

SOUL FOOD RECIPES

compiled by Jim Embry of Sustainable Communities Network 2/6/13

Kale with Red Bell Pepper

Yield: 2-3 servings

This dish is a favorite of Byron Hurt, director of [Soul Food Junkies](#). His mother, Frances Hurt, has been serving this up for years. Follow her tip for cleaning the kale and you'll never crunch into a bit of soil or sand again.

Ingredients

- 1 large bunch kale
- 1 small red pepper cut in strips
- 1 small onion slice
- 2 small cloves garlic, chopped
- 1 tablespoon brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon salt or to taste
- 2 tablespoons plus ½ teaspoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes or to taste
- 1 can of low sodium chicken broth
- 2 to 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar

Preparation

Remove stems from the kale and remove any yellow or brown spots. Place the kale in the kitchen sink, filled with cold water, and sprinkle with salt (salt helps to remove the dirt and grit). Wash, remove from sink, and replace the old water with new water. Repeat 3 times.

Heat 2 teaspoons olive oil in a large pot on medium heat, just until hot. Sauté kale 10 to 15 minutes until olive oil and moisture from greens is mostly absorbed. Add brown sugar, salt, red pepper flakes, and just enough chicken broth to cover greens. Cook for about 20 minutes, add the vinegar, and cook until tender. Add chicken broth when needed.

While this is cooking, sauté the pepper, garlic, and onions in ½ teaspoon of olive oil. Add the red pepper strips, garlic, and onion, and continue to cook on low heat until all of the ingredients are just tender. Drain most of liquid from kale, and toss with pepper mixture.

Spicy Roasted Sweet Potatoes

Carol Anne White, of Plantation, Florida, is the winner of our Healthy Soul Food Recipe contest. Her delectable, healthy recipe for spicy roasted sweet potatoes now graces its very own recipe card in this Healthy Soul Food feature! Here she is:

Candied sweet potatoes is a family recipe that I needed to make healthier. I took away the sugar and butter that made up the heavy syrup and substituted with agave nectar and olive oil. When you roast the sweet potatoes in the oven lightly coated with olive oil and agave nectar with a little chili powder, you will get caramelized potatoes with a little hit of spice. You can also add fresh herbs that will take it to another level.

Ingredients

- 2 ½ pounds sweet potatoes peeled and cut into chunks
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons agave nectar (may substitute pure maple syrup)
- 1 tablespoon of fresh-squeezed lime juice
- 4 cloves garlic (minced)
- 1 tablespoon fresh grated ginger
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon chili powder
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- ½ teaspoon allspice
- ½ cup fresh scallions (chopped for garnish)

Preparation

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Spray cooking spray lightly on a large foil-lined baking sheet.
2. In a large bowl, combine olive oil, agave nectar, lime juice, garlic, fresh ginger and spices. Then add sweet potatoes; toss and coat well.
3. Place seasoned sweet potatoes onto a baking pan and spread them out into a single layer, so they can roast evenly.
4. Roast sweet potatoes in oven, stirring occasionally, for about 40 - 45 minutes or until they are golden brown, tender, and caramelized. Remove from oven and season with a little salt and pepper to taste, if desired. Then place in serving dish, garnish with fresh scallions.

Citrus Collards with Raisins Redux

Note: Adapted from Bryant Terry in Vegan Soul Kitchen

Yield: 4 servings

Author and chef Bryant Terry says this recipe was the seed of his book *Vegan Soul Kitchen*. “(The recipe) is a brand-new classic, if you will,” says Terry. Its delightful combination of sweet and savory will have you coming back for seconds — or more!

Ingredients

- Coarse sea salt
- 2 large bunches collard greens, ribs removed, cut into a chiffonade (see below), rinsed and drained
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup raisins
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup freshly squeezed orange juice

Preparation

In a large pot over high heat, bring 3 quarts of water to a boil and add 1 tablespoon salt. Add the collards and cook, uncovered, for 8 to 10 minutes, until softened. Meanwhile, prepare a large bowl of ice water to cool the collards.

Remove the collards from the heat, drain, and plunge them into the bowl of cold water to stop cooking and set the color of the greens. Drain by gently pressing the greens against a colander.

In a medium-size sauté pan, combine the olive oil and the garlic and raise the heat to medium. Sauté for 1 minute. Add the collards, raisins, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt. Sauté for 3 minutes, stirring frequently.

Add orange juice and cook for an additional 15 seconds. Do not overcook (collards should be bright green). Season with additional salt to taste if needed and serve immediately. (This also makes a tasty filling for quesadillas.)

Chiffonade

The chiffonade cut is used to produce very fine threads of leafy fresh herbs as well as greens and other leafy vegetables. First, remove any tough stems that would prevent the leaf from being rolled tightly (reserve them for stocks or salads). Next, stack several leaves, roll them widthwise into a tight cylinder, and slice crosswise with a sharp knife, cutting the leaves into thin strips.

Black-Eyed Pea Fritters with Hot Pepper Sauce

Yield: 4 servings

While bean fritters are thought to have their origin in Nigeria, one can find them throughout West Africa. Inspired by the Black-Eyed Pea Fritters served at the Gambian-

Cameroonian restaurant Bennachin, in New Orleans, chef and author Bryant Terry whipped up this dish.

Ingredients

- 1 cup dried black-eyed peas, sorted, soaked overnight, drained, and rinsed
- ½ medium onion, diced
- ½ cup raw peanuts
- 1 teaspoon minced thyme
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne
- 1 tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup plus 2 tablespoons water
- 1 teaspoon coarse sea salt
- ½ cup finely chopped green bell pepper
- 1 tablespoon cornmeal
- 5 cups coconut oil (see note in Healthy + tab)
- [Hot pepper sauce](#) (see below)

Preparation

Remove the skins from the beans by adding them to a large bowl, filling the bowl with water, agitating the beans, and fishing out the skins that float to the top with a fine mesh strainer. Rinse beans well.

In a food processor fitted with a metal blade, combine the beans, onion, peanuts, thyme, cayenne, vinegar, water, and salt and pulse until completely smooth. Transfer to a medium bowl, cover, and refrigerate for 1 hour.

Preheat the oven to 200°F. Remove the batter from the refrigerator, add the bell pepper and cornmeal, and beat with a wooden spoon for 2 minutes.

In a medium-size saucepan over high heat, warm the coconut oil until hot but not smoking, about 5 minutes. Lower the oil to medium high, and in batches of 5, spoon the batter into the oil, 1 tablespoon at a time. Fry, stirring around, until golden brown, about 2 minutes. If necessary, adjust the temperature to ensure that the fritters do not cook too quickly.

Transfer the fritters to a paper towel-lined plate and allow them to drain. Transfer the drained fritters to a baking sheet and place in the oven to keep warm.

Serve hot with Hot Pepper Sauce (below).

Hot Pepper Sauce

Bryant Terry writes: “This is my attempt to replicate the oh-so-slammin’ hot sauce at the Senegalese restaurant Joloff, my favorite eatery in New York City. This version is only slightly hot, but if you really want that fire add one more habanero chile.”

- ¼ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small red onion, diced
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- ⅛ teaspoon cayenne
- Coarse sea salt
- 1 large clove garlic, minced
- 1 habanero chile, minced
- ¼ cup tomato paste
- ¼ cup tomato sauce
- 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ teaspoon freshly ground white pepper

In a saucepan over low heat, warm the oil. Add the onion, cumin, cayenne, and 1/2 teaspoon salt and sauté until the onions start to caramelize, about 8 minutes.

Stir in the garlic and chile and sauté for 2 minutes more. Add the tomato paste, tomato sauce, vinegar, and water. Mix well, and simmer until it starts to thicken, about 5 to 7 minutes.

Transfer all the ingredients to an upright blender, add the white pepper, and puree until smooth. Season with additional salt to taste. Store in a tightly sealed jar in the refrigerator.

Light Seafood Gumbo Recipe

This delicious, low calorie Seafood Gumbo is an African influence to Louisiana cuisine, and is incredibly filling, for just 4 Points + per serving. Serve this hearty dish as any low calorie lunch or dinner and enjoy its fresh and fabulous flavors.

Ingredients

- 1/2 lb shrimp, peeled and de-veined
- 1/2 lb lump crabmeat
- 1/2 lb okra, thinly sliced
- 1 cup chopped tomatoes
- 1 large yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 2 large celery stalks, chopped
- 1 large green pepper, seeded and chopped
- 3 cups fat free vegetable broth
- 3 bay leaves
- 4 garlic cloves, mined

- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice
- 2 tbsp whole wheat flour
- 2 tbsp light butter
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp white pepper
- 1 tsp fresh thyme, finely chopped
- 1/2 tsp cayenne pepper

Instructions

1. Spray a large, non-stick skillet with with non-fat cooking spray and set over medium-high heat. Add in garlic okra, bell pepper, onions, and celery. Cook until veggies are tender, about 5-7 minutes. Transfer to a bowl and set aside.
2. Make the roux by adding the butter to the skillet, and then add in the flour; stir until blended. Continue to cook, stirring constantly until the flour is well browned, but not burned, about 8-10 minutes.
3. Slowly drizzle in the broth into the skillet, continuously stirring to remove lumps, and bring to a slow simmer. Add in the thyme, bay leaves, salt, pepper, lemon juice, and tomatoes.
4. Add the cooked vegetables back into the skillet and simmer for about 5 minutes.
5. Stir in the shrimp and crabmeat and simmer until shrimp are cooked, about 3-5 minutes.

Preparation time: 10 minute(s)

Cooking time: 30 minute(s)

Diet type: Pescatarian

Diet tags: Low calorie, Reduced fat, Reduced carbohydrate, High protein

Number of servings (yield): 4

Culinary tradition: USA (Southern)

Smoked Paprika Chicken

Yield: 4 servings

This crowd-pleaser is quick, easy, economical, and finger-licking good. Just be sure to prep the brine 24 hours before roasting the chicken. Chef Jacquie Steiner recommends using good-quality smoked Spanish paprika if possible. It makes a real difference in the results.

Ingredients

- 1 chicken (approximately 3 pounds) butterflied (take out the back bone and flatten, or buy it pre-butterflied)
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt
- ½ to 1 teaspoon hot smoked Spanish paprika
- 2 teaspoons extra virgin olive oil
- 6 whole garlic cloves, peeled

Preparation

24 hours before roasting your chicken, dry chicken with paper towels. Mix salt and smoked paprika together in a bowl. Rub salt-and-paprika mixture all over chicken and under skin to coat the meat. Place on a tray or dish and refrigerate uncovered. This will make the skin of the chicken crispy, and the salt acts as a dry brine so your chicken is moist as well.

Preheat oven to 450°F (convection roast if you have this option on your oven. It is best!). Take chicken out of fridge for 30 minutes to bring to room temperature. Throw the garlic cloves in the roasting pan. (Tip: Use a pan that best fits the chicken snugly. Don't use too large of a pan.) Place chicken skin side up in roasting pan on top of the garlic.

Coat chicken with a little olive oil. Cover roasting pan with foil. Roast for 20 minutes, covered. Take foil off chicken and roast for 20 more minutes until skin is nice and crispy and meat thermometer reads 175°F. Let chicken rest for 10 to 15 minutes before serving. Great on its own, but if you've had a favorite (healthy!) dipping sauce you've been hankering to try, this flavorful chicken can be an excellent complement to it.

Greens and Roasted Sweet Potato Soup

1 large sweet potato, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 1/2 teaspoon salt
 Freshly ground pepper
 1 bunch mustard greens (leafy parts only), leaves halved vertically, cut across into 1/2-inch strips
 1 small onion, thinly sliced
 4 cloves garlic, peeled, minced
 1 teaspoon mustard seeds
 4 cups vegetable broth, plus 1 cup water
 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
 soy sauce, salt and pepper to taste

Heat oven to 425 degrees. Spread the sweet potato pieces on a parchment-lined cookie sheet. Sprinkle with 2 teaspoons olive oil, salt and pepper, tossing to mix. Bake, stirring every 15 minutes, until the outsides are light golden brown, about 30-35 minutes. Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a thick-bottomed soup pot over medium high heat. Toss in the onion, garlic and mustard seeds. Cook, stirring, until the onion wilt and

become tender. Toss in the remaining 1 teaspoon of oil, mustard greens and 1/2 teaspoon soy sauce. Cook, stirring, five minutes more. Add the soup stock. Heat to a boil; lower heat to a simmer. Cook until flavors come together, about 10-15 minutes. Remove sweet potatoes from the oven, reserving 1/2 cup. Add the remaining sweet potatoes to the pot. Puree the reserved yams with one cup water in a blender until smooth. Add pureed mixture to the pot. Season with vinegar, salt, pepper and soy sauce to taste. Cook five to ten minutes more or until the mustard greens reach the degree of tenderness you prefer. Serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.

Corn Pudding and Roasted Shrimp

Yield: 2 servings

Mouth-wateringly delicious, healthy, and simple. Just what we all need these days! Use sweet corn at its peak for the ultimate flavor.

Ingredients

- 6 ears of corn, husked (sweet corn is best, but not necessary)
- Pinch of salt (to taste)
- Pinch of cayenne pepper (to taste)
- Squeeze of lime
- Roasted shrimp (see below)

Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°F. Grate corn over a bowl. (It will look almost pureed.) Pour the corn into a casserole dish or round soufflé bowl. Bake 20 to 30 minutes, until the edges and top are golden and it has thickened. (While it's cooking, you can season the shrimp. See below.) Remove corn from oven and turn oven up to 500 degrees in preparation for roasting the shrimp. (As soon as oven preheats, put seasoned shrimp in oven, as instructed below. This way it will all be done at one time.) Season corn to taste with salt, cayenne pepper, and a squeeze of lime juice. Gently stir to combine corn and seasonings. Spoon corn pudding into a bowl and place the roasted shrimp on top. Garnish with cilantro, chives, or green onion.

Roasted Shrimp

- ½ pound of shrimp, cleaned and deveined
- Extra virgin olive oil
- Salt to taste
- Pepper to taste
- Dash of smoked paprika (optional)

- Cilantro, chives, or green onion for garnish

Preheat oven to 500°F. Place shrimp on a baking sheet. Coat shrimp with some extra virgin olive oil (just a light coating). Sprinkle with salt, pepper, and paprika. Toss with rubber spatula to evenly coat the shrimp. Bake for 5 to 7 minutes, just until cooked through and pink. Don't overcook!

Succotash Soup with Garlicky Cornbread Croutons

Yield: 4-6 servings

Succotash, a Native American dish consisting primarily of lima beans and corn, has been reinterpreted by Southern African Americans with a number of bean, vegetable, and meat combinations. Here chef and author Bryant Terry remixes the simplest version of this dish by making a tasty pureed soup. He says that while you can get away with using frozen lima beans for this dish, using fresh corn-off-the-cob is essential. Enjoy it during the summer months when corn is at its freshest.

Ingredients

- 2 cups fresh baby lima beans, rinsed (use frozen if fresh are unavailable)
- 10 cups cold water
- Coarse sea salt
- 4 large ears yellow corn, shucked, kernels scraped, cobs reserved
- ¼ cup plus ½ teaspoon extra virgin olive oil
- 1 large onion, diced
- ¼ cup finely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- White pepper
- [Garlicky Cornbread Croutons](#) (see below)

Preparation

In a medium-size saucepan, combine the beans with the water. Bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium, partially cover, and simmer for about 10 minutes, or until the beans are slightly tender. Add 1 teaspoon salt and simmer for 5 more minutes. Drain the cooking liquid into a bowl, set the beans aside, and add the liquid back to the saucepan.

To make a broth, cut the corncobs into thirds, add them to the bean liquid, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to medium-low, partially cover, and simmer for 30 minutes. Remove from heat. With a slotted spoon, remove the corncobs from the liquid to a compost pail.

While the broth is simmering: In a medium-size sauté pan over medium-low heat, combine the olive oil, ¼ teaspoon salt, and the onions, and sweat for 15 minutes, until the onions are softened. Set aside ⅓ cup of corn kernels and add the rest to the onions. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until the corn is tender.

Transfer the corn-onion mixture to the broth. Add the cooked beans. Over high heat, bring to a boil, immediately reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer for 5 more minutes, until the corn is done.

Remove from heat, stir in 2 tablespoons of the parsley, and puree in small batches in an upright blender. Strain through a medium-mesh strainer to remove tough corn skins. Season with salt and pepper to taste and set aside.

Preheat broiler. In a small bowl, toss the reserved corn kernels with ½ teaspoon of olive oil. Transfer kernels to a 9-inch pie pan or comparable receptacle. Place the corn about 3 inches from the heat and broil until browned, about 3 to 5 minutes, stirring a few times with a spoon.

If necessary, warm up the soup, then ladle it into bowls, sprinkle roasted corn kernels and Garlicky Cornbread Croutons (see below) on top, and garnish with the remaining parsley.

Garlicky Cornbread Croutons

Bryant Terry writes: "In the spirit of recycling and reusing, I take leftover cornbread and make crunchy croutons that I add to soups and salads."

- 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- 2 large leftover pieces of your favorite cornbread cut into ½-inch cubes

Preheat the oven to 350°F. In a medium-size sauté pan, combine the olive oil and the garlic. Turn the heat to medium-low and sauté for 3 to 5 minutes, until fragrant and golden. Remove from heat and set aside. In a large bowl, gently toss together the cornbread and the garlic oil. Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet and bake, shaking the pan a few times, until the croutons are golden brown, about 15 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Greens and Roasted Sweet Potato Soup

1 large sweet potato, peeled, cut into 1/2-inch cubes
2 tablespoons olive oil
1/2 teaspoon salt
Freshly ground pepper
1 bunch mustard greens (leafy parts only), leaves halved vertically, cut across into 1/2-inch strips
1 small onion, thinly sliced
4 cloves garlic, peeled, minced
1 teaspoon mustard seeds

4 cups vegetable broth, plus 1 cup water
1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
soy sauce, salt and pepper to taste

Heat oven to 425 degrees. Spread the sweet potato pieces on a parchment-lined cookie sheet. Sprinkle with 2 teaspoons olive oil, salt and pepper, tossing to mix. Bake, stirring every 15 minutes, until the outsides are light golden brown, about 30-35 minutes. Meanwhile, heat 1 tablespoon of oil in a thick-bottomed soup pot over medium high heat. Toss in the onion, garlic and mustard seeds. Cook, stirring, until the onion wilt and become tender. Toss in the remaining 1 teaspoon of oil, mustard greens and 1/2 teaspoon soy sauce. Cook, stirring, five minutes more. Add the soup stock. Heat to a boil; lower heat to a simmer. Cook until flavors come together, about 10-15 minutes. Remove sweet potatoes from the oven, reserving 1/2 cup. Add the remaining sweet potatoes to the pot. Puree the reserved yams with one cup water in a blender until smooth. Add pureed mixture to the pot. Season with vinegar, salt, pepper and soy sauce to taste. Cook five to ten minutes more or until the mustard greens reach the degree of tenderness you prefer. Serve immediately. Makes 6 servings.

Note: Adapted from Bryant Terry in Vegan Soul Kitchen

Red Velvet Cake

Yields: 8 Servings or 1 dozen cupcakes & 2 mini-loaf pans.

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Baking time: 30 to 35 minutes for cakes; 20 minutes for cupcakes

Ingredients:

- 2 cups cake flour
- 3 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1½ sticks ¾ cups butter
- 1¾ cups sugar
- 4 eggs
- 1 cup milk
- 3 teaspoons red food coloring
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- Buttercream Frosting, below

Directions:

Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Stir the flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt together in a large bowl; set aside. Beat the butter and sugar with a mixer on medium until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time; set aside.

Stir together the milk, food coloring and vanilla in a small bowl. Alternating, fold the red mixture and flour mixture into the egg mixture, ending with the dry ingredients. Transfer to two 9-inch greased and floured pans and/or paper lined muffin tins.

Bake until an inserted toothpick comes out clean, about 30 to 35 minutes for cakes or mini loaves, about 20 minutes for cupcakes.

Cool in pans 5 minutes before turning out onto racks. Cool completely; frost with icing.

Note: Beat together 6 cups powdered sugar, 2 sticks softened butter 4 to 6 tablespoons milk or heavy cream and 2 teaspoons vanilla until light and fluffy.

Adapted from B. Smith "Rituals and Celebrations"

Spinach Salad w/Bacon & Mushrooms

Yields: 4 Servings.

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 6 minutes

Adapted from *A Well-Seasoned Appetite* by Molly O'Neill

Ingredients:

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon coarse salt
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 4 slices bacon, diced
- 1 tablespoon, plus 1 teaspoon each: coarse mustard, apple cider vinegar
- 1 pound spinach, stemmed, torn
- 2 large portobello mushrooms, stemmed, cut in slices, oven dried, see note

Directions:

Heat the oven to 200 degrees. Cook the bacon in a skillet over medium heat until brown and crisp, about 6 minutes. Remove from skillet; drain on a paper towel. Measure out 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons of bacon fat; transfer to a small bowl.

Whisk in the mustard; whisk in the vinegar. Add 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper. Place the spinach leaves in a large bowl; add dressing. Toss to coat. Season with additional salt and pepper if needed. Divide the salad among 4 plates. Top with dried mushrooms and bacon.

Note: to dry mushroom, brush the mushroom slices with oil; spread on a baking sheet in a single layer. Sprinkle with 1/4 teaspoon salt and pepper. Bake until dried, about 1 hour.

Soft-Shell Crabs with Spicy Lime Sauce

Yields: 8 Appetizer Servings
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Marinating Time: 30 minutes
Cooking time: 6 minutes

Ingredients:

- 8 medium soft-shell crabs, cleaned
- 2 cups milk
- ½ cup, each flour, cornmeal
- 1 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper, to taste
- 1½ sticks (¾) cup butter
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 tablespoons freshly chopped parsley
- ½ teaspoon hot pepper sauce, or to taste

Directions:

Arrange the crabs in a large, shallow baking dish; add milk. Marinate 30 minutes. Combine the flour, cornmeal, salt and pepper in a pie plate. Dust the crabs lightly in the mixture. Heat 1 stick of butter and the oil in a large, heavy skillet over medium heat. Add half the crabs. Cook 3 minutes; turn. Transfer to a hot serving platter. Continue with remaining crabs.

Add the remaining 1/2 stick butter, lime juice, parsley and hot sauce to the skillet over medium-high heat. Cook, stirring, until the butter sizzles. Pour over the crabs.

Oven-Fried Chicken

Yields: 6 Servings.
Preparation time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 1 hour

Adapted from *The New Ebony Cookbook* by Charlotte Lyons

Ingredients:

- 1 chicken (broiler/fryer) about 3 pounds, trimmed, see note
- 1/2 teaspoon each: salt, garlic powder
- 1/2 cup flour
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- 2 tablespoons reduced-calorie margarine or butter, melted

Directions:

Heat oven to 425 degrees. Season the chicken with salt, pepper and garlic powder. Combine flour and paprika in medium bowl. Coat seasoned chicken parts with flour mixture. Place chicken (skin side down) in 13-by-9-by-2-inch oil-sprayed baking pan. Drizzle melted margarine or butter over chicken. Bake 30 minutes; turn chicken. Bake until thickest pieces are done and juices run clear when pierced by a fork, about 30 minutes longer.

Note: Skin may be removed from chicken before preparing, if desired

Benne-Coated Asparagus

Yields: 8 Servings.

Preparation time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 6 minutes

Adapted from *Tupelo Honey Cafe* by Elizabeth Sims with Chef Brian Sonoskus

Ingredients:

- 3 pounds asparagus, trimmed
- 2 tablespoons sesame oil
- 2 teaspoons sea salt
- 1 tablespoon freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tablespoons sesame seeds

Directions:

Blanch the asparagus in salted boiling water for 2 to 3 minutes, just until tender. Heat the sesame oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add the asparagus, cooking 2 to 3 minutes. Add salt, pepper and sesame seeds.

Strawberry Pie

This recipe is from “The Buster Holmes Restaurant Cookbook” by Buster Holmes

Ingredients

- Juice of 2 lemons
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 2 eggs, separated, whites beaten stiff
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla
- 1 baked 9-inch pie crust
- Whipping Cream

Instructions

- Heat oven to 275 degrees. Place lemon juice in a large bowl; stir condensed milk into lemon juice. Whisk in egg yolks and vanilla. Fold in egg whites and berries. Pour into baked pie shell. Bake until mixture firms, about 15 minutes. Refrigerate at least 4 hours; top with optional whipped cream, before serving.

Crudités with Vinaigrette

Adapted from *Great Food All Day Long* by Maya Angelou

5 small red potatoes

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 pound asparagus, tough ends snapped off 1/2 bunch broccoli, separated into small florets

10 edible-pod peas, strings removed

6 each: small carrots, peeled; green onions, including green tops, chopped

1/2 pound small button mushroom caps

4 to 5 inner leaves from 1 head romaine lettuce

Dressing:

3 tablespoons white wine vinegar

2/3 cup chopped fresh parsley

1 1/2 teaspoons dried tarragon

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/4 teaspoon pepper

1 1/4 cup olive oil

Place the potatoes in a medium saucepan; cover with water. Heat to a boil over medium-high heat. Lower heat to a simmer. Cook until just fork tender, about 20 minutes. Remove the potatoes from water; set aside. Add the asparagus, broccoli, peas, carrots, and green onions to the water. Raise heat to medium high. Cook 6 minutes. Remove vegetables from the pot; rinse in ice water. Set aside to drain. Meanwhile, peel and cut potatoes in half. Transfer to a large bowl with other vegetables. For the dressing, puree 3 tablespoons cold water, vinegar, parsley, tarragon, salt and pepper in a blender until smooth. With the motor running, gradually add the olive oil, increasing the flow as the mixture thickens. Pulse the blender off and on to mix the ingredients well.

Pour 1/4 cup of dressing over the vegetables in the bowl; toss, mixing well.

Arrange vegetables and the raw mushrooms on the lettuce leaves in a basket. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

People's Punch

By Chef Bryant Terry

1 cup freshly squeezed orange juice

1/2 cup pomegranate juice

1/4 cup each: freshly squeezed lemon and lime juice

2 tablespoons agave nectar, see note

1 cup chilled sparkling mineral water

2 orange slices, for garnish

Combine the orange, pomegranate, lemon and lime juice in a small pitcher. Stir in agave nectar. Pour into slender glasses, topping each glass with 1/2 cup sparkling water. Garnish glasses with orange slices. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Note: agave nectar or syrup comes from the sap of a plant native to Mexico. It is used as a substitute for sugar, honey and maple syrup.

Prep Time: 10 minutes

Roast Eggplant, Greens and Okra

Cook Time: 35 minutes: Total Time: 45 minutes: Yield: 12 servings

This healthy dish tastes delicious on its own or used in salads, casseroles, dressings, omelets and frittatas. Store covered in the refrigerator.

Ingredients

Roast Eggplant, Greens and Okra

1 package (16 ounces) frozen chopped turnip, mustard or collard greens

1 package (20 ounces) frozen okra slices or 1 1/2 pounds fresh, trimmed okra

1 large eggplant, unpeeled, trimmed, cut into 1 1/2-inch chunk

1 large yellow onion, trimmed, cut into thin slices or cut into wedges

1 package (6 to 8 ounces) sliced mushrooms, or to taste

1 can (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes, or 3 large vine-ripened tomatoes, cored, chopped

1/2 teaspoon sea salt

Freshly ground pepper, to taste

Instructions

Heat oven to 425 degrees; cover 2 large baking sheets with foil. Place half the frozen okra and greens on one of the pans; repeat with the second pan.

Top each sheet evenly with eggplant, onion and mushrooms; add tomatoes. Toss with your hands or use a wooden spoon to blend.

Place on top and bottom oven racks. Bake, checking and stirring with a wooden spoon every 15 minutes, until vegetables are tender and beginning to brown, about 35 to 40 minutes.

Remove from oven. Let sit about 15 minutes before adding to recipe or

Black-Eyed Pea Calas (Give Peas A Chance) #2

APPETIZER: FRIED OR BAKED

Prep Time: 35 minutes: Cook Time: 20 minutes: Total Time: 55 minutes

Yield: 33 to 36 pieces

Stir 1/2 teaspoon Thai ground fresh chili paste (Sambal Oelek) or 2 teaspoons prepared horseradish into 1 cup of Greek yogurt for a flavorful calas addition.

Ingredients

1 cup cooked rice

1 cup plus 1 tablespoon prepared black-eyed peas, thawed if frozen, drained, if canned, 1 tablespoon reserved, 1/2 cup lightly pressed with a fork

1 package (8 ounces) prepared roll dough such as Crescent

1 1/2 cups oyster crackers, crushed with a rolling pin to a fine powder, see note

1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon Creole seasoning

Canola or Peanut Oil

Lime wedges, optional, for garnish

Instructions

Combine rice and peas in a medium bowl. Add the Creole seasoning, stirring and pressing the peas with the back of a spoon to mix. Add the dough. Mix with your hands, pressing to combine all with the mixture. Divide into 33 to 36 balls, about 1 1/2 inches in diameter. Place the crushed cracker crumbs on a plate. Roll the balls in the cracker crumbs to lightly coat. Set aside about 10 minutes.

Heat oil in a fryer according to directions or heat about 2 1/2 inches of oil in a Dutch oven or heavy saucepan to 350 to 375 degrees. Add black-eyed pea calas to the oil, careful not to crowd. Cook until calas rise to the top and brown, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a paper towel to drain while frying remaining balls. Add reserved peas to oil at end; fry until they rise to the top.

Serve with lime wedges and yogurt dip, if using.

Note: to make cracker crumbs, place 1 cup of oyster crackers in a food storage bag and press down with your hands to crush. Seal the bag. Use a rolling pin to crush to a fine powder.

Notes

To bake instead of frying. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Place rice balls on parchment-lined baking sheet. Bake until golden, about 12 to 15 minutes. Cool 2 minutes on wire rack before serving, refrigerating for late

Best Fried Green Tomatoes with “Skinny Dip

Best Fried Green Tomatoes with “Skinny Sauce”

Prep Time: 20 minutes; Cook Time: 14 minutes; Total Time: 34 minutes

Yield: about 24 pieces

Very firm green tomatoes make the best choice for frying.

Ingredients

4 large green tomatoes, sliced about 1/4-inch thick

1 1/2 cups each: flour, buttermilk, yellow cornmeal

1 teaspoon Creole or Soul Food Seasoning Blend

Canola oil or peanut oil

Skinny Sauce, recipe follows

Instructions

Heat oil in a large cast iron skillet to 375 degrees. Place flour, cornmeal and milk in 3 shallow containers. Season flour with paprika, salt and pepper. Dredge tomatoes in the seasoned flour; set aside on wax paper 1 minute. Dip floured tomatoes in milk; dip in cornmeal; Add to oil. Cook, turning once until browned on each side, about 2 minutes. Drain on paper towels. Repeat with remaining slices. Serve with Skinny Sauce. For Skinny Sauce: combine 1 1/2 cups 0 percent fat Greek yogurt with 1 teaspoon dry mustard powder and 1/2 teaspoon each: Thai ground fresh chili paste and prepared horseradish. Stir to combine.

Hotel Theresa Salad (Skinny Soul Food)

SKINNY SOUL FOOD: SALAD

Prep Time: 20 minutes; Cook Time: 5 minutes; Total Time: 25 minutes

Yield: 6 appetizer servings

Ingredients

12 pecan halves

1/2 cup nonfat Greek yogurt

1 teaspoon Creole seasoning or Soul Food Seasoning, see note

1 tart, cored apple, chopped, tossed with juice of 1/2 lemon

1/2 cup each: chopped celery, halved grapes

6 slices cooked chicken or turkey, cut into chunks

Romaine lettuce leaves, optional

6 Maraschino cherries, drained halved

Instructions

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Place pecans on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Cook until beginning to toast, about 5 minutes. Remove from heat; set aside. Meanwhile, stir the Greek yogurt, seasoning, apple, grapes and chicken together in a medium bowl. Arrange lettuce pieces on six plates or small salad bowls. Top with apple/chicken mixture. Crumble 2 pecan halves over each salad. Top each salad with one halved cherry.

Note: Creole seasonings and Soul Food Seasoning blends are available in the spice section of supermarkets. Look for Black America Cooks™ and Skillet Diary™ seasoning blends soon.

Skinny Soul Soup

Skinny Soul™ Soup

Prep Time: 20 minutes; Cook Time: 25 minutes; Total Time: 45 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

Tiny meatballs are optional in this flavorful vegetable soup with soulful highlights.

Ingredients

1 bag (16 ounces) shredded cabbage or slaw mix
2 medium onions, chopped
1 green bell pepper, trimmed, seeded, chopped
2 ribs celery, finely chopped
3 cloves garlic, minced
2 1/2 cups tomato juice
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) chicken or vegetable broth
2 tablespoons liquid Maggi Seasoning, optional, see note
2 teaspoons Creole or Soul Food Seasoning
1 bag (14 to 16 ounces) each, frozen: sliced okra, chopped greens
Cooked Skinny Soul™ meatballs, optional
1/2 cup each: sliced mushrooms, cocktail tomatoes

Instructions

Place cabbage, onions, bell pepper, celery and garlic in a large Dutch oven; top with tomato juice and chicken broth, Maggi seasoning, garlic salt, hot sauce and ground pepper to taste. Stir in okra, turnip greens and mushrooms. Add water to top about 1 inch over the mixture. Heat to a boil over medium high heat; lower heat to a simmer. Cook until flavors come together, about 25 minutes. Stir in meatballs, pearl or cocktail tomatoes during the last 10 minutes of cooking.

Note: Maggi Seasoning, is available in the Asian food section or condiment section of most grocery stores

Notes

Creole Seasoning and Soul Food Seasoning are both available in most spice sections of the market. Both bold, distinctive flavors to this soup. Experiment to see which one you prefer. Or, like me, vary which flavoring you add depending on your mood.

MLK Day Pecan Pie

DESSERTS: PIES

Prep Time: 25 minutes; Cook Time: 50 minutes; Total Time: 1 hour, 15 minutes

Yield: 8 servings

Ingredients

1 (9-inch) unbaked pie shell

3 eggs

3/4 cup sugar

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted

1 cup light corn syrup

3 tablespoons flour

1 teaspoon each: vanilla extract, almond extract

1/2 teaspoon salt

3/4 cup each: pecan pieces, pecan halves

Instructions

Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Prick the bottom of an unbaked pie shell several times with a fork; set aside. Beat together the eggs and sugar with a mixer on medium speed, beating until light and fluffy; beat in the butter, beating until creamy. Lower the speed to low; add the corn syrup, beating until combined. Add the extracts and salt. Stir in the chopped nuts, stirring until combined. Stir in the flour, stirring lightly just until combined. Transfer the mixture to the reserved pie shell. Decorate with the pecan halves. Bake until the pie is firm and a tester comes out almost clean, about 50 minutes.

Master Recipe for Skinny Soul

SKINNY SOUL MASTER RECIPE

Prep Time: 15 minutes; Cook Time: 35 minutes; Total Time: 50 minutes

Yield: 8 to 10 Servings

Ingredients

1 frozen package (16 to 20 ounces) turnip or collard greens, okra slices

1 each, trimmed cut into chunks: unpeeled eggplant, yellow onion

1 package (6 to 8 ounces) sliced mushrooms, or to taste

1 can (28 ounces) crushed tomatoes, or 3 large vine-ripened tomatoes, cored, chopped

1 teaspoon Creole or Soul Food Seasoning, see note

Instructions

Heat oven to 425 degrees; cover 2 large baking sheets with foil; lightly oil the foil. Place half the frozen okra and greens on one of the pans; repeat with the second pan. Top each pan evenly with eggplant, onion and mushrooms; add tomatoes. Toss with your hands or use a wooden spoon to mix. Place on top and bottom oven racks. Bake, checking and stirring with a wooden spoon every 15 minutes, until vegetables are tender and beginning to brown, about 25 to 35 minutes. Remove from oven. Let sit about 15 minutes before adding to recipe or refrigerating for later use

Notes

Experiment with different brands of Creole and Soul Food Seasonings

Mobile Creole Spice Blend

1/2 cup coarse salt

3 tablespoons each: sweet paprika, garlic powder, onion powder

2 to 3 tablespoons ground red pepper or to taste

2 tablespoons dried parsley

1 tablespoon each: dried thyme leaves, smoky paprika, freshly ground black pepper

2 teaspoons brown sugar, optional

Stir ingredients together in a medium bowl; transfer to a sealable airtight container for up to 4 months.

Honey Candied Yams

3 small sweet potatoes, peeled, quartered, each quarter cut into 2 pieces

1/2 cup water

1/4 cup honey

1 tablespoon light margarine

1/4 teaspoon each: ground nutmeg, lemon flavor

Combine sweet potatoes, water, honey, margarine, nutmeg and lemon flavoring in a medium saucepan. Heat to a boil over medium high heat; lower heat to a simmer. Cover; cook until sauce becomes syrupy, about 5 to 6 minutes.

Black-Eyed Peas and Rice

On New Year's Day this is part of the "Black-Eyed Peas for Luck, Cabbage for Folding

Money; Greens for Prosperity traditions. On other days of the year, this is simply a delicious featured addition to a meal.”

1 each, finely chopped: celery rib, small green pepper, small onion (or use 1/2 green pepper and onion)
1 pound dried black-eyed peas, rinsed, rehydrated in water, see note for quick or overnight soaking
1 tablespoon sherry vinegar
1 can (14 1/2 ounces) chicken broth
1/2 teaspoon each, or to taste: red pepper flakes, salt
Freshly ground black pepper
Rice, cooked according to package instructions

Add celery, green pepper and onion. Cook, stirring, until softened, about 5 to 6 minutes. Add peas, vinegar, broth, pepper flakes, salt and pepper. Increase heat to medium high; heat to a boil. Lower heat to a simmer. Cook 5 minutes; add 3 1/2 cups water; increase heat to medium high. Heat to a boil; lower heat to a simmer. Cook stirring, occasionally, until peas are tender but not mushy, about 1 hour, 15 minutes. Serve over rice. Makes 10 servings.

Note: I've used both of the following two methods for soaking dried black-eyed peas.

Overnight: Place dried peas in a large bowl; cover with water. Let stand overnight to rehydrate. Drain.

Quick: Heat a large pot of water to a boil; add dried beans. Cook 2 minutes; remove from heat. Let stand 2 hours. Drain. or nuance.

Collard, Mustard and Turnip ‘Soul2Keep’ Greens

©Donna Pierce BlackAmericaCooks.com

If your market doesn't stock bags of greens from Glory Foods in the produce section, you need to insist, says my sister, Carolyn.

The results are definitely old school. But starting with cleaned, prepared greens make me almost feel as if I'm cheating, she says. In Chicago, we buy turkey tails in the smoked meat section of our largest supermarket chain.

Collard, Mustard and Turnip ‘Soul2Keep’ Greens

3 tablespoons olive oil
1 each, trimmed, finely chopped, onion, celery rib, green pepper
6 pounds mixed collard, mustard, turnip greens, cleaned, trn
5 smoked turkey tails
2 dried red hot chile peppers, broken into pieces

2 teaspoons salt
Freshly ground black pepper
4 cups of water

Heat olive oil in a stock pot or very large Dutch oven over medium heat. Add onions, celery and green peppers. Cook, stirring, until vegetables soften, about 5 minutes. Stir; lower heat to medium low. Cover; cook, stirring occasionally, until greens wilt and flavors begin to come together, about 15 minutes.

Stir in dried peppers, salt and black pepper. Lay turkey tails on top of greens; cover. Cook 15 minutes.

Add the water; raise heat to medium-high; heat just to a boil. Lower heat to a simmer. Cook until greens are very tender about 1 hour, 30 minutes. Makes 16 servings.

Note: Smoked turkey tails are available at most supermarket meat departments.

Macaroni and Cheese on Carolyn's table

Yes, this recipe comes with a warning label: “Holidays and Special Occasions Only.” My sister, Carolyn, reserves this decadent version of everyone’s favorite side dish for Thanksgiving day and “day-after” leftovers.

Carolyn’s Once-A-Year Macaroni and Cheese

1 box (16 ounces) elbow macaroni
4 eggs
4 cups milk
2 teaspoons each: salt, freshly ground pepper
4 cups of shredded Mexican- blend cheese
1 1/2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Cook macaroni to al dente, according to package instructions; drain. Set aside.

Whisk together eggs, milk, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. In very large bowl, combine macaroni and Mexican cheese blend, until evenly distributed. Stir in milk mixture until well combined.

Transfer mixture to a buttered 9-by-13-inch baking dish. Top evenly with Cheddar cheese, lightly pushing the cheese down into the macaroni mixture to moisten. Bake until cheese melts and sides and top begin to lightly brown, about 50 minute

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Chicken Salad

In "The Welcome Table" Jessica Harris describes this chutney-flavored dish as a "no-hold- barred chicken salad for those who dare to be unconventional."

Chicken Salad

4 cups minced cooked chicken

1 cup minced celery

1/4 cup each, minced: onion, pecans, cucumber

2 tablespoons mango chutney

1/4 cup mayonnaise

2 teaspoons hot Madras curry powder

Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste

Mix together the chicken, celery, onion, pecans, cucumber in a medium bowl. Set aside.

Mix together the chutney, mayonnaise, curry salt and pepper in a small bowl, stirring until the curry blends in to color the dressing yellow. Stir the mayonnaise into the chicken mixture by tablespoons to the desired consistency. (The salad should not be too wet or too dry—you may not have to use all the mayonnaise mixture.)

Adjust the seasonings; cover with plastic wrap. Refrigerate at least 1 hour. Serve on a bed of lettuce or mounded in a hollowed-out pineapple half. Makes 6 servings.

Farmer's Market Strawberry Nut Salad

This quick and easy salad is a delicious blend of flavors and textures. It's important to sample the strawberries to see if tossing them with "just rinsed" strawberries is necessary.

2 tablespoons sugar, optional

3 cups strawberries, trimmed, halved or

1/4 cup sherry vinegar

1 to 2 teaspoons Dijon-style mustard

1/4 cup extra-virgin olive oil

1 to 2 bunches young spinach cut into bite-size pieces, about 6 cups

1 cup baby arugula leaves optional

1/4 cup toasted pecan halves

Sprinkle sugar over strawberries, if needed; toss. Set aside. Whisk together the vinegar and mustard in the bottom of a large salad bowl; slowly whisk in oil to make a vinaigrette. Add spinach, arugula, if using, strawberries and pecans. Gently toss to coat all ingredients with dressing. Makes 6 servings

Bethune Cookman College Sweet Potato Pie

According to Dr. Dorothy Height, Chair and President Emerita of the National Council of Negro Women, Mrs. Bethune baked and sold these pies to raise funds for Bethune

Cookman College. This recipe, adapted from "Occasions to Savor" by Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, makes three pies.

Bethune Cookman College Sweet Potato Pie

9 medium sweet potatoes, about 4 pounds, boiled, peeled, mashed
2 sticks (1 cup) butter, softened
1/2 cup each: white sugar, packed brown sugar
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon grated nutmeg
2 eggs, beaten
2 cups milk
1 tablespoon vanilla
3 unbaked 9-inch pie shells

Heat the oven to 350 degrees. Combine the butter, sugars, salt and nutmeg in a large bowl; beat with a mixer on medium speed until creamy, Lower the mixer speed to low; beat in the sweet potatoes, beating until well mixed. Spoon the filling into pie shells using about 4 cups per shell. Bake until set, about 50 to 60 minutes. Cool to room temperature before servings. Store in refrigerator. Makes 18 to 24 servings. ategory:

Mama Williams Deviled Eggs

Horseradish, sherry vinegar and butter compliment deviled eggs with sparkle and texture. Secret Ingredients? Not anymore. For a complete picture, click to deviled eggs tips.

12 hard-cooked eggs, peeled
1/4 cup mayonnaise, more to desired consistency
1 tablespoon softened butter
2 teaspoons sherry vinegar
1 teaspoon each: prepared horseradish, mustard powder
1/2 teaspoon each: salt, sugar (optional)
Paprika

Halve eggs lengthwise. Transfer whites to a platter; transfer yolks to a small bowl. Press yolks through a ricer; set aside. Combine mayonnaise, vinegar, horseradish, mustard powder and salt in a small bowl Taste, add sugar if needed. Generously sprinkle paprika over the eggs. Makes 24 pieces.

Mama's Cashew Muffins

My mother loved cashew nuts so much, her three daughters gave her a box of fresh roasted nuts each year at Christmas and on each January (23rd) birthday. One year for a New Year's Day brunch, my grandmother created these muffins using cashew crumbs from the large box we had used babysitting money to purchase. Feel free to substitute pecan or walnut pieces for the cashews. If you don't have a ricer, mash very ripe bananas with the back of a fork until mushy.

Mama's Cashew Muffins

3 ripe bananas
1 stick butter, melted
1/2 cup white sugar
1/4 cup each: brown sugar, milk
1 egg, beaten
1/2 teaspoon each: almond and vanilla extract
1 1/2 cups flour
1 1/2 teaspoons baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup finely chopped roasted cashew nuts

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Press bananas through a ricer into a large bowl or mash well with a fork; stir in butter, white and brown sugar, milk, egg and extracts. Set aside.

Combine flour, baking soda and salt in a medium bowl; stir in to banana mixture. Add 1/2 cup of the nuts.

Spoon batter into lined mini-muffin tins. Top muffins evenly with remaining 1/4 cup of crushed nuts. Bake until a tester comes out clean, about 16-18 minutes. Makes 36 mini muffins or 12 regular muffins.

Beaten Biscuits

One cook remembered 500 whacks with an ax for company; 200 whacks for home. The modern food processor makes these almost forgotten biscuits fresh again as an appetizer biscuit filled with country ham or proscuitto.

Beaten Biscuits

4 cups flour
1 teaspoon each: sugar, baking powder
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup vegetable shortening, lard or butter, cut into small pieces
1/3 cup each: milk, water or more as needed
Thin slices proscuitto or country ham, as desired

Heat oven to 400 degrees. Combine the flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in a food processor; set aside. Combine shortening and sugar in a bowl. Pulse in the shortening mixture until it resembles coarse meal; set aside.

Stir together the milk and water. With the processor running, slowly pour in the liquid through the feed tube. Process until dough is smooth and shiny, about 2 minutes, stopping as needed to scrape down the side of the bowl.

Transfer dough to a lightly floured surface; knead several times. Cover; let stand about 3 minutes. Shape dough into small 1-inch balls with your hands. Place on a greased baking sheet. Press down lightly with your palm. Prick each biscuit 3 times with the tines of a fork. Bake until tan and firm, about 18 to 20 minutes.

To serve as an appetizer, cut each biscuit in half horizontally. Add a thin layer of country ham or prosciutto. Makes 4 to 5 dozen.

Spicy Roasted Acorn Squash Wedges

Most acorn squash recipes I've tried are sweet and simple, with a basic flavor palette. But I was determined to come up with something a bit more unique, with bold flavors. So with some acorn squash that I just received in my most recent Farm Fresh to You package, I got to work coming up with a tangy and spicy topping for my roasted acorn squash wedges. And I hit the jackpot with a Chile Lime Vinaigrette that I was actually planning on using for my salad. Instead, I drizzled it over the roasted squash, and it was absolutely delicious. The contrast of the sweet, delicate squash with the tangy citrus and spicy chile peppers was perfect. Both my husband and I devoured it. I used cayenne peppers in my vinaigrette because I like things very spicy, but just about any chile would work. If you prefer something more mild, I'd suggest seeded jalapenos, Anaheim peppers, or even red bell peppers. This would make a perfect healthy and unique Christmas side dish recipe!!

Spicy Roasted Acorn Squash Wedges

A unique and spicy twist on a basic roasted acorn squash recipe, these amazingly delicious squash wedges are roasted and then drizzled with a tangy chile lime vinaigrette.

Ingredients

- 1 medium sized acorn squash, cut into 12 wedges
- Juice from 2 limes
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 4 chile peppers, minced (I used Cayenne, but any kind will work)
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1/2 tsp black pepper
- 2 tbsp cilantro, finely chopped

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 450 degrees.
2. Line a baking sheet with aluminum foil, and mist with cooking spray.
3. Arrange squash wedges on baking sheet, and then lightly mist with an olive oil mister, and sprinkle with ½ of the salt.
4. Roast squash in oven until tender, about 25- 30 minutes.
5. While squash is roasting, combine remaining ingredients in a small bowl.
6. Transfer squash to a platter, sprinkle with paprika, drizzle with the vinaigrette and

serve.

Preparation time: 15 minute(s)

Cooking time: 30 minute(s)

Diet type: Vegan

Diet tags: Low calorie, Reduced fat, Reduced carbohydrate

Number of servings (yield): 4

PER SERVING: 80 calories; 3.5g fat; 11g carbohydrates; 1g protein; 2g fiber

Cornbread Recipe –

Tasty cornbread recipes are pretty easy to come by. But tasty low calorie ones aren't always so easy. The ones I did try were bland or dry and just didn't make the cut. So, after some experimentation, I managed to come up with an easy cornbread recipe that tastes great and is a low calorie version!

Cornbread Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 cup uncooked cornmeal, yellow
- 1 14oz can of creamed corn
- 2 tsp baking powder
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 2 packets of Splenda sweetener
- 1 tsp table salt
- 1/2 cup reduced fat buttermilk
- 2 large egg whites
- 2 tsp corn oil

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400°F. Coat an 8-inch square cake pan with non-fat cooking spray (I prefer the butter flavored kind).
Combine cornmeal, flour, baking powder, Splenda, salt and baking soda in a large bowl. Mix well with a fork and set aside. Combine creamed corn, buttermilk, egg whites and oil in a medium bowl; mix until blended. Fold mixture into dry ingredients and blend.
Pour batter into prepared pan. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near the center comes out clean, about 20 minutes. Allow to cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove from pan and let cool completely. Cut into 8 squares.

Cilantro Lime Quinoa Recipe

I cannot even begin to express how amazingly good this Cilantro Lime Quinoa recipe. I got the idea for it while eating some Cilantro Lime Rice from Whole Foods a couple weeks ago. So yummy, but definitely not Weight Watchers friendly. So I made my own version using quinoa instead of rice, and I added more texture and flavor. I also toasted the quinoa beforehand, which I had seen done in another quinoa recipe, and in my opinion, this made all the difference. This low calorie side dish recipe is a much tastier and healthier alternative to Mexican rice and is loaded with much more nutrition than rice. I am in love with this Cilantro Lime Quinoa, and I have no doubt you will be too. Enjoy!

Cilantro Lime Quinoa

A tasty new spin on quinoa recipes, this is the perfect healthy side dish for your favorite Mexican meal as an alternative to rice. Get the health benefits of quinoa flavored with roasted chiles, cilantro and lime.

Ingredients

- 1 cup quinoa
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups fat free vegetable broth
- 1 4oz can green chiles
- 2 tbsp lime juice
- 1 jalapeno, seeded and finely chopped
- 1/2 cup green onions, chopped
- Zest from 1 lime
- 2/3 cup cilantro, finely chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Set a large skillet over medium high heat, and leave dry. Add in quinoa and toast until quinoa starts to darken at the edges, about 3-5 minutes. Using a fine sieve, rinse quinoa and set aside.
2. Spray a large sauce pan with non-fat cooking spray and set over medium high heat. Add in onions and garlic and sauté until tender and fragrant, about 3 minutes. If onions and garlic start to stick to the pan, add in a bit of the broth to deglaze.
3. Stir in chiles and cook for another 2 minutes.

4. Add in quinoa and remaining broth and bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to a gentle simmer, cover and cook until the quinoa is tender and most of the liquid has been absorbed, 20 to 25 minutes.
5. Add in remaining ingredients and fluff with a fork. Serve immediately.

Preparation time: 15 minute(s)

Cooking time: 30 minute(s)

Diet type: Vegan

Diet tags: Low calorie, Reduced fat

Number of servings (yield): 6

Culinary tradition: Mexican

Pear, Quinoa, and Spinach Salad Recipe

Treat yourself to this delicious and easy Autumn inspired Pear, Quinoa, and Spinach salad. Fresh and light, this quinoa salad makes a wonderful low calorie side dish recipe to serve with a variety of Fall meals, or as a non-traditional Thanksgiving dish. By removing the nuts and the chickpeas, as well as making a few other changes to the traditional version of this recipe, I was able to create a much lighter rendering without sacrificing the fabulous flavors. The slight nutty flavor of the quinoa grains is enhanced with a walnut oil and pomegranate vinegar dressing, and is a tasty contrast to the sweet, delicate pears. Definitely a great salad recipe to try out if you are want to enjoy some fabulous Fall flavors in a new way.

Pear, Quinoa, and Spinach Salad Recipe

The perfect vegetarian side dish recipe, this Pear, Quinoa and Spinach Salad is a fresh and delicious way to enjoy the flavors of the season.

Ingredients

- 1 cup quinoa, rinsed
- 2 ripe but firm pears, diced
- 1 cup baby spinach leaves
- 1/2 cup red onion, finely chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh chives
- 2 cups and 1 tbsp fat free vegetable broth

- 1 tbsp walnut oil
- 1 1/2 tbsp pomegranate vinegar
- 1 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground pepper

Instructions

1. Bring 2 cups of broth to a boil in a large saucepan.
2. Add in quinoa, reduce heat to maintain a simmer, cover and cook until the liquid is absorbed and the quinoa has popped, about 15 minutes.
3. Whisk oil, vinegar, 1 tbsp broth, chives, salt and pepper in a large bowl.
4. Add pears, spinach and onion and toss to coat.
5. Drain any excess liquid from the cooked quinoa, if necessary.
6. Add the quinoa to the pear mixture; toss to combine.
7. Transfer to the refrigerator to cool for about 15 minutes or serve warm.

Preparation time: 15 minute(s)

Cooking time: 30 minute(s)

Diet type: Vegan

Diet tags: Low calorie, Reduced fat, Reduced carbohydrate

Number of servings (yield): 6

PER SERVING: 146 calories; 3 g fat; 24 g carbohydrates; 8 g protein; 5 g fiber

Sauteed Kale Recipe

been a fan of roasted kale chips longer than I can remember, but it never occurred to me, until recently, to start getting more experimental in my kale usage. It is such an amazing vegetable with incredible benefits, and yet I had only prepared it a few different ways. Since it does have a similar taste to chard, I decided to cook it the same way I would make a sauteed chard recipe. Plus, I happened to have a lot of kale on hand, and I needed a quick and healthy side dish recipe that required little effort. A sauteed kale recipe was just the ticket. And I was thrilled with how it turned out — so delicious and so incredibly easy. This is definitely a great Weight Watchers recipe to go to when I need a quick side that is very low in Points + and super high in nutrition.

Sautéed Kale

Reap the nutritional benefits of kale in this super easy sautéed kale recipe that is tasty and very filling. It's a quick and easy recipe that compliments a variety of main dishes.

Ingredients

- 1 large bunch of Kale, chopped
- 2 shallots, thinly sliced
- 1/2 cup fat free vegetable broth
- 3 cloves garlic, minced (or more to taste)
- Juice from 1 lemon
- Salt to taste
- Red Pepper chili flakes to taste

Instructions

1. Spray a large, non-stick skillet with non-fat cooking spray and set over medium high heat.
2. Add in garlic and shallots and sauté until they just begin to become tender, about 3 minutes.
3. Add in kale and vegetable stock, cover and lower heat to medium.
4. Cook till kale is wilted (but not too soft) and still bright green, about 5 minutes or so. Then uncover, and toss around while the excess stock cooks off, about another minute or so.
5. Add in lemon juice, and season with salt and red pepper flakes. Serve immediately.

Preparation time: 5 minute(s)

Cooking time: 10 minute(s)

Diet type: Vegan

Diet tags: Low calorie, Reduced fat, Reduced carbohydrate

Number of servings (yield): 4

Baked Kale Chips Recipe

If you haven't tried a Baked Kale Chips Recipe yet, you are really missing out! When you are craving something crunchy and salty, this is a MUCH healthier alternative to potato chips, Pop Chips or popcorn. I admit that I was a bit reluctant to believe that roasted kale would actually taste good, but I was pleasantly surprised and I've been a

fan of baked kale chips ever since. I also love that these are a kid friendly veggie. My 3 year old son gobbles these down, which says a LOT! If a picky toddler eats them, then they've got to taste good, right? They are easy and cheap to make, and each 1 cup serving is just 1 Points +. Which means you don't have to feel guilty about mindlessly eating them while watching TV at night :). So the next time you are thinking about grabbing a bag of potato chips, just make this Baked Kale Chips Recipe instead, and save yourself a ton of Weight Watchers Points Plus, while still feeling satisfied.

Baked Kale Chips Recipe

A delicious and healthy alternative to potato chips, this Baked Kale Chips Recipe has all the crunch and flavor you crave.

Ingredients

- 1 large bunch of fresh kale leaves
- 1 tsp sea salt
- Light misting of olive oil

Instructions

1. Preheat an oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C).
2. Line a non-insulated cookie sheet with parchment paper.
3. With a knife or kitchen shears carefully remove the leaves from the thick stems and tear into bite size pieces.
4. Wash and thoroughly dry kale with a salad spinner. Pat excess water with a paper towel.
5. Lightly spray kale with olive oil from an olive oil mister and sprinkle with seasoning salt.
6. Bake until the edges brown but are not burnt, 10 to 15 minutes.

Preparation time: 10 minute(s)

Cooking time: 15 minute(s)

Diet type: Vegan

Diet tags: Low calorie, Reduced fat, Reduced carbohydrate

Number of servings (yield): 2

PER SERVING: 44 calories; 1g fat; 7g carbohydrates; 2g protein; 3g fiber

Reduced Guilt Spinach & Kale Greek Yogurt Dip

Stop everything you are doing and get yourself to a Trader Joe's ASAP to pick up their new Reduced Guilt Spinach and Kale Greek Yogurt dip. The only way that I can think of right now to describe this dip is absolutely, downright AMAZING. Trader Joe's always manages to come up with the best low calorie, Weight Watchers friendly foods, that I should really just dedicate a entire category on my blog to all the incredible stuff I find there. This Spinach and Kale Greek Yogurt Dip tastes like any high calorie dip you'd get with a plate of tortilla chips at your favorite restaurant, but this healthier version. You would never know that this is a diet friendly dip.

Trader Joe's Reduced Guilt Spinach & Kale Greek Yogurt Dip

This incredible Spinach and Kale Greek Yogurt Dip is a low fat, low calorie dip made with low fat Greek yogurt in place of the more typical sour cream. It's packed with kale, spinach, water chestnuts, red peppers, carrots, green onions, garlic and other seasonings, with mayo for extra smoothness and just a touch of agave nectar to boost the sweetness a bit. It's the perfect healthy dip for fresh veggies, crackers, sandwiches, or (my favorite option) with their yummy Organic Low Fat Tortilla Chips – so good! And if you really can't restrain yourself from eating the *whole* container...don't fret...I did the math and it's only 14 Points +. Granted, that's not ideal, but it's certainly not going to blow your day. Enjoy!

Serving size is 2 tbsp
Each serving = 1 Points +

PER SERVING: 30 calories; 2.5g fat; 2g carbohydrates; 1g protein; 1g fiber

Chicken Jambalaya Recipe –

If you love Mardi Gras recipes as much as I do, you'll love this Chicken Jambalaya Recipe! It's the perfect meal to serve at any Mardi Gras feast. This a super easy recipe to make, and it still has all the flair of the traditional jambalaya recipe – just less fat and calories. Packed with fiber and protein, this favorite New Orleans Recipe will fill you up without filling you with guilt. Give it a try and enjoy!

Chicken Jambalaya Recipe

Ingredients:

- 1 spray non fat cooking spray
- 2 1/2 oz raw turkey sausage, chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 1 medium celery, stalk, chopped
- 1 small green pepper, chopped

- 1/4 tsp cayenne pepper, or to taste
- 1/2 tsp dried thyme
- 1 tsp table salt
- 1/2 tsp black pepper, ground
- 2 medium garlic cloves, minced
- 2 medium chicken breast, cooked, skinless, cubed (about 2 cups)
- 28 oz canned tomatoes, whole, plum, peeled with juice
- 2 cups fat-free chicken broth
- 1 cup uncooked white rice, long-grain

Directions:

Coat a large, nonstick saucepan with cooking spray. Over high heat, sauté sausage until crispy on edges. Add onion, celery and green pepper; sauté until tender. Reduce heat and stir in cayenne, thyme, salt, pepper and garlic; sauté until garlic is fragrant.

Stir in chicken, tomatoes, broth and rice. Bring to a simmer, cover and let cook until rice is tender, about 20 minutes.

Flavor Booster: Popcorn rice, a specialty of Louisiana, is a delicious substitute for long-grain rice. The rice, which has a mild nutty taste like basmati rice, is available through gourmet food stores and Internet specialty shops