pan toss to coat. Cook, stirring, 1 min. Add green onions; stir to combine.

Entrées: Meat/Poultry: Hot & Spicy Chicken



This great little recipe's super easy to make and tastes delicious. I obtained it from Wegmans. I would caution y'all because it is a bit spicy.

You'll need:

- 3 Tbsp. peanut oil
- 1 lb. Seasoned Chicken Breast strips for Stir Fry
- 3 cloves garlic, peeled, minced
- 1.5-inch piece of fresh ginger peeled and minced (1 tbsp.)
- ¼ tsp paprika
- ¼ tsp hot Mexican style chili powder
- ½ red sweet pepper ½-inch diced
- ½ green bell pepper ½-inch diced
- 2 tbsp. water
- 1 tbsp. Lee Kum Kee Chili Garlic sauce
- 1 Fresno chili, cut into thin rings seeded
- ½ cup Asian classics stir-fry sauce
- ½ cup dry roasted salted peanuts
- 2 green onions

Preparation:

Heat 1 tbsp. peanut oil in stir-fry pan on High; add half the chicken. Cook, stirring occasionally, 3-4 min, until chicken is browned and cooked through. Remove chicken; transfer to clean dish. Add additional 1 tbsp. peanut oil to pan on high; repeat with remaining chicken. Remove chicken; transfer to clean dish; set aside.

Heat remaining tbsp. peanut oil on med-low. Add garlic, ginger, paprika, and chili powder. Cook 1 min, until fragrant. Add peppers and 2 tbsp water. Cover; let steam 2 min.

Add chili sauce and Fresno pepper to pan. Increase heat to high. Cook, stirring, 1 min. Return chicken to pan; toss to coat. Cook 1 min. Add stir-fry sauce, toss to coat. Cook 1 min. Remove from heat; garnish with peanuts and green onions.

Entrées: Meat/Poultry: Rubeen Bake



A coworker sent me this recipe and I found it to be quite good. If you enjoy Rubeen sandwiches, you'll probably enjoy this. One note is to make sure that you properly flour and press the dough otherwise; it becomes too doughy and takes too long to cook.

You'll Need:

- 2 tubes (8oz) refrigerated crescent rolls
- 1 lb. sliced Swiss cheese
- 1.25 lbs. sliced deli corned beef
- 1 can (14oz) sauerkraut, drained
- 2/3 cup thousand island dressing
- 1 egg white
- 3 teaspoons caraway seeds

Preparation:

Unroll one tube of crescent dough into one long rectangle, seal seams and perforations. Press into a lightly greased 13x9 inch baking dish. Use a fork to poke small holes into bottom of dough. Bake at 375 degrees for 8-10 minutes until crust is a nice golden brown.

Layer with half of the cheese and all of the corned beef. Combine sauerkraut and Thousand Island dressing, spread over beef. Top with remaining cheese. On a lightly floured surface, press or roll second tube of crescent dough into a 13x9 inch rectangle, sealing seams and perforations. Place over cheese, sealing edges and sides. Brush egg white over the top and sprinkle caraway seeds. Bake for 12-16 minutes, or until heated through and crust is golden brown. Let it stand for 5 minutes before cutting.

Soups, Stews and Chilies: Introduction

Not such a huge soup, stew person but I do love me some chili. A few of the recipes given require a crockpot to be done correctly.

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Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Beer Cheese Soup

This recipe needs some improvement; I believe adding more cornstarch to make this recipe thicker would help it a lot. Also perhaps potato would be a good addition in this soup.

Depending on the type of cheddar, cheese you use depends on the beer you choose. If you buy English cheddar go with Pale Ale (Saranac is a good choice), if you buy buttery, well-aged cheddar use Sweet or Oatmeal Stout (If you can get a hand on the Harpoon 100 Barrel series they make an oatmeal stout), if you used long-aged cheddar Imperial Stout (Harpoon Imperial Pumpkin), if you buy mild white Vermont cheddar use a Classic Pilsener (Sierra Summerfest), if you buy white cheddar use an Amber Lager (Harpoon Oktoberfest, Hofbrau Oktoberfest, JW Dundee Honey Brown, Negra Modela, Paulaner Oktoberfest).

You'll Need:

- 1½ cups carrots, diced
- 1½ cups onions, diced
- 1½ cups celery, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tsp hot pepper sauce
- 1/8 tsp cayenne pepper
- ½ tsp salt
- ¼ tsp pepper
- 3 cups chicken broth
- 2 cups beer
- 1/3 cup butter
- 1/3 cup flour
- 4 cups milk (or half and half)
- 6 cups shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 tbsp. Dijon mustard
- 2 tsp Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tsp dry mustard
- Popped popcorn for garnish (optional)

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Beer Cheese Soup (cont...)

Preparation:

In a large saucepan over medium heat, stir together carrots, onion, celery and garlic. Stir in hot pepper sauce, cayenne pepper, salt, and pepper. Pour in chicken broth and beer; simmer until vegetables are tender, about 12 minutes. Remove from heat.

Meanwhile, heat butter in a large soup pot over medium-high heat. Stir in flour with a wire whisk; cook, stirring until the flour is light brown, about 3 or 4 minutes. Gradually stir in milk, whisking to prevent scorching, until thickened. Remove from heat, and gradually stir in cheese. Keep warm.

Stir beer mixture into cheese mixture. Stir in Dijon mustard, Worcestershire sauce, and dry mustard. Adjust for hot pepper sauce. Bring to a simmer, and cook 10 minutes. Serve topped with popcorn.

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Minestrone Soup



This recipe is incredible. I obtained it from the North End Italian Cookbook, which is the best cookbook I've ever seen. All of you should go out and buy this book because it's great. The nice thing about this recipe is that you can add or subtract ingredients with little consequence.

You'll Need:

- 1 quart cold water
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 1 8oz can whole-green beans, undrained
- 1 8oz can chickpeas, undrained
- 1 8oz can red kidney beans, undrained
- 1 small zucchini, unpeeled and diced
- 1 celery stalk with leaves, chopped
- 2 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced
- 1 16oz can chicken broth
- ~~1 medium cabbage, chopped (remove center)~~
- 1 8oz can medium-size peas, undrained
- Quick Pesto sauce (optional)
- 1 8oz can tomato sauce
- Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- ½ cup cooked pastini, tubetini, acini di pepe or rice
- Freshly grated Parmesan or Romano cheese

Quick Pesto Sauce:

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1 garlic clove chopped
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh basil leaves
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley
- ½ cup freshly grated parmesan or Romano cheese
- Blend until smooth

Preparation:

Place the first 11 ingredients in a large pot and bring to a slow boil. Lower heat and simmer uncovered for 1.5 or 2 hours. Stirring often. Add the pesto sauce and tomato sauce to the soup. Adjust seasonings. Bring soup to a soft boil and add cooked pasta of your choice. Ladle and sprinkle with grated cheese.

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Pasta E Piselli



Another recipe from my favorite cookbook. This recipe is quite enjoyable and doesn't require many ingredients. It goes particularly well with garlic bread.

You'll Need:

- ½ cup olive oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 large garlic clove, chopped
- 2 teaspoons tomato paste
- 1 14-oz can peeled Italian plum tomatoes
- Pinch of: dried basil, mint, and red pepper flakes
- 1 8-oz can medium size sweet peas, undrained
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 1lb small shells, ditali, or elbow macaroni
- Freshly grated parmesan or Romano cheese

Preparation:

Heat the olive oil in a heavy saucepan, and sauté the onion and garlic. When transparent, add the tomato paste. Mix well.

Add the canned tomatoes and juices, squeezing the tomatoes to break them up. Sauté for a minute or two, then add basil, mint, and red pepper flakes. Stir gently for about 3 minutes over medium-low heat. Add the undrained can of peas. Simmer the sauce while you cook the pasta, adding more seasonings if desired and salt and pepper to taste.

Meanwhile, bring 2 quarts of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta. Boil rapidly, uncovered, about 10 minutes or until tender. Drain in a colander, reserving 2 cups of the water. Do not rinse. Transfer the pasta back to the pot, and add the tomato sauce and peas mixture.

Stir gently and add the pasta water until the sauce produces a nice broth texture. Serve immediately with plenty of grated cheese.

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Beef Stew

This is a good recipe that you can make to create a nice hearty stew. This one is going to require a crockpot and some patience as well.

You'll need:

Stew Ingredients:

- 2 tbsp. Olive oil
- 2lb beef stew meat, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 1½ tsp kosher salt
- 1 tsp essence, recipe follows
- ¾ tsp pepper
- 2 tbsp. unsalted butter
- ~~½lb button mushrooms, thinly sliced (ew)~~
- 3 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 3 cups veal or beef stock
- 2 tbsp. tomato paste
- ¼ tsp dried thyme
- ¼ tsp dried oregano
- ¼ tsp dried basil
- 1/8 tsp ground allspice
- 1lb small new potatoes, quartered
- 1 cup carrots, diced
- 1 cup frozen pearl onions, thawed
- ½ cup frozen green peas, thawed
- 1 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley leaves

Emeril's ESSENCE Creole Seasoning (aka Bayou Blast):

- 2½ tbsp. paprika
- 2 tbsp. salt
- 2 tbsp. garlic powder
- 1 tbsp. black pepper
- 1 tbsp. onion powder
- 1 tbsp. cayenne pepper
- 1 tbsp. dried oregano
- 1 tbsp. dried thyme

Yields: ~2/3 cup

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Beef Stew (cont...)

Preparation:

Set a 12-inch sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add 1 tbsp. of the olive oil to the pan and season the beef with 1 tsp of the salt, 1 tsp Essence and ½ tsp of the black pepper. Sear the beef (in 2 batches) in the sauté pan for about 2 or 3 minutes per side.

Add the butter, mushrooms, flour, veal stock, tomato paste, herbs, spices, and browned meat to a slow cooker. Cover the slow cooker and set the temperature to high. Cook for 1 hour. Add the potatoes and carrots and continue to cook the stew for another 7 hours. During the last hour of cooking, add the pearl onions and replace the lid. Once the stew is cooked, stir in the peas and parsley and serve immediately.

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Boilermaker Tailgate Chili

This recipe is a fan favorite, great for homemade garbage plates. The recipe has a bit of a kick to it; to decrease the heat doesn't add a can of Rotel. This can be done in a crock-pot or by using a regular pot; I prefer the crock pot method myself.

You'll Need:

- 2lb ground beef chuck
- 1lb bulk Italian Sausage (Hot)
- 3 (15oz) cans chili beans, drained
- 1 (15oz) can chili beans in spicy sauce
- 2 (28oz) cans diced tomatoes with juice
- 1 (6oz) can tomato paste
- 1 can Rotel (optional – this makes it hotter)
- 1 large yellow onion, chopped
- 3 stalks celery, chopped
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and chopped
- 2 green chili peppers, seeded and chopped
- 1 tbsp. bacon bits (optional)
- 4 cubes beef bouillon
- ½ cup beer
- ¼ cup chili powder
- 1 tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1 tbsp. dried oregano
- 2 tsp ground cumin
- 2 tsp hot pepper sauce
- 1 tsp dried basil
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 tsp cayenne pepper
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp white sugar
- 1 (10.5oz) bag of corn chips such as Fritos (optional)
- 1 (8oz) package of shredded cheddar cheese (optional)

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Boilermaker Tailgate Chili (cont...)

Preparation:

Heat a large stockpot over medium-high heat. Crumble the ground chuck and sausage into the hot pan, and cook until evenly browned. Drain off excess grease.

Pour in the chili beans, spicy chili beans, diced tomatoes and tomato paste. Add the onion, celery, green and red peppers, chili peppers, bacon bits, bouillon, and beer. Season with chili powder, Worcestershire sauce, garlic, oregano, cumin, hot pepper sauce, basil, salt, pepper, cayenne, paprika and sugar. Stir to blend, then cover and simmer over low heat for at least 2 hours, stirring occasionally. (This is where I would transfer the ingredients to a crock-pot).

After 2 hours, taste and adjust salt, pepper and chili powder if necessary. The longer the chili simmers (4 hours is okay I think, just keep an eye on it so you don't burn it), the better it will taste. Remove from heat and serve, or refrigerate and serve the next day.

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Texas-Style Chili Soup

This recipe is great but remarkably spicy. It also requires a fair amount of work on the part of the cook.

You'll Need:

- 1/2 pkg Lo Mejor Dried Ancho Chile Peppers
- ½ pkg Lo Mejor Dried New Mexico Chile Peppers
- 2 cups beef broth
- 10 plum tomatoes
- 1 jalapeno pepper
- 1 Fresno chili pepper
- 1 long hot green pepper
- 2 poblano peppers
- 2 Anaheim peppers
- 2 tbsp. olive oil
- 1 large sweet onion, diced
- 1.25 tsp salt
- 10 cloves garlic sliced thinly
- 2 lbs. 80% lean ground beef
- 2 tbsp. McCormick Hot Mexican-Style Chili Powder
- 2 tbsp. McCormick Ancho Chile Pepper
- 1 tbsp. McCormick Roasted Ground Cumin
- Pinch of ground cinnamon
- 1 bottle (22oz) pale ale
- 1 can (28oz) crushed tomatoes
- ½ cup Corn masa flour
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preparation:

Preheat oven to 450. Roast Ancho and New Mexico chiles on foil-lined baking sheet 1 min, watching to prevent burning. Remove from oven; cool. Wearing gloves remove stems of roasted dried chilies. Split chilies open; discard seeds. Add broth to saucepan on high. Bring to simmer; turn off heat. Add roasted dried chilies; cover. Steep 10-15 min to rehydrate chilies.

Roast tomatoes, jalapeno, Fresno, long green, poblano, and Anaheim peppers on foil-lined baking sheet 30 min. remove from oven. When cool enough to handle remove skin from tomatoes and chilies and seeds from chilies.

Heat olive oil in stockpot on med. Add onions and ¼ tsp salt; cook, stirring, 5 min, until soft but not browned. Add sliced garlic; cook stirring, 5 min. Add ground beef,

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Texas-Style Chili Soup (cont...)

Mexican style Chili powder, chili pepper spice, cumin, cinnamon, 1 tbsp. salt, beer and crushed tomatoes to stockpot; stir. Bring to simmer, stirring to break up ground beef.

In blender, pulse rehydrated chilies and broth until smooth. Add roasted fresh tomato-pepper mixture to blender; pulse until smooth. Carefully add puree to stockpot; stir. Reduce heat to low; simmer 30 min. Whisk in masa; season to taste with salt and pepper.

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Leinie's Sweet Cheeks Chili

This is a decent chili recipe that I found in the Leinenkugel winter 12 pack. I enjoy cooking with beer and this recipe is quite solid. The one thing I would change is the amount of chili powder used the recipe uses too much.

You'll Need:

- ¼ cup virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, chopped fine
- 1 clove garlic
- 1 jalapeno, chopped fine
- 1 each of red, orange, and green peppers, chopped fine
- 1/8 cup celery and cilantro leaves
- ¼ cup chives
- 2 stalks celery, chopped fine
- 1 can each of black and kidney beans, drained
- 1 can chili beans, not drained
- 2 cans of diced tomatoes
- 1 can tomato sauce
- 2.5 cups browned ground beef
- 2 Hershey chocolate bars
- ¾ cup of Leinenkugel's Creamy Dark
- 2 tsp. Cumin
- ~~4.5 tsp.~~ chili powder (this is way too much, use 3.5tsp)
- ½ tsp. red pepper
- ¼ tsp. black pepper

Preparation:

In a large skillet heat olive oil over medium heat. Add the ground beef and brown completely. Once browned, drain the grease from the ground beef. Add the ground beef and remaining ingredients to a slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours ~~or on high for 4 hours~~ (don't be impatient good things take time), stirring periodically.

Soups, Stews, and Chilies: Feijoada

This is a dish I fell in love with when I went to Texas de Brazil in Destiny USA outside of Syracuse. If you enjoy many different types of meat in one dish this is for you. I probably won't make it that frequently because it is quite expensive but it's a nice once every 8-9 month dish. Additionally you can add or subtract ingredients as necessary.

You'll Need:

- 1 lb. dry black beans
- 4 tbsp. olive oil
- ~~1 lb. pork shoulder~~
- 2 large onions, sliced
- 1 head of garlic, peeled and chopped
- 1 lb. carne-seca or corned beef
- ½ lb. fresh sausages, such as chorizo or Italian sausage
- 1 lb. smoked sausage, such as linguica or kielbasa
- ~~1 smoked ham hock or shank~~
- 3-4 bay leaves
- Water
- 1 can (14.5 oz.) of crushed tomatoes
- Salt

Preparation:

Pour boiling water over the black beans and let them sit while you prepare the rest of the stew.

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium-high heat and brown the pork shoulder. When it has browned, remove the meat from the pot, set aside and add the onions to the pot. Brown them; stirring occasionally, scraping up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Sprinkle a little salt over the onions and add the garlic. Stir well and sauté 2 more minutes.

Add back the pork shoulder and the other meats and add enough water to cover. Add the bay leaves, cover and bring to a simmer. Cook gently for 1 hour. Drain the black beans from their soaking liquid and add them to the stew. Simmer gently, covered, until the beans are tender, about an hour and a half.

Add the tomatoes, stir well and taste for salt, adding if it's needed. Simmer this, uncovered, until the meat begins to fall off the ham hock, which will probably take 2-3 hours.

Serve with white rice and hot sauce.