

FAMILY FOOD FAVORITES

*Good stuff you ate when growing up and still like
-- and some new stuff as well.*

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Here's the deal!

I'll get the ball rolling with the first set of recipes delivered during the 2012 holidays. Then, each year, every member of the Flaherty-Patterson extended family and friends is encouraged to contribute one recipe per year. Recipes should be family favorites, perhaps from your childhood, comfort food, great stuff your mom and dad made! Or, contribute pretty good, easy recipes that you have discovered. Write up your recipe and e-mail it to me. I'll add it to the book and distribute a new eBook each holiday season. Okay?

Needless to say, I'd love to hear ideas for improving the book. For example, it occurs to me that it would be good to know what kinds of other dishes go with the recipe. And, it would be great to hear stories that are associated with the foods.

Also, I tried to add some basic, common sense cooking tips for family who are just learning to cook, or just setting up a kitchen. Please feel free to add comments, corrections and new ideas. Think of this as a kind of wiki-cooking-bookie.

The Table of Contents

[Basic Cooking Advice](#)

[Utensils you should have](#)

[Breakfast](#)

[Coffee](#)

[Oatmeal](#)

[Michael's Yucky Oatmeal](#)

[Michael's Brain Health \(and braces friendly\) Smoothie](#)

[Orange Whole Wheat Pancakes a la Judith](#)

[Basic French Pan Crepes](#)

[Basic Scrambled eggs](#)

[Fancy Ass Scrambled Eggs](#)

[Hard Boiled Eggs](#)

[Soft Boiled Eggs](#)

[Basic \(or Fancy\) Omelet](#)

Soups

[Butternut Squash Soup with Ginger & Lime](#)

[Curried Pea Soup](#)

[Chestnut and Frangelico Soup](#)

Salads

[Michael's Syrup-Mustard Salad Dressing](#)

[Janet's Awesome Shredded Root Vegetable Salad Approach](#)

[Judith's Awesome Over-The-Top Salad Approach](#)

[David's Cole Slaw \(or, really Cole slaw for David\)](#)

[Naomi's version of her friend Amber's Citrus Dressing/Marinade](#)

Vegetable Dishes

[Steamed Vegetables](#)

[Collard Greens](#)

[Baked Herbed Potato Cubes](#)

Vegetarian Main Dishes

[Broccoli and Tofu in Peanut Sauce](#)

[Shepherd's Pie](#)

[Russian Vegetable Pie](#)

[Indian Yellow Lentil Stew](#)

[Egg and Potato Curry](#)

[Tamale Pie](#)

[Timbale of Corn](#)

Rice & Bean Dishes

[Basic Brown Rice](#)

[Brazilian Black Beans](#)

Steve's Paella (This is a request for the 2014 edition)

Jillian's Risotto (This is a request for the 2014 edition)

Chicken Dishes

[Chicken with Dijon Mustard Sauce](#)

[Chicken Breasts with Garlic and Balsamic Vinegar](#)

[Chicken B'stila](#)

[Chicken Couscous with Raisins, Almonds and Pine Nuts](#)

[Basque Chicken](#)

[Beena's Wafuu Curry](#)

Fish Dishes

[Broiled Salmon in Soy Ginger Marinade](#)

[Curry Coconut Pecan Crusted Tilapia](#)

[Salmon in Puff Pastry with Dill Sauce \(Christmas Dinner\)](#)

[Salmon with Fennel and Pernot](#)

Pasta Dishes

["Nona's Sauce" \(i.e. Romano family tomato sauce\)](#)

[Patterson's Pasta Primavera Pesto Pot Pouri](#)

Oona's quick Tomato Sauce (This is a request for the 2014 edition)

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

BASIC COOKING ADVICE

The Law of Chopping - When all is said and done, cooking is mostly about chopping. I estimate that I spend 1/8 to 2/16 of my life chopping food. Three quarters of cooking time is eaten up (bad choice of metaphor) in preparation (i.e. chopping) and only one quarter in actually doing things with heat and flames. So, get yourself a good French knife, a good sharpener, a good cutting board and practice chopping (See, Essential Utensils below). Learn to use claw fingers or "monster fingers" as Judith calls them (see below).

Monster-Finger Chopping - Hold the food on the cutting board by curling your fingers so that the fingertips are tucked under and are away from the blade of your big, broad knife. Rest the blade against the flat, middle part of the digits and use the curled hand to guide the blade. Practice using this monster claw approach so that you can chop up your food and not your fingertips.

Sharp Knives - Sharp knives make your life easier and safer. I once I worked with a volatile Italian chef who had all the kitchen knives sharpened professionally on a regular basis. Nothing out of the ordinary there. But, he impressed me with his commitment to perfection. If a knife

came back that was not sharpened to his standards he would fly into a rage and, wildly waving the defective blade over his head, threaten to kill the incompetent knife sharpener. "I'm gonna kill that incompetent sonofa...." The sharper the blade, the more easily it cuts the food. And, the less likely you are to have the blade slip and cut your finger. Keep your knives sharp.

Salt & Pepper - Duh! Always have salt & pepper.

Onions and Garlic - If you have no onions or garlic in the house do not -- I repeat DO NOT -- attempt to cook. It will taste yucky.

Slicing an Onion - It's good to have a designated cutting board for onions and garlic. You may not want your fruit, for example, to taste like garlic. Cut off the rough ends of the onion. Peel off the outer paper-like layer. Rest the onion on one of the cut ends so that you are looking down at concentric circles and slice the onion into two halves. Take one half and lay it flat on the cutting board. Using monster claw hands cut thin slices of onions so that you end up with long, thin strands of onion, rather than little chopped pieces (see below).

Chopping an Onion - One of the most useful skills I ever learned was how to chop an onion efficiently. This takes some practice, but once mastered it saves hours, even days, worth of cooking time. With your freshly sharpened blade:

Cut off the two ends of the onion, turn the onion over and rest it on one of the flat surfaces you just created so that you are looking down at the concentric layers of the onion, and cut the onion in half.

Take one half of the onion and place it flat side down on the cutting board. The onion should have half rounds, like arches, that are resting flat on the cutting board.

Hold your blade horizontally and VERY CAREFULLY make 3-4 horizontal incisions into the onion so that you end up with 4-5 horizontal layers. CAUTION! Don't cut all the way through the onion. Leave a little bit connected at the end so that it holds together.

Then make similar vertical incisions, leaving the same end of the onion uncut

Finally, cut thin slices off the end of the onion against the grain of the previous cuts. This should result in nice little bits of onion.

The uncut end of the onion is a bit messy, but just whack that part a few times with the cutting blade to chop it up and VOILA! Minced onion pieces.

Cooking Onions and Garlic - The first step in lots of recipes is to cook some chopped onions in olive oil (or butter, but I don't use butter), *until they are soft*. That's not long enough. Cook the onions, over a moderate heat, until they turn brown. The browner they get, the tastier they are. If the onions turn black and crispy you have gone too far. Crushed garlic burns easily, so don't add the garlic until the onions are almost done and you are about to add other ingredient.

Be sure to have an Executive Chef in the house - One of my best hiring decisions was bring on Judith, my wife, as my executive chef. She makes all the hard decisions about what recipes should be used, which dishes will go well together, and what wine should be served.

Sous Chefs - If, par chance, you are the Executive Chef, be sure to have a sous-chef in the house who will actually do the work and knows how to follow a recipe.

Timing is everything - The hardest thing about cooking, especially when putting together multiple dishes, is to get the timing right so that everything is done at the same time. I don't

know what to tell you except that your sense of timing will grow with experience. A lot depends on the law of chopping, as above.

Clean as you go - Some would disagree and prefer to work in a kitchen that looks as though a hurricane passed through, but I prefer to clean as I go so that work surfaces are generally clear and free from clutter. Growing up I spent a good deal of time with Sonny and Jerry who were friends of my family. I babysat for their kids and they were the first adults who treated me as an adult. I spent a lot of time talking with Sonny while she prepared dinner and I was incredibly impressed with how clean the kitchen remained. When she was finished with a pot, she cleaned it and put it away. I live by the standards set by Sonny. Your cleaning crew will appreciate that you have minimized the after-dinner work.

Cleaning crew - Be sure to have a cleaning crew -- Hey! Where did everyone go?

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

UTENSILS - Essential cooking tools that you wouldn't think were that essential

A good French Knife - These have a large blade that is gently curved on the sharp side so that you can rock the knife a bit as you chop your food. It is worth investing a few bucks to have a good knife.

A sharpening stone or sharpener - The knife is useless, and dangerous, if it is dull. You must be able to sharpen your precious knife before attacking a slippery onion.

A cutting board - We have multiple cutting boards. One large one for cutting vegetables that spread out a lot when chopped, and for rolling out crusts that take room. A smaller one that is supposed to be for cutting just onions and garlic, so that the taste doesn't get into other things that might be cut on the board. Then we have a designated plastic (or some kind of composite inorganic material) board for cutting chicken and any meat stuff that makes its way into the kitchen. This board is cleaned immediately after use with boiling water and, ideally, is put into the dishwasher where whatever bacteria might be present is washed away.

A vegetable steamer - I'm a big fan of no nonsense steamed vegetables, so almost every meal includes steamed vegetables. I think steaming retains more vitamins and nutrients than are retained if you boil vegetables (including potatoes), so a steamer is really useful. These are metal trays that fold together for storage and pop open to hold vegetables when you put them into a saucepan. IMPORTANT ADVICE. Whenever you put a steamer into a pot or saucepan, add water (filtered) right away before you put in the vegetables. I have ruined too many pots by forgetting to add the water and inadvertently -- tragically -- cooking the pot instead of the food.

A vegetable and lettuce spinner - We eat lots of salads and leafy vegetables that need to be washed and dried before cutting and/or cooking. A good spinner is a great timesaving tool. It also serves as a good container for washing fruit. The inner part acts as a sieve that enables you to pull the fruit, etc. out of the water, drain it and set it aside to dry.

A fresh ginger scraper - I'm not even sure where I got this device. I probably inherited it from my mom who probably bought it in China Town in lower Manhattan when she was learning how to cook Chinese food. It's a bamboo contraption that has rows of serrated bamboo. You take fresh ginger root, peel it, and then scrape the root against the serrated rows. You get shredded ginger that can easily be worked into a variety of dishes. It is easier than chopping (enough chopping all ready!) and it mixes in better than the little chunks you get from chopping.

A wooden spoon(s) - You need at least one wooden utensil to stir and scrape foods that are cooking in metal pans. If you use a metal spatula or spoon, you risk scraping up little bits of metal into the food. At least, that's what Judith tells me, and she's the Executive Chef, so . . . I'm not arguing with the EC.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Ingredients you should always have in the house:

Onions

Garlic

Olive Oil

Salt & Pepper

Balsamic Vinegar

Whole Wheat Flour

Chicken Stock

Canned Tomatoes

Herbs

Thyme

Bay leaves

Dill

Salt

Pepper

Curry

The secret language of cooking

Don't you hate recipes that fail to explain the meaning of cooking terms? If you don't know what it means to "sauté" something, it doesn't do any good to read an instruction that tells you to "sauté" chicken livers until done. Or, for that matter, the instruction "cook until done." Well, how do we know it's done! I'll try to define some of the more common cooking jargon. Help me think of other terms that crop up.

Dredge - Generally this means you coat the food with flour. You can put the cut up food in a bowl and add the flour, then mix. Or, you can put the flour and the cut up food in a paper bag and shake-a-bake -- well, shake-a-dredge. The objective is to get a light coating of flour on the food.

Marinate - When you marinate food, you submerge the main dish in some kind of flavorful liquid that infuses the flavor into the fish, meat or whatever. (See [Salmon Soy Ginger](#) for an example.)

Sauté - Essentially this means you fry the food lightly in some oil. Fried food is bad for you, so when we need to fry something we say we are sauteing it. In all fairness, with sauteing you don't use a lot of oil, which is the real culprit. Just a bit of oil to coat the food, and then lightly heated to soften the veggies, or chicken or whatever.

Roux - A roux thickener that either adds some bulk to a recipe, or serves as a base for a sauce. Making a roux is pretty simple. Mix about equal parts of butter (or oil) and flour (2 tablespoons each, for example) and heat in a sauce pan until it looks a bit like bubbling lava. Then add some kind of liquid, such as water if you want the roux to be really boring, or stock and wine, if you want it to be tasty. Add a bit of the liquid and stir it into the roux. You will be amazed at how much liquid gets soaked up by the fat and flour lava. Add liquid until you have the consistency your like.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

BREAKFAST

Coffee

Absolutely! 5-6 cups. The best cognitive boost yet discovered. I like to grind fresh beans and brew them in a French Press coffee maker. Fill with water that has boiled and let the grounds steep in the water for at least 3 minutes.

Oatmeal

What is the point of *instant* oatmeal? Regular, old-fashioned oatmeal takes 2 minutes to cook! How hungry are you? Pour some water in a pan, pour in some oatmeal, bring it to a boil, stir it

for about ten seconds and voila! Oatmeal. How much more instant do you need it to be? If it is too thick, add some more water. Too thin, add more oats and return to a boil.

When I lived in England while studying acting at the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School, I pretty much lived on oatmeal. I had no money. Oatmeal was cheap, warm, filling and yummy. I love oatmeal.

Michael's Yucky (not really) Oatmeal.

I now make a habit of adding 4-5 prunes and some ground flax seeds to my oatmeal. Prunes are extra high in antioxidants. Flax seeds are extra high in Omega-3s. Oatmeal lowers cholesterol. We are talking super food for breakfast here folks. But, it expands prep time to about 5 minutes.

Michael's Super Brain Healthy (and braces friendly) Breakfast Smoothie

I am a late-bloomer. I didn't get braces until I was 64 years old. Guess what? You can't eat anything solid when you first get braces. Who knew? Aside from every teenager in the country. So, I began making myself smoothies for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Here's my recipe for a super duper brain healthy breakfast smoothie. One banana, 5 strawberries, a handful of blueberries, about a cup of soy milk, about half a cup of orange-mango juice and whatever other fruit is available (cantaloupe, pears, apples, grapes). And, la piece de resistance, to give it some substance -- about a cup of my yucky oatmeal with prunes and flax seeds. Whoa! Antioxidants out the wazooo, to say nothing of Omega 3, potassium, cholesterol-lowering oatmeal. And, it tastes like milk shake.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Orange Whole Wheat Pancakes a la Judith

Inspired by "The Vegetarian Epicure" by Anna Thomas, published 1972

How long does it take to make? 20 minutes

Serves: 3-4, or one hungry hombre.

What Tools Do I Need?

~ Mixing Bowl

~ Griddle or large frying pan

Ingredients? (Judith altered the ingredients)

2 eggs

1/4 cup oil (canola)

2 cups whole-wheat flour (or white, or half white and half whole wheat)

1 teaspoon baking powder

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

2 cups Orange Juice (or, use your imagination - you get the idea. The juice replaces the standard milk).

How to Make It.

- ~ Beat the eggs and oil together in the mixing bowl and then mix in the orange juice.
- ~ Add the flour to the liquid and mix well. You are trying to achieve a nice thick consistency. If it's too runny you will get thin, overcooked pancakes.
- ~ Get your griddle, or frying pan moderately hot and pour out a nice round to get started. The first pancake never turns out quite right, so just go ahead and eat it and make some more to serve to your guests or loved ones. You are doing them a favor.
- ~ Let the pancakes cook until the surface becomes pock marked with little bubble holes. Then, flip the pancake and let it cook for 30 seconds or so on the other side. You want it to be cooked all the way through - no raw dough. Ugh.
- ~ You can make a few pancakes and keep them warm in the oven set at 200 degrees.

Presentation

- ~ Serve 2 or 3 pancakes per plate
- ~ Add some cut fruit or some chopped walnuts and real maple syrup. If you use fake maple syrup Judith will not let you into the house. (You could add the chopped nuts to the batter so that the nuts are cooked within the pancake.)

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Basic French Pan Crepes

I learned how to make standard French crepes when working at a restaurant in Santa Cruz, California around the time that Oona was born.

How long does it take to make? 30 minutes

Serves: You can make about 20 crepes with this basic recipe.

What Tools Do I Need?

- ~ It's really important to have a good pan. A crepe pan is a smallish metal frying pan with gently sloped sides. David and I figured out how to make decent crepes when I was in San Diego just after Leo's birth. I think we rejected three frying pans before finding one that worked.
- ~ Mixing bowl or blender

- ~ Paper towels
- ~ A rubber spatula (optional)
- ~ A plate to hold the cooked crepes.
- ~ An umlaut to put over the first e in the word crepes.

Ingredients

- 2/3 cup white flour
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 3 eggs
- 2 cups milk
- 2 tablespoons oil or butter
- 1-2 tablespoons of cognac (optional)

How to Make It.

- ~ It's sorta like making pancakes, but the batter is thinner. You are making really thin pancakes. Mix the liquid, then add the flour and mix, or blend well.
- ~ Add the cognac to the batter, or save it to drink straight up after the first 7 or 8 crepes have failed.
- ~ Heat the crepe pan and lubricate with oil or butter. Start with a generous coating of oil and when it is hot wipe the pan with some paper towels. The oil soaked paper towels are used to re-lubricate the pan between the cooking of each crepe.
- ~ Here's the fun part! Dump some batter into the pan and swirl it around so that you get a nice thin, circular coating of batter around the pan and then **POUR THE EXTRA BATTER BACK INTO THE BLENDER**, or the bowl. The batter that hits the hot pan will start cooking immediately and will stick to the pan, the extra batter on top will not cook immediately and can be poured. This is the creative and theatrical part of the process. You have to get the knack of the wrist action that spreads the batter around the pan and gets the extra stuff back into the blender.
- ~ The action of pouring the batter back into the blender will create a natural "handle" on the crepe, a small bit of batter that is hanging over the side of the pan. You will use this handle to flip the crepe.
- ~ After 30 seconds, the crepe will be cooked enough to flip. Flick the handle with your thumb, or with a rubber spatula. Grab the handle and gently, but confidently lift the crepe away from the pan and flip it. Let it cook on the second side for 10 - 15 second. Blow on your fingers during this time to reduce the burning sensation, or dip into warm water.
- ~ Hold the pan just above your plate and slide the cooked crepe onto the plate.
- ~ Take your oily paper towel and rub it around the pan to re-lubricate and repeat the process as many times as you can until the batter is gone.

~ As with pancakes, the first crepe never turns out well. In fact, the first 7 or 8 crepes are likely to look like shit until you get the hang of it. Do not despair. Remember the cognac. And, even if they don't look good they will taste good. Add some syrup or put some jelly on the stuff and chow down. Don't tell your guests about this part.

Presentation

~ Crepes can be stored for a number of day. Simply stack on a plate and cover with plastic wrap. Let them heat up in room temperature before using again.

~ The basic idea is to roll whatever you want to eat inside the rolled up crepe. You can use crepes for breakfast, lunch or dinner (as explained below) and put whatever you want inside them and put whatever you want, sauce wise, on top of them.

Breakfast or Desert Crepes

Add a little sugar, or syrup to the batter to sweeten it. Put sweet stuff inside and on top.

Dinner Crepes

Put dinner stuff inside and cover with a sauce, like a basic béchamel, or whatever -- a tapenade might be nice.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

EGGS

My college buddy Roger Babb grew up in Hong Kong. His family had a Chinese cook who told Roger that to learn how to cook one needed to start by learning to cook eggs. "If you can cook eggs," he said, "you can cook anything." Who knows? It's really easy to cook eggs poorly, a bit harder to cook them well. I learned how to cook eggs during the summer that Judith and I worked in Provincetown on Cape Cod, at a great restaurant called Poor Richard's Buttery, which offered gourmet breakfasts. I was hired as a breakfast cook and was trained on the job, one egg at a time. Judith was the first female waitress ever hired by the restaurant.

The basic rule is to cook eggs slowly - be patient.

Basic Scrambled Eggs

The basic rule - mix the eggs in a bowl, but don't over-mix scrambled eggs. With scrambled eggs you should be able to see the difference between the cooked white and yoke. It should look kinda marbled. Omelets are a different story. The eggs for an omelet need to be beaten really

well so that the color is nice and even when cooked. I think scrambled eggs should be moist, but some people like them dry. Let these people cook their own eggs.

I have to admit that I love eggs with ketchup. Don't tell.

Fancy Ass Scrambled Eggs

Start by browning some chopped onions, or some well chopped bell peppers. Add a bit of garlic. Then, throw in anything else that sounds good to you, like some chopped olives or tomatoes or artichoke hearts, or pesto. If you are eating cheese, add cheese and mix it while the eggs are still kind runny. Serve with hot sauce (ketchup with attitude!).

Hard Boiled Eggs

Put the raw eggs into cold water, or they will crack. Boil the water for 10 minutes. Time it. At the 10-minute mark hold the saucepan under flowing cold water to stop the cooking. Test that the eggs are done by spinning one on a table, pointy side down. If it spins, it's done. If it wobbles, it's still got something liquidy inside. To peel, press the egg against a cutting board until it cracks and then roll the egg under your palm so that cracks appear all over the shell. Then hold the egg under water, or in running water, and see if you can peel off the shell without pulling too much of the white off with the shell. It might.

Soft Boiled Eggs

Boil for 3 minutes.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Basic (or Fancy) Omelet

I learned to make omelets at Poor Richard's Buttery in Provincetown, MA

How long does it take to make? - 15-30 minutes for chopping. 5 minutes for cooking the omelet.

Serves: 2 eggs per person is plenty

What Tools Do I Need?

~ A good frying pan. The easiest is a non-stick Teflon pan, if you are so inclined. Otherwise, it is hard to avoid the eggs sticking to the bottom of the pan.

~ A second frying pan for cooking the fixings.

~ A spatula with a long head.

Ingredients?

Eggs (2 per person, as a rule of thumb)

1 tablespoon of Oil, or butter to lubricate the pan. We used clarified butter at Poor Richard's, and lots of it. It wasn't called the "Buttery" for nothing.

Salt & Pepper

Whatever you want to put in the omelet (chopped, of course). When I worked at Poor Richard's Buttery I once got an order for a brown rice omelet from a Japanese theatre diva who came with a big group of actors at the very end of a Memorial Day rush, when I was about to collapse. I made the damned *brown rice omelet*.

Good stuff includes, browned onions and peppers, olives, tomatoes, grated cheese and greens

How to Make It.

~ Mix the eggs in a bowl. Unlike scrambled eggs, the eggs for an omelet should be well beaten so that there is a uniform color - i.e. no separation of the yoke and the egg.

~ My preferred approach is to cook the extra ingredients separately. So, in the second frying pan, add some oil and brown the onions, then throw in whatever else you want to add.

~ Grate the cheese, or cut into thin slices.

~ Get your pan heated over a low to moderate heat so that the oil is moderately hot. Remember, the trick to cooking eggs well is to cook them slowly. The eggs should not sizzle when you add them to the pan.

~ Pour the eggs slowly into the center of the pan so that it spread evenly around the entire pan. Let it cook slowly until you begin to see the edges getting hard. Don't fiddle with the eggs.

~ When the underside of the eggs appear to be hardening, but the top part is still liquidy, sprinkle or layer the cheese across the surface (if you are using cheese). Let the cheese melt a little bit and then spread the rest of the goodies on ONE HALF OF THE OMELET.

~ Here's the hard part! Get your spatula under the half of the omelet that has no fixings and flip it on top of the fixings half. This never works unless you use a non-stick pan. An alternative approach is to slice the non-fixing side in half and flip one part at a time. What you get is a half-found omelet.

~ Let the omelet cook a bit more then see if you can flip the whole thing over to the other side. This should be easier, because the eggs are more cooked and are harder. Or, just cut the whole thing in half and flip one half at a time. Don't over cook!

Presentation

~ You might make some toast and cut the pieces into triangular wedges that you arrange on either side of the omelet, or add a few pieces of fruit.

~ The essential piece de resistance, of course, is a bright red daub of ketchup. Yum!

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

LUNCH

I don't really have any great ideas for lunch. I usually eat leftovers or, more likely, a peanut butter and jelly sandwich - a comfort food for me. Sometimes I'll make a tuna fish salad sandwich, or if I am being good I'll make a salad and add tuna fish (with chopped onions & mayo).

Please send me your ideas for lunch.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

SALADS

Michael's Syrup & Mustard Salad Dressing

How long does it take to make? About 10 minutes

Serves - Well, about 17 - 27 salads. I don't know.

What Tools Do I Need?

- ~ A mixing bowl, or I use a 2 cup measuring cup
- ~ A whip
- ~ Some kind of pouring container that can be stoppered with a cork.

Ingredients?

3/4 cup of olive oil

1/4 cup of balsamic vinegar

Salt & pepper

Mustard (Dijon is nice)

1 tablespoon of maple syrup (or, honey)

How to Make It.

~ Pour the oil to the 3/4 cup mark in the measuring cup and then add the balsamic vinegar up to the cup mark.

~ Add the mustard, the syrup, the salt & pepper - sometimes I throw in some horse radish -- and mix the shit out of it.

Presentation

~ Shake well before pouring on the salad. As a general rule, I let each person dress their own salad to their liking. The benefit of dressing an entire salad is that the dressing gets mixed evenly through out. The down side is that any leftover salad probably needs to be thrown out because it will be all soggy by tomorrow.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Janet's Awesome Grated Root Vegetable Salad Approach

The main deal with Janet's approach to salad was she taught me to add grated root vegetables (aka beets and carrots) to the lettuce, which makes the salad taste good - and it looks pretty.

How long does it take to make? It depends on whether you need to clean fresh lettuce or if you use pre-packaged lettuce.

Serves - It depends on how much you make

What Tools Do I Need?

~ Lettuce spinner.

~ Vegetable grater

Ingredients?

~ Different kind of lettuce - anything but iceberg

~ Spinach

~ Beets

~ Carrots

~ Celery

How to Make It.

~ Clean the lettuce and spinach well by chopping or tearing it up, putting it into the lettuce spinner and rinsing two or three times. Nothing is worse than grit in the salad.

~ Chop the celery and - here's the point of this recipe - grate the beets and carrots and spread them attractively on the lettuce.

Presentation

~ As above, make it look pretty.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Judith's Awesome Over-The-Top Salad Approach

The idea is to start with Janet's cool approach and then add whatever else you can think of that makes it more elaborate and interesting.

How long does it take to make? About an hour and half. And I just watch!

Serves - It depends on how much you make

What Tools Do I Need?

- ~ Lettuce spinner.
- ~ Vegetable grater
- ~ Most of the counter space in the kitchen
- ~ A huge mixing bowl

Ingredients?

- ~ Different kind of lettuce - anything but iceberg
- ~ Spinach
- ~ Beets
- ~ Carrots
- ~ Celery
- ~ Avocado
- ~ Red onion, sliced
- ~ Green onions, chopped
- ~ Sprouts
- ~ Seeds (sunflower)
- ~ Spinach
- ~ Cucumber
- ~ Raw diet stuff - like "Salad Booster"

How to Make It.

~ As above. Mix it all together. Judith mixes it all in a large bowl, adds the salad dressing and serves tossed and dressed.

Presentation

~ As above, make it look pretty.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

David's Memorial Cole Slaw.

David likes Cole slaw, so it is necessary to know how to make this when David, Oona and Leo visit.

How long does it take to make? 15-20 minutes.

Serves - 4-6, or just David.

What Tools Do You Need?

~ Cutting board and your good French knife

~ Mixing bowl

Ingredients:

1 green (white) cabbage (or, to be fancy you could mix white and red cabbage, half & half)

2-3 good-sized carrots

1/2 cup of raisins (Golden or Thompson)

1/2 cup mayo (soy mayo if you like)

Some caraway seeds

2 tablespoons of Michael's Syrup-Mustard Salad Dressing

How to Make It:

~ Cutting the cabbage is the best part. Cut the head in half, splitting the core in two. Cut each half in half again so that you end up with four wedges. Hold one wedge on edge with the core facing down and slice the core out of each wedge with a diagonal cut.

~ Turn a wedge onto a flat side and then, carefully, using claw fingers (see above) cut the cabbage wedge into thin slices - the thinner the better. Put the cut cabbage in a big bowl.

~ Grate the carrots and add to the bowl.

~ Add the raisins, caraway seeds and the mayo and the salad dressing. Mix and let sit for a while, or cover the bowl with plastic wrap and refrigerate.

The Presentation:

~ Just let David know the Cole slaw is in the frig.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Naomi's version of her friend Amber's Citrus Dressing/Marinade

Served at Chez Sorkin, when guest chef Naomi is en casa.

How long does it take to make? About three hours of shaking, or 30-seconds if you are in a hurry..

Serves: It's purpose.

Ingredients

~ 1 lemon

~ 2 pieces of garlic

~ 1 tsp agave/honey

~ ½ tsp mustard

~ 1T olive oil

Blend/shake thoroughly.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

VEGETABLES

Steamed Vegetables

Can you boil water? Okay, then you can steam vegetables.

A word about cleaning vegetables. They need to be cleaned. They make them by putting them in dirt, which is dirty. Then, they are picked by people who pick their noses. Scrub all vegetables

with soap and water. If you must, use a vegetable skinner and take off the outer skin, although this is not the preferred method because most of the vitamins are in the skins.

Greens and lettuce should be cut up, put in a vegetable spinner (essential equipment). Fill with water. Agitate. Rinse and spin dry. Repeat twenty times, or at least tell Judith that you have done so.

Basic Recipe - Put water in the pot. Put the vegetables in the steamer. Turn on the gas (electricity) until the water boils and let the vegetable steam until they are tender, but not exhausted. Flimsy greens will cook faster than root vegetables like carrots and potatoes.

Serve with a little salt & pepper, or perhaps mix in a bit of olive oil. Yum.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Collard Greens

I just recently discovered collard greens and they are now almost a daily staple. Wash the leaves under running water and dry by going outside and swinging them vigorously. Collards are a hardy leaf and can take the abuse. This is a standard drying method for leafy greens. I've worked in restaurants that had a wire cage with handles that was specifically used to dry lettuce and greens. You put them in the cage, closed it up, went outside and spun it vigorously. Fun.

The trick with collard greens is to cut out the central spine, which is too tough to eat. You then end up with two sides of the big flat leaves. Put one leaf on top of the other and roll them as though you are making a cigar. Then, use your French Knife and your monster claw fingers to slice very thin strips all the way down the cigar.

If you like raw vegetables, just eat the collard strips as is, or with a bit of oil, salt & pepper.

Or, heat some olive oil in a frying pan, crush some garlic and stir fry the collard green strip until they are bright and shiny, and a bit limp. Really tasty!

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Baked Herbed Potato Cubes

Cut the potatoes into cubes and put them into a small, pyrex baking dish. Add various French herbs, like thyme, savory, tarragon or herbs de provence. Pour some olive oil over the potatoes and mix so that the cubes are coated. Bake in the oven at 375 degrees for about 45 minutes.

Serve with ketchup.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

SOUPS

Butternut Squash Soup with Ginger & Lime

From Gourmet Magazine, September 1987

We traditionally make this soup for Thanksgiving dinner. It is really easy and can be made 2 days in advance, but will impress the guests. Although we didn't think it tasted so great this last Thanksgiving. The hardest part is peeling and cutting the Butternut squash. Get your burly boyfriend (or, girlfriend) to help.

How long does it take to make? 60-90 minutes including cooking time, blending, etc.

Serves 4.

What Tools Do You Need?

- ~ A peeler or sharp knife to peel the darned Butternut Squash
- ~ A blender or food processor
- ~ A good knife for cutting the darned squash and other stuff
- ~ A hammer to pound on the knife to get it through the squash
- ~ A big pot to cook the soup in
- ~ A nice small frying pan

Ingredients:

2-3 tablespoons Olive Oil

1/2 cup chopped Onion (one onion should do it.)

1 1/2 tablespoons of fresh Ginger, peeled and cut up into little pieces

One Butternut Squash (you need 4 cups once it is peeled, seeded and thinly sliced)

2 cups Chicken Stock

2 cups Water

3 cloves of Garlic

2-3 fresh limes (you need 2 tablespoon of juice and sliced rounds for garnish)

Salt and Pepper, of course

How to Make It:

- ~ Before you do anything, peel and slice the squash.

- ~ Cut up the onion. Chop the garlic. Peel some fresh ginger & chop. (The hard part is done.)
- ~ Put the oil in the big pan and heat it (moderate).
- ~ Add the onions to the pan and brown, adding the ginger when the onions start to soften.
- ~ When the onions are brown add the squash then add the 2 cups of Chicken Stock and the 2 cups of water and throw in the garlic. Stir.
- ~ Cover, bring to a boil, then turn down to low and simmer, covered for about 15 minutes or until the squash is nice and soft.
- ~ While the squash is cooking try to find your food processor. If you can find it, set it up. If you can't find it, use a blender or one of those blender wand thingies. If none of these are available, rush to the store and buy about 6 things of squash soup and just be quiet about it.
- ~ Puree the soup, in batches, one way or another. If you have time, let the soup cool down a bit before blending to minimize the risk of burning yourself. Pour the pureed soup into a storage container.
- ~ Before you serve the soup, heat it up again.
- ~ Add the 2-3 tablespoons of lime juice, to taste, then slice up one thin round of lime for each bowl of soup you plan to serve.
- ~ And -- here's the best part -- cut the ginger into long thin slices (i.e. julienne the ginger) and sauté the ginger in some olive oil in a frying pan. Make a lot so that you can be generous with the garnish. Pay attention so that the ginger gets browned, but not burned. When nice and brown, take the ginger out and put it on some paper towels to sop up the extra oil. It will get crispy when it dries and cools, so be careful not to crush it.

The Presentation:

- ~ Serve the soup in flattish bowls if you have them.
- ~ Float a lime round in the middle of the bowl
- ~ Then top each lime with the sautéed ginger.
- ~ Yum.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Curried Split Pea Soup

This is a real easy, kinda cheating soup. Peas are a source of protein

How long does it take to make? About a half hour. By the way, peas are a source of protein.

Serves: 4-6

What Tools Do You Need?

- ~ Soup pot

~ Frying pan

Ingredients

- ~ 1 cup of dried yellow peas (or, more if you want to make more)
- ~ Water (according to the package)
- ~ Bay leaf
- ~ Curry Powder
- ~ 1 Carrot, cubed
- ~ 1 celery, chopped
- ~ 1 Onions, chopped
- ~ 2 cloves of garlic, crushed

How To Make It

- ~ Cook the peas according to the instructions on the package, add a bay leaf to the water.
- ~ While the peas are cooking, sauté the onions till brown, carrots, celery and garlic until soft.
- ~ When the peas are soft and mushy, add the vegetables, garlic and curry. Voila.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Chestnut Christmas Soup

This has become the traditional soup that we serve at Christmas dinner. Look for the chestnut puree and chestnuts in advance because they are sometimes hard to find.

How long does it take to make?

Serves:

What Tools Do You Need?

- ~ A big soup pot
- ~

Ingredients

- ~ 1/2 cup chopped onions
- ~ 1/2 cup minced celery
- ~ 1 stick of butter
- ~ 1/4 cup flour

- ~ 8 cups of chicken broth
- ~ a 15 ounce can of pureed chestnuts
- ~ white pepper (or black - whatEVER!)
- ~ 1/4 cup of Frangelico liquor
- 1/2 cup of heavy cream
- ~ 1/2 cup of crème fraiche
- ~ 10 chestnuts, roasted and chopped for garnish (or, from a jar)

How to make it:

- ~ Melt the butter in the soup pot and add the onion. Cook until soft and beginning to brown. Then, add the celery and cook until the celery softens. Then add the flour and mix with the buttery mixture to create a roux. Cook until the roux takes on some color and begins to look like lava. You want the flour to be cooked.
- ~ Add the broth and simmer, stirring occasionally, for about 30 minutes.
- ~ Chop up the puree and add to the broth, whisking it so that it gets all mixed in, and simmer for 5 minutes.
- ~ Take a sip of the Frangelico to make sure that it tastes okay. Test it again, just to be doubly sure. Then add 1/4 cup to the soup.
- ~ Stir in the heavy cream and the crème fraiche and simmer for one minute. (Save some crème fraiche for the presentation. Season with salt and pepper. THAT'S IT!

Presentation:

- ~ Serve in soup bowls. Add a dollop of crème fraiche and put a chestnut piece on top.
- ~ Eat it all up.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

VEGETABLE DISHES

Broccoli & Tofu

Inspired by The Enchanted Broccoli Forest, by Mollie Katzen, published 1982

How long does it take to make? About 35-45 minutes

Serves: 4-5

What Tools Do You Need?

- ~ A frying pan or a large saucepan
- ~ A smaller saucepan
- ~ Wooden spoon

Ingredients?

Peanut Sauce

- 1/2 cup peanut butter (smooth, or chunky if you want chunks of peanuts)
- 1/2 cup hot water
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 1 1/2 tablespoons of tamari sauce
- 2 tablespoons of blackstrap molasses
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne

The Sauté

- 1 bunch of broccoli, cleaned and chopped into small pieces
- 2 tablespoons of oil (peanut, canola or olive)
- 2 tablespoons of fresh ginger, chopped or shredded
- 4 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 1 pound of tofu, cubed
- 1 small onion, sliced
- 1-2 tablespoons of tamari
- 2 minced scallions (optional)
- 1 cup chopped peanuts (optional)

How to Make It.

- ~ Serve with rice. Get the rice started before anything else.
- ~ Clean the broccoli. Cut off the flowerets and cut them into small pieces. Clean by immersing in water (vegetable spinner). If you want to use the stalks cut off the bottom part and peel off the outer skin which is yucky.
- ~ Chop the garlic. Chop, or shred the ginger. Cube the tofu.
- ~ Slice the onions and start them cooking in some oil. Add the garlic when the onions get soft and the ginger when the onions are almost done.
- ~ Make sure there is enough hot oil in the pan with the onions and add the broccoli. Turn up the heat a bit. Stir the broccoli with a wooden spoons so that it is coated in oil and quickly stir fry the

broccoli. When it looks shiny and bright turn down the heat, add the tofu and cover so that the broccoli steams a little.

~ The sauce - Put the peanut butter in a saucepan, boil some water and add a 1/2 cup of water to the saucepan. Turn the heat on to low and mush the peanut butter with a wooden spoon, or with a whip.

~ Add the vinegar, molasses, the tamari sauce and the cayenne. Let it thicken a little and turn off the heat. Then, add to the frying pan with the vegetable and mix the sauce so that it coats the tofu and the vegetables. Keep warm.

Presentation

In a bowl, add some rice and spoon the tofu & vegetable mix over the rice.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Shepherd's Pie

Inspired by The Enchanted Broccoli Forest, by Mollie Katzen, published 1982

How long does it take to make? It bakes for 35 minutes.

Serves: 4-5

What Tools Do You Need?

~ *A steamer*

~ *A casserole dish*

~ *A large skillet (frying pan) with a lid (or, foil)*

~ *An oven.*

Ingredients

2 large potatoes, cubed

1/2 cup yogurt

1/2 cup minced chives

1/2 cup minced parsley

1 tablespoon butter (if you insist)

1/2 tablespoon oil

1 onion, chopped

1 large garlic, crushed
1 teaspoon salt, pepper to taste
1 stalk celery, chopped
12 oz. chopped mushrooms (or, enough)
1, 1 pound eggplant, cut into small cubes
1 green bell pepper, minced
1/4 teaspoon thyme
1/2 teaspoon each of basil and oregano
1 cup frozen peas (or, fresh)
3 tablespoons of wheat germ (if, by some chance, you happen to have wheat germ)
1 tablespoon cider vinegar

How to Make It

- ~ Chop everything that needs to be chopped.
- ~ Steam the potatoes, mash or whip them together with the yogurt, chives and parsley. Add salt & pepper to taste and set aside.
- ~ Add oil and sauté the onions in the skillet, adding the garlic when the onions are soft.
- ~ When the onions start to brown add the celery, mushrooms, green pepper and eggplant. Cover over low heat, stirring occasionally. When the eggplant is cooked through, add the herbs and the peas.
- ~ When the vegetables are done, stir in the wheat germ (maybe some bread crumbs) and the vinegar.
- ~ Spread the vegetable mixture into an oiled casserole dish and top with the mashed potatoes.
- ~ Sprinkle some paprika on top of the mashed potatoes and bake, uncovered for 35 minutes.

Presentation

- ~ Wear shepherd's clothing and put the casserole on the table. Serve from the casserole onto people's plates.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Russian Vegetable Pie

Inspired by "The Vegetarian Epicure" by Anna Thomas

How long does it take to make? 90 minutes (50 minutes to prepare - 40 minutes to bake)

Serves: 4 - 6

This recipe is not really as complicated as it looks. You make a simple crust, coat it with cream cheese, sauté some vegetables, boil some eggs, put them all inside the crust and bake. Voila! Delicious.

What Tools Do You Need?

- ~ A large glass pie plate
- ~ A sauce pan
- ~ Large cutting board or flat surface
- ~ Waxed paper
- ~ A grater, or something to shred carrots
- ~ A big frying pan
- ~ A smaller frying pan
- ~ A pie server, or spatula for serving

Ingredients

Pastry:

- 1 1/4 cups flour
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 4 ounces softened cream cheese
- 3 tablespoons butter (softened)

Filling:

- 1 head of cabbage
- 2 large carrots
- 1/2 pound of mushrooms
- 1 yellow onion
- Dried basil, marjoram, tarragon, and dill
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 4 ounces of softened cream cheese
- 4-6 hard boiled eggs
- A little dry white wine

How to Make It.

The Crust:

~ Make the crust by sifting together the dry pastry ingredients and then working in the butter and the cream cheese. I usually start with a couple of dinner knives and end up using my hands. Work the pastry into a nice ball that doesn't fall apart.

COOKING TIP: Roll out the pastry between two pieces of waxed paper that you have dusted with flour. When the pastry is rolled out into a big surface you can peel off the top piece of waxed paper and use the bottom one to lift the pastry and transfer it into the pie dish. Turn the pie dish upside down over the pastry then hold them together and flip them over. It might work. ~ Spread some flour on the cutting board so the pastry won't stick to it. Roll out the 2/3 of the pastry until it is large enough to fill the bottom of the pie dish and lap over the sides. Put the pastry into the pie dish and set aside.

~ Roll out the remaining 1/3 of the pastry and set aside. This goes on top of the vegetables. (You can do this part while the vegetables are cooking.)

The Filling:

~ Hard boil the eggs (see Hard Boiled Egg recipe).

~ Cut up the cabbage (see Cole Slaw recipe for cutting hints). Shred the carrots with the grater.

~ Slice the mushroom, slice the onions (not chopped).

~ Put about two tablespoons of oil in the frying pan and cook the sliced onions until they begin to brown, then add the cabbage and carrots. Mix as best you can to spread the oil around the vegetables. It will cook down pretty quickly.

~ Add about 1/2 teaspoon of marjoram, tarragon and basil, plus salt & pepper. Cook slowly, stirring occasionally until all the vegetables are wilted.

~ *SAUTEED MUSHROOMS* - This part of the recipe is great all by itself, or in combination with other dishes. I think I learned this at Poor Richard's Buttery. Heat some oil or butter in the small frying pan until it gets pretty hot, but not smoking then add the mushrooms stirring frequently. As they begin to soften and darken, sprinkle the mushrooms with salt. This will usually cause the mushrooms to release liquid into the pan. Continue to cook and stir then add a bit of white wine (1/4 cup maybe.) Don't drown the mushrooms, just let them wade in some wine. Boil the wine to cook out the liquor part and remove from the burner. You should end up with nicely browned mushrooms and some really tasty sauce. Set aside.

~ Spread 4 ounces of softened cream cheese into the bottom the pie plate, on top of the uncooked pastry.

~ Peel and slice the hard-boiled eggs into nice rounds and spread the egg around the bottom of the pie plate, on top of the cream cheese. Sprinkle dill over the eggs.

~ Spoon the softened vegetable mixture into the pie plate, on top of the eggs. You want to avoid getting the pastry too wet, which is why I recommend spooning the vegetable mixture.

~ Spread the sautéed mushrooms on top of the mound of vegetables. Use this liquid, because it is really tasty.

~ Then, cover the whole thing with the second piece of pastry. Press the edges of the top and bottom pieces of the pastry together (wet your fingertips) so that it makes a nice, decorative seal. Cut a few decorative slices in the top of the pie so that it can breathe, and not burst, while baking.

~ Bake at 400 degrees for 15 minutes. Then at 350 degrees for another 20 minutes or so until the crust is golden brown (or, until you are too hungry to wait any longer).

Presentation

~ The pie is impressive so you might want to serve at the table.

~ You want to serve pie wedges. Cut portions that are about the size of your pie server or spatula so that you can get out a full, intact wedge that includes the bottom crust.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Indian Lentil Soup (really more like a stew)

Warning! You need some out-of-the-ordinary Indian spices to make this dish, including mustard and cumin seeds, asafetida (huh?) and ground turmeric, cumin and coriander. It also calls for dried coconut. It's a really good dish if you want to go to the trouble of getting the ingredients.

How long does it take to make? About 90 minutes. .

Serves - 6-8

What Tools Do You Need?

~ A nice big skillet or pot

~ A saucepan

Ingredients?

1 1/2 cups of lentils

4 cups water

2 bay leaves

1/4 cup oil

2 tablespoons of black mustard seed.

1 tablespoon of cumin seed

1/4 teaspoon asafetida (I warned you!)

1 fresh hot pepper, finely chopped. (I just use pepper flakes)
1/2 inch piece of fresh ginger, chopped or shredded
1 teaspoon of turmeric
1/2 cup dried, unsweetened coconut
1 tablespoon oil
1 small can of chopped tomatoes
2 teaspoons salt
2 tablespoons ground cumin
2 tablespoons ground coriander
1/2 teaspoon cayenne
Yellow squash, slices.

How to Make It.

- ~ Cook the lentils. Yellow lentils are a bit hard to find. They cook relatively fast. Follow the directions on the package.
- ~ Chop the onion, the garlic, the ginger and slice the yellow squash. .
- ~ In a big pot, or big skillet, heat the oil over moderate heat, and add the mustard and cumin seeds. Cover and watch. When the seeds get hot enough they will start to pop, which is why you have it covered. When they start to pop, pull the pan off the fire so that the seeds don't burn.
- ~ Stir in the asafetida. (I suppose you could omit this ingredient. I have no idea what it tastes like, or what it adds to the recipe).
- ~ Return the pan to the fire and add the garlic, ginger and the turmeric. Then, add the chopped onions, and the hot peppers. Cook the onions until they are soft and are beginning to brown.
- ~ Add the shredded coconut and pour a little bit of oil on top to moisten it. Mix it in and cook for a while.
- ~ Chop the tomatoes and add to the stew along with the yellow squash. Add some salt and the ground cumin, coriander and cayenne. Cook for a while and then add the lentils, mix and cook for a while longer. The recipe says 30 minutes, but that seems excessive. You can make it whatever consistency you like, either thin and soupy, or thick and stew-like. I prefer the thick approach.

Presentation

- ~ This dish stores well. Refrigerate and reheat.
- ~ We serve in bowls, although it could work on a plate if you cook it down and make it really thick.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Egg and Potato Curry

This is good faux Indian cuisine. So, needless to say, you will need some Indian spices (see below). Inspired by *The Vegetarian Epicure, Book Two* by Anna Thomas (1982). Basically you blend all the spices together and then throw them in with the potatoes, tomatoes, eggs and peas. Voila.

How long does it take to make? About an hour

Serves: 4-6

What Tools Do You Need?

~ A big frying pan, or big sauce pan

~ A blender

Ingredients

Spice Paste"

1 large onion chopped

2 cloves garlic, crushed

1 teaspoon crushed red peppers

1 teaspoon peeled and grated fresh ginger

1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric

1/2 teaspoon ground cumin

2 teaspoons ground coriander

2 tablespoons of water

salt - to taste

1 small potato per person (cut into small cubes)

3 tablespoons of olive oil (or canola)

2/3 cup of water

1 small can of chopped tomatoes

1 bay leaf

5-7 hard-boiled eggs

1 cup of frozen peas (thawed)

Mango chutney (lots)

How to Make It.

- ~ Add all of the ingredients for the spice paste to a blender and blend until pasty.
- ~ Add the oil to the pan and sauté the potatoes until they begin to get some color (10 min.).
- ~ Boil the eggs
- ~ Add the spice mix and cool for another 5 minutes.
- ~ Add the chopped tomatoes and the 2/3 cup of water, cover and cook for about 20 minutes until the potatoes are tender.
- ~ Chop the hard-boiled eggs and add to the potatoes, along with the peas.
- ~ Salt.

Presentation

- ~ The curry can be a little soupy, so bowls work nice. Throw some parsley on top if you want to get fancy. Also, you can serve with little garnish bowls of peanuts or shredded coconut.
- ~ Serve with mango chutney. I find that even mediocre Indian food tastes great if it is mixed with sufficient mango chutney.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Tamale Pie

A real blast from the past - golden oldie for you! From Let's Cook It Right by Adele Davis, copyright in 1947, the year of my birth, but reissued in 1962 when we hippies were first into learning how to eat well.

How long does it take to make? Who remembers? Not long.

Serves: 2-4

What Tools Do You Need?

- ~ A frying pan
- ~ A mixing bowl
- ~ A Pyrex glass baking dish

Ingredients

- ~ 1 Green pepper or a chili pepper, chopped
- ~ 1 onion, chopped
- ~ 1 can diced tomatoes
- ~ 12 ripe olives (or 13 if you are hungry)

- ~ 1-3 teaspoons of chili powder
- ~ 1/2 teaspoon of basil
- ~ 1/2 teaspoon of oregano
- ~ 1/2 teaspoon of ground cumin
- ~ 1 can of kidney beans
- ~ 1 cup water
- ~ 1 cup of corn meal
- ~ 1/2 cup powdered milk (I don't know that you need to use this)
- ~ Paprika
- ~ Salsa

How to Make It.

The filling:

- ~ Sauté the onion and when soft, add, the green/chili pepper and sauté until they are soft as well.
- ~ Add the tomatoes, olives, chili pepper, basil, oregano and cumin, and cook for about 10 minutes.
- ~ Add the kidney beans and the corn, stir well, and set aside.

The crust:

- ~ Make corn meal mush. (I suppose you could use polenta, turned into mush).
- ~ Mix the corn meal and powdered milk, if you decide to use it, and put it into a sauce pan.
- ~ Boil 2 cups of water and gradually pour into the corn meal while stirring. Cook over moderate heat until the corn meal thickens.

The tout ensemble:

- ~ Pour the filling into a glass baking dish, about an inch thick.
- ~ Pour the thickened corn meal on top of the filling and spread evenly.
- ~ Sprinkle some paprika on top for aesthetic purposes.
- ~ Bake at 350 degrees for about a half an hour.

Presentation

- ~ Cut out squares and serve with salsa.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Timbale of Corn

From Julia Child and Company. This recipe is contributed by chef Sara Sorkin of Chez Sorkin's in Bethesda Maryland.

How long does it take? Baking time: 1hr 15-30 mins.

Serves: 8

What Tools Do You Need?

- ~ An 8-cup baking dish
- ~ A bigger dish that you can set the 8-cup dish into

Ingredients

- ~ 3 c. cream-style corn (one large + one small can)
- ~ 6 eggs
- ~ 3 T grated onion
- ~ 1 tsp salt
- ~ 4-5 T fresh minced parsley or 2 T dried
- ~ 2/3 (two-thirds) cup of pressed-down bread stuffing/crumbs
- ~ 2/3 (two-thirds) cup of mixed grated cheeses (Swiss, Cheddar, mozzarella)
- ~ 2/3 (two-thirds) cup of heavy cream
- ~ 6 drops hot pepper sauce (optional)
- ~ 8-10 grinds of fresh black pepper

How To Make It

- ~ Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
- ~ Butter 8-cup baking dish (optional: line with wax paper)
- ~ Beat eggs and add all other ingredients. Pour into baking dish
- ~ Set dish in larger dish and pour boiling water in larger dish to depth of 1" or so
- ~ Place dishes in lower-middle oven.
- ~ Timbale is done when top begins to crack.
- ~ Take out of oven and let it rest for 10 minutes before eating. Enjoy!

RICE & BEAN DISHES

Basic Brown Rice

There have been times when I have said to myself, “Self, if you could only eat one food, what would it be?” And the answer has been brown rice. Delicious and nutritious.

Two to one, water to rice. That’s it. Two cups of water to one cup of rice. Bring to a boil, add a bit of oil and some salt and add the rice. Then turn down and simmer for about 45 minutes to an hour. This will make enough rice for 4.

If you find plain old brown rice boring, spice it up with some sautéed mushrooms. See the recipe for Russian Vegetable Pie and extract the sautéed mushroom part. Or, rice is ideal for any kind of soupy recipe. Just serve the soupy stuff over the rice.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Brazilian Black Beans

This is a great rice and beans recipe that is easy to make and yummy to eat.

How long does it take to make? About 20 minutes to prep and 20 minutes to cook.

Serves 4

What Tools Do You Need:

~ A large saucepan

~ A can opener.

Ingredients

~ 2 tablespoons of olive oil

~ 1 onion, chopped

~ 1 or 2 stalks of celery, chopped into little bitty pieces

~ 1 large garlic, crushed

- ~ 2 cans of organic black beans
- ~ 1 can of diced tomatoes
- ~ 1 orange
- ~ Salt & pepper
- ~ 1 tablespoon of molasses (optional)

How To Make It

- ~ Make the brown rice, which takes longer to cook than do the beans.
- ~ Add the olive oil to the saucepan and brown the onions, then add the celery and garlic and cook until the celery is tender
- ~ Open the cans of black beans and the can of tomatoes (This is the hard part. You might want to wear a wrist brace and have some ice ready to soak your hand).
- ~ Add the beans and the tomatoes (chopped up even more).
- ~ Wash the orange and add it to the beans. Eat the other half. Add the molasses if you like. Cook over low heat for about 20 minutes.

Presentation

- ~ Put some brown rice in a bowl and cover with the beans. Eat.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

CHICKEN DISHES

Dijon Chicken Breasts

From Epicurious

How long does it take to make? 45 minutes or so, start to finish.

Serves 2-4

What Tools Do You Need:

- ~ A big frying pan

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 cup of chicken stock

1/2 an onion, chopped
1/4 cup dijon mustard
2-4 cloves of garlic
1 teaspoon of dried thyme
3-4 chicken breasts

How to Make It.

~ Chop the onions and garlic
~ Add the oil to the pan and sauté the onions until brown. Throw in the garlic when the onions are brown.
~ Salt and pepper the chicken breast and brown the chicken quickly in the pan, pushing the onions aside. It's fine to let the pan brown as long as it doesn't burn. Turn the chicken so that the breasts brown on both sides.
~ Remove the chicken. Mix the mustard and chicken stock and add to the pan with the onions. Scrape up the brown gunk on the bottom of the pan. This is where the flavor comes from.
~ Return the chicken to the sauce, cover and cook over a low to medium heat for about 10 minutes.
~ Before serving, remove the chicken again and cook down the sauce so that it thickens again. The back in again to warm up the chicken.
Voila.

Presentation

~ *Serve with potatoes, or rice, and a vegetable. Pour the sauce, liberally, over the chicken.*

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Chicken Breasts with Garlic and Balsamic Vinegar

From Cuisine Rapide by Pierre Franey, published in 1987. I love this recipe. It is easy to make and can be done *rapidement*. It usually is good for two meals. I like serving it over steamed cubes of potatoes.

How long does it take to make? 45 minutes or so, start to finish.

Serves: 4 (or, 2 and 2 again with leftovers)

What Tools Do You Need:

- ~ A big frying pan
- ~ A bowl
- ~ A cutting board for the chicken that can be cleaned really well with boiling water, or put in the dishwasher

Ingredients:

- 3-4 skinless chicken breasts, cut up into bite-sized pieces
- 5-6 mushrooms, sliced
- 1/2 an Onion (I added the onions, and just use onions if I forget to buy mushrooms)
- some Flour
- 2 tablespoons of Olive Oil
- 6 cloves of Garlic
- 1/4 or more of Balsamic Vinegar
- 3/4 cup of Chicken Stock
- 1 Bay leaf
- 1/2 teaspoon of minced fresh thyme or 1/4 teaspoon dry

How to Make It:

- ~ Clean the fat off the chicken and take off the skin if there is any. Cut the breast into strips and then crosswise to create bite-sized pieces. Put them in a bowl. Salt & pepper the chicken
- ~ Add enough flour to lightly coat all of the chicken pieces. That is, dredge the chicken with the flour.
- ~ Clean and slice the mushrooms. Slice the onion into , long thin strips.
- ~ Heat the olive oil in the frying pan. I sauté the onions until they are brown, then add the chicken pieces until the brown. The chicken always sticks to the pan. Try to minimize the sticking, but don't obsess about it.
- ~ When the chicken pieces look brownish, add a bit more oil and sauté the mushrooms in the pan with the chicken and onions.
- ~ Mix 3/4 cup of Chicken Broth with 1/4 cup of Balsamic Vinegar and pour over the chicken so that the pieces are now swimming in the balsamic broth. The idea here is to create a kind of semi-thick sauce by adding the liquid to the cooked flour that coats the chicken, as well as whatever flour got stuck to the bottom of the pan. It won't be super thick, but you don't want to be too runny either.
- ~ Cook for about 10 minutes.
- ~ Oh, by the way, you should have steamed the potatoes by now.

Presentation:

~ This dish works well in a bowl, or on a plate. I put out the potatoes first and then spoon the chicken, mushrooms and sauce on top of the potatoes.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Chicken B'stila

This is a special dish for a special occasion. Go out and buy the ingredients and give yourself time to fix it. Better yet, make it for yourself first to make sure you know how, and enjoy.

How long does it take to make? I'd give yourself about two hours.

Serves: 6-8

What Tools Do I Need?

- ~ A big cutting board or work surface
- ~ A big (circular, if possible) baking tray
- ~ A big frying pan
- ~ A pastry brush

Ingredients

Filling:

- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- 1 onion finely chopped
- 3 chicken breasts
- 1/4 cup minced fresh parsley
- 2 tablespoons minced cilantro
- 1/4 teaspoon ground tumeric
- 8 threads Spanish saffron, toasted and crushed
- 1 cup water
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- 1 /14 teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 3 eggs, lightly beaten
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 teaspoon pepper
- 2/3 cup powdered sugar

Almond mixture:

1/2 cup whole blanched almonds

1/2 cup powdered sugar

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

12 sheets phyllo dough, thawed (make sure they are thawed, or you are screwed)

1 cup (2 sticks) butter, melted

Ground cinnamon and powdered sugar for garnish

How to Make It.

The Filling (fancy scrambled eggs):

~ Add the oil to the pan and brown the chopped onion. When the chicken is brown, add the chicken, parsley, cilantro, turmeric, saffron, water, ginger and cinnamon. Cover for 20 minutes and cook over moderate heat until the chicken is cooked. When done, use a slotted spoon to transfer the chicken to a bowl.

~ Shred the chicken when it is cool enough to handle.

~ Continue to cook the sauce and add to the beaten eggs, salt and pepper and sugar. Continue to stir the eggs and then add the chicken to the egg mixture.

Making the Almond mixture:

~ Coarsely grind the almonds in a blender or food processor.

~ Mix the almonds with the powdered sugar and the cinnamon.

Putting it all together:

~ Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

~ Remove 12 sheets of phyllo and lay out on the cutting board. Use the baking tray to cut out 12 circles of phyllo. Keep the dough moist with a moist cloth.

~ The almond layer. Paint the baking tray with some butter and lay out three layers of phyllo. Then sprinkle about 2/3 of the almond mixture on top of the first layers of phyllo leaving a 1 1/2 inch border around the edge.

~ The chicken layer. Add another three sheets of phyllo on top of the almond layer, paint with butter and then add the chicken mixture. Cover with three more layers of phyllo and butter.

~ The final almond layer. Add the final 1/3 of the almond mix, cover with 3 more layers of phyllo and butter.

~ Tuck all the top layers of phyllo under the bottom of the b'stila, as though you are tucking sheets under a mattress.

~ Bake the B'stila in the oven for 20 to 25 minutes, until it is golden brown. Use a sieve to shake the powdered sugar over the top of the baked B'stila.

~ Serve immediately. You can also cover the B'stila with plastic wrap and then aluminum foil and store in the freezer for up to two months. Imagine that!

Presentation

The B'Stila is impressive the way it is. Cut, like a pie, at the table. Enjoy.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Chicken Couscous with Raisins, Almonds and Pine Nuts

This is a very tasty recipe that is actually pretty easy to make. Don't be overwhelmed by the number of ingredients.

How long does it take to make? Maybe an hour.

Serves: 4-6

What Tools Do I Need?

~ A big frying pan

~A saucepan (for the couscous)

Ingredients

~ 2 tablespoons of oil

~ 3 pounds of chicken pieces

~ 2 large sliced onions

~ 3 garlic cloves

~ 1 large can of Italian tomatoes

~ 3 red bell peppers

~ 1 bunch cilantro (chop about half)

~ 1 bunch of Italian parsley (chop about half)

~ 1 teaspoon ground ginger

~ 3/4 teaspoon ground cloves

- ~ 1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg
- ~ 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ~ 10 threads Spanish saffron
- ~ 1 teaspoon ground turmeric
- ~ 10 cups water
- ~ 1 cup golden raisins
- ~ 1/4 cup pine nuts, toasted
- ~ Salt & pepper
- ~ 2 tablespoons butter
- ~ 2 cups of couscous
- ~ 1/2 cup whole blanched almonds, toasted

How to Make It.

- ~ As always, start by add oil to the pan and sauté the onions until almost brown. Add the chicken and brown and add the garlic.
- ~ Then, add the tomatoes, peppers, cilantro, parsley, ginger, cloves, nutmeg, cinnamon, saffron, turmeric and 8 cups of water. Cover and simmer until the chicken is tender, about 40 to 45 minutes.
- ~ About 30 minutes in, add the raisins.
- ~ About 35 minutes in, make the couscous.

Presentation

- ~ I like to serve in individual bowl, first putting in a mound of couscous and then pouring the chicken mixture on top.
- ~ Be sure that there is enough liquid to fully moisten the couscous. Otherwise, the couscous will expand in your stomach and . . . well, you don't want that to happen.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Basque Chicken with Olives

How long does it take to make? I don't know. About an hour and half.

Serves: 4-6

What Tools Do I Need?

- ~ A big pot (Hey, who has our big black pot, with the handle and lid? I need it to make this dish.)

~ Something that will enable you to get a whole hot chicken out of a pot that is spitting hot oil.

Ingredients

- ~ 1 broiler chicken
- ~ 1/4 pound of mushrooms, sliced
- ~ 1 onion, chopped
- ~ 1 green onion, cut in strips
- ~ 1/2 cup of pimiento-stuffed olives (or, some green olives)
- ~ 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- ~ 2, 8 oz. cans of tomato sauce or crushed tomatoes
- ~ 1/2 cup of dry white wine
- ~ parsley
- ~ salt & pepper

How to Make It

- ~ Clean and dry the chicken and sprinkle with salt
- ~ Heat the oil in the pot and put the chicken in the pot. You want to “brown” the chicken on top and bottom and sides. So, let it brown on one area, then skooch it around so that it browns on another side, etc. Then, take the chicken out and set it aside on a platter.
- ~ Brown the onions and then the mushrooms in the pan. Add some oil if necessary. When the onions are brown, add the chopped tomatoes, white wine, some parsley and return the chicken to the pot. Simmer over low heat for about an hour.
- ~ Add the olives about 45 minutes in.
- ~ Meanwhile, sauté the green pepper slices. Stir the peppers into the sauce.
- ~ Bam! You done.

Presentation

- ~ Serve over brown rice

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Beena's Wafuu Curry:

Beena is a friend of Steve and Sarah's. This is Chef Sarah's interpretation and is apparently a combination of a number of recipes found on the web.

How long does it take to make: I don't know. BEEENA???

Serves: Probably 2-4 (Sarah? Beena?)

What tools will you need?

~ A large Dutch oven (a heavy metal or pottery pot with a lid).

Ingredients

~

Wafuu chicken curry (from the Web, combination of several recipes)

~ 1 ½ lbs. boneless skinless chicken thighs or legs.

~ Salt, pepper

~ 2 tablespoons Vegetable oil

~ 1 onion, ½ of it chopped fine, the other half cut into 1-inch pieces

~ 6 cloves garlic, minced

~ Ginger

~ 2 tablespoons. Butter

~ 4 tablespoons. Flour

~ 3 tablespoons. S&B Oriental Curry Powder (available at Whole Foods)

Or, make the curry powder. Wow! I'm impressed! Approx ½ teaspoon of ground turmeric, fenugreek, cumin, red pepper, black pepper, cinnamon, ginger, star anise, cloves, cardamom, fennel, nutmeg, bay leaves, allspice, garlic powder. Add 1 ½ teaspoons of coriander powder. Grind the spices together to make a fine curry powder. Put it into an airtight tin and store for future use.

~ 1 tbsp. Tomato paste

~ ½ cup white wine

~ 4 cups chicken stock (Imagine organic chicken stock is very good, but Pacific works well too)

~ 3 carrots, chopped into coin shapes

~ 2 sweet potatoes, cut into chunks

~ 1 small sweet apple, grated

~ 2 teaspoons honey

~ 1 teaspoon soy sauce.

How to make it:

~ Heat chicken stock over low heat.

~ Heat up a separate large Dutch oven on the stove. Add oil. Add chicken, salt, pepper. Brown.

~ When there are a few crispy bits at the bottom, remove the chicken. Melt butter in the same pan. Add finely chopped onion, garlic, ginger. Saute for two minutes, or until the onion is soft and translucent.

~ Lower the flame to medium. Sprinkle flour and stir constantly. Cook the roux till all is golden brown. Add curry powder and tomato paste. Stir well. Throw in wine and stir till mixture bubbles and thickens.

~ Put the chicken back in the pot and stir in the hot chicken stock. Put in the onions, carrots, and potatoes. Simmer for an hour over low heat, until the chicken is tender and the curry is cooked.

~ Grate apple. Add honey and soy sauce and stir into curry. Cook for another 5 to 10 minutes. Serve with rice and salad.

Presentation:

I like to sprinkle a little chopped coriander over the top before serving.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

FISH DISHES

Salmon in Soy Ginger

This is my default salmon recipe. It's easy and delicious. I don't actually measure the ingredients, so the amounts listed below are bogus. Make enough marinade to coat the bottom of the fish.

How long does it take to make? Marinate the fish for 30 minutes to an hour. Cooking time is about 15 minutes.

Serves: Figure 1/3 to 1/2 a pound of fish for each person.

What Tools Do I Need?

- ~ Something in which to marinate the fish.
- ~ A broiling pan that will catch the drippings
- ~ A spatula

Ingredients

- ~ Salmon
- ~ 1 tablespoon Molasses
- ~ 1 tablespoon Soy Sauce
- ~ Ginger (fresh 1/2 inch shredded or powdered 1/2 teaspoon)
- ~ 1 tablespoon of olive oil.

How to Make It.

- ~ Make the marinade by putting the oil in the marinade dish, adding the soy, the molasses and the ginger and mixing.
- ~ Put the salmon, fish side down, skin side up, into the marinade and let it sit for 30 minutes.
- ~ Broil the salmon, fish side up for 14 minutes and 30 seconds, or until the fish is done. (Don't you just love instructions like that - until it is done. How the hell do we know it is done? Pull the fish out and use a couple of forks or knives to pry apart a small section and see what it looks like inside. You don't want to overcook the salmon and dry it out. It is good to take the fish out when the insides still looks a bit raw. The heat of the surrounding fish will continue to cook the insides a bit, even after you take it out of the oven.
- ~ Fish needs to be served quickly, so make sure that everything else you are serving is ready in advance of the salmon.
- ~ Sauce - You might try boiling the marinade in small fry pan to thicken it (and to kill any bad stuff that might be associated with raw fish) and using it as a sauce on top of the fish. Try it. I like it. Judith doesn't.

Presentation

- ~ Work a knife, or spatula, under the fish and see if you can work off the skin without destroying the fish. If necessary, flip the fish over and scrape the skin off. Judith thinks that the brown stuff under the skin is gross and insists on it being removed. Suit yourself.
- ~ I like to serve the salmon with rice, pouring some of the sauce onto the rice.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Curry Coconut Pecan Crusted Tilapia

For a while I made this dish every week and whenever we had quests.

How long does it take to make? Most of the time is involved in chopping the pecans. After that, about 30 minutes.

Serves: 2-3

What Tools Do I Need?

- ~ A glass baking dish large enough to accommodate your fish.
- ~ Cutting board and a good chopping knife.

Ingredients

- ~ 2-3 pieces of Tilapia or other meaty white fish
- ~ 1 cup of pecans, chopped into tiny little pieces (or, put in a coffee grinder. You don't want powder, but really finely chopped pieces)
- ~ 1 tablespoon of curry powder
- ~ 1/2 to 1/4 onion, chopped
- ~ 1 tablespoon of the olive oil
- ~ 1/4 cup of dried, shredded coconut
- ~ 1 egg, separated for the white
- ~ Salt & Pepper

How to Make It.

- ~ Separate the egg white by cracking the egg in two and holding over a bowl. Slip the yoke from one shell to the other so that the egg white drips out into the bowl. Set the yoke aside with the intention of using it for something. You will eventually throw it away.
- ~ Whip the egg white in a shallow bowl until it becomes frothy and sit the tilapia in the froth
- ~ Chop the pecans into tiny smithereens and put them into the baking dish. Chop the onions and mix them with the pecans. Add the coconut and the curry powder. Mix well, then bake at 400 degrees for 8 minutes. Not a second more, or less. When done, let the mix cool a bit.
- ~ Take the fish that have been sitting in the egg whites and lay them on the spread-out pecan mixture. Press the fish so the mixture sticks and then flip them over to get the pecans on the other side.
- ~ Cook the fish at 400 degrees for 8 minutes. Not a second more, or less.

Presentation

- ~ Stick them on a plate with the other food.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Salmon and Rice Wrapped in Pastry Dill Sauce

This has become our traditional Christmas dinner. It can be frozen and saved for a couple of days, so it works well as left-overs. Found on epicurious.com.

How long does it take to make? 90 minutes

Serve: 8

What Tools Do I Need?

- ~ A big cutting board, or surface for rolling out the puffed pastry.
- ~ A baking dish, and oven

Ingredients?

- ~ 1 cup white rice
- ~ 1 cup wild rice
- ~ 4 tablespoons of butter (1/2 stick)
- ~ 1 cup leeks
- ~ 12 ounces of fresh shitake mushrooms, stemmed and chopped
- ~ 2 packages of puff pastry, thawed (very important - thawed but still cool)
- ~ 8 fillets of salmon, each 1/4 to 1/3 of a pound.
- ~ 2 eggs beaten with 2 tablespoons of water
- ~ 1 1/3 cups of bottled clam juice (two bottles)
- ~ 1/2 cup of dry white wine
- ~ 2 and 1/2 cups of crème fraiche or whipping cream
- ~ 6 tablespoons of minced fresh dill

How to Make It.

The rice:

- ~ Cook the white rice and wild rice separately. The wild rice takes longer. When done, mix in a bowl and add salt and pepper to taste.
- ~ Melt butter in a skillet. Add the chopped leek, sauté until soft. Add the mushrooms. Add some salt and cook to release the juices. Continue sautéing until the liquid evaporates. Mix the mushrooms and leeks into the rice and set aside to cool.

The pastry, fish and rice production line:

- ~ Sprinkle some flour on the cutting board and lay out one piece of puff pastry. With a sharp knife, divide the piece into two equal squares. Set one square to the side.
- ~ Sprinkle the remaining square with some flour and roll it out to about double it's original size. Divide into four equal squares (or rectangles) large enough to wrap around the fish.)
- ~ Here's where the production-line kick's in, because you repeat the process with each piece of fish. Lay one slab of fish on one square of puff pastry, add 1/8th of the rice mixture and salt and pepper to taste. Pull up the sides of the puff pastry and pinch the ends together. Then, turn the fish and pastry upside-down onto another piece of rolled-out puff pastry. Fold up the second piece of pastry so that it totally seals the fish and rice in a nice, neat wrap.
- ~ Place the fish on the buttered baking pan and repeat the process for each piece of fish, rolling out two fresh pieces of pastry for each piece of fish. The fish can be chilled and saved for up to 8 hours - in the frig.
- ~ Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Brush the top of the pastry with the egg mixture and bake for about 30 minutes, until golden brown. If you have a food thermometer, the fish should register 145 degrees when done.

The dill sauce:

~ Combine the clam sauce and wine in a heavy saucepan. Boil until reduced to 2/3 cup (10 minutes). Reduce the heat and whisk in the crème fraîche. Boil until reduced to 2 cups (5 minutes). Remove from the heat, add the dill and some salt and pepper.

~ I am never very successful at getting the sauce to thicken. Maybe I'm too concerned about having enough that I don't reduce it as much as I should. But the sauce is really tasty and there should be lots of it. You might even make more than the recipe calls for, just to be on the safe side.

Presentation:

~ Lay the lovely browned pastry on a plate and dribble the dill sauce over the top. We serve with baked root vegetables.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Salmon With Fennel and Pernod

This is a newly found recipe, but it is becoming a favorite.

How long does it take to make? 45 minutes - mostly the chopping of the shallots and slicing the fennel bulbs.

Serves: 2

What Tools Do You Need?

~ A skillet

Ingredients

~ 1 1/2 teaspoons of fennel seeds, crushed (I have never been able to crush a fennel seed.)

~ 1/8 cup (1/4 stick) butter, & olive oil.

~ 2 tablespoons minced shallots

~ 1 large fennel bulb with fronds, quartered then cut in thin strips

~ 2 tablespoons of fennel fronds, chopped

~ 2 - 6 ounce salmon fillets

~ 2 tablespoons of Pernod, or other anise-flavored liqueur

How to Make It.

~ Stir fennel seeds in a large skillet until they become fragrant (5 minutes); transfer to a bowl and add the butter, shallots and 1 tablespoon of fennel fronds plus salt & pepper to create a butter mixture.

~ Prepare the fennel. Cut off the stalks, then cut each bulb into quarters. Make a diagonal cut to remove the core from each of the quarters. Turn the quarters on their sides and, using monster fingers, cut thin slices.

~ Melt 1 tablespoon of the butter mixture into the skillet over moderate heat and add the sliced fennel bulb and 1/4 cup of water. Mix, then cover and cook until the fennel is “crisp-tender” (8 minutes). Uncover and continue to sauté the fennel until brown. Transfer fennel to a bowl.

~ Sprinkle salmon with salt & pepper. Add 1 tablespoon butter mixture to the skillet and melt. Add the salmon. Cover and cook for 5 minutes. Flip the salmon and add a bit of water to the skillet. Cover and continue until the salmon is opaque in the center (5 minutes).

~ Slide the salmon to the side of the skillet and return the fennel to the skillet. Add the Pernod, another 2 tablespoons of the butter mixture and 1 tablespoon of the chopped fennel fronds. Stir and heat through.

Presentation:

~ Divide the fennel and on each of the plates. Put the salmon on top of the fennel, and spoon the remaining butter mixture over the salmon.

~ We served this with roasted fingerling potatoes and asparagus.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

PASTA DISHES

Nona's Sauce (aka Romano Tomato Sauce)

This is the basic staple of all Romano family dishes. The secret is to a) brown the onions, duh!, and b) cook the sauce for a really long time.

How long does it take: All day.

Serves: Entire families.

What Tools Will Your Need?

~ A big pot

~ A special tomato sauce squisher contraption that only Italian families have, or even know about.

Ingredients

~ 2 tablespoons of olive oil

~ 2 large cans of Italian tomatoes

~ 2 small cans of tomato paste

- ~ 4-6 cloves of garlic.
- ~ 1-2 large onions, sliced
- ~ 1 teaspoon oregano
- ~ 1 teaspoon basil
- ~ 2 cups or more of water

How to make it.

- ~ Put the olive oil in the pot, add the onions and cook slowly until they are dark brown - almost burned. Throw in the garlic, oregano and basil.
- ~ While the onions are cooking, cut the tops off the cans of tomato paste and tomatoes. Add the two cans of paste to the onions and cook for a few minutes.
- ~ Wash your hands really well. Pour the liquid from the canned tomatoes into the pot and stir. *Then stick your hands into the cans and squish the tomatoes.* Be careful not to cut your hand on the little sharp piece that is always left when you remove the lid. Add the squished tomatoes to the mixture in the pot.
- ~ Add two cups of water, bring the mixture to a boil, then reduce the heat and cook for the rest of the day. Stir the sauce occasionally so that it doesn't stick, and add water if it is cooking down too much. The idea is to keep adding water and cooking down the tomatoes so that the sauce becomes really thick and rich.
- ~ After 8 - 16 hours of cooking down the sauce, Get your tomato squishing mechanism and run the sauce through it so that the seeds and skins, etc. are removed and all that is left is a rich, thick, lava-like sauce. Return to the pot and reheat when you want to serve.

Presentation:

- ~ Take just about anything other than desert and put sauce on it. Bad-bing. Bada-boom. Italian cooking southern style.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

Patterson's Pasta Primavera Pesto Pot Pouri

How long does it take to make? 30 minutes

Serves: 2-4

What Tools Do You Need?

- ~ A pasta cooker
- ~ A skillet

Ingredients

- ~ Olive Oil

- ~ Garlic, smushed
- ~ Onion, chopped
- ~ Pasta - I like fusili spirals for this dish
- ~ Pesto (either basil pesto, or artichoke pesto)
- ~ Whatever vegetables are handy (frozen peas, chard, zucchini, yellow squash, mushrooms, peppers, asparagus).
- ~ Hard grating cheese, like Romano or Pecorino

How to make it

- ~ Chop whatever vegetables need to be chopped.
- ~ Get your pasta water boiling. Add a dollop of olive oil and some salt to the water.
- ~ Add the oil to the skillet and cook over medium heat until brown, add the peppers. Throw in the garlic.
- ~ Then saute the rest of the vegetables, starting with stuff that will take longer to soften, like carrots. You can either throw the chard and other greens into the saute at the very end, or even wait until the pasta is done and let the heat of the pasta cook the greens (al dente).
- ~ Cook the pasta according to the instructions on the package (usually around 11 minutes). Drain the pasta and add to a serving bowl. Add the vegetables and fold in the pesto so that it coats the pasta and vegetables. (Throw in the chopped chard if you haven't sauteed it in advance).

Presentation.

- ~ Serve in bowls with grated Romano cheese on top.

[\(Return to Table of Contents\)](#)

The End
