

Lockdown Cookbook

These are the dishes Karen and I have made at home since the Covid lockdown began on March 17, 2020.

Cooking kept us happy.

Although we are now delightfully “unlocked,” this cookbook continues as an ongoing project.



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Boise, Idaho

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This cookbook is subject to incessant tinkering and revision.
Updated versions are available on my firm's website: www.givenspursley.com/publications.
Comments or questions are welcome. Please email me at chrismeyer@givenspursley.com.

This cookbook is dedicated to our food tasters, Maggie and Abby.



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COCKTAILS

COMPARISON OF DRINKS

The following drinks overlap in interesting ways.

Begin with a classic Campari and soda water.

An Americano is Campari and soda water with the addition of sweet red vermouth.

A Negroni is an Americano, with gin substituted for the soda water.

A Quill is a Negroni with an added Absinthe rinse.

A Boulevardier is a Negroni made with rye instead of gin.

A Manhattan made with rye, sweet red vermouth, and bitters.

A Boulevardier may also be described as a Manhattan with Campari instead of bitters.

An Old Fashioned is a Manhattan with sugar instead of vermouth.

A Sazerac an Old Fashioned with different bitters and an Absinthe rinse.

A Black Manhattan is a Manhattan with amaro instead of vermouth.

A Rob Roy is a Manhattan with Scotch instead of rye.

A Perfect Rob Roy is a Rob Roy with equal parts of sweet and dry vermouth.

A Bobby Burns is a Rob Roy with a dash of Bénédictine.

A Brooklyn is a rebuttal to the Manhattan, made with dry vermouth and two liqueurs instead of red vermouth and bitters. The only thing in common is rye.

The Martini, made with gin, white vermouth, and bitters, is like none of the above.

	Scotch	Rye	Gin	Campari	Sweet red vermouth	Amaro	Dry white vermouth	Angostura or Warn's Aromatic bitters	Peychaud's Aromatic bitters	Orange bitters	Other
Negroni			√	√	√						
Quill			√	√	√						Absinthe
Boulevardier		√		√	√						
Old Fashioned		√						√			sugar
Manhattan		√			√			√		√	
Black Manhattan or Monte Manhattan		√				√			√	√	
Rob Roy	√				√			√		√	
Perfect Rob Roy	√				√		√	√		√	
Bobby Burns	√				√			√			Bénédictine
Brooklyn		√					√				China-China liqueur; Maraschino liqueur
Sazerac		√							√		Absinthe; sugar
Martini			√				√			√	

GLASSWARE



Etched coupe glasses

Coupe is a type of champagne glass with a flat bowl. The French pronounce it “coop” (with a silent “e”). It should not be confused with the other French word, coupé (with an accent mark), which refers to a sporty car and is pronounced “coop ay.”

Champagne, which the French pronounce “shaahm paahn yah,” may be served in a champagne flute or a champagne coupe. The tall, narrow flute-shaped glass (which displays the bubbles and exposes less air to the drink) is now more popular. Back in the day, the coupe was de rigueur.

The petit, seductively attractive coupe glass, they say, was modeled on Marie Antoinette’s left breast. All done so her court might toast her more knowingly. Alas, this tale is fiction. The queen was born in 1755 and the champagne glass of this shape dates to 17th century England.

But don’t despair. Marie Antoinette may not have had drunk from coupe glasses, but she certainly had lovely porcelain bowls—also said to be molded from her breasts—which she delighted in at her “Pleasure Dairy” at Rambouillet. These “jattes tetons” were enjoyed by the Queen and her ladies-in-waiting who dressed up as shepherdesses and frolicked about in the Queen’s rustically designed hamlet. Each footed bowl, had a nipple, pointing downward, supported by three decorative goat heads. You may visit the four surviving bowls at the Musée National de Céramique de Sèvres in Paris.

But I digress.

Today, cocktails are typically served either “up” or “down.” A cocktail served up may arrive in either a coupe glass or a martini glass. Cocktails served down are served in an Old Fashioned Glass with ice, ideally a single large cube. See discussion under “Old Fashioned” for why it has that name.

COCKTAIL INGREDIENTS

Bitters

Angostura Aromatic Bitters

Like Peychaud's bitters, Angostura aromatic bitters are based on gentian (a flowering plant with medicinal properties). It is produced by House of Angostura in Trinidad and Tobago. It was originally produced in the town of Angostura (now Ciudad Bolívar) in Venezuela, hence the name. The bitters were invented in 1824 as a medical tincture for stomach ailments by Dr. Johann Siegert, surgeon general for Simon Bolivar. The word angostura is Spanish for "narrowing," the town of Angostura being located at the narrowing of the Orinoco River.

Warn Reserve Aromatic Bitters

The aromatic bitters made by this company in Boise, Idaho pack more of a punch than Angostura's. Nice in a martini. Warn Reserve also makes an orange version (and several others). You may order them from www.warnreserve.com.

Peychaud's Aromatic Bitters

In 1795, Antoine Amédée Peychaud, a French Creole pharmacist fled the slave revolts in the colony of Saint-Dominique (now Haiti) and re-settled in New Orleans. In 1832, he opened his apothecary at what is now numbered 437 Royal Street. There he concocted his namesake bitters, which he touted as a good restorative tonic for "cases of general debility." His bitters were gentian-based, like Angostura bitters, but with a more predominant anise aroma and background of mint. The Sazerac Company acquired Peychaud's bitters in 1970. The bitters are now produced at the company's Buffalo Trace Distillery in Frankfort, Kentucky. Peychaud's makes two versions: (1) the standard "Aromatic Cocktail Bitters" and (2) "Whiskey Barrel-Aged Cocktail Bitters." The latter is hard to find, costs four times as much, and is worth the investment.

Orange bitters

You have two very different choices: Warn Reserve orange cocktail bitters made in Boise, Idaho, or Angostura orange bitters (which comes with the same oversized label as their aromatic version). The Angostura version is almost sweet and drinkable on its own. Way too sweet for a martini. The bitters made by Warn Cocktail Company are very complex and very strong, and excellent in a martini.

Comparison of bitters

Peychaud's bitters are less bitter with more pronounced sweet notes and a strong anise taste. Aromatic bitters have a deeper flavor profile and a more savory taste, marked by spices like cassia, cloves, and cinnamon. Orange bitters have a sweeter note.

Vermouth

Vermouth is an aromatized fortified wine, flavored with botanicals (herbs, spices, roots, flowers, seeds, etc.). It has been around a long time. The "modern" versions were first produced in Turin, Italy in the late 1700s. Choose between sweet red vermouth (for Manhattans, negronis, and Boulevardiers) or dry white vermouth (for martinis and more obscure drinks like a Brooklyn or a Perfect Rob Roy).



The Angostura bitters bottle is noted for its distinctive over-sized label.

Sweet (red) vermouth

Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino

This is the best. This difficult to acquire Italian red vermouth is superbly delicate and a tad sweeter than the Carpano Antica. Get it if you can. It is sometimes available at the Grove Street liquor store in Boise because one bar in the city has it on special order.

Carpano Antica Formula 1786

This is the second best. It is an extraordinary Italian red vermouth based on a formula created by Giuseppe B. Carpano in 1786.

Punt e Mes

“Punt e mes” is a Piedmontese dialect for “point and a half.” In proper Italian, it would be “punto e mezzo.” It is so named because the flavor is said to be a half a point bitterness and a full point sweetness. This is a strong, dark, sweet Italian vermouth, described as halfway between a traditional red (rosso) vermouth and Campari. It is said to be simultaneously among the bitterest and sweetest of vermouths, but I would emphasize the bitter part. It may be used in any drink calling for rosso vermouth

Other sweet vermouth

You may use any other sweet red Italian vermouth (e.g., Cinzano 1757 or Cinzano Rosso) or a sweet red French vermouth (e.g., Dolin Rouge or Noilly Prat Vermouth Rouge).

In drinks calling for sweet red vermouth, an interesting alternative is Cinzano Vermouth Bianco (a barely sweet, white vermouth). It will produce a cocktail with a lighter pink color and a softer taste.

Dry (white) vermouth

Dolin dry vermouth

This French vermouth is my hands-down favorite.

Other dry vermouth

Other options are Cinzano Extra Dry Vermouth from Italy (unavailable in Idaho) and Noilly Prat Extra Dry from France.

Gin

Tanqueray No. Ten

My favorite is favorite. Tanqueray No. Ten was originally from London but is now made in Scotland (after its production facilities were bombed during WWII).

Bardenay Dry Gin

This is an excellent locally distilled gin (made in Boise, Idaho).

Nolet's (Silver) Dry Gin

This gin, made in Holland, is the most expensive option on my short list. It drinks like velvet, but I think it is too quiet for a martini. All a matter of taste.

Bombay Sapphire

This is a highly regarded gin, but it is not my favorite. I find it too astringent.

Beefeater

This, too, is a highly regarded gin, and, again, not my favorite. I find it less complex than Tanqueray No. Ten.

Rye

My favorites are: Bulleit, Jack Daniel's Bonded Rye, Knob Creek, The Wiseman (thanks to

Murray Feldman), Templeton (thanks to Don Zienty), and Sazerac Rye.

Bourbon

My favorites are Elijah Craig Single Barrel and Bulleit.

Liqueurs, aperitifs, and digestifs

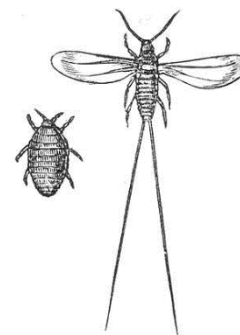
Campari



Campari is dark red liqueur invented by Gaspare Campari in Milano in 1860. It contains 60 still secret herbs, spices, fruits, and barks. It originally derived its intense scarlet color from crushed insects known as cochineal, which contain the natural dye carmine. If you wish to gather some of these tasty insects, travel to South American and search for them on pads of prickly pear cacti.

Alas, in 2005, Campari switched to artificial dyes.

True fact: About the same time, the bug disappeared from Ben & Jerry's Cherry Garcia ice cream and Starbuck's Frappuccinos.



Female (left) & male (right) Cochineal beetle. They original source of Campari's crimson hue.

Licor 43

This is a Spanish liqueur made from citrus and fruit juices, flavored with vanilla and aromatic herbs and spices. It is difficult to find. If you can get your hands it, buy it. It is useful in many drinks, such as the Rockefeller cocktail in this book.

Tuacana Originale Italiano

If you can get your hands on Licor 43, substitute Tuaca Originale Italiano.

Picon

Amer Picon is a bitter orange-flavored French aperitif. In recent years it has become next-to-impossible to find in the U.S. liquor stores. It is available online, for a price.



Amer Picon was invented by Gaétan Picon, a French scholar and who created the drink in 1837 while serving in the French Army in Algeria. It was popular among the officers, and thought to fight off malaria in North Africa owing to the quinine in its recipe.

Amer Picon is a traditional ingredient in the Brooklyn cocktail.

Amer Picon is the main ingredient in the American Basque cocktail "Picon Punch" popular in Basque establishments in Boise and Reno (which have large Basque populations). Because Amer Picon is no longer readily available, Basque bars today recreate the aperitif with a blend of Italian amari and other liqueurs—typically two parts Ramazzotti, two parts dry curaçao, and one part gentian liqueur.

Amaro

The word amaro (amari is the plural) is Italian for "bitter." Amaro is a generic term for any of the many Italian herbal liqueurs of this type. They are typically drunk after dinner as a digestif, but are also the foundation for many cocktails.

Montenegro Amaro

Known as "liqueur of the virtues," this amaro was created in 1885 by distiller and herbalist, Stanislao Cobianchi who named it in honor of the second Queen of Italy, Princess Elena Petrović-Njegoš of Montenegro on the occasion of her marriage to the King of Italy, Victor Emmanuel III.

Amaro Averna

This amaro has an ancient history, back to Benedictine monks of the San Spirito Abbey in Caltanissetta, Sicily who invented this herbal elixir. In 1859, the monks passed along the recipe to a Sicilian businessman and benefactor of the abbey, Salvatore Averna, as a token of their appreciation. He appreciated it so much that he built its production into a family business. By 1912, Averna was the official supplier to King Victor Emmanuelle III.

China-China

This oddly named liqueur is the French counterpart to the better known bitter Italian liqueurs known as amari. It is a blend of sweet and bitter orange peels macerated in beet neutral alcohol. Its color derives from the addition of caramel. It has been produced by Bigallet since 1875. Frank Caiafa, the author of *The Waldorf Astoria Bar Book*, suggests substituting Bigallet China-China Amer liqueur as a substitute for Picon in the Brooklyn cocktail. It may also be used for lighter cocktails. A Sparkling China-China consists of 1½ oz. China-China, 1 oz. sweet vermouth, and 3 oz. sparkling wine, served in a wine glass on ice, garnished with an orange slice.

Bénédictine

Bénédictine D.O.M. is an herbal liqueur produced in France. It was developed in 1863 by French wine merchant Alexandre Le Grand. It is flavored with 27 flowers, berries, herbs, roots, and spices in a neutral spirit sweetened with honey. A less-sweet version, B&B (blending Bénédictine with brandy), was developed in the 1930s. For marketing purposes, Le Grand embellished a story of the liqueur having been developed by monks at the Benedictine Abbey of Fécamp in Normandy, and produced by them until the abbey's devastation during the French Revolution. To reinforce his myth, he placed the abbreviation "D.O.M." on the label, for "Deo Optimo Maximo" ("To God, most good, most great"), used in documents created by the Benedictine Order. Bénédictine is used in many wonderful cocktails, for the example the Singapore Sling, the Brass Rail, the Preakness Manhattan, the Vieux Carré, and the Bobby Burns. It also appears together with absinthe in De La Louisiane No. 4 and the Chrysanthemum.

Drambuie

Bénédictine and Drambuie are both dark-colored, honey-sweetened herbal liqueurs often featured in high-end cocktails. However, Drambuie is quite different in taste, dominated by a scotch and honey foundation, with notes of grass, licorice, and orange peel.

Chartreuse

Chartreuse is a French herbal liqueur available in green and yellow versions. Yellow Chartreuse is sweeter than Green Chartreuse. Yellow Chartreuse is closer to Bénédictine. Yellow Chartreuse is noted with flavors of honey, saffron, and anise spice, whereas Green Chartreuse shows more prominent flavors of lime, citrus spice, and fresh cut herbs.

Unlike Bénédictine, Chartreuse really is made by monks. It was named after the Carthusian monks' Grande Chartreuse monastery, located in the Chartreuse Mountains north of Grenoble. It has been made since 1737 according to the instructions set out in a manuscript given to them by François Annibal d'Estrées in 1605. In 1793, the monks were expelled during the dechristianization of France during the French Revolution. Manufacture of the liqueur ceased. The monk fleeing with the original recipe was arrested and sent to prison in Bordeaux, but he was not searched and managed to pass the manuscript to one of his friends, a monk named Dom Basile Nantas. Alas, that monk sold the manuscript to a pharmacist (and former brother monk) in Grenoble, Monsieur Liotard. In 1810, Liotard was compelled to turn over the recipe to Napoleon who ordered that all secret recipes of medicine be sent to the Ministry of Interior for review. Thankfully, the recipe was returned to Liotard. After Napoleon met his Waterloo, the monks were allowed to return to France. At the death of the pharmacist Liotard, his heirs returned the manuscript to the monks who resumed production of Chartreuse. Once again, in 1903 the French government expelled the Monks from their home in the mountains. This time they took their recipes with them to Tarragona, Spain, where Chartreuse was produced until after World War II. They were allowed to return to France and have been producing it in Voiron ever since. The demand for Chartreuse exceeds the supply, making it difficult to find and

quite expensive. An article appearing in the Wall Street Journal on April 7, 2023 explained that the monks have determined to not to expand production but instead to spend more time praying.

Génépy le Chamois

If you can't get your hands on Chartreuse (and no one can), you might be lucky enough to find a rare bottle of Génépy le Chamois. This legendary, intensely herbal liqueur from the French alps has been made by Dolin (the vermouth maker) since 1821. It remains the darling of French ski resorts, traditionally served after fondue with chocolate. Its flavor profile has been described as lying between absinthe and chartreuse. I find it very drinkable and far closer to chartreuse.

Absinthe

This is most notable ingredient in a Sazerac, a New Orleans classic. It also appears in the lesser known but wonderful New York drink, the Quill.

Absinthe is a strong spirit—known as an overproof liquor—whose flavors derive from the flowers and leaves of wormwood (which the French call absinthe) accented by green anise and other herbs. It is traditionally green, but may also be colorless. It is known historically as *la fée verte* (the green fairy). The elixir was invented in Switzerland as a general cure-all by Pierre Ordinaire, a French physician, in 1792, according to *Cocktail: The Drinks Bible for the 21st Century* by Paul Harrington and Laura Moorhead. It gained popularity among Parisian artists and writers (bohemians) in the late 1800s and early 1900s. It was banned in the U.S. (and elsewhere) from 1912 to 2007 because it was thought to make people crazy. It was later learned that people are already crazy.

Herbsaint

During the century of abstinence from absinthe, anise-flavored liqueurs (anisettes) were substituted, notably, Herbsaint, Pernod, or Pastis. The former was created in 1934, soon after the end of Prohibition. New Orleans pharmacist J.M. Legendre concocted an anise-flavored wormwood-free absinthe substitute, which he marketed as Legendre Herbsaint (after the federal government forced him to stop calling it absinthe). This potent spirit remains popular, and many New Orleanians (including my brother, the former Dean of Tulane Law school) stick with it today over absinthe.

In 1949, the Sazerac company acquired the Herbsaint company and rejiggered it to a lower, mere 90-proof product with a heavier anise flavor. The Sazerac Company also owns and distributes Peychaud's bitters, Sazerac Rye, and Sazerac de Forge cognac, among many others.

BTW, Herbsaint and the other absinthe substitutes are liqueurs. Absinthe itself is not technically a liqueur because it has no sugar.



Albert Maigan's Green Muse (1895):
A poet succumbs to the Green Fairy.

THE MARTINI

The martini has been with us since the 1800s. Back then, way more vermouth was involved. Sweeteners and bitters were also standard. The olive did not emerge as an alternative to the lemon twist until recent decades. Over the course of a century, the drink trended dryer and dryer, until vermouth became a joke rather than an ingredient. Thankfully, vermouth has made a comeback. Originally, it was sweet Italian vermouth. When dry French vermouth arrived around the turn of the last century, people called that a “dry martini”—referring to the type of vermouth. When people order a dry martini today, they refer to the quantity of dry vermouth.

In *The Hour*, Bernard DeVoto described the magic that occurs each evening at 6:00 pm when the martini is served: “This is the violet hour, the hour of hush and wonder, when the affections glow and valor is reborn, when the shadows deepen along the edge of the forest and we believe that, if we watch carefully, at any moment we may see the unicorn.”

My version (10:1 – halfway between Stork Club and Montgomery)

- 2 ½ oz. gin (Tanqueray No. Ten)
- ½ oz. dry vermouth
- 3 dashes of orange bitters (Warn Reserve brand, or nothing)

Garnish with your choice of:

- olives
- lemon peel
- cocktail onion (for a “Gibson martini”—which requires skipping the bitters)

H.L. Mencken called the martini “the only American invention as perfect as the sonnet.”

Directions

Fill a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with ice.

Add the gin, vermouth, and orange bitters.

Stir lovingly for 60 seconds (shake briskly only for James Bond)

Strain into a martini glass. Garnish as desired.



Bitters

In the olden days, bitters were a standard component of the martini. They disappeared from the drink beginning in the 1940s. Today, bitters are making a comeback, notably orange bitters. I recommend Warn Reserve brand (made in Boise), which is complex and, well, bitter. Angostura also makes orange bitters, but I think it is too sweet for a martini.

Dilution:

Mixing with ice will dilute the drink, which is part of a perfect martini. Putting your gin in the freezer is popular, but defeats the goal because it inhibits the dilution. If you use gin from the freezer, stir or shake longer to compensate.

Ten-Minute Martini

Ordinarily, a stirred or shaken cocktail must be poured promptly. Chandler's famous Ten-Minute Martini defies this rule. Discovered by accident when a customer ordered a martini and then dashed out saying he'd be right back, the Ten-Minute Martini calls for stashing the filled mixing glass in ice for ten minutes before stirring and serving. When retrieved, a thick layer of ice will adhere to the exterior of the mixing glass. One would think that the ice inside the mixing glass would melt too much. Chandler's bartender, Pat Carden, has a theory (involving molecules and other confusing things) for why this doesn't happen. I do not understand. But who cares? The result is one fine martini.

History

San Franciscans say the martini originated in the 1860s as a drink then known as the Martinez. The Occidental Hotel in San Francisco served it to guests before they boarded the evening ferry to Martinez, California. The City of Martinez disputes this and has installed a brass plaque commemorating the invention of the Martinez cocktail in its fair city. The city insists the drink was concocted in 1874 by a bartender in Martinez in exchange for a bag of gold nuggets thrust upon him by a newly rich miner who demanded "something different." Jerry Thomas' *"Bartender's Guide, How to Mix All Kinds of Plain and Fancy Drinks"* (published in 1887) contains the Martinez recipe reported above, lending credence to the origin of the drink but failing to resolve the dispute between the cities of San Francisco and of Martinez. How the name Martinez transmuted to Martini is perhaps explained by the drink's association with the Martini brand of sweet Italian vermouth used in early versions of the cocktail. The company dates to 1847. When Alessandro Martini became its director in 1862, his name was added to the company name, now known as Martini & Rossi. These days, they make both sweet and dry versions.

Shaken not stirred

Opinions differ as to whether shaking or stirring results in less "bruising" of the gin. James Bond and Stanley Tucci, for instance, have strongly opposing viewpoints. The British tend to stir, as do high-end bartenders in the U.S. Stirring is said to cause less damage to the "top notes" (the perfumes in the spectrum of flavors in the gin). Stirring takes at least twice as long to achieve the same effect.

The dirty martini

The dirty martini includes a wee bit of olive "juice" (the brine in the jar). A wee bit is normally is ¼ ounce or less (or ½ ounce if you are incorrigibly filthy). It dates to 1901 when a NYC bartender named John O'Conner experimented with muddling an olive and settled on a splash of olive brine. Its many followers over the years include F.D.R. who served it in the White House, whether his guests wanted it or not. It has an equal number of detractors.

The perfect martini

In recent years, those with given to Truth and Reconciliation have declared the “Perfect Martini” to be one made with equal parts of sweet and dry vermouth.

The vodka martini

The experts say you may shake your vodka martini all you like: Unlike gin, vodka has no top notes to worry about damaging.

The following versions chart the Martini’s history.

1887 - “Martinez Cocktail” (Jerry Thomas’ Bartenders Guide) (gin/vermouth = 1:2)

- 1 oz. Old Tom gin (a slightly sweeter version that is experiencing a resurgence today)
- 2 oz. sweet red vermouth
- 1 dash of Boker’s bitters
- 3 dashes of Luxardo Maraschino Originale Liqueur (created in 1821 & still available!)
- 2 dashes of gum syrup (a sugar solution similar to molasses)
- 2 cubes of ice
- garnished with a lemon slice

1895 - Gilded Age Version (gin/vermouth = 2:1)

- 2 oz. gin
- 1 oz. dry vermouth
- hint of orange bitters
- garnished with lemon peel

1930s - Stork Club during the Great Depression (gin/vermouth = 5:1)

- 2 ½ oz. gin
- ½ oz. dry vermouth
- hint of orange bitters
- garnished with lemon peel

1940s - “The Montgomery” (gin/vermouth = 15:1)

Named after Field Marshall Bernard Montgomery who, it is said, liked his gin to outnumber vermouth in the same ratio as he like to outnumber his opponents in battle. In chapter 4 of *Across the River and Into the Trees*, Hemingway’s character, Colonel Cantwell, ordered Montgomerys at Harry’s Bar in Venice.

- 3.0 oz. gin
- a hint of dry vermouth
- garnished with lemon peel

1951 - “The Hour: A Cocktail Manifesto” (gin/vermouth = 3.7:1)

In 1951, Bernard DeVoto (an American historian who edited the journals of Lewis and Clark and the papers of Mark Twain) published his splendidly stern manifesto on the martini which demands this perplexingly precise ratio. Daniel Handler (alias Lemony Snicket) wrote the introduction to the 2010 edition. As for bitters, DeVoto wrote: “Orange bitters make a good astringent for the face. Never put them in anything that is to be drunk.”

- 3.7 oz. gin
- 1 oz. dry vermouth
- “500 pounds of ice”
- garnished with lemon peel

Note: This is a rather huge serving!

1980s - Gray Flannel Suit Version (nothing but gin)

This all-gin martini is the same as the so-called Churchill martini. “Glance briefly at a vermouth bottle across the room while pouring the gin freely.” But the Churchill martini is apocryphal. Churchill did not drink martinis, except when visiting F.D.R. at the White House, where he is said to have discretely poured into flower pots the vermouth and olive brine laced cocktails so admired by the President. Churchill preferred brandy or watered down scotch.

- 3 oz. gin
- garnished with an olive

2020 - Stanley Tucci Video (vermouth strained out)

- ½ oz. dry vermouth (poured over the ice, then strained out)
- 3 oz. gin
- garnish with a twist of lemon peel dragged over the rim of the glass

CAMPARI – LIGHT COCKTAILS

Campari and soda. This was the most popular drink served by Gaspare Campari.

- 1 ½ oz. Campari
- 3 oz. soda water

Garnish with an orange wedge.

Serve on the rocks in an old fashioned glass. Hold an orange wedge over the glass, rind side down. Squeeze it so its juice runs over the rind and white connective tissue, picking up those bitter flavors and melding with the bitter Campari. Drop the smiling orange into the drink.

Americano.

- 1 ½ oz. Campari
- 1 ½ oz. Punt e Mes
or sweet red Italian vermouth (e.g., Cinzano 1757 or Cinzano Rosso)
or sweet red French vermouth (e.g., Dolin Rouge or Noilly Prat Vermouth Rouge)
- 3 oz. soda water.

Garnish with an orange wedge.

Serve on the rocks in an old fashioned glass. Garnish with an orange wedge.

Like the simpler Campari and soda, this drink was created by Gaspare Campari and served at his bar in Milano. The drink was then known as the “Milano-Torino.” The Campari came from Milano; the vermouth came from Torino. It was re-named “Americano” in the 1930s as an homage to the first Italian boxer to win the world heavyweight championship in the United States.

Many years ago I had my first Americano at Harry’s Bar in Venezia (frequented by Ernest Hemingway, Charlie Chaplin, James Stewart, and Orson Welles, though none stopped by on my visit). This was the first drink ordered by James Bond in Ian Fleming’s book, *Casino Royale*. Bond always stipulated Perrier instead of soda water.

Spritz Veneziano (aka Negroni Sbagliato—literally meaning Negroni made the wrong way).

- 2 oz. Prosecco (Italian champagne)
- 1 ½ oz. Campari (or substitute lower alcohol content Aperol)
- A splash of soda water

Serve over ice in an old fashioned glass or wine glass. Garnish with an orange wedge.

This drink traces its origin to Habsburg rule of northern Italy in the 1800s. The Austrians took to the local Italian wines, but found them stronger than they were used to. So they asked the bartenders to water them down a bit (spritzen, in German). Over years, things evolved to the drink known today as Spritz Veneziano.

NEGRONI

Pronunciation: “neh GROW ee” (emphasis on GROW, with a light “ee” – as in knee -- at the end).

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 1 ¼ oz. gin
- 1 oz. Campari
- ¾ oz. sweet red vermouth (Punt e Mes, Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino, or Carpano Antica Formula) or try Cinzano Vermouth Bianco (a barely sweet, white vermouth).

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain into a chilled Old Fashioned glass and serve on the rocks (ideally with a giant craft ice cube).

Garnish with your choice of:

- an orange wedge (by tradition)
- an expressed orange peel
- a Luxardo maraschino cherry

Traditionally, this drink calls for equal parts of gin, Campari, and vermouth, but recipes vary. This gin-forward version is my favorite.

The third ingredient is red vermouth. I prefer Punt e Mes. You may use any other sweet red Italian vermouth (e.g., Cinzano 1757 or Cinzano Rosso) or a sweet red French vermouth (e.g., Dolin Rouge or Noilly Prat Vermouth Rouge). An interesting alternative is Cinzano Vermouth Bianco (a barely sweet, white vermouth) is a nice alternative to the more traditional red vermouth. It will produce a cocktail with a lighter pink color and a softer taste.

History

According to tradition, the first Negroni was mixed in 1919 at Caffè Casoni in Firenze. (The café operates today as Giacosa Café.) The Negroni family is a famous family from Genoa, which sent ships to the Battle of Lepanto in 1571. See Meyer Christmas letter of 2021. One of its members, Count Camillo Negroni, who was born near Florence, fled to Ellis Island to escape financial distress, won a fortune gambling in America, and returned to Florence in 1912. There he became a regular customer at Caffè Casoni. Growing tired of his regular drink, the Americano, he asked the bartender, Fosco Scarselli, to kick it up a notch. The bartender substituted gin for the soda water and added an orange slice to distinguish it from the Americanos. It is still served with an orange slice 100 years later.

As so often is the case with cocktails, the origin of the drink is disputed. There is a French alternative, based on another member of the Negroni family. The French insist that the real inventor is General Pascal Olivier de Negroni aka Comte de Negroni (1829-1913). A Corsican by birth, Pascal was a cavalry officer in the French army. He served as a prisoner of war in the Franco-Prussian war and was later promoted to brigadier general and Commander of the Legion of Honor. In 1865 (shortly after the invention of Campari in 1860) he was posted as base commander to Saint Louis, Senegal. At that time he wrote a letter (preserved by a family member) commenting on his invention of the drink bearing his name at the Lunéville officers' club. There are accounts from pharmacists and barmaids in Senegal describing a French Army captain who “spread the gospel of the Negroni throughout Dhakar.”



Orson Welles, while filming *Black Magic* in Rome in 1947, offered this assessment of a Negroni: “The bitters are excellent for your liver; the gin is bad for you. They balance each other.” Of course, there are no bitters in a Negroni. Mr. Wells was referring to the taste of Campari.

THE QUILL

The Quill (a writer's drink) is simply a Negroni with an added absinthe rinse.

Directions

Rinse a chilled Old Fashioned glass with:

- ¼ oz. absinthe

Pour out most of the remaining absinthe.

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 1 ¼ oz. gin
- 1 oz. Campari
- ¾ oz. sweet red vermouth (Punt e Mes, Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino, or Carpano Antica Formula)

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Pour into the Old Fashioned glass with a large ice cube.

Garnish with your choice of:

- an expressed orange peel (by tradition)
- an orange slice (like a Negroni)
- a Luxardo maraschino cherry

Traditionally, this drink (and the Negroni) calls for equal parts of gin, Campari, and vermouth, but recipes vary. This gin-forward version is my favorite.

History

The cocktail is credited to Frank C. Payne of New York who formed a union of theatrical agents in the 1920s. The union's magazine was named *The Quill*, after which Payne named the drink. Absinthe was banned during this period, but, then again, so was all alcohol.

A recipe for the drink appears in the 1996 updated version of *Harry's ABC of Mixing Cocktails*, but does not appear in earlier editions.



BOULEVARDIER

There are two correct pronunciations. Most commonly it is pronounced like a big street: “BOULEVARD-ee-ay.” Occasionally it is pronounced “Boo-lay-var-DEAR.”

The Boulevardier is essentially a Negroni with whiskey substituted for the gin.

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 1 ½ oz. rye whiskey or bourbon
- 1 oz. Campari
- ¾ oz sweet red vermouth (Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino, Carpano Antica Formula, or Punt e Mes) or Cinzano Vermouth Bianco

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute. May be served “up” or on the rocks.

Garnish with your choice of:

- an expressed orange peel
- an expressed lemon peel
- a Luxardo maraschino cherry



The traditional ratio is 1-1-1 (same as for a Negroni), but the modern trend is to increase the role of the whiskey—ranging from 1 ¼ oz. to 2 oz. I find the heavier dose of whiskey produces a more balanced drink.

As in a Negroni, the third ingredient is sweet red vermouth. Of the reds, I prefer Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino, Punt e Mes, or Carpano Antica Formula. You may use any other sweet red Italian vermouth (e.g., Cinzano 1757 or Cinzano Rosso) or a sweet red French vermouth (e.g., Dolin Rouge or Noilly Prat Vermouth Rouge). Another great but non-traditional option is Cinzano Vermouth Bianco. This is a very interesting, barely sweet white vermouth.

The Boulevardier will remind you a bit of an Old Fashioned or a Manhattan, but is more complex. The Boulevardier is essentially a Manhattan with Campari instead of the bitters. Likewise, the sweetness of the Campari picks up on the simple syrup in an Old Fashioned. Critic Paul Clark offered this praise: “The bittersweet interplay between Campari and vermouth remains, but the whiskey is rich and intriguing. There’s a small difference in preparation, but the result is absolutely stunning.”

History

The word Boulevardier roughly translates to a man-about-town. In particular, it refers to a wealthy and fashionable socialite who is frequenter of the Parisian boulevards. The Boulevardier was concocted by Erskine Gwynne, an American expatriate and nephew of Alfred Vanderbilt, who founded a literary and humor magazine of the same name (*Boulevardier*) in Paris in the 1920s. He modified the Negroni by swapping the gin for rye. The drink first appeared in print in 1927 in Harry McElhone’s *Barflies and Cocktails*.

OLD FASHIONED

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 2 ½ oz. rye whisky or bourbon or blended whiskey
- ¼ oz. simple syrup (homemade is best)
- 3 dashes Angostura aromatic bitters

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain into a chilled Old Fashioned glass and serve on the rocks (ideally with a giant craft ice cube).



Garnish with one or both:

- orange peel
- Luxardo maraschino cherry

History

The Pendennis Club, a gentlemen’s club in Louisville, Kentucky established in 1881, claims the Old Fashioned cocktail was invented there by a bartender in honor of James E. Pepper, a prominent bourbon distiller. They say Mr. Pepper then brought the drink to Waldorf-Astoria bar in New York.

But that fails to explain why the drink is called Old Fashioned. The evidence suggests the drink is perhaps 80 years older than the Pendennis Club. According to Robert Simonson, author of *The Old-Fashioned: The Story of the World’s First Classic Cocktail, with Recipes and Lore*, the drink dates to as early as 1800. It was originally known as the Whiskey Cocktail—a combination (just as today) of whiskey, sugar, bitters, and water. Mr. Simonson reports that when bartenders in the 1870s and 1880s (perhaps the fellow who served Mr. Pepper) began adding embellishments to their Whiskey Cocktails, some customers rebelled against the innovations, preferring the traditional version and thus insisting on an “old-fashioned whiskey cocktail.” Eventually, the name was shortened to Old Fashioned.

And, of course, the drink also lent its name to the glass used for so many cocktails.

Fruit

“In the fullness of time, some people have come to believe that the ‘old-fashioned’ way of making an old-fashioned included mashing slices of fruit into it—or even, God forbid, maraschino cherries—and drowning the whole sticky mess with club soda. That is not an old fashioned.” Esquire’s *Drink Like A Man* (2016).

The whole fruity thing dates to Prohibition, when concoctions of muddled orange and cherry were used to camouflage the taste of the bad whiskey.

Simple syrup

See “How to make simple syrup” on page 39 for notes on the homemade version.

MANHATTAN

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 2 oz. rye whiskey
- 1 oz. sweet red vermouth (Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino or Carpano Antica Formula)
- 2 dashes Angostura or Peychaud's aromatic bitters

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain and serve “up” into a chilled martini or coupe glass.

Garnish with your choice of:

- Luxardo maraschino cherry
- lemon peel

Stir don't shake

“Some prefer to shake their Manhattans. There's nothing wrong with that, really—at least nor more than putting ketchup on a hot dog is wrong. If you like your Manhattan cloudy and topped with an algae-like foam, shake away. It won't taste any worse, anyway, although it'll feel thinner on the tongue.” *Esquire's Drink Like A Man* (2016). *Mr. Boston Deluxe Official Bartender's Guide* agrees: Must be stirred.



Bitters

“And don't forget the bitters. They tie the other ingredients together and are no more optional than mortar is to laying bricks.” *Esquire's Drink Like A Man* (2016).

In contradistinction, *Mr. Boston Deluxe Official Bartender's Guide* doesn't call for any bitters!

Vermouth

The second ingredient is sweet red vermouth, either Italian (“rosso”) (e.g., Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino, Carpano Antica Formula, Punt e Mes, Cinzano 1757, or Cinzano Rosso) or French (“rouge”) (e.g., Dolin Rouge or Noilly Prat Vermouth Rouge,).

Variations

The standard Manhattan is made with two parts rye to one part sweet vermouth, plus bitters.

The “Dry Manhattan” is made with dry vermouth rather than sweet.

The “Rob Roy” is a Manhattan made with Scotch instead of rye whiskey.

The “Perfect Manhattan” is made with equal parts of rye and sweet vermouth, plus bitters. This is the version that is said to have been served at the old Manhattan Club.

History

The Manhattan cocktail is said to have been invented in the late 1870s by Dr. Iain Marshall where it was served at a banquet at the Manhattan Club in New York City hosted by Lady Randolph Churchill (mother of Winston) in honor of presidential candidate Samuel J. Tilden. Those who attended the successful banquet began ordering it, referring to it by the name of the club where it originated. Although the story is disputed, the drink certainly dates to this era. It appears in the 1882 edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, and the drink was included in two bartenders guides published in 1884. The Manhattan Club was social club established in 1865 as the Democratic alternative to the Republican-dominated Union Club. It dissolved in 1979. It is not connected to The Manhattan Club timeshare located on 56th Street near Central Park, which we often stay in.

BLACK MANHATTAN (AKA MONTE MANHATTAN)

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 2 oz. rye whiskey
- ¾ oz. Averna or Montenegro amaro
- 2 dashes orange bitters (I prefer Warn Reserve over Angostura)
- 1 dash Peychaud's aromatic bitters

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain and serve “up” into a chilled martini or coupe glass.

Garnish with:

- Luxardo maraschino cherry

Notes

The Black Manhattan and Monte Manhattan are recent developments—dating to the early 2000s. They are wonderful riffs on the Manhattan, substituting amaro for the vermouth. They are basically the same thing, with an argument over which amaro is better.

Color

The name comes from the dark coloration of the Averna. Montenegro is not so dark (notwithstanding being named “Black Mountain”).

Full Monte

Quantities of each ingredient vary. You may dial the amaro back to ½ oz. or go all in with the jestfully named Full Monte (1 oz. rye to 2 oz. amaro).

History

The Black Manhattan was created in 2007 at Bourbon and Branch in San Francisco. It employs Averna amaro.

The Monte Manhattan (and Full Monte) appear on various websites. This appears to be an argument over whether this drink should employ Averna or Montenegro amaro. Both amaros are exceptional.

PREAKNESS MANHATTAN OR MONTE CARLO

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 1 ½ oz. bourbon or rye whiskey
- ¼ oz. cognac
- ½ oz. Bénédictine D.O.M. liqueur
- ½ oz. sweet red vermouth (Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino or Carpano Antica Formula)
- 3 dashes Angostura aromatic bitters

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain and serve “up” into a chilled coupe or martini glass.

Garnish with:

- lemon peel (by tradition)
- a Luxardo maraschino cherry (if you don't have a lemon)

Notes

This drink is described as a sweeter version of the classic Manhattan. It is more accurately thought of a variation on the Old Fashioned (which is also a tad sweet). Named after the Preakness Stakes horse race in Kentucky, it originated in a competition for the official cocktail of the Preakness Ball, which was held (for some reason) in Baltimore, Maryland in 1936. A bartender from Baltimore's Emerson Hotel won with this tweak on the Manhattan. He basically just added a teaspoon of Bénédictine. Other recipes swap in bourbon for rye and add a bit of cognac. It is generally served with a lemon peel garnish, rather than the maraschino cherry used in a Manhattan. An identical drink (sans the cognac) is named the Monte Carlo. It is found in 1948 book by David Embury, *The Fine Art of Mixing Drinks*.

ROB ROY

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 2 oz. blended scotch (or a single malt if not too heavily peated, which may overpower the vermouth)
- 1 oz. sweet red vermouth (Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino or Carpano Antica Formula)
- 2 dashes Angostura aromatic bitters
- 1 dash orange bitters

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain and serve “up” into a chilled martini or coupe glass.

Garnish with:

- Luxardo maraschino cherry

History

The Rob Roy cocktail basically a Manhattan made with Scotch instead of rye or bourbon. While the Manhattan dates to the 1870s, the Rob Roy appeared more than a decade later, likely around 1894 at the Waldorf Astoria’s original location on Fifth Avenue. According to Frank Caiafa, NYC bartender and author of *The Waldorf Astoria Bar Book*,” the drink was inspired by an operetta named “Rob Roy,” which was performed at the nearby Herald Square Theatre. Created by the composer Reginald De Koven and lyricist Harry B. Smith, the operetta was loosely based on a Scottish folk hero who was a Robin Hood-like figure named Robert Roy MacGregor.

The ratio of components varies, with many older recipes calling for equal parts scotch and vermouth and many newer recipes opting for a two-to-one build. Some recipes use just $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. of vermouth.

PERFECT ROB ROY

A “Perfect Rob Roy” calls for equal parts sweet and dry vermouth.

BOBBY BURNS

To make a “Bobby Burns,” follow the directions for a Rob Roy, adding a dash ($\frac{1}{8}$ oz.) of Bénédictine D.O.M. liqueur before mixing.

BROOKLYN

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 2 oz. rye whiskey
- 1 oz. dry vermouth
- ¼ oz. Luxardo Liqueur (a maraschino liqueur)
- ¼ oz. Bigallet China-China Amer (or Amer Picon, if you can get it).

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain and serve “up” into a chilled martini or coupe glass.

Garnish with:

- Luxardo maraschino cherry

History & Notes

The Brooklyn is a member of the family of cocktails named for the boroughs of New York City, the Manhattan being the most famous. The Brooklyn departs from the Manhattan by substituting dry vermouth for the sweet, and adding a liqueur and an aperitif.

In recent years, the drink has spun off a number of riffs named after the borough’s distinct neighborhoods, including the Red Hook, Greenpoint, and several more.

The Brooklyn cocktail appeared in print the book “Drinks” by Jacques Straub in 1908. This “authentic” version calls Amer Picon, a bitter orange-flavored French aperitif. It is difficult to find these days, though it is available online, for a price. Frank Caiafa, the author of *The Waldorf Astoria Bar Book*, suggests substituting Bigallet China-China Amer, which I think is fantastic!

SAZERAC

Ingredients

- ¼ oz. simple syrup (or 1 sugar cube)
- 4 dashes Peychaud's bitters
- 2 ½ oz. rye whiskey
- ¼ oz. absinthe (or Herbsaint)

Garnish with:

- a lemon peel

Batch

If making a batch, use 10 parts rye to 1 part simple syrup, with 3 dashes bitters per 2 ounces of rye.

Directions

Chill smallish Old Fashioned glasses in freezer (fill them with ice to speed process). Combine the simple syrup and bitters in an empty cocktail mixing glass or shaker. Stir to blend. Alternatively place a sugar cube in the mixing glass and muddle with the bitters. Add rye, and stir again. When ready to serve, add plenty of ice to the mixing glass. (You may use the ice from the chilled glasses.) Stir to chill thoroughly (30 seconds or so). Swirl absinthe or Herbsaint in each chilled glass as high up as you can reach. Pour out most of it, leaving just a puddle. (You may pour the elixir from one glass to the next.) Finally, strain the cocktail into the serving glasses, with no ice! Garnish with a twist of lemon peel, which is expressed (twisted) above the glass and then rubbed around the entire circumference of the glass.

Note: Traditionalists insist that the expressed lemon peel not be placed in the drink, but placed on the rim of the glass (as pictured). Moderates place the peel briefly into the drink before tossing. The defiant leave the peel in the drink. I am defiant.

Simple syrup

See "How to make simple syrup" on page 39 for notes on the homemade version.

Faux pas

Stir. Never shake.

Tradition dictates that it be served in a smallish Old Fashioned glass without ice.

Cognac

Some Sazerac recipes call for half rye and half cognac (notably Sazerac de Forge Cognac).

History

The Sazerac is rooted in antebellum New Orleans. Some claim, with justification, that it is the oldest cocktail in America. It pre-dates the legendary Martini, Manhattan, and Old Fashioned. In the early days, New Orleanians considered themselves too refined for saloons, so they referred to their tippling establishments as "coffee houses"—of which there were more than 200 listed in the city directory in 1859. In 1849, Sewell Taylor, who operated the Merchant Exchange Coffee House, lost his lease and set up a shop to import and distribute the *Sazerac-de-Forge et Fils* brand of cognac. The new bar owner changed the bar's name to Sazerac Coffee House. He added Peychaud's bitters to Taylor's imported cognac and sold it as the Sazerac Cocktail. Over the years, cognac changed to rye (when the phylloxera epidemic wiped out European vineyards in the 1880s), and absinthe found its stage (before it was banned, see page 17). The Sazerac Coffee House became the Sazerac House, and is now located at the corner of Magazine and Canal Streets, not far from its original location. While the Sazerac Coffee House made the drink famous, some suggest that the cocktail can be traced to creation of Peychaud's bitters in the 1830s, and that it was Peychaud himself who first combined his bitters with cognac (see page 13).



VIEUX CARRÉ

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- ¾ oz. rye whiskey
- ¾ oz. cognac
- ¾ oz. sweet red vermouth (Cocchi Storico Vermouth di Torino, Carpano Antica Formula, or Punt e Mes)
- ½ oz. Bénédictine D.O.M. liqueur
- 2 dashes Peychaud's bitters
- 2 dashes Angostura aromatic bitters

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain into a chilled Old Fashioned glass and serve on the rocks. May also be served "up."

Garnish with one or both:

- Luxardo maraschino cherry
- a lemon peel

History

The cocktail is similar to a Manhattan, but is more complex given the addition of cognac, Bénédictine, and more bitters. It was created in the 1930s by Walter Bergeron, a bartender at New Orleans' legendary Carousel Bar (then known as the Swan Room) inside the Hotel Monteleone. He named it after the city's French Quarter where the hotel is located. Vieux Carré is French for "old square." It is pronounced in the Cajun and Creole style "vyur kaa ray." The recipe was first printed in the 1937 edition of *Famous New Orleans Drinks and How to Mix 'Em*. The cocktail fell out of fashion for a few decades, but is now enjoying a resurgence.

Bitters

This drink is traditionally made with both Peychaud's bitters and Angostura aromatic bitters. Some call for using Dale DeGroff's instead. Critics of that substitution say "don't gild the lily."

PHILADELPHIA FISH HOUSE PUNCH

Ingredients	1 serving	6 servings	8 servings
Goslings Black Seal Bermuda black rum	1 ½ oz.	9 oz.	12 oz.
Laird's Applejack (brandy blend)	1 oz.	6 oz.	8 oz.
Christian Brothers peach brandy	½ oz.	3 oz.	4 oz.
Cherry Heering	½ oz.	3 oz.	4 oz.
Simple syrup or Runamok (brand) maple syrup	¼ oz.	1 ½ oz.	2 oz.
Juice of fresh lemon and/or lime	(1 lemon)	(4 lemons)	(6 lemons)
Water (to dilute)	½ oz.	3 oz.	4 oz.
Garnish with slice of lime, lemon peel, and/or a Luxardo maraschino cherry.			
May be served with a sprinkle of nutmeg!			

Directions

Individual: Fill a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with ice. Add all the ingredients. Stir or shake, as you chose. Serve on the rocks in an old fashioned glass.

Advance Batch: Combine all ingredients in a container with a modest amount of ice (to dilute). Stir to mix. Chill in fridge or freezer. Serve in old fashioned glasses over ice. Leftovers will keep in fridge for the next day or so.

Ingredients

Dark rum: Most recipes call for dark rum rather than amber. Judge Carey recommends Pusser's British Navy Rum or Goslings Black Seal Bermuda black rum.

Applejack: Most recipes call for cognac (which is quite good in this drink), but Judge Carey uses Applejack (an apple brandy blended with spirits). This is most appropriate, because the drink dates to pre-Revolutionary times and was a favorite of George Washington. It was created in 1698 by William Laird (a Scottish distiller who emigrated to New Jersey). His great grandson served in the Continental Army, and made it available to Washington's troops. It was also a favorite of Presidents Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Johnson. Applejack has been compared to Calvados (an apple brandy from Normandy France), but Calvados is made with cider apples and Applejack is made with winesap apples.

Peach Brandy: Christian Brothers is nice.

Cherry Heering (formally known as Heering cherry liqueur). This is optional, but a nice addition. It appears only Judge Carey's recipe; I've never seen it elsewhere. One could substitute Kirsch.

Syrup: Most recipes call for simple syrup. See "How to make simple syrup" on page 39 for notes on the homemade version. Judge Carey uses maple syrup. One option is Runamok (brand) maple syrup infused with cinnamon and vanilla (available online).

Lemon/lime: You may use any combination of lemon or lime juice. Lemon juice is more common, but many recipes call for both. If using both, go heavier on the lemon.

Water. Judge Carey, being a very sober judge, adds a considerable amount of water to produce a diluted drink which he makes in a batch for serving later. I find adding a modest amount of ice provides sufficient dilution.



History

This cocktail is said to have been invented in 1732 by members of the Schuylkill Fishing Company, also known as the Fish House. If you're not from these parts, be advised that the Schuylkill River (a tributary of the Delaware) is pronounced "SKOO-cul." The Fish House was a gentleman's club devoted to cigars, drinking, and, on occasion, a little fishing. The angling club was established by prosperous Quakers under the formal name "Colony of Schuylkill" pursuant to a treaty with the Lenni-Lenapa Indians. It was not really a colony, of course, but that did not stop them from electing a governor, lieutenant governor, sheriff, and coroner. Its distinguished members—limited to 25—were referred to as citizens of the colony. Think about the ingredients: During the colonial era, access to lemons and limes from distant places was a challenge achievable only by the very well-to-do. This was truly a high-class drink. After the American Revolution, the citizens dissolved the colony and declared themselves the "State of Schuylkill." The club credibly asserts that it is the oldest continuously operating club in the English-speaking world. The Beefsteak Club of London predates it slightly but forfeited its rank when it briefly suspended its operation. The State of Schuylkill maintains its exclusive and semi-secretive operation nearly 300 years since its inception. Its elegant clubhouse, known as The Castle, has been moved twice (owing to dam construction and sewage pollution) and is now located along the shores of the Delaware River. In the early days of the young nation, when Philadelphia was the national capital, George Washington was an honorary member and a frequent visitor to The Castle. On one occasion, it is said our first President partook of so much Fish House Punch—having made 13 toasts, one for each of the 13 new states—that he couldn't manage to make an entry in his diary for three days.

Punch bowl

This drink was traditionally made in large quantity, chilled, and served in an excessively large punch bowl with a block of ice, garnished with many slices (wheels) of lemon. How large? A note taken in 1744 by the secretary of delegation of dignitaries from the Colony of Virginia described it as being "a Bowl of fine Lemon Punch big enough to have Swimm'd half a dozen of young geese." Others have noted that the bowl used by the original Schuylkill Fishing Company did double duty as a baptismal font for member's infant sons.

Oleo saccharum

The most authentic recipes, particularly for large batches, begin with combining sugar and lemon peels rubbed together to release the citrus oils into the sugar. After sitting at least 30 minutes, this is chemically transformed into something called oleo saccharum. Thereafter, one adds water or warm black tea to dissolve the sugar. This marvelous concoction is used in lieu of simple syrup in making the drink. The oleo saccharum technique for extracting the essence of citrus for making sweetened punch dates to 1670.

Simple syrup

See "Basic Techniques" on page 39 for notes on the homemade version. Or use maple syrup.

ROCKEFELLER COCKTAIL

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail mixing glass or shaker with an ample supply of ice:

- 1 oz. bourbon
- ¾ oz. Punt e Mes (red vermouth)
- ¾ oz. Licor 43 (or substitute Tuaca Originale Italiano)
- a tiny splash of Runamok cinnamon + maple infused maple syrup from Vermont (or just a dash of vanilla)
- 3 dashes orange bitters

Stir for 60 seconds to chill and dilute.

Strain into a martini or coupe glass.

Garnish with:

- Luxardo maraschino cherry

Origin

This cocktail appears on the menu at Alavita, an Italian restaurant in Boise (which uses Bulleit bourbon, Punt e Mes, and Licor 43). Here are the exact words from Alavita's cocktail menu: "Rockefeller — Bulleit bourbon, house-spiced cinnamon-vanilla syrup, Punt e Mes sweet vermouth, Licor 43, aromatic bitters & The Original Luxardo maraschino cherry. Coupe."

We first tried this marvelous drink not at Alavita, but when John and Shannon Marshall served it to us at a dinner party on 11/6/2022. They use a single malt scotch instead of bourbon (which was the original version served at Alavita).

Internet research discloses a number of drinks called the Rockefeller Cocktail. None bear the slightest resemblance to this drink.

CARAJILLO

Directions

Combine ingredients in a cocktail shaker with plenty of ice:

- 2 shots (1 oz.) espresso (regular or decaf)
- 1 oz. Licor 43 (substitute Tuaca Originale Italiano if you must)

Shake 15 seconds. Strain into an Old Fashioned glass with a large ice cube. Should come out velvety with a light bit of foam.

Notes

This is a Spanish after-dinner drink, also popular in Mexico.

It may also be served hot.

Its Italian counterpart is caffè corretto (meaning corrected coffee) which typically includes espresso with grappa, sambuca, or brandy.

Compare also to an Irish coffee (hot coffee, Irish whiskey, sugar or Bailey's, and a dollop of whipped cream).



BASIC TECHNIQUES

HOW TO BOIL AN EGG

Using a slotted spoon, gently place the eggs in a pot of boiling water. Boil them on medium heat for 25 minutes. Move the pot with the eggs to the sink and turn on the cold water faucet. Let the cold water run until the water in the pot is cold. Let the eggs sit in cold water for at least five minutes.

When thoroughly cooled, remove the shells.

HOW TO COOK RICE

Ingredients	2 Servings (small)	2 Servings (generous)
Water (or chicken broth)	1 ¼ cup (10 oz.)	2 cups
White rice (basmati or jasmine)	almost ⅔ cup (5 oz.)	1 cup
Butter (optional, especially for Asian)	¼ stick	⅓ stick
Salt	¼ tsp.	⅓ tsp.

For Karen's Onion Rice, use chicken broth and add browned onions.

Equipment:

Works well in rice cooker. Can also do in covered pot on the stove.

Ratio: The ratio is 2 to 1 (water to rice).

Rinse: Before cooking, rinse the rice in a strainer (not a colander) with cold water. Drain well. This will make the finished product less sticky.

Directions – on the stove:

Bring the water (or broth) to a boil. Add the rice, butter (optional), and salt. Return to a boil, then cover. Reduce heat and simmer for 18-20 minutes. (Don't lift the lid for the first 18 minutes—steam is important.)

Directions – rice cooker:

Put rice, butter (optional), salt, and water (or broth) into rice cooker and let it work. (It will take 20 minutes.)

Fluff and rest:

When rice is cooked, cover and let it rest for 3 to 5 minutes.

Remove cover and fluff with a fork.

Replace cover and let rest for another 5 to 10 minutes.

(This prevents mushy rice by allowing excess moisture to be absorbed.)

Serve.

Store until later:

Cooked rice may be covered with Saran Wrap and kept in the fridge up a few days before serving.

See also recipes for:

Karen's Onion Rice

Pretty Authentic Mexican Rice

HOW TO BAKE A POTATO

Baking a potato (or potatoe in Vice President Dan Quale's household) is easy. Scrub them thoroughly and pierce them with a sharp fork or a knife. They say this keeps them from exploding. Never experienced that. But why test the theory?

We like our sweet potatoes done very well, in honor of our first dinner at Tom and Paula Lustig's house. Dinner was ready, but the news in the background announced that Egypt's Anwar Sadat, my hero, had been assassinated. We were gripped to the TV as the sweet potatoes kept cooking. The sweet silken taste of these overcooked potatoes was the only solace to that horrible news. I have loved them that way ever since.

We like our baked potatoes well done, too. I am perplexed by restaurants that think a baked potato (or any potato) should be served al dente. Here's the goal: When they are done, slit the skin open with a knife. Then use your hands (and a thin dish towel for heat protection) to scrunch the potato around the bottom to pop it open. The soft white flesh of the potato should burst into a mound of steaming hot happiness. Add butter, sour cream, and chives—and not much else, in my opinion.

Sweet potatoes

Place them in a 350° oven sitting on tin foil. Foil is critical; they will drip. Do not wrap them in tin foil, as one might a baking potato. They will be perfect after 2 hours or so.

Baking potatoes (Russets)

Here's the choice:

If you wrap them in foil (as do the old school steak houses like the Stagecoach Inn in Boise) you will have remarkable flexibility and forgiveness as to when they are done. Put 'em in and Fuggedaboutit. Indeed, they can tolerate a high temp with ease. Try 400° for 2 hours, then drop to 300° until dinner is ready. The result is very good, but the skin will be soft.

A more perfect baked potato with crisp skin requires baking without the tinfoil wrap. But you need to pay more attention to when they are done. Try 350° for 1 ½ hours.

HOW TO MAKE SIMPLE SYRUP

You may buy Rose's Simple Syrup at the liquor store. It's convenient and does not require refrigeration (because it contains a preservative). Or you make your own, which will be far better.

Combine equal parts white sugar and water in a saucepan (typically one cup each). You may start with hot water to speed this up. Put on high heat and bring to a simmer, stirring until the sugar is completely dissolved. Turn down heat as soon as it reaches a simmer. Don't boil; you don't want to caramelize this. Cool completely. Pour into an airtight container (e.g., a metal coffee thermos or an empty jar), using a funnel if needed. Keep in the refrigerator and use as needed. It will last up to a month.

Simple syrup is used most commonly in cocktails, such as an Old Fashioned, Sazerac, Whiskey Sour, Tom Collins, Gimlet, or Margarita. It may also be used to make sorbet, to sweeten tea and lemonade, or to keep cakes moist.

You may customize your simple syrup by adding a flavor infuser at the simmering stage: dried flowers like hibiscus, citrus peels, fresh herbs, and even crushed whole spices like cardamom and fennel.

There are alternative "cold version" recipes for making simple syrup. I see no advantage to them. And, reportedly, they don't last as long in the refrigerator.

HOW TO MAKE A BALSAMIC REDUCTION

Ingredients	2 Servings
Balsamic vinegar	½ cup
Honey	1 Tbsp.

Equipment:

A tiny pan. I use a mini version of Le Creuset pot.

Directions:

Simmer the balsamic vinegar very gently – long enough to reduce by half. This may take at least 20 minutes.

Add a generous drizzle of honey during last 10 minutes.

PASTA – BASIC QUANTITIES & TIMING

For two people:

Most dried pasta: 8 oz. (½ pound)

Carbonara: 6 oz. (@⅓ lb.)

Angel hair for Mizithra & burnt butter: 6 oz. (@⅓ lb.)

Bionaturæ traditional tagliatelle: 8.8 oz. (for two, generously) (5 minutes hard boil, max. package calls for 4 minutes)

Ferranti Fresh Ravioli: 11.4 oz.

Conversion:

If buying imported pasta, 500 grams is 1.1 lbs.

Italian Lesson:



This is “Penne” (a tube pasta).
It is pronounced PEHN-neigh.

This is “Pene.” It is not a pasta.
It is pronounced PAY-neh.

SCALLOPS (TYPES AND SIZES)

Dry vs. wet. If possible, use “dry-packed” sea scallops. Dry-packed means they were packed without added chemicals. Less expensive “wet-packed” scallops are soaked in a phosphate solution (sodium tripolyphosphate aka STPP) prior to freezing, which causes them to bleach white and bloat (take on water to increase their weight). Because they’re filled with water, they cost less per pound. Their bright white color is a dead give-away of cheap wet scallops. The chemicals give them a soapy taste, and the water is released when cooked—making it difficult to obtain a proper sear, producing a tough, flavorless result. Dry scallops have a slightly tan or pale coral color.

Size matters, but each has its merits. There are sea scallops and bay scallops. Sea scallops are harvested in deep cold waters. Bay scallops come from shallow waters. Bay scallops are the sweetest and most succulent. But they are not appropriate for recipes calling for sautéing the scallops. Bay scallops are typically used in stews and soups.

Scallops are sold by size, labeled “U” followed by a number referring to the number of scallops in a pound. The “U” stands for “under” meaning “no more than.” The largest sea scallops are labeled “U/10,” meaning that it takes ten or fewer scallops to make a pound. Those labeled “U/15” are still plenty big. Those labeled “20/30” require between 20 and 30 scallops to make a pound. Smaller bay scallops might be labeled “70/120.”

Fresh vs. frozen. Fresh scallops are great if you live on the coast. But if you live in Idaho and are not eating at Chandlers (where they are flown in), the “fresh” scallops are probably thawed out versions of previously frozen. In which case, just buy the frozen ones. If you are going to keep them in the freezer, re-package them in vacuum-sealed bags (using a vacuum sealer machine). In any event, eat them soon.

Harvesting options. “Diver scallops” (seen only at fancy restaurants) are literally harvested by hand by divers. These are very expensive (and the most protective of the ocean floor). “Dayboat scallops” are harvested on boats that return to the shore within 24 hours of departing. These, too, are very fresh and very expensive. In contrast to dayboats, tripboats may be at sea for a week or longer. Most scallops are harvested using tripboats (meaning they are out to sea for more than a day), by trawling (scraping) the ocean floor, after which the scallops are frozen aboard ship.

Veal: Not all scallops are bivalve marine mollusks. Thin slices of meat (typically veal, chicken, or pork) are also called “scallops.” These scallops are used in dishes like Weiner Schnitzel or Saltimbocca alla Romana.

Scalloped: Curiously, the cooking term “scaloped” means to bake in a cream sauce, typically covered with seasoned bread or cracker crumbs. According to the 1931 version of *The Joy of Cooking*, the term “scaloped” may be traced to the recipe for Coquilles St. Jacques. This French recipe for scallops was made with cream. But now any creamy thing has come to be referred to as “scaloped” (as in scalloped potatoes or scalloped oysters), which, of course, has nothing to do with scallops. (See “Etymology” under the recipe for Coquilles St. Jacques on page 130 for further history.)

ROMERTOPF PREP

A Romertopf (German clay pot) is ideal for slow roasting. I learned this from Don Anderson (see page 227), who described the Romertopf as a “gift that will change your life.” It releases water to steam the meat while cooking.

If using a Romertopf, you must take steps to ensure that it does not crack while cooking. Submerge both the top and bottom in water (if not completely submerged, at least put them on the counter and fill them with water) for 20 minutes or more before cooking. Then begin cooking in a COLD oven.

BASIC TRAEGER INSTRUCTIONS

Start the Traeger on “smoke” with lid open until fire is established (about 4 minutes). If the lid is closed, it will smoke a lot, but this doesn’t really matter. Once it is going well, set the desired temperature. It may take 10 minutes to reach the desired temperature.

PREPPING EGGPLANTS (SALT TECHNIQUE)

If making eggplant slices for Melanzane alla Parmigiana, Imam Bayildi, or other dishes, this salting process will extract some of the water and bitterness while transforming the eggplant interior into a creamier texture. This salting process is far less important today, because eggplants have been bred to be less bitter than the ones our grandparents salted. But it’s still worth doing if you have the time.

The eggplant may be peeled, unpeeled, or peeled in zebra stripes—depending on preference and the particular dish.

Slice the eggplants to the proper thinness for the dish.

Place the sliced eggplants in one by one in a large colander. With each layer, salt them very generously. And the next layer, salt, and repeat.

Pick a colander size the results in the eggplants being slightly mounded when finished. Two large eggplants will fill a medium colander.

Place a dinner plate under the colander (to catch the “eggplant juice”). Place another dinner plate on top to press down the eggplants. Put a weight on top of the plate (some cans, a tea kettle, or a very calm cat).

Let the eggplants sit for at least 30 minutes, preferably an hour. A brown liquid will collect in the plate. Toss it out. That’s the bitterness that has been extracted from the eggplants.

Wash the eggplants thoroughly. It is surprising how much salt clings to them! Dry the eggplants with paper towels and place them on a plate with paper towels. Add a paper towel between each layer of eggplant.

SAUCES

ROUX, WHITE SAUCE, AND CHEESE SAUCE

Ingredients	2 1/2 cups white sauce
<i>Roux</i>	
Butter	2 Tbsp. = 1/4 stick = 1/8 cup
Flour	2 Tbsp. = 1/8 cup
<i>White Sauce</i>	
Whole milk and/or half & half	2 cups (or as needed)
<i>Cheese sauce</i>	
Cheddar or other cheese	10 oz.

Equipment:

A good frying pan

Directions:

The roux

Melt the butter. Add the flour. Stir over medium heat 2 minutes to eliminate the floury taste.

The white sauce

Over medium-low heat, very gradually add the milk/cream, stirring in each splash before adding more. Don't worry amount the quantity of milk; worry about the consistency. Aim for something thinner than you ultimately want. It will thicken later.

Stop here if you're just looking for a white sauce.

The cheese sauce

Over medium-low heat, gradually add the grated cheeses. Which cheeses you use depends on the recipe, your taste and mood, and what is in your refrigerator. Ditto for the seasonings and their quantities. This is highly subjective.

As needed, add more milk to thin the cheese sauce.

REMOULADE SAUCE

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Mayonnaise</i>	1/3 cup
<i>Dijon mustard</i>	1 Tbsp.
<i>Ketchup</i>	1 Tbsp.
<i>Paprika</i>	1/2 tsp.
<i>Capers (chopped)</i>	2 tsp. (2/3 Tbsp.)
<i>Sweet pickle relish</i>	1 1/4 Tbsp.
<i>Fresh lemon juice</i>	juice of 1/3 lemon
<i>Tabasco or Crystal hot sauce</i>	a little shake

Directions:

Mix ingredients. Keep in fridge until ready to serve

Serve with:

The Louisiana version is served with fried fish, crab cakes, po boy sandwiches, artichokes, fried green tomatoes, even fried chicken!

Origin:

This is a traditional French sauce, as adapted by Louisiana Creole cuisine (as well as Cajun). Adaptations of it are found throughout Europe. The Danish put it on open-face roast beef sandwiches!

Pronunciation: "Reh-moo-lahd"

Source:

I observed John Moeller make this in his kitchen, but didn't keep notes. I then read 100 online recipes and came up with this.

SIMPLE MIDWESTERN TARTAR SAUCE

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Mayonnaise</i>	1/3 cup
<i>Sweet pickle relish</i>	1/3 cup
<i>Fresh lemon juice</i>	juice of 1/4 lemon

Directions:

Mix ingredients. Keep in fridge until ready to serve

Serve with:

Serve with fried fish, crab cakes, salmon cakes, etc.

Notes:

Some recipes add black pepper.

Many recipes add dill, which I hate.

APPETIZERS

Moo's MELTED BRIE

Ingredients	
Round of brie (or a slice of brie for small version)	8 oz.
Chutney (your choice: sweet mango, hot mango or Major Grey) (good brands are Crosse & Blackwell and Patak's)	12 oz. jar
Slivered almonds	2.25 oz. package (or less)
<i>Serve with:</i>	
French baguette (sliced thin)	

Directions:

If using round brie, cut into eight pie-shaped wedges. Leave the slices in pie shape, but separate wedged out so there is a little room in between each. Then scoop chutney into the middle so that it oozes around between the wedges. Sprinkle generously with almonds. Bake at 350 or 400 for about 15 min. Serve with thinly sliced crusty bread.

Note:

This is based on Mom's recipe card. (Her children affectionately called her Moo or the Jersey Mother—for no apparent reason.) She cut the brie into six wedges and alternated each wedge with topping chutney, nuts, and minced green onions.

GUACAMOLE DE BARBACOA

Ingredients	3 Servings
Ripe avocados	2 avocados
Pico de gallo (or fresh salsa)	4 Tbsp.
Red onion (fine dice) – skip if plenty of onion in the pico de gallo	2 Tbsp. (½ small onion)
Olive oil	1 Tbsp.
Garlic (mashed)	1 tsp.
Jalapeños (super fine chop)	3 jalapeños
Green Tabasco sauce	2 Tbsp.
Cilantro	2 Tbsp.
Fresh lime (for juice)	½ lime
Thyme	Pinch
Sea salt	Two pinches

Mash them together.

Serve with the best tortilla chips you can get.

Source: Barbacoa's Restaurant in Boise. They make the best tableside guacamole in the world. (Enrique's in Kuna runs a close second.) This is modeled on Barbacoa's, based on close observation of their tableside service.

KAREN'S TRADITIONAL SWISS FONDUE

Ingredients	2 servings (main course) 6 servings (appetizer)
<i>Grate the cheese:</i>	
Emmentaler (coarsely grated)	½ lb. (8 oz.)
Gruyere (coarsely grated)	½ lb. (8 oz.)
Flour or cornstarch	3 Tbsp.
<i>Season the pot:</i>	
Garlic clove (peeled and cut in half)	½ clove
<i>Melt the cheese:</i>	
Dry white wine (I like a dry Alsatian Gewürztraminer)	1 cup (add more if needed)
Lemon juice (freshly squeezed)	1 Tbsp.
Nutmeg (grated from the nut)	Just a touch
Pepper (freshly grated) (white pepper is nice, black is fine)	A good shake
Kirsch (a type of cherry brandy)	4 Tbsp.
Serve with:	
Baguette or other French white bread (cut into medium-large cubes) (day-old is traditional)	
Apples (green is nice) (sliced and cut in half)	
Pears (sliced)	
Green, yellow and/or red peppers (julienned)	
Cherry tomatoes	
Blanched broccoli florets	
Roasted potatoes	

Equipment:

An electric fondue pot is the easiest way to do this. However, in Switzerland, the fondue is prepared in a heavy glazed enameled pan (such as Le Creuset) on low heat, and then transferred to a traditional fondue pot over a flame for serving.

If your fondue pot is nonstick, use a wooden spoon to stir the cheese. Fondue forks at the table (one for each guest).

Grate the cheese:

Grate the two cheeses. If using a Cuisinart, use the regular grating blade, not the fine one. Dredge the grated cheese in flour or cornstarch, and set aside in a bowl.

Season the pot:

Rub the inside of the fondue pot with a clove of garlic cut in half. Discard the clove.

Melt the cheese:

Add wine to pot and bring to a bare simmer. Add the grated cheese (dredged in flour or cornstarch) to the pot in handfuls, to melt. Stir in a zigzag fashion (not circular) to avoid the cheese balling up. Add the lemon juice, nutmeg, and pepper. Continue stirring on low heat until the flour has a chance to thicken the cheese sauce. Don't let it boil. If it gets too thick, add more wine. This process will take 5-8 minutes. Don't overcook, or it will get stringy. Add the Kirsch at the end. Serve at once.

Keep on a medium heat while people eat the fondue. It should be hot enough that you need to let the cheese cool for a moment before popping it into your mouth. If the oil starts to separate, it is too hot. Lower the heat and the oil will re-integrate with the cheese.

Etymology:

Fondue is a riff on the French word “fondre,” which means “to melt.” (More specifically, fondue is the feminine passive past participle of the verb fondre, which is used instead as a noun.)

La religieuse (see notes below) is French for “nun.” This golden cracker of cheese apparently looks something like the cap worn by European nuns of yesteryear.

Historical notes:

The first cookbook to include fondue was published in Zurich in 1699. Fondue was heavily promoted in Switzerland during the 1930s, and became an American craze in the 1960s (along with the now forgotten Nehru jacket and pendant).

The requirement to kiss someone at the table if you drop your bread in the fondue is authentic. You can make up your own rules as to whom should be kissed.

In Switzerland, I’m told that some like to touch their bread into a glass of Kirsch before swirling it in the cheese. After the fondue is eaten, there will be a thin golden crust of toasted cheese at the bottom of the pot. This is called *la religieuse*. Traditionally, it is lifted out and eaten—considered a delicacy in Switzerland.

Kirsch:

Kirsch, as it is commonly known, is short for Kirschwasser (German for “cherry water”). It is a clear, colorless brandy, made from double distillation of morello cherries (a type of sour cherry). The cherries are fermented completely, including the stones.

KAREN'S DEVILED EGGS

Ingredients	15 deviled eggs
<i>Boil the eggs</i>	
Eggs	10 eggs (see note below)
<i>Devil them</i>	
Mayonnaise	½ cup
White vinegar	1 ½ tsp
Mustard (Grey Poupon or old fashioned yellow)	1 ½ tsp
Salt	¼ tsp.
Freshly ground pepper	A good shake
<i>Sprinkle with paprika</i>	
Smoked Spanish paprika	A sprinkle on top

Equipment:

Use a very large pot and lots of water to boil the eggs. Heat retention is important.

Extra eggs:

Our antique (1940s) deviled egg platter holds 15 half eggs. Instead of making 8 eggs, Karen makes 10 in case a couple don't turn out right. For some reason, occasionally one will be difficult to peel and will fall apart. If they all turn out perfectly, then you have a couple extra to eat!

Directions:

Boil the eggs

Boil and peel the eggs. (See "How to boil an egg" on page 38.)

Devil them

Cut the eggs in half lengthwise. Remove the yolks to a separate bowl.

Place the whites on a serving platter.

Mash the yolks into a fine crumble using a fork. Add mayonnaise, vinegar, mustard, salt, and pepper. Mix well.

Heap a spoonful of the egg mixture into each of the egg whites. Sprinkle with paprika. Serve at once or chill and serve later.

SALADS

CAPRESE SALAD WITH BALSAMIC REDUCTION

Ingredients	2 generous servings
<i>The salad:</i>	
Heirloom tomatoes (thinly sliced)	2 medium tomatoes
Salt & pepper	Very lightly
Burrata mozzarella (Bel Gioioso brand) Or regular mozzarella cheese (sliced)	8 oz.
Fresh basil	One plastic container or half of a “live” plant
<i>The reduction:</i>	
Balsamic vinegar	½ cup
Honey	1 Tbsp.
<i>The oil:</i>	
Olive oil	A generous drizzle

Equipment: I use a mini-Le Creuset pot to reduce the balsamic vinegar. Any pot would do.



Directions:

Slice the tomatoes and sprinkle them with a tiny bit of salt & pepper.

Pull the leaves off the fresh basil. Rinse them, and dry them with a paper towel.

Arrange the tomato slices on their individual serving plates. Top each tomato slice generously with basil leaves. Finally, add the sliced mozzarella. This is traditionally arranged with the slices stacked and leaning together. I prefer a presentation with them each laid out on the plate next to each other. It doesn't matter.

Set them aside until dinner is ready. If the plates accumulate any liquid while waiting, quickly switch to fresh plates.

Simmer the balsamic vinegar very gently – long enough to reduce by half. This will take at least 20 minutes. Add a generous drizzle of honey during last 10 minutes.

When everything is ready to be served, drizzle the salads very lightly with olive oil. Finish with a tiny drizzle of the balsamic vinegar reduction. Don't over-do it. This is powerful stuff. You can always add more.

Source:

I learned the balsamic reduction from my son, Andy.

TOMATO AND ONION SALAD

Ingredients	2 servings
<i>The salad:</i>	
Heirloom tomatoes (thinly sliced)	1 large tomato
Vidalia onions (thinly sliced, then cut)	½ large onion
Salt & pepper	Lightly
<i>The oil:</i>	
Very good olive oil	A generous drizzle
Huckleberry vinegar	A generous drizzle

Directions:

Slice the tomatoes and arrange on salad plates.

Slice the onions, then cut each slice in half, producing individual long pieces of onion. Arrange them on top of the tomatoes.

Sprinkle lightly with salt & pepper.

Dress with your best olive oil and vinegar.

I like an olive oil flavored with herbs de Provence and a fruity huckleberry vinegar.

KIMMY'S SALAD DRESSING

Ingredients	4 servings
Good olive oil	1/3 cup
Grey Poupon mustard	2 tsp.
Apple cider vinegar	2 Tbsp.
Honey	1 Tbsp.
Shallot (minced)	1 Tbsp.
Salt & pepper (optional, and not really needed)	Very lightly

Combine ingredients in salad oil container. Shake together.

Source: Karen's sister, Kim Neal, made this simple but delicious dressing when she visited Boise in 2023.

BEEF & VEAL

LE BOEUF CHRISTOPHE (MY VERSION OF STEAK AU POIVRE)



Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>The Steaks:</i>	
Filet mignon (ribeye or NY strip is really good too).	6-8 oz. per person for filet
McCormick Grill Mates' Montreal Steak seasoning	A nice sprinkle on both sides of the steaks. Be generous, but don't overdo. This is very salty.
Optional: Bacon	Two thin slices wrapped around each filet, then tied with a string (This is generous amount of sauce)
<i>The Sauce:</i>	
Whole peppercorns (coarsely ground)	1 ½ Tbsp. (this is Karen's level of pepperiness, which is pretty high)
Garlic (fine mince)	2 Tbsp. if using chopped from jar. 4 large cloves or 8 small cloves
Shallots (fine mince) (Onion may be substituted.)	2 large shallots (3 oz.) (or ¼ of a large onion)
Olive oil	As needed (about 2 Tbsp.)
Cognac (for flaming)	⅓ cup
Heavy cream	1 ¼ cup
Beef or veal demi-glace (from Williams Sonoma – worth every bit of the \$30 per jar)	1 ¾ Tbsp.
Cognac (again, when almost done)	1 tsp.
Juice from the steak (after resting)	

Equipment: 10 inch frying pan (for up to 4 people); otherwise, used largest available.

Prep: Remove the steaks from the fridge and allow them to come to room temperature.

Directions:

Peppercorns

Crush the peppercorns in a mini-chopper (takes two minutes!). (Or you can do it with a mortar & pestle if you have strong arms and an hour or so.) You want them fairly fine, without big chunks of peppercorn. But not completely pulverized and turned to dust.

Sauté

Mince the shallots. Sauté them in good olive oil for a minute (to give it a head start), then add the garlic and continue sautéing for another couple of minutes. Add the crushed pepper. Then add the cognac. Let the cognac heat a few seconds, then tilt pan to flame. Watch out! Very fiery!

Take off the heat or turn heat to low and wait till it's done flaming.

Stir in the demi-glace. It will melt right in!

Pause now if you like; this can sit quite a while.

The Cream

Final step: About 20 or 30 minutes before serving dinner, add the cream. Simmer on low heat (just bubbling) about 15 minutes to reduce cream by at least a third. Finally, add another teaspoon of cognac to the sauce. (This is an Alton Brown trick.) Try to time the sauce so it doesn't sit around too long before going on the steaks.

Prep the steaks

Carefully remove any fat or gristle. (Cook it and feed to dogs.)

Sprinkle steaks with seasoning.

Optional: Wrap each filet in a strip or two of bacon. Tie with a string and cut off extra string.

Grill the Steaks

Every chef approaches the BBQ differently. Here is my approach, using a gas Weber:

Preheat the BBQ grill to highest temperature, all burners on – over 600 degrees.

Sear the steaks over the “searing station” for 3 ½ minutes per side (less for small filets).

(If doing lots of steaks, or you don't have a searing station, sear with all burners set to high.)

This searing is the main part of the cooking. Indeed, for a very rare steak, you may be done!

After searing, turn off all burners but one (unless it's cold outside). Move steaks to area with no burner. Monitor other burners to achieve 400 degrees, but don't turn on any burners under the steaks.

Cook another 2-8 minutes to desired temperature. (Take out before reaching the desired temperature! The temperature will go up as much as 5 degrees while resting!)

NOTE: COOKING TIMES VARY WILDLY. For example, very large steaks cook may take longer.

As will winter cooking. Pay attention to the internal temperature.

Rare = 125°

Medium rare = 135°

Medium = 145°

Medium well = 150°

Well done = 160°

Rest the Steaks

Remove steaks to a plate and cover with tin foil. After resting 5-8 minutes, pour the juice that collects into the brandy cream sauce and stir it in. (This is divine.)

Plate the Steaks

Serve steaks with sauce in a gravy boat for people to apply to their liking. The sauce also is good on mashed potatoes like a gravy.

Non-dairy alternative for sauce (for the lactose intolerant):

Substitute almond milk and/or beef broth for the cream.

Serve with: Excellent with potato-kale cakes, Potatoes Anna, baked potatoes, mashed potatoes, Emeril's potatoes, oven-fried potatoes, or creamy polenta. May be

accompanied by spinach sautéed in garlic, roasted tomatoes, green beans, grilled asparagus, sautéed zucchini, and/or carrots à l'orange.

Etymology: Poivre is French for pepper. The name simply means pepper steak.

Aphrodisiac: This dish originated in Normandy France where it was a nineteenth century bistro staple. It particularly popular because it was believed to be an aphrodisiac. Indeed, piperine, an alkaloid found in pepper, has been shown to increase blood flow in various organs.

Julia Child: The first published recipe for Steak au Poivre published in the U.S. is Julia Child's *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* (with Louisette Bertholle and Simon Beck, 1970), in which she disparaged the whole cognac flaming thing. "Steak au poivre can be very good when it is not so buried in pepper and doused with flaming brandy that the flavor of the meat is utterly disguised. In fact, we do not care at all for flaming brandy with this dish; it is too reminiscent of restaurant show-off cooking for tourists. And the alcohol taste, as it is not boiled off completely, remains in the brandy, spoiling the taste of the meat."

Classic: In a traditional *steak au poivre*, crushed pepper is pressed into the steak. Instead, I put the pepper into the sauce. A traditional *steak au poivre* is cooked in a skillet with butter and oil. The cognac sauce is then prepared and flamed (often tableside) in the pan after the steaks are removed. I prepare the sauce in its own pan, because I use the grill for the steaks. My sauce roughly corresponds to the traditional sauce, but I added the demi-glace (which is killer), and I simmer it longer.

Martha W: An early version of steak au poivre (minus the cream sauce) is fun to read. Quoted from Fourpoundsflour.com:

"Martha Washington's *Booke of Cookery* is a manuscript collection of recipes, gifted to Martha on the occasion of her first marriage to Daniel Custis [prior to her marriage to our Founding Father]. The recipe book—copied from recipes of her in-laws—includes recipes that date from the late medieval era to the early 18th century. One in particular caught my eye: a roast of venison crusted in black pepper.

"To Season a Venison

"Take out ye bones & turne ye fat syde downe upon a board. yn take ye pill of 2 lemons & break them in pieces as long as yr finger & thrust them into every hole of yr venison. then take 2 ounces of beaten pepper & thrice as much salt, mingle it, then wring out ye juice of lemon into ye pepper & salt & season it, first taking ye leamon pills haveing layn soe a night. then paste it with gross pepper layd on ye top & good store of butter or muton suet.

"Here's a rough translation of the recipe: De-bone a roast of venison. Take the peel of two lemons and cut it into finger length strips, stuffing them into any holes left from the bones. Let the meat sit overnight, and remove the lemon peels. Take two ounces ground pepper and six ounces salt, mixed with the juice of one lemon, and season the holes the lemon peels previously occupied. Crust it with cracked pepper and butter or fat."

MRS. NIXON'S MEATLOAF

Ingredients	1 meatloaf (serves 2 with leftovers)	3 meatloaves
<i>Milky bread</i>		
Homemade bread crumbs (from baguette or other good white bread with crust on)	½ cup	1 ½ cups
Whole milk	⅓ cup	1 cup
<i>Meat mixture</i>		
Eggs	1 egg	
Ground beef (SRF wagyu or regular beef 80% lean)	⅔ lb.	2 lbs.
Ground veal, lamb, or Duroc pork	⅓ lb.	1 lb.
Chili sauce (preferably "Homade" brand)	⅓ of a 12 oz. jar	one 12 oz. jar
Salt	⅓ tsp. (max)	1 tsp. (max)
Pepper	⅓ tsp. (max)	1 tsp. (max)
<i>Top off the loaves</i>		
Chili sauce (preferably "Homade" brand)	⅔ of a 12 oz. jar	two 12 oz. jars
Thick-sliced bacon (cut slices in half)	5 half slices per loaf (4.3 oz.)	5 half slices per loaf (13 oz.)

Oven: 350°, with broil at the end.

Equipment:

The meatloaves do very well on a broiling pan with slots, which let the juices drop into the pan below. But you could also use a lasagna pan or pretty much anything.

Chili sauce:

On third of the chili sauce goes into the meatloaves; two thirds goes on top. That's a lot. on top You could reduce. I prefer Homade brand. Karen's mom and Mrs. Nixon used tomato sauce. Even ketchup will do. This is America!



Directions:

Soak the bread

If you don't have leftover bread crumbs in your freezer, make some. Cut bread into pieces (leaving the crust on). Put them in the Cuisinart and pulverize them with the metal chopping blade for a minute. Make extra with whatever old bread you have, and freeze the leftovers! Measure the breadcrumbs in a measuring cup. Add whole milk (or broth, if you're lactose intolerant) to soften. Let sit for a good 10 minutes.

Meat mixture

Beat the eggs in a mixing bowl that is large enough to hold the meat. Add the ground meat, the milky bread, ⅓ of the chili sauce, and salt & pepper. Mix together VERY GENTLY. If overworked, the meatloaf will taste "tougher."

Top off with chili sauce & bacon

Form into loaves, and place on a pan. The loaves will be very loose (falling apart). Pour/spread the remaining $\frac{2}{3}$ of the chili sauce over the top of each meatloaf. (Yes, it's a lot. Just do it.) Top with bacon slices. (Karen likes this much bacon. You could use less. Or none, if you are feeling a tad Kosher).

Bake one hour (no more) at 350°.

Broil the bacon

Thick bacon may require a quick broil at the end. Leave meatloaves in the oven, turn to high broil, leave for 3 minutes max.

Remove meatloaves from oven. Let rest briefly before slicing.

Leftovers:

It is a brilliant idea (as the British would say) to make extra meatloaves. They freeze well. Cook them first. When cool, vacuum seal them, or wrap them in tinfoil and then put in an Zip-lock bag. To reheat: Thaw. Remove tinfoil. Put on broiling pan (or cookie sheet)—no slotted pan required. Cover with more chili sauce (or substitute ketchup). Rewarm gently (uncovered) in a 300° oven for about an hour.

Origin:

This recipe is derived from Fran Adam's (Karen's mom) recipe, which she got from Pat Nixon (published in a newspaper). This was the first dish that Fran Adams made for Chris on his first visit to Connecticut! Fran's version was fantastic, served with simple white rice. The recipe has evolved since we started making it. (Mrs. Nixon's version had no milky bread, it was just beef, and she used plain tomato sauce instead of chili sauce.). This recipe proves that simplicity is perfection. Karen has made this 1,000 times. We typically serve it with Karen's sour cream mashed Yukon Gold potatoes. Bringing great joy each time. And the leftover meatloaf sandwiches the next day (just add sourdough bread and a touch of ketchup) are the best.

DAD'S ALL-AMERICAN HAMBURGERS (THE JUCY LUCY)

Ingredients	2 servings
Onions:	
<i>Onion (sliced, then cut in half)</i>	<i>1 ½ onion (or 2 small onions) — yes a lot</i>
<i>Olive oil or grapeseed oil</i>	<i>1 ½ Tbsp.</i>
<i>Crushed red pepper</i>	<i>a nice sprinkle</i>
and/or Mushrooms:	
<i>Mushrooms (sliced)</i>	<i>8 oz.</i>
<i>Olive oil or butter</i>	<i>3 Tbsp.</i>
<i>Crushed red pepper</i>	<i>a nice sprinkle</i>
The Hamburgers	
Ground beef (Our favorite is Snake River Farms Wagyu. Because its Wagyu. Wagyu does not display a fat %. If you get regular beef, get 20% fat for best flavor.)	⅔ pound (for ⅓ pound burgers) or 1 pound (for ½ pound burgers)
<i>Salt & pepper</i>	A light sprinkle
<i>BBQ sauce, e.g., Rib Rack Sweet Honey, Signature Southern Style Whiskey, or Rufus Teague Honey Sweet</i>	2 Tbsp. (any more will make them too mushy on the grill)
Dried minced onion	2 Tbsp.
Pepper Jack, cheddar, or white American cheese	For each burger: 2 ½ slices stacked and folded into fourths (3 slices for ½ lb. burgers), or grated cheese mashed into the size something approaching the size of a golf ball. This looks like way too much, but it is not; assuming you want a little cheese oozing out of your hamburgers when they are done.
Other Stuff:	
Soft hamburger buns – brioche is good (toasted in oven or on grill)	
The sauteed onions and/or mushrooms	
Lettuce, tomato, mayonnaise	
Serve with your choice:	
Karen's Oven-Fried Potatoes	(see recipe on page 194)
Doctored-up Baked Beans	(see recipe on page 91)
Corn on the cob	Serve with melted butter and Lawry's Seasoned Salt
Semi-homemade coleslaw	Combine 3-color slaw mix and a tiny bit of Lighthouse organic coleslaw dressing

Equipment: Frying pan for the onions and/or mushrooms. Hamburgers on the grill. Buns may be toasted in oven broiler or on the grill.

Brown the onions and/or mushrooms:

Sauté the sliced onions in oil on high heat until barely browned (perhaps 6 minutes). Add the crushed red pepper halfway through the sauté. Then keep on low for a long time (while everything else cooks) to caramelize the onions (another 45 minutes is great).

and/or:

Sauté the sliced mushrooms on high heat in good olive oil until nicely browned (10 minutes).



Prep the hamburgers:

Set out beef early to bring to room temperature. Make one “cheese-ball” for each hamburger (roll up shredded cheddar into a ball a bit smaller than a golf ball or fold sliced cheese into a similar size—which is more of a cube). Put the beef on a plate or cutting board. Divide each $\frac{1}{3}$ or $\frac{1}{2}$ pound in half. Press each into a mini-patty. (If making for 2 people, there would be 4 mini-patties.) Make patties thin and large as possible so that there is room to keep the “stuff” in the middle. Sprinkle half of the mini-patties with salt & pepper, add dried onions, and top them with the “cheese ball.” Pour some BBQ sauce on the middle of the other mini-patties. Place each BBQ mini-patty on top of the other one (with the cheese ball). Carefully form them together into hamburgers. They will be plump.

You can make the patties in advance and put them in fridge. Remember to bring to room temperature before grilling (or else grill longer and slower).

Cook the hamburgers:

Every grill is different. I heat my Weber gas grill red hot ($600+^{\circ}$). Then turn one burner to low (where burgers will be placed), the other burners on medium, and the super-burner off (but leave everything on high in dead of winter, including the super-burner). Goal is 525° ; adjust as needed. Higher than that will cook burgers too quickly leaving the cheese unmelted. Put burgers over the low heat burner. Close lid. Adjust the other burners to maintain 525° , leaving the burner under the burgers on low.

For $\frac{1}{3}$ lb. burgers: 10 minutes total (5 minutes, flip, 5 more minutes)

For $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. burgers: 12 minutes total (6 minutes, flip, 6 more minutes)

Cooking time varies widely, use judgment.

If adding cheese slices on top (instead of or in addition to the cheese inside), be patient and add them at the last minute or two.

Remove from grill to a plate, tent them, and let them rest a minute before serving.

After resting, pour the accumulated “juice” (from the plate where the burgers rested) on the buns.

Wagyu beef: The term Wagyu refers generically to all Japanese beef cattle (or to Japanese cattle raised in the U.S.). Cattle in Japan were used as draft animals. As a result, they have increased intramuscular fat (marbling). The highest grade is Kobe (“A5” in the Japanese rating system). The U.S. version of Wagyu is considered very good—with even more marbling than prime. But, for reasons I do not understand, U.S. Wagyu does not or cannot achieve the same level of perfection as the highest grades of Japanese beef. Hence, the extraordinary price of Japanese Kobe beef.

History of the Jucy Lucy:

I have been making these cheese-in-the-middle concoctions for years. In 2024, my son pointed out to me that I am actually making what has been known since the 1950s as the Jucy Lucy. It was named, according to legend, after the first customer to sample it exclaimed, “Ohhh! That’s one juicy lucy!” Two bars in Minneapolis contend they are the creator of this cheese-in-the-middle burger. One has kept the original misspelling (dating to an error on the first menu). The other spells Juicy correctly. A powerful rivalry between the bars (and their respective patrons) continues to this day. One sells shirts proclaiming, “If it’s spelled right, it’s done right.” The other bar’s shirts retort: “Remember, if it’s spelled correctly, you’re eating a shameless rip-off!” President Obama sampled a Jucy Lucy in 2014, prompting an immediate invitation from the other bar.

Notes:

In the past, I've added breadcrumbs to the ground beef. Makes a great meatloaf (if you add milk to crumbs first), but leave it out if making hamburger. Likewise, past versions have had many more seasonings. But I've decided simpler is better. It's really all about the quality beef. Wagyu, if you can get it.

STEAK DIANE

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Steak marinade:</i>	
Filet mignon	2 filets (16 oz. total) (8 oz. per person) (generous)
Soy sauce	light drizzle
Olive oil	generous drizzle
<i>Sauté the steaks:</i>	
Butter	3 Tbsp. (adding more as needed)
Olive Oil	3 Tbsp. (adding more as needed)
<i>The sauce:</i>	
Butter	2 Tbsp.
Shallots (or onion) (finely minced)	7 oz. whole (5 oz. after mince)
Garlic (minced)	1 ½ tsp. (2 cloves)
White mushrooms (sliced)	¼ lb.
Pepper	a generous sprinkle (salt not needed)
Cognac	⅓ cup
Dijon mustard	1 Tbsp.
Heavy cream	⅔ cup
Veal demi-glace (from Williams Sonoma)	2 Tbsp.
Crystal Extra Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	splash
Worcestershire sauce	1 Tbsp.
Fresh lemon juice	Juice of 1 lemon
Flat leaf parsley (optional)	2 Tbsp.
<i>Plate:</i>	
More flat leaf parsley (optional)	A nice sprinkle

Equipment:

The mushroom sauce and the steak will be made in the same large frying pan. If making for more than four people, use a deeper copper pan with 4-inch sides.

For the marinade: A jelly roll pan, lasagna pan, or several plates.

Prep the steaks (start early – requires marinade!):

Trim the filets. If the filets are huge, cut them first in half crosswise. Then cut them in half lengthwise to make them thinner. Then pound them relatively thin ($\frac{3}{8}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch) with the flat side of a meat mallet.

Marinate the steaks:

Lay out the steaks in a large jellyroll pan. Drizzle them with a little soy sauce and a more generous amount of olive oil. (Put on the soy sauce first; it will roll off the olive oil.) Flip them over and add a bit more soy sauce and olive oil. If you have a lot, the steaks may be layered in the pan as each one is prepped. Allow the steaks to marinate in the refrigerator (or on counter) for at least 30 minutes (an hour is better).

Prep the shallots, mushrooms & garlic

Chop the shallots. Slice the mushrooms. Chop the garlic (or use from jar).

Sauté the filets

Heat a large frying pan over high heat. Add butter and olive oil (50/50) to about $\frac{1}{8}$ inch deep. (Add more, if needed, for each batch of steaks.) Sauté the steaks in batches on high heat for one minute before turning (less if they're on the thin side), then 45 seconds on second side. They



should be lightly colored on outside, rare on inside. Remove them to a platter and let them rest while the remaining steaks cook. Tent the steaks under tin foil and set aside.

Sauté the garlic, shallots & mushrooms:

If needed, add more butter to the frying pan. Add the garlic and shallots, and sauté for one minute on high heat. Add the mushrooms and continue to sauté over high heat for 3 minutes or so until tender. Add salt & pepper during the sauté.

The flambé sauce:

Be sure everything is very hot then add the cognac. Tilt the pan to flame it, and immediately turn off flame or move pan. (Use a long lighter, if you don't have a gas stove or flame doesn't catch.) When the flames subside, add mustard, cream, demi-glace, Worcestershire Sauce, lemon juice, and hot sauce. Stir on high heat for 5 minutes or so to thicken the cream. Add half of the parsley (reserving the rest for garnish). Return the steaks to the frying pan, together with any accumulated juices. Turn the steaks to coat them in the sauce and let them simmer a minute or so until they are fully warmed. Serve immediately.

Plate:

Serve with potatoes (mashed or potatoes Anna are nice).

Plate the steaks, spooning the mushroom sauce over the steaks (and perhaps mashed potatoes). Garnish with the remaining parsley.

Origins: Steak Diane may be thought of as an Americanized version of Steak au Poivre. Steak Diane is a dish of a pan-fried beefsteak with a sauce made from the seasoned pan juices, generally prepared in restaurants tableside and flambéed. The name 'Diane', the Roman goddess of the hunt, has been used for various game-related foods. "Steak Diane" does not appear in the classics of French cuisine. (But see Source notes below regarding Julia Child.) The dish is said to have been invented in London in the 1930s (though other restaurants ranging from Ostend, Belgium to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil claim they were the originators). During the thirties, Lord Louis Mountbatten dined regularly at the Café de Paris in London where he routinely ordered 18 oysters on the half shell followed by Steak Diane. The dish soon arrived in New York and spread across the U.S. It remained hugely popular through the flambé craze of the 1960s, but was considered dated and retro by the 1980s. It has enjoyed a mini-revival (with the emphasis on mini) in recent years, thanks to chefs like Emeril Lagasse, who re-introduced it when he opened his NOLA restaurants.

Source: Though described in America as "continental cuisine," is not a classic French dish. You will not find it, for example, in *Mastering the Art of French Cooking* by Child, Bertholle & Beck) However, that book contains a similar dish, albeit non-flaming, named *Sauté de Boeuf à la Parisienne*. A recipe for Steak Diane appears in *Julia Child & Company* (1979). See also Julia Child's recipe as presented in *Cuisine At Home* magazine 2/2007 (available online at www.cuisineathome.com). Julia's version, by the way, has no cream or brandy—which is odd, because those ingredients are usually considered foundational to this dish (and to Steak au Poivre). Emeril Lagasse has a Steak Diane recipe that includes cream and brandy and is much closer to Steak au Poivre.

ROULADEN DER WIESBADEN

Ingredients	6-8 Servings (about 18 rouladens)
<i>Bacon filling:</i>	
Thick cut bacon (cut into ¼ inch pieces)	1 ½ lb.
Yellow onions (chopped medium/fine)	2 medium-large onions
Dill pickle relish	16 oz.
Crystal Hot Sauce or Frank's Original Red Hot Sauce	1 ½ Tbsp. (that's a lot, but the heat dissipates)
Paprika	2 ½ Tbsp.
Salt	½ tsp.
Pepper	1 tsp
<i>Beef roll-ups:</i>	
Top round steak — sliced thin: 0.5 cm (between ⅛ and ¼ inch)	4 lbs.
Dijon mustard	16 oz. (as needed for rolls)
<i>Braise:</i>	
Beef stock	48 oz. or more (e.g., three 16 oz. cans) (use as much as needed to cover)
<i>Gravy:</i>	
Butter	¾ stick
Flour	½ cup
Reserved sauce from rouladen	3 cups or more
Sour cream	½ cup
Juice of lemon	1 lemon

Butcher: Have your butcher slice the top round steak. Make sure it's as thin as specified above, or else you'll be pounding it with a meat tenderizer to make it thinner, which takes forever.

Equipment: I prefer a large copper frying pan. Cast iron is also great. Use it for the bacon & onion, for browning the rouladens, and for the gravy. For the braise, this quantity fits easily into a very large red Dutch oven.

Note: If serving with German sweet & sour cabbage, you may sauté enough onion and bacon for both recipes.

Fry the bacon and onion separately

Cut the bacon into ¼ inch slivers. Fry thoroughly but still chewy but not crisp; reserve the grease.

Finely chop the onion in the reserved bacon grease. Sauté onion in large frying pan with some bacon grease until deeply golden. **SAVE THE PRECIOUS BACON GREASE** for browning the rouladens.

Combine filling ingredients in bowl

Combine all filling ingredients in a mixing bowl: fried onion, bacon, pickle relish, hot sauce, paprika, salt, and pepper.



Rouladen with mashed potatoes and German sweet & sour cabbage

Make the Beef Rolls

Note: The tricky part is to put on just enough bacon mixture on each rouladen so that you use it all up, but don't run out. You may want to count how many heaping tablespoons of filling you have (moving it from one bowl to another) and compare that with the number of rouladen slices you have. That will let you know how generous each dollop of filling can be.

Note: Depending on the butcher, the beef slices are often triangle shaped. If so, put the mustard and filling on the skinny end.

Lay out a piece of beef. Cut off any gristle or fat and put on a side plate to cook for the dogs. Smear about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{2}{3}$ of the slice with mustard, then spread around a heaping tablespoon of the bacon mixture over the portion with the mustard. Roll it up. (Leaving the nicest and widest portion without mustard or bacon mixture makes it easier roll up so that it sticks together.)

Brown the Beef Rolls

Brown the rouladens in just the reserved bacon grease in the same frying pans. Leave room between each rouladen to improve browning (five rouladens in a large frying pan). Brown on two sides. If using very high heat, this will just take a minute or two per side. After each batch, scrape out any filling that fell into the pan; save it and add to the Dutch oven.

Combine beef & broth in Dutch oven

Place rouladens in a large Dutch oven. Add in any stuffing that come out in the frying pan or any leftover stuffing that didn't fit into the rouladens. Pour in the beef stock to completely cover the rouladens. (You want a lot, which will be used for the gravy.) Cover with lid or tin foil. This can be done ahead of time—even overnight, and put into fridge.

Braise (which may be the next day)

Cover and bake at 325° for 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours. If you put it in cold from the fridge, add another 45 minutes cooking time. If this is done ahead of time, move the whole pot to a warming oven for up to another hour (the rouladens will continue to cook). When done, the rouladens should be very tender.

Gently remove the rouladens to a serving platter. Reserve the broth that it was cooked in. Put the platter of rouladens in a warming oven while the gravy is made.

The Gravy

Make the gravy just before serving (using same frying pan). Begin with a roux of butter and flour. Cook 2 minutes. Gradually add the reserved cooking broth as needed (about 3 cups) and any tasty little pieces of stuff from the pot of rouladens. Near the end, add juice of lemon and sour cream.

Plate

Plate the rouladens and top with the gravy (or allow guests to serve their own).

Goes great with mashed potatoes, which also love the gravy. This dish calls out for German Sweet & Sour Cabbage.

Source: From Fraü Margie Wauge (pronounced "VO-ga") in Wiesbaden, Germany (the Adams family cook in 1961-63). I have made significant changes, particularly to the gravy. Mine is richer and creamier than the authentic version.

TSAR NICHOLAS' BEEF STROGANOFF

Ingredients	2 servings (very generous)
<i>Sauté or caramelize the shallots:</i>	
Shallots (minced) – or substitute onions	2/3 cup minced (4 shallots or 1/2 onion)
Butter	2 Tbsp. (as needed)
Olive oil	1 Tbsp. (as needed)
Sugar (if caramelizing)	the tiniest sprinkle
<i>Sauté the mushrooms:</i>	
Mushrooms (washed, stems trimmed, then sliced)	16 oz. (2 tubs)
Nutmeg	1/4 tsp.
Tarragon (dried is fine)	1/2 tsp.
Butter	3 Tbsp. (more as needed)
Olive oil	1 Tbs. (more as needed)
<i>Slice the beef:</i>	
Filet mignon	1 lb. (before trimming)
<i>Seasoned flour for dredge:</i>	
Flour	3/4 cup
Sweet paprika	2 Tbsp.
Red pepper flakes	2/3 Tbsp.
Garlic powder	1/2 tsp.
Salt	1/2 tsp.
Pepper	1/2 tsp.
<i>Pan-fry the breaded beef:</i>	
Olive oil	Add to frying pan as needed
<i>The roux and sauce:</i>	
Butter	Add butter more only if needed for roux
Use the left-over seasoned flour	5 Tbsp.
Beef stock (or mushroom stock, if you have it)	1 1/2 cup (more as needed)
Dijon mustard	1 1/4 Tbsp.
Juice of fresh lemon	1 lemon
<i>Add the sour cream:</i>	
Sour cream	16 oz.
<i>Boil the noodles:</i>	
Serve with egg noodles (The best is Rustichella D'Abruzzo Fettuccine nests from the Co-op. Delverde Tagliatelle nests are also good. I think these are better than the "fresh" pasta. But anything works.)	8 oz. fresh noodles
<i>Plate with paprika:</i>	
Paprika	Sprinkle on top

Equipment: If cooking for 4 or fewer, everything may be cooked in one very large frying pan. I prefer a copper pan, but you may use a non-stick pan if you insist. After cooking the shallots, brush out any remaining pieces with a paper towel (so they don't burn as cooking continues). But don't clean the pan between cooking stages. Leave all that goodness in the pan for the sauce stage.

The shallots:
Sauté shallots in butter and olive oil on moderate heat for about 5-10 minutes. Better yet, if you have time, caramelize them. This is the same as a sauté, except it is done at very low heat and takes up to an hour. Near the end of caramelization, add a tiny sprinkle of sugar and a little butter to aid the caramelization process. Remove the shallots and set aside (in a warm oven, if available).



The mushrooms:
Sauté the mushrooms in butter and olive oil with some nutmeg and tarragon (about 10 minutes). Set aside (add to the shallots in the warm oven).

Slice the beef:
Slice the filet across the grain into slices $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch thick. If some of the pieces are huge, cut them in half. You want medallions of beef, not strips or little pieces.

Blend the flour & spices for dredge:
Mix the flour, paprika, red pepper flakes, garlic powder, and salt & pepper in a large bowl.

Dredge the beef:
Put a generous amount of the flour mixture onto an empty plate. Dredge the filet strips in the flour mixture. Set aside on a clean plate.

Take a break:
You may proceed directly to the cooking or you may pause, relax, and socialize. Or, if you feel a compelling need, retreat to your study briefly to study the New Testament, Koran, or Torah. The last steps cannot be undertaken until you are ready to serve and appropriately inspired. Ideally, the shallots & mushrooms are in a warming oven. The beef may be left on the counter for a while. Don't put it in the fridge. It should not be ice cold when it hits the pan.

Dredge the beef a second time:
After resting on the counter for 20 minutes or so, the beef will have absorbed all of the flour. You may dredge them again, lightly, before cooking.

Pan-fry the beef:
Add olive oil to the frying pan (without cleaning after the sauté). You want a thin layer of oil (about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch deep). Heat the oil to high temperature (but not crazy high). Sauté the dusted filets (in batches if making for more than two people). Sauté them for 2 minutes or so (1 minute on each side). They should be on the rare side. They will continue to cook after you transfer them to a clean plate. Don't put them in the warming oven, or they will be too well done. After cooking, you may cut these into strips—so that the dish can be eaten with a fork. That is an aesthetic question for you to decide.

Boil the noodles:
Now might be a good time to start cooking the noodles in a ton of boiling water. You may salt it very lightly, if you like. Drain when tender. For once, no need to save the pasta water.

Make the sour cream sauce:

In the same frying pan, make a roux of the leftover melted butter/oil (adding more butter only if necessary) and some flour (use the leftover seasoned flour). You want a 1:1 ratio of oil/butter to flour. Cook the roux 3 minutes to eliminate the raw flour taste. Gradually add the beef stock as needed to make a very thin gravy. Add the mustard and fresh lemon juice. Finally, add the mountain of sour cream. Stir this together until all has gotten quite warm. Add more broth if needed to keep sour cream sauce from getting too thick. Check the seasoning, but it is unlikely that you will need more.

Add the shallots, mushrooms, and cooked beef:

When the sour cream gravy is hot, return the shallots and mushrooms to the pan and re-heat. Finally, add the cooked filet and bring it all back to a warm temperature. Just long enough to warm—don't overcook that beautifully medium rare steak.

Plate:

Serve the stroganoff over egg noodles or fettuccini. Top with a sprinkle of paprika.

Beef notes

Stroganoff is often made with inexpensive cuts of beef like chuck roast or round steak. The more expensive cuts make a world of difference. Some go with rib eye, sirloin, or steak tips. But to me this dish is about texture as much as flavor. Go with the filet mignon, preferably prime.

History

Back in the day, every Russian palace was staffed by French chefs. Not surprisingly, this dish is a marriage of tastes: Russian (the sour cream) and French (the mustard). It is attributed to a French chef working for Russian General (and mathematics professor) named Count Pavel Alexandrovich Stroganov (born in 1774). The Stroganoffs were the richest family in Russia. The Count was born in Paris, when his parents were living at the court of Louis XVI and Marie Antoinette.

It became popular in the U.S. when servicemen returned from Europe in World War II. But it has been served at famous Russian Tea Room in New York City since the 1930s.

The Russians traditionally served this dish with mashed potatoes. Following the revolution in 1917, many Russians fled to China, where the dish is still popular. The Chinese served it with rice and then (brilliantly) with noodles.

My recipe is richer, heavier, and more complex than the traditional, more understated version served in authentic Russian restaurants. They are not about to change. Nor I.

WIENER SCHNITZEL OR VEAL MILANESE

Ingredients	2 people
<i>Pound the cutlets:</i>	
Veal scaloppini (Sofia Farms veal from Albertsons is excellent), Pork cutlets, or Chicken cutlets	0.9 lbs.
<i>The crumb/panko mixture:</i>	
Homemade breadcrumbs	¾ cup
Panko	¾ cup
Salt	1 tsp.
Pepper	½ tsp.
Parmigiano-Reggiano (only for veal Milanese)	2 Tbsp.
<i>Additional items for the breading process:</i>	
Flour	½ cup
Eggs	2 eggs
Paprika (only for schnitzel)—added to beaten eggs	A pinch
Cream (only for schnitzel)—added to beaten eggs	1 ½ Tbsp.
<i>Fry the cutlets:</i>	
Canola, corn, or other vegetable oil	about ½ inch or enough to “float” the veal scallops
Olive oil (add a little for veal Milanese)	About 3 Tbsp.
Butter (add some for Wiener schnitzel)	About 3 Tbsp.
Alternatively, and best of all, use nothing but clarified butter!	
<i>Options for serving:</i>	
<i>Classic Wiener Schnitzel (Viennese style):</i>	
Fresh lemon slices	
Capers (old school)	
<i>Schnitzel mit Preiselbeeren:</i>	
Swedish lingonberries	
Fresh lemon slices	
<i>A la Holstein:</i>	
Fried egg	
Anchovies	
Capers	
<i>Jägerschnitzel (Hunter style):</i>	
Brown mushroom gravy	
<i>Zigeunerschnitzel (Gypsy style):</i>	
Creamy paprika gravy with red peppers and onion	
<i>Veal Milanese:</i>	
Fresh lemon wedges	
Pasta on the side, with aglio e olio or a light tomato sauce	

Equipment: For breadcrumbs, use a Cuisinart with the slicing blade. For schnitzels, use a large frying pan (or even a le Creuset Dutch oven) that is deep enough to allow you to shake schnitzels in the oil.

Pound the cutlets:

Cut off any non-tender fat from cutlets or scaloppini. One at a time, place them in a large Ziploc bag and pound with the flat side of a meat mallet until quite thin (less than ¼ inch). Set aside.

Make breadcrumbs:

Coarsely chop good French bread (with crust on) into cubes. Pulse it in the Cuisinart with the slicing blade long enough to get very fine crumbs. There is no need to dry them. (These freeze well for future use!)

The crumb mixture set-up:

In a small mixing bowl, combine the fresh breadcrumbs, the panko, and the salt and pepper. Pour some of the crumb mixture onto a plate. Put flour on another plate. Finally, beat the eggs in another bowl.

Bread the cutlets:

Use tongs (so you don't have to constantly wash egg flour goo off your hands). Dredge each cutlet in flour, then dip in the eggs long enough to become fully coated. Let the egg mixture drain off before laying them in the crumb mixture. Flip them back and forth in the crumbs, gently pressing in the crumbs. Don't stack the finished slices; spread them out on plates or a jelly roll pan. As you make these, use the bowl of fresh crumb mixture to replenish the plate as needed. This avoids getting the crumb mixture goopy with egg during the breading process.

Optional: Let them rest:

Before frying them, you may allow the breaded cutlets to rest an hour in the refrigerator. (Some recipes say a pause allowing them to "set up" is helpful, but most recipes call for immediate frying.)

Fry the cutlets:

Fry the cutlets in large frying pan with a generous amount of oil and butter. Should be enough to nearly cover the cutlets—about ½ inch deep. Once they start frying, the oil mixture will foam up around them. Fry at moderately high temperature, not super-hot—you want them to cook through before browning. Shake the pan to keep the schnitzels "floating" in the oil, and also ladle some oil on top with a spoon. Fry no more than two at a time to avoid crowding and to keep oil hot. Fry until golden brown (roughly 1½ minutes per side). (See Technique discussion below.) Remove the cooked schnitzels to a plate covered with a paper towel. As each batch is done, keep the schnitzels warm in 240° oven for up to 15 minutes before serving. You may stack them with layers with paper towels between the schnitzels.

Etymology: The German word "schnitzel" is a diminutive of "sniz," meaning "slice." It refers to a small slice or cutlet of meat. The city of Vienna is called "Wien" in Austria. Wiener is a name for a long elegant hot dog known as the Vienna sausage. It bears no resemblance to the little things in a can found in the USA (which we use as pill pockets for our dogs). Wiener has another colloquial meaning, as Carlos Danger can explain. Neither meaning is employed here. Wiener schnitzel is simply schnitzel in the Viennese style—which is its purest and simplest (in contrast to heavier German versions with sauce).

The meat: Under Austrian law, a schnitzel may not be called Wiener schnitzel (Austria's national dish) unless it is made with veal. But many Austrians and Germans prefer the pork version (schweineschnitzel).

History: Some argue that Wiener schnitzel originated in northern Italy, which showcases its *cotoletta alla Milanese* (veal Milanese). According to a hotly disputed legend, it was not until 1857 that Austrian Field Marshall Joseph Radetzky brought the dish back to Vienna from the Italian territories of the Habsburg Empire. Given that the Habsburgs ruled both places, this is really no more than a family argument. German-Americans living in the Hill Country of Texas modified the dish into what we call chicken fried steak. The French have a version called *côtelette de veau*. In 1899, a fancy restaurant in Tokyo (Renga-tei, which still operates in the elite Ginza district) did a twist on the French version, creating what is now the enormously popular dish known as tonkatsu (which the Koreans call donkaseu). Egypt has a version of schnitzel which they call "frakh pané" (if made with chicken) or "boftik" (if made with veal). It may be found in Namibia, which was colonized by Germany. Iran serves a version known as "shenitsel" (thought to have arrived during the World Wars) that is thicker and made with more breading. In Israel, you may find a turkey or chicken version (a recipe modified by Ashkenazi Jews in the early years when veal was unavailable).

Veal Milanese: Wiener schnitzel is virtually identical to *veal Milanese*. Traditionally, the Italian version (at high end restaurants) is based on a bone-on veal chop, pounded thin. The Italians sometimes add a bit of Parmigiano Reggiano and spices to the breadcrumbs. And the Italian version may be fried in olive oil, rather than butter and vegetable oil. It may be served with an arugula salad or a side of angel hair *aglio e olio* (garlic and olive oil).

Tonkatsu: For tonkatsu, use a $\frac{3}{4}$ " boneless loin chop with a thin fat cap. Cut slices into the fat cap to prevent the chops from buckling. Unlike the recipes above, do not pound it thinner. The meat is later sliced, leaving the breading around the edges. Bread with salt, flour, egg, and panko (instead of breadcrumbs). Deep fry in vegetable oil only (no butter). (Some chefs prefer a shallow fry.) Test to be sure it is cooked through. Place cooked chops vertically (use a taco stand or even an English toast holder) to let them drain and rest for 5 minutes. Serve sliced over white rice, with tonkatsu sauce on the side. The Japanese also serve thinly shredded cabbage on the side. Place shredded cabbage in salad spinner with ice and cold water. When ice melts and cabbage is cold and crisp, spin out the water. (See *Cook's Illustrated* July/Aug 2024.)

Technique: A true Wiener schnitzel is made with a puffy, wrinkly breading that lifts off the meat and looks like a Shar Pei dog. This result is difficult to achieve. It requires very fine, lighter breadcrumbs (no Panko), a little cream with the egg, and not pressing the breadcrumbs into the meat. The cutlets should "float" on the bubbling oil and be shaken with a pan-swivel technique the Germans call "souffieren." Meanwhile, oil/butter from the pan is ladled on top with a spoon. Turning them over more than once is permissible. Brent Southcombe sent me a note saying that the trick is to use clarified butter, which is indeed called for in the traditional recipes (along with lard and duck fat).

Serve with: Wiener schnitzel is traditionally served with a German-style cucumber or bibb lettuce salad. It may also be served with spätzle. Real spätzle is too hard to make, so we serve it with Karen's oven fried potatoes or Potatoes Anna. Switch to angel hair pasta for veal Milanese.

DaVinci's secret: Gino Vuolo, may he rest in peace, made the best Veal Milanese I've ever tasted. I have no clue how he achieved his delicate, almost soft, breading. He then topped it with thin tomato slices—a taste I eventually acquired. He took his secret recipe with him. DaVinci's Italian Restaurant in Eagle also makes an exceptional veal Milanese. It is not on the menu, but the former owner/chef (Tony Plotter) used to make it for me by request. I persuaded him to reveal that he makes his breading with a combination of sour dough breadcrumbs and crushed corn flakes! And he cooks the veal in a combination of 80% vegetable oil and 20% olive oil (with no butter). Fantastic!

CHICKEN FRIED STEAK

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>The steaks</i>	
Cube steak	1 pound
Salt (to pre-salt the steak)	a sprinkle
<i>The flour mixture</i>	
Flour	1 cup
Baking powder	1 tsp.
Baking soda	1 tsp.
Salt	½ tsp.
Pepper	½ tsp.
Cayenne	
<i>The liquid mixture</i>	
Eggs	1 egg
Whole milk or buttermilk if you have it!	¾ cup
Hot sauce	1 Tbsp.
Canola oil, peanut oil, Crisco, or extra virgin olive oil	Enough to cover pan ¼ inch deep
<i>The gravy</i>	
Pan drippings and	
Cayenne	
Garlic powder	

Equipment:

Everything is done in a large frying pan. Cast iron is nice for Deep South tradition, but not required.

Directions:

Pound and salt the meat

Place the cube steak in a large zip-lock bag and pound it with the spiked end of the mallet to make it thinner—a little thicker than ¼ inch.

Spread them out on plates or something, and sprinkle a little salt on them.

Prepare the flour mixture

In a bowl, combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt, and pepper.

In another bowl, combine the beaten egg, milk, and hot sauce.

Bread the steaks

Dredge each steak in the flour mixture, then in the egg/milk mixture, and then in the flour again.

Source: My first attempt at this dish (3/14/2021) was inspired by a column in the Idaho Statesman by Jeanne Huff published on 1/10/2021. She described the dish she learned from her mother, who, according to family lore, secured a marriage proposal from husband after serving him this dish. Heanne's recipe, curiously, uses saltine crackers—crushed with a rolling pin (instead of flour or breadcrumbs). I have not given that a try yet. It departs from tradition, but who knows? Maybe that really is the secret of marriage.

Origin: The Austrians and the Italians argue over which came first—Wiener schnitzel or veal Milanese (while the Japanese have their Tonkatsu). Meanwhile, German-Americans living in the Hill Country of Texas modified the dish into what we call chicken fried steak.

Notes: Some recipes say you may use round steak instead of cube steak. We used cube steak on 3/14/2021 and it was fabulous.

SHEPHERD'S PIE

“So good, you’ll wish you were a shepherd.”

Ingredients	3 servings
<i>The Vegetables:</i>	
Onion (chopped medium-fine)	1 onion
Green, yellow or red pepper (chopped medium-fine)	½ pepper
Butter	2 Tbsp.
Red chile flakes	A good sprinkle
Garlic (jar is OK)	1 tsp.
<i>The Hash:</i>	
Your choice of beef (typically leftovers): Prime rib (if you are so lucky) or Roast beef or Corned beef (which you can make yourself or get at the deli) or Morton’s of Omaha fully cooked “Beef Pot Roast with Gravy” (from Costco), or Hereford brand of corned beef in a tin	1 lb. (after trim)
Crystal Extra Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	A good splash
Your choice of seasoning: Organics brand Cajun seasoning, or Kinder’s brand Prime Rib seasoning, or Paul Prudhomme’s “Meat Magic” or Emeril’s Essence, or Grill Mates Montreal Steak Seasoning	A generous sprinkle
<i>Mashed Potatoes:</i>	
see separate recipe (including sour cream, whole milk, seasoned salt & pepper)	3 lb. baking potatoes or Yukon golds
<i>The Pie:</i>	
Fresh corn on the cob. Boil for 40 minutes, then cut off the kernels with a knife. Or frozen corn or succotash	3 ears of corn (about 1 cup) 10 oz. package
Cheddar cheese and/or Pepper Jack (grated)	8 oz.

Equipment: All the sautéing can be done in a large frying pan. If you use a Dutch oven to boil the potatoes, use it as your covered baking dish for the shepherd’s pie.

Sauté the vegetables:

Chop onion and green pepper. Brown onion and green pepper in olive oil and butter, adding a sprinkle of chili flakes. If cooking together, give onion 3 minute head start. Then the green pepper for another couple minutes. Better yet, caramelize the onions for 30 minutes separately. At the end, add the garlic on high heat for a minute or two.

Prepare hash:

Cut the beef into tiny pieces (not necessary if using canned corned beef)
Add beef and your choice of seasonings to sautéed onions & green pepper in the frying pan.
Brown for another few minutes until everything is perfect.

Prepare mashed potatoes:

Meanwhile, boil potatoes in lots of salted water.

Drain in colander and return to pot.

Mash in the butter, sour cream, milk, seasoned salt, and pepper. Go light on the salt; everything else is salty. They should be quite wet (milky) before going into the pie.

Build the pie:

Arrange mashed potatoes in a baking dish, or leave them in the pot used to make them. For a nice presentation, make a “well” in the potatoes (an indentation made with a spoon). But if making a big batch, just make a flat layer.

Sprinkle potatoes with corn or succotash.

Place hash in “well” or distribute on top of potatoes.

Top with grated cheese.

Cover and bake at 350° for 30 minutes (assuming everything was warm going into oven).

CHILI CON CARNE Y POBLANOS ASADOS

Ingredients	5 Servings
<i>Prep the chiles (optional, but wonderful)</i>	
Poblano chiles	4 ½ poblanos (1 lb.)
Olive oil	Drizzle on peppers
<i>Barely brown the beef</i>	
Ground beef (80% lean, or Wagyu if you can get it)	2 lbs.
Salt & pepper	
<i>Sauté the onions, jalapeños, and garlic</i>	
Yellow onion (medium chop)	2 large onions
Jalapeños (fine chop)	1 or 2 jalapeños
Chopped garlic	2 Tbsp.
Good olive oil	As needed for sauté
<i>Combine in pot with spices & beer</i>	
Chipotle chile powder	1 Tbsp.
Ground cumin	1 ½ Tbsp.
Salt	1 tsp.
Beer (Mexican or other good beer, dark is nice)	2 beers (24 oz.) add more later if needed
Canned chili beans (or kidney beans or pinto beans)	40 oz.
Canned diced tomatoes and green chilies (or fire-roasted tomatoes), undrained (include juice)	25 oz.
Further seasoning of your choice: Crystal hot sauce, Red Duck brand Korean taco sauce, other hot sauce, and/or dried chili flakes	1 Tbsp. (optional)
Flour	1 Tbsp. (More may be added later if needed to thicken)

Equipment:

Frying pan for browning the beef, onions, jalapeños, and garlic. Large Dutch oven for chili, but you'll need a large pot for the 10-person batch (which will fit in the oven if you take out the top rack).

Directions:

Prep the poblanos (70 minutes) (this may be done the day before)

Preheat oven to 350, then switch to the broiler. Double line a large jelly roll or other pan with tinfoil. (This is critical to clean-up.) Lay out the whole poblano peppers. Poke them once with a fork to prevent them from exploding. Drizzle them with olive oil. Broil under high heat for 10 minutes until they turn really black and scary. Flip them over, drizzle a wee tiny bit more olive oil, and broil for another 7 minutes. Promptly remove chiles from pan and place them in one a Ziploc bag while they are still hot. Let sit for 30 minutes while the chiles sweat. (This makes removing the skin easier.)

Remove the chiles from the bag. Gently peel off the blackened skin and discard, revealing the marvelous flesh of the peppers. Pull out the stems, seeds, and any stringy stuff. Gently rinse them under a faucet in the sink to remove the last of the seeds and any stray pieces of blackened skin. Dice them up in large pieces.

This can be done the day before, and then stored in the Ziploc bag.

Note: If things go wrong and you can't get the skins off, don't worry. Just chop the whole poblanos up very fine.

Brown the hamburger (10 minutes)

Put the ground beef in skillet and season generously with salt & pepper. Barely brown the hamburger, stirring constantly on high heat. (Perhaps 10 minutes. This step is mostly to get rid

of the grease, not to cook it thoroughly. It has plenty of time later to cook.) Put in browned beef in colander to drain the grease.

Sauté the onions, jalapeños, and garlic (30 minutes)

Wash the jalapeños. Cut off the stem and discard. Cut each jalapeño in half; remove seeds and ribs. Chop them finely.

Sauté the onion, jalapeños, and garlic in frying pan with good olive oil until soft (10 minutes or so, or long and slow (40 minutes) if you have time to caramelize them). Some jalapeños are much hotter than others. Depending on your audience, go easy on the jalapeños, and add more later, if needed. The seeds are the hottest, but even that heat will dissipate in the cooking process.

Combine everything in pot (3 hours)

In a large Dutch oven or Calphalon pot, combine everything: the beef, onion & jalapeños mixture, chili beans, tomatoes, beer, seasonings, and a bit of flour. With all the beer and other liquids, this will be very soupy. Don't worry, this will cook down and thicken slowly over time.

Heat in 345° oven, uncovered, for 3 hours. Stir every 20 minutes or so. Add a cover if it gets too thick. After 3 hours, it may be kept longer (covered) in a warm oven. Check and correct the seasoning/heat after a while. (If no room in oven, the whole thing may be done on low heat on stovetop.)

Plate it

Optional: Some serve this with grated cheddar and chopped raw onion. Some people offer chopped cilantro.

Definitely serve with cornbread. (A simple boxed version like Famous Dave's, Jiffy, or Marie Callender's will suffice.)

The chili can be served with macaroni and cheese, known as Chili Mac, which is highly recommended if you're from Missouri.

Poblano Notes:

Preparing the poblanos is the hardest part. The poblanos can be skipped altogether if time does not permit, but you will be so sorry.

One can char these chiles in the oven (as called for in this recipe). I find this easier and more predictable. But real Mexican cooks, it seems, do not do this. Indeed, when I worked for Cesar Chavez and the Farm Workers Union in the 1970s, I recall the cooks (always women) invariably roasted the chiles, one by one, over a direct flame (or other intense heat) on the stove top. It takes just a minute or so each.

Spelling lesson:

Is it chile or chili? There is inconsistency in use of the "i" and the "e," even by authoritative sources. (Wikipedia insists on using "i" for everything.) The best rule is: Chile (with an "e") is used for various peppers used in cooking. (And, of course, it is a beautiful country.) Some authentic Mexican cookbooks also use chile for all of the dishes made with these peppers. But it is more common in the U.S. to use chili (with an "i") to describe a dish made with chiles and other spices. For example, chili verde or chili con carne. Likewise, chile powder is from solely chile peppers, while chili powder is a combination of chiles and other spices, notably, cumin. By the way, etymology is the study of the origin of words. It should not be confused with entomology, which is the study of insects.

Source:

The poblano part comes from www.pioneerwoman.com. The chili part is largely Karen's old standby recipe. The beer comes from www.myrecipies.com. Karen used to make this with "Stinking Good" brand chili sauce from Costco. We switched to real poblanos when they stopped carrying that in 2014. The poblano version is even better.

STANDING RIB ROAST

Ingredients	6 or more Servings
<i>The roast:</i>	
Standing (bone-in) rib roast (small end preferred). Or: Use a boneless rib roast. Or: Costco makes a “seasoned” bone-in rib roast that is already dry-rubbed with garlic inserted.	6 lbs.
<i>Salt cure:</i>	
Salt	1 cup
<i>Bed of seasonings:</i>	
Garlic (entire head cut in half, no need to trim)	2 heads
Onion (entire onion cut in half, no need to trim)	1 or 2 onions
Rosemary (fresh)	1 package
Thyme (fresh)	1 package
Olive oil	a drizzle
<i>Mustard paste:</i>	
Choice of mustard: Inglehofer stone ground mustard, or other good country-style German mustard	1/3 cup
Garlic (fresh or from jar)	3 cloves or 1 tsp.
Olive oil	1/2 cup
Kinder’s (brand) Prime Rib seasoning	1/4 cup
Or concoct your own seasons with: Rosemary (fresh or dried) Thyme (fresh or dried) and/or Paul Prudhomme’s blackened beef seasoning, or Spade L Ranch Beef Marinade and Seasoning, or Cajun’s Choice Blackened Seasoning, or McCormick Montreal Steak Seasoning	
<i>The crust (very optional):</i>	
Panko	6 oz.
Olive oil	2 oz. (to moisten)
<i>Au Jus Sauce:</i>	
Low sodium beef broth	2 1/4 cups
Dry red wine	1/2 cup
Kitchen Bouquet brand browning & seasoning sauce	
Williams-Sonoma demi-glace (veal or other)	2 Tbsp.
Butter	4 Tbsp.
Corn starch	A touch, only if needed
<i>Horseradish sauce</i>	
Sour cream	3/4 cup
Prepared horseradish (Beaver brand cream horseradish is great)	1/4 cup
Lemon juice	4 Tbsp.

The Salt-Cure

Do not remove the layer of fat. Rub ½ cup of salt all over the roast and let stand for 10 minutes. Repeat with another ½ cup of the salt. Set a rack over a baking sheet. Transfer the roast to the rack and refrigerate uncovered for 12 to 24 hours. When done, hold the roast in the sink and rinse off the salt. Let roast warm fully to room temperature (2 to 3 hours) before cooking.

Bed of seasonings (optional)

Layer the bottom of the roasting pan with garlic, onion, thyme & rosemary. Drizzle with olive oil.

Initial Browning

Place beef on rack over a roasting pan (fat side up).

Place into 500° oven for 15 minutes or so to brown.

Remove from oven. Let it cool for several minutes (cool enough to be handled when applying the mustard paste).

The Mustard Paste

Combine ingredients for mustard paste in bowl (mustard, seasonings, garlic & olive oil).

Rub mustard paste all over the roast (top, bottom, sides) after it has browned in hot oven.

Very Optional Panko Crust

If you like, you may add a panko crust. First moisten the panko with olive oil. Then cover the roast entirely, pressing the panko mixture to form a thin crust on top of the mustard paste.

Slow roasting

Turn temperature down and roast at 225° (this is not a typo). This may take 2 ¾ hours for a 6 lb. roast (not counting the initial browning). A 16 lb. roast could take 6-8 hours! Goal is internal temperature of 125° for medium rare or 130° for medium. My perfect point is 134°. This will give you some red slices in the middle and the ends well done. Remove from oven, tent with tin foil, and allow to rest for 45 minutes. As it rests, temperature will continue to rise a bit (but not much IF done in a slow oven).

Au Jus

(Note: If you are making Yorkshire pudding, reserve most of the drippings.)

Put roasting pan on stove with drippings over medium heat.

If you added “bed of seasonings” to the roasting pan, leave them in throughout this process. They will come out at the end (with a strainer).

If you don't have much drippings, don't panic. This can be made in a separate frying pan.

Add beef broth and wine. Deglaze (stir to scrape up browned bits).

Add whisk in demi-glace, Kitchen Bouquet, and butter. Stir and simmer 15 to 20 minutes to reduce. (Only if needed, add a little corn starch to thicken to the point of silkiness.)

Pour through a strainer into gravy pitcher.

Creamed horseradish sauce

Combine sour cream, horse radish and lemon juice. This may be done a few hours in advance and kept in fridge.

Plate

Serve with au jus sauce and horseradish sauce. Goes nicely with potatoes Anna and vegetables de la mode.

Quantity: In a restaurant, a traditional “he-man” serving is a full pound (very thick slice). A ladies' cut might be half that.

Standing: A “standing” rib roast is a bone-in roast that is cooked “standing” (vertically) with the bone structure on the bottom so that the meat does not touch the pan. A bone-in roast has better flavor, but is also more expensive (bones cost as much as the meat). When carving, you must cut off the bones first, before slicing the meat. A compromise is to ask your butcher to cut the bone off and tie it back on to the roast



with twine. This makes it much easier to cut and serve, while preserving some or all of the bone flavor.

Prime

grading:

According to the USDA, a “prime rib roast” does not have to be a “prime” cut (based on grading). It is called prime because it comes from the “rib primal” section of beef. Depending on the degree of marbling, the meat may be also be labeled “prime” (the most expensive) or “choice.” Thus, if you are served “prime rib” at a restaurant, it may not be prime grade.

Prime rib:

Prime rib roast (aka standing rib roast) includes meat from ribs numbered 6 through 12. “Chuck beef” begins at the 5th rib—the larger end, while the “loin” begins at the 13th rib. The best prime rib is the small end (rib 12), closest to the loin.

Ribeye:

Ribeye steaks (for grilling, not roasting) are cut from the same meat—a standing rib. A ribeye steak is typically boned and most of the fat is removed.

Bed of

seasonings:

Several modern recipes urge the use of a bed of seasonings (garlic, rosemary, etc.). They say this eliminates the need for a rack in the roasting pan, but I use a rack anyway. I’m doubtful these seasonings really change the flavor of the roast that much. But I love the idea of them going into the au jus at the end!

Panko crust:

A non-traditional option is to add a panko crust to the rib roast. This seems to have peaked in popularity during the early 2000s. It’s tasty, but also a bit distracting. And the crumbs will fall in the broiling pan and soak up your precious juices. So, consider this an option, but not necessarily the best option. If you do a panko crust, you cannot do the reverse sear. The panko goes on after the browning and before the roasting.

Garlic:

Many recipes call for inserting cloves of garlic into the raw roast before cooking. This is a fine thing to do. The only reason I don’t include it in this recipe is the extra work..

Horseradish:

The horseradish sauce can be made with pure “prepared” horseradish or a cream version (which is easier to find in the store). If you are truly adventurous and have 10 minutes to spare, you may make your own prepared horseradish. Take a horseradish root (which looks like a gnarly 10-inch-long king crab leg). Use a vegetable peeler to remove the brown part and get down to the white part. Cut the white part into small cubes. Blend the horseradish in a food processor with a couple splashes of water. Add vinegar a teaspoon at a time to stabilize the hotness level. Transfer to a covered jar. This is not a joke: This exercise produces intense eye-burning gasses. Undertake only in a well-ventilated room. You may want to wear goggles.

Reverse

sear:

The standard approach for a rib roast is to start in a very hot oven to brown and then finish in a slow oven. This approach is used here. Some fancy new chefs now encourage a “reverse sear” in which you start at 225 or 250 degrees, cook almost to desired temperature. Let it rest thoroughly. And then return to a very hot oven at the last minute for 10 minutes or so to brown. According to these self-proclaimed experts, this results in more “even” cooking (more consistently cooked meat, without the browning on the outer layer).

Source:

This recipe is based on trial-and-error, with strong influences from *Joy of Cooking*, *Bon Appetite* (12/2002), *Food and Wine* (12/2013), and various internet recipes, notably Joshua Weismann. All the recipes disagree. This is an amalgam that I largely made up. The salt-curing (which I strongly recommend) comes from a recipe in www.foodandwine.com (and various other sources).

YORKSHIRE PUDDING

Ingredients	12 Servings
Eggs	3 large eggs
Whole milk	1 ½ cup
Flour	1 cup
Salt	½ tsp.
Pepper	Pinch
Chives	
Vegetable oil (or pan drippings)	¼ cup

Preheat oven to 450°.

In medium bowl, mix eggs and milk. Stir in the flour, salt & pepper, and chives. Beat to make satiny smooth.

Let stand at room temperature for 30 minutes.

Brush the empty pudding cups with oil. Heat them (empty) in the oven.

Add ¼ cup batter to each cup (about half full).

Bake until golden brown, 15-25 minutes.

Remove carefully to a serving dish, and serve immediately.

Source: Based on an old recipe from Fran Adams (clipped out of a newspaper). I have slightly modified it based on other recipes, including a Rachel Ray internet recipe.

Equipment: I have a Yorkshire pudding rack, which is splendid. You may also make this in muffin tins or individual ramekins. Some recipes even call for making one big pudding in 9"x13" baking dish and then cutting it up.

VEAL PICCATA (SEE PICCATA ON PAGE 154)

PORK

RUSS FEREDAY'S BRATWURSTS

Ingredients	2 Servings	
<i>Sauté:</i>		
Onions (coarsely sliced, do not chop)	2 large onions (don't skimp, they reduce)	
Butter	2/3 stick	
Red pepper flakes	1 tsp.	
Garlic (chopped) (from jar is fine)	1 tsp.	
Salt	1 tsp.	
Pepper	1 tsp.	
<i>Simmer:</i>		
Bratwursts (cook them whole – do not slice)	4 brats	
Good beer	2 cans	
Chicken broth	1 cup	
<i>Serve with:</i>		
Hoagie buns	2 buns	
Good mustard		

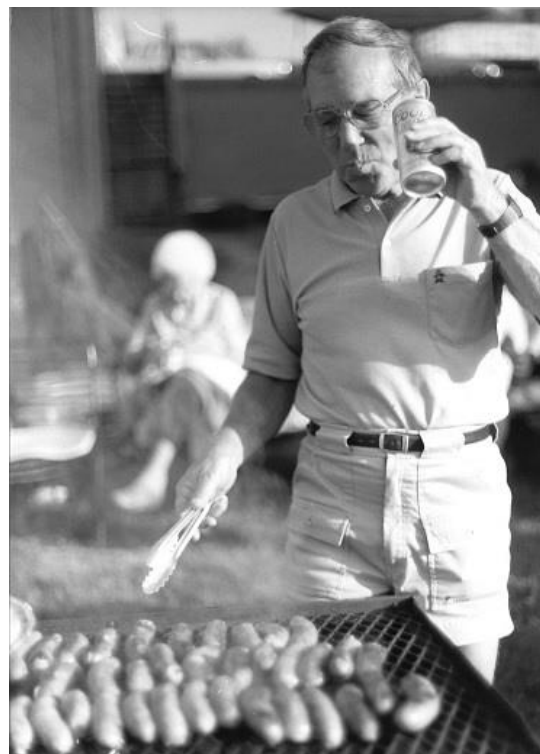
Combine onions, butter, red pepper, garlic, salt & pepper large pot (Le Creuset is good). Sauté the onions on high heat (with careful turning and attention) until caramelized (just beyond golden, barely starting to turn brown). For a large batch, this may take as long as an hour.

Add the whole brats to the pot along with enough beer and chicken broth to cover them. Simmer uncovered 8-10 minutes. (Can be simmered longer – very low – if need be.) Remove the brats. Drain the onions in colander (discard broth – or save for a wonderful broth for another meal). Grill the brats whole (not sliced) a few minutes on preheated BBQ grill until nicely browned. Meanwhile brown the buns on the grill. Let the brats rest a few minutes to re-absorb their wonderful juices. Only then may you slice them lengthwise. Put two brats on each bun and top with lots and lots of onions. Slather with mustard. Prepare for ecstasy.

Source: I learned this recipe from my partner and dear friend, Jeff Fereday.

Russ' recipe was handed out at Russ Fereday's celebration of life service on August 4, 2013 at Hillcrest Country Club.

Notes: Brats from Whole Foods are really good for this. Likewise for the brioche buns. Russ's (like most) calls for just beer. Jeff and Kay tried adding some chicken broth, and this was really good.



Russ Fereday (father of Jeff Fereday) cooking his famous brats circa 1999.

NANA'S HAM ROLL-UPS

Ingredients	3 servings (6 rolls)
<i>Ham rolls:</i>	
Sliced ham from deli, sliced very thick – halfway between 1/8 and 1/4 inch. If their machine runs metric, ask for 5 mm. (or thinly hand-slice a real ham)	6 slices (2 per serving) (15-16 oz.)
Asparagus (4 spears per roll-up) (more if thin)	24 spears (more if thin) = 12 oz.
<i>Cheese sauce:</i>	
Butter	1/3 stick
Flour	3 Tbsp. (just under 1/4 cup)
Half & half	1 cup
Milk	1 cup
Cheddar cheese (you may also add in some Gouda or whatever else you have on hand)	10 oz.
Crystal Extra Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	2 tsp. (or more if you like it hot)
Red chili flakes	1 tsp. (or more if you like it hot)
Paprika	2 tsp.

See separate recipe for Karen's Onion Rice. Once cup is generous for 3 servings.

Equipment:

Use a large frying pan to brown the onion for the onion rice.

You may use the same large frying pan—without washing (or other pan) to make the cheese sauce.

Use a covered lasagna pan for the casserole.

The onion rice:

Follow recipe for Karen's Onion Rice.

The cheese sauce:

Melt butter and add flour to make a roux. Stir over low heat 3 minutes to “cook” the flour. Over low heat, gradually add half & half and milk in small increments, incorporating fully and maintaining a light bubbling head before adding more milk. You want a fairly thin sauce. A spatula scrap in the pan should take 3 or 4 seconds to completely fill. If needed, you may add more milk.

Gradually add the grated cheese.

Season with hot sauce, chili flakes, and paprika. I don't find that salt & pepper is necessary, but add if you like.

The cheese will thicken the sauce. If needed, add more milk to thin the sauce.

The asparagus:

Cut off ends of the asparagus.

Steam (parboil) the asparagus (under-done). Remember, they will finish in the oven. Check after 4-5 minutes (from a cold start). It doesn't take long. Run under cold water to stop cooking.

The casserole:

Butter a lasagna pan; place rice on bottom of pan.

Roll each ham slice around 3 or 4 spears of asparagus (more if skinny asparagus).

Place ham rolls on top of rice.

Pour all of the cheese sauce over ham rolls and rice.

Cover and put in 350° oven for 35 minutes.

Remove cover and finish under broiler (high heat) for 5 minutes to brown it up a bit.

Let it rest a few minutes before serving.

Source: Fran Adams made this up. We've been making it for decades.

BROILED HAM STEAK WITH PINEAPPLE

Ingredients	2 Servings
Your choice of ham steak: Falls Brand (from Albertsons) Homestead brand (from Whole Foods)	1 pound or more (½+ lb. per person)
Your choice of spice rub. We have used: Dan-O's Original Johnny's Chicken & Pork Seasoning Cajun's Choice Blackened Seasoning Emeril's Essence Paul Prudhomme's pork or chicken seasoning Traeger Sweet Rub	
Your choice of fruity glaze: Mango Chutney (sweet or hot) (Patak's or Crosse & Blackwell) Major Grey's Chutney (Crosse & Blackwell) Apricot jam (Bonne Maman) Ham Glaze (Crosse & Blackwell) Apricot Mustard Sauce (Silver Palate)	5 Tbsp. (more or less, to taste)
Fresh pineapple (sliced and cored), or Canned pineapple slices (toss the juice)	½ fresh pineapple 20 oz. can
Honey, or Lyle's Golden Syrup	A good drizzle

Equipment:

Select a "jelly roll" baking pan with an inch high edge (so sauce doesn't run all over your oven). Tinfoil is the key to easy clean-up. If you enjoy hopelessly scrubbing pans and then throwing them out, skip the tin foil. (The syrupy juices will caramelize and adhere permanently to your pan.) Best is 18" tinfoil, which will completely cover the jellyroll pan. Two layers is best. If you only have 12" wide tinfoil, you will need to cover it with four or five layers of foil. (The juice somehow finds its way between the overlapping layers.)

Recipe:

Fresh pineapple (optional)

If using fresh pineapple, cut off the beautiful top with the leaves. Then cut off the bottom. Cut off the "bark" all around the pineapple. Cut slices (circles). Use a circular hole-cutter-thingy to cut the core out of each slice. Now they look just like the ones in a can.

The ham

Place ham steaks on the tin foil covered pan. Sprinkle seasoning on both sides.
Optional: Press cloves into ham steak. (If you are married to Karen, skip this step. She despises cloves.)
Spread the top side of the ham with fruity glaze.
Top generously with pineapple.
Drizzle with sweetener on top.
Bake uncovered at 400° for 30 minutes. Or 375° for 40 minutes.
Finish under broiler turned on high for 2-5 minutes, but watch carefully. This will caramelize the sauce and brown the pineapples very quickly.

Plating

Cut the ham steak in half. Put a half a steak (with pineapples on top) on each plate.

OVEN-FRIED PORK CHOPS (MANLEY STYLE)

Ingredients	2 Servings
Pork loin rib chops (bone-in) (cut thin or not, your choice) or cutlets	1.8 lb. (4 bone-in chops, cut thin) 0.8 lb. (4 cutlets)
Eggs	2 eggs
Milk	¼ cup milk
Panko	1 ½ cup
Salt	1 ½ tsp.
Pepper	1 ½ tsp.
Butter (melted)	1 stick
Olive oil	a delicate drizzle
Lingonberries	(for serving)

Equipment

To bake the pork chops, use a lasagna pan or other baking dish (uncovered). For a large batch, use a “jelly roll” pan with a rim.

Recipe

Mix eggs and milk in a shallow bowl.

Put panko, salt & pepper in a bowl. Mix with a spoon or fork. Put a little of panko onto a dinner plate.

Dip chops in egg mixture. Dredge them in the panko on the dinner plate. Use a spoon to sprinkle on more fresh panko from the bowl, as needed. The goal is to get a lot of panko onto the chops. Set aside the breaded chops on additional dinner plates (or whatever).

When ready to cook, pour melted butter into baking pan. Carefully arrange chops on top of butter, so as to keep the panko intact. Then drizzle a little olive oil on top of the chops.

Bake at 435° for @ 10 minutes (for cutlets) or 15 minutes (for bone-in). Flip and cook another @ 10-15 minutes. Cooking time varies depending on thickness of chops. Take out when meat is white. If necessary, turn the broiler on high for a couple minutes at the end to get a little browning action.

Source: No, I have not misspelled manly. This dish is named in honor of lost but not forgotten Manley’s Restaurant on Federal Way, a Boise icon and our favorite when we arrive here in 1991. I don’t have any idea how they actually made theirs. I recall them being served with jam (not lingonberries).

BEANS AND FRANKS

Ingredients	2 Servings
Franks – your choice: SRF (Snake River Farms) gourmet franks (Wagyu beef) Boar’s Head bratwurst or frankfurters Hebrew National hot dogs) or any wonderful sausage	12-16 oz.
<i>Brown the onions:</i>	
Finely chopped onions (or substitute dried onion)	1 medium onion
Crushed red pepper	¾ tsp.
Olive oil	As needed for sauté
<i>Doctor-up the beans:</i>	
Beans (e.g., Bush’s Country Style)	28 oz. (large can)
Ketchup	⅓ cup (a very generous dollop!)
Dried mustard (substitute Dijon mustard if need be)	1 tsp.
Allspice	½ tsp.
Grated sharp cheddar cheese	4 oz. (1 cup)

Equipment: A frying pan to sauté the onions. A uncovered casserole or other oven-proof dish for the beans.

Directions:

Brown the onions

Sauté the chopped onions in olive oil, about 20 minutes. Add the crushed red pepper halfway through the sauté. If you happen to have enough time, do this very slowly so as to caramelize the onions, up to an hour.

If in a hurry, you may skip this step and just add some dried onion and crushed red pepper to the bean mixture. But you will be sad.

Prep the casserole

Combine in baking dish and mix together: beans, onions, ketchup, grated cheese, and spices. Mix together.

Cut gashes into the franks every ½ inch or so, on both sides.

Lay the franks on top. You will be tempted to push the franks down into the beans. Don’t do it! The bean mixture will soften up and the franks will sink into the beans. The idea is to let them brown up a bit. Let nature take its course.

Bake

Bake uncovered at 350° for 50 minutes.

Note: Skip the franks for perfect baked beans as a side dish with hamburgers or hot dogs.

Source: We have been making this since time immemorial.

LAMB

HERB-CRUSTED RACK OF LAMB

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>The Lamb:</i>	
Frenched rack of lamb (Costco's from New Zealand is excellent.)	1 rack (1.2 to 1.8 lbs.)
<i>Breadcrumbs Mixture:</i>	
Fresh breadcrumbs from any good bread (with crust left on)	1.5 cups crumbs
Grey Poupon mustard	¼ cup
Good olive oil ("Tuscan Herb" version from Olivin—a shop in Boise—is a favorite. Wild Groves Herbs de Provence olive oil is fantastic, if you can get it.)	¼ cup
Garlic (minced)	1 Tbsp.
Rosemary (dried)	⅓ Tbsp.
Thyme (dried)	⅓ Tbsp.
Parsley (dried)	1.5 Tbsp.
Paprika	⅓ Tbsp.
Salt	⅛ tsp. (not much!)
Pepper	½ tsp.
<i>The Mint Jelly:</i>	
Rosebud Farm mint jelly from Whole foods is extraordinary – it's red! Crosse & Blackwell Mint Flavored Apple Jelly is also quite good – it's green. Gilway Fresh Garden Mint Sauce (from Whole Foods) is interesting, but stronger flavored and more like an Indian chutney. Or, if you want to be all that fancy, get a recipe for home-made. But that's too much trouble for me.	



Note:

My version has way more breadcrumb topping than a classic recipe for crusted rack of lamb. The beautiful topping will fall off when you slice the lamb. I serve it like stuffing on the side. Cut the crumb quantity substantially if you want a more traditional herb-crusted rack of lamb.

Equipment:

Be sure your oven has a sheet of tinfoil on the lowest rack to catch any drips from overhanging lamb. For browning lamb: Use a cast iron frying pan. Heat retention is important.

For roasting lamb: Use a broiling pan. Notwithstanding the picture, I now skip the fitted flat “lid” with slots and just put the lamb on the bottom of the pan. There are no “juices” to speak of.

Make breadcrumbs

Perhaps you have saved some breadcrumbs in your freezer. If not, make fresh breadcrumbs (it’s remarkably easy): Cut bread into large pieces (leave crust on). Chop in Cuisinart with chopping blade to turn into breadcrumbs (a couple of minutes). Do NOT toast them. Note: If you are using frozen cubes of bread, you must thoroughly thaw them (or microwave them) first. Frozen bread cubes will jam the Cuisinart.

The breadcrumb mixture

Put the breadcrumbs in a bowl. Add all the other ingredients (mustard, olive oil, and spices). Mix together. The breadcrumb mixture may be done in advance by a few hours.

Brown the lamb

Trim any excess fat from lamb, but this is rarely necessary nowadays with the “Frenched” versions available at Costco and elsewhere.

Cut crisscross hash lines into the fat side.

Partially slice each rib (between the rib bones) down to and barely into the meaty part. This will make it easier to cut them after roasting.

Heat cast iron frying pan to very high temperature. (I pre-heat 5 minutes, but this depends on your stove.). Do not add any oil. Oil will collect as you brown them (removed if excessive).

Sear the racks of lamb with the fat side down for 2 minutes. Turn on the end side and do another 2 minutes. Lean them over at another tilt for up to 2 more minutes. 6 minutes total per rack.

Dress and cook the lamb

Place the browned ribs, boney side down (fat side up) on a broiling pan.

Pick up a small amount of breadcrumb mixture in your hands and gently press it together like you’re making a snowball. Not too tight; just enough that it holds together. Carefully press these breadcrumbs onto the top of the lamb.

Bake at 375° for 40 minutes. Watch the meat temperature carefully.

The breadcrumbs should be nicely browned.

For medium-rare (145°).

KEY POINT: Take out of oven about 3 degrees before reaching desired temperature!! It will continue to cook. Tent under tinfoil until ready to serve.

The presentation

Remove lamb from oven. Cover loosely with tin foil and let rest 10 minutes.

Carefully lift the “cap” of breadcrumbs off and set aside. Plate this separately, as one would stuffing for a turkey. (This is not at all traditional, but a function of the massive amount of breadcrumb stuffing called for in this recipe. If you use a normal amount of crumb cover, ignore this step.)

Cut the ribs into individual chops and arrange on serving platter, with the breadcrumb “stuffing” on the side.

Although you will be faulted by the connoisseurs, you may serve it with mint jelly (as we do).

Royal Rack: If you want to make a royal rack of lamb, you will need two racks to form one crown. Partially cut through each rib on the meaty side. This will allow the rack to be “fanned” out to form a crown. Tie with string (two loops, top and bottom). However, if you make a crown, there is no way you will get the herbed bread to stay on. One could pile it up in the middle, I suppose. But I prefer to stick with my bourgeois version.

DAD'S GRILLED LAMB CHOPS

Ingredients	
Lamb chops	3 small chops per person (¾ lb. per person)
McCormick's Grill Mates Montreal steak seasoning	A good shake on each, all over including sides.

Before cooking, set the lamb chops on a plate or something, and bring to room temperature. Trim all excess fat and gristle. Sprinkle lamb chops on all sides with steak seasoning. You can be pretty generous, but don't go overboard (it's salty).

Heat gas BBQ grill to highest setting and close lid: temp should reach 600° or more. Leave burners on high (but no scorcher burner, unless it is winter). Close lid. Should maintain 550° while cooking.

For medium to medium rare, 7 minutes total (turn after 4). (Chris's fav)

For very well done, 11 minutes total (turn after 6). (Karen's fav)

(These times are for a medium size chop at room temperature. Smaller chops will cook faster. In any event, cooking times will vary.)

Put on plate, tent with tinfoil, and let rest a couple of minutes before serving.

Serve with mint jelly.

Notes: Costco's chops are awfully good, but require trimming.

MOROCCAN LAMB STEW

Ingredients	8 Servings
<i>Marinade:</i>	
Whole leg of lamb (with the bone, if possible)	If using whole leg (on the bone), you will need one leg with bone (5 ½ lbs.). If using boneless, start with about 4 ¼ lbs. This will produce 3+ lbs. cubed meat (after trimming).
Orange juice	4+ cups juice (enough to cover the meat)
Garlic (minced)	⅓ cup minced garlic from jar or about 10 cloves of garlic
Extra virgin olive oil	4 Tbsp. (added to marinade)
<i>Brown:</i>	
Onions (coarsely chopped and browned)	1 onion
<i>Stew:</i>	
Ground ginger (dried in jar is fine). If using fresh ginger, peel the skin, then grate with fine cheese grater.	1 Tbsp. (dried ginger) a whole ginger if using fresh
Saffron	¼ tsp. or so
Nutmeg (preferably whole, grated)	½ Tbsp. or ½ nut
Crushed red pepper flakes (aka red chili flakes)	1 ¼ Tbsp. (no more! This is plenty of heat)
Turmeric	½ Tbsp.
Salt	½ Tbsp.
Pitted dates	11 oz. (reserving ⅓)
Pitted prunes (sometimes sold as dried plums)	7 oz. (reserving ⅓)
Chicken stock	14 oz. (or less)
<i>Add fruits after 3 hours:</i>	
Pitted prunes	⅓ of the prunes
Pitted dates	⅓ of the dates
<i>Add in last 30 minutes:</i>	
Honey or Lyle's Golden Syrup	2 Tbsp.
Cinnamon	1 ½ Tbsp.
Slivered almonds	About 1 oz. (half of 2.25 oz. package)
Fresh cilantro, coarsely chopped	¼ cup or more (use what you have)
<i>Yogurt topping & sesame seeds:</i>	
Plain Greek yogurt	16 oz.
Fresh mint, finely chopped	1 Tbsp.
Toasted sesame seeds	A nice sprinkle

Equipment: This quantity is too large to fit into my largest tagine, so I use a very large Le Creuset Dutch oven or Romertopf. For a very large crowd, I use one or two cast iron Dutch ovens. I use a couple of cast iron frying pans to brown the lamb—two pans speed things up. (These will be hard to clean up, but non-stick frying pans will produce inferior browning.) Or you may brown them in the same Dutch oven as used for the stew.

Directions:

Marinate the Lamb:

Cut lamb off the bone and cut into large bite-size pieces (1 x 2 inches). You may ask the butcher to do this for you. Optionally, the butcher can cut through the bone with the meat on it, so that some of the pieces will have bone attached. Either now or tomorrow you will need to go through the tedious process of removing the fat and gristle from each piece of lamb. (This is a 25 minute job that will result in nearly 2 lbs. of “waste” meat for a large leg. You may cook that for the dogs, or discard.) Put lamb pieces (and bone), minced garlic, and olive oil in the Dutch oven (or other large non-metallic container). Add enough orange juice to cover the lamb. Cover and let sit in refrigerator overnight.

Spice the Marinade:

Remove the lamb pieces from the marinade. Save the marinade! Add the spices to the marinade and mix well. (This could be done later, but it is hard to blend the spices after the browned lamb has been added back into the crowded pot.)

Brown the Lamb:

If you have not already removed the fat & gristle, do so now. Heat two cast iron frying pans to highest possible temperature. Brown the lamb in small batches (about 6 pieces) with a drizzle of olive oil at extremely high temperature for 60 seconds on one side. Turn once and brown for another 60 seconds (less for very small pieces). Then quickly remove them and go on to the next batch, adding olive oil and letting the pan return to high temp before adding more. Don't try to brown on all sides or you will end up with over-cooked lamb. Key is very hot pan, small batches. Don't cook, just brown. The browned lamb may be returned to the pot with the spiced marinade.

Brown the Onions:

Chop onions into large chunks. Brown in olive oil in frying pan. Get it nice and brown (about 5 minutes). Add them to the pot with lamb and marinade.

Prepare the Stew:

Combine in large Dutch oven or Romertopf: The spiced marinade, the lamb, the lamb bone with any fat removed, the browned onion, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the dates, $\frac{2}{3}$ of the prunes. Add chicken stock as needed to completely cover the lamb. Cover and cook in oven for 5-7 hours at 250° (very slow oven). (Do not exceed 7 hours. Plan for when dinner will be served, not when guests arrive.) Lamb should be very tender.

After 3 Hours of Cooking:

Add reserved portion of prunes and dates. (This way, some of the prunes and dates are cooked to smithereens; they just blend in and add flavor. The ones added now will still be recognizable.) If stew is too soupy or too spicy, remove lid during last couple hours. Both the water and the heat from the red chili flakes will dissipate.

Last 30 Minutes of Cooking:

Add the cinnamon, honey or Lyle's Golden Syrup, cilantro, and almonds. Before serving, remove the lamb bone (if not attached to the lamb).

Yogurt Topping:

Make topping of Greek yogurt mixed with mint.

Plating:

Serve with couscous on side. After plating, sprinkle stew with toasted sesame seeds. Then top with a dollop of minty yogurt topping.

Source: Ali Baba came to me in a dream and told me to read the recipe in *Wine Spectator* magazine. Over the years, I have manipulated that recipe a great deal. That magazine recipe has been lost, and, at this point, only Allah knows what it said.

CHICKEN

GRANDPA MEYER'S CHICKEN



At the grill: Grandpa Eugene Meyer of Springfield, Missouri (Chris's grandfather). Pictured (left to right) with his grandchildren: Beth, Rie, Amy (in basket), Joe, Matt, Chris, Grandpa, Jenny, and Boomer the beagle (not pictured: Dave, Murray & Mary) (not yet born: Thomas & Alex)

Ingredients	2 servings
Chicken:	
Your choice of chicken:	2.3 lbs. for 2 people (bone-in) 1.7 lbs. for 2 people (boneless)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chicken breasts (bone-in and skin-on) • Half chickens (breast and leg) • Mixed pieces (thighs, legs, etc.) • Boneless, skinless chicken breasts 	
Grandpa's BBQ Sauce:	
	This is generous for 2 people
Butter	3 sticks (12 oz.)
Worcestershire sauce	12 oz. (1 ½ cup)
Pepper	1 ½ Tbsp. This is a "Karen level" of heat (mild compared to traditional Meyer standards).
Bread:	
Your choice of:	one or two large pieces per person
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fat slices of French bread • Sliced artisan or sour dough bread • Garlic bread 	

Grill the Chicken

I use a covered gas grill. Pre-heat grill very hot (600°). Make adjustments per your grilling preference.

Goal for done chicken = 165° internal temperature (which will rise a bit as chicken rests; take the chicken out at 155°). If you are juggling a lot of chicken on a small grill, you may do some of the cooking in a 350° oven, but that is not the preferred option. If you don't have a covered grill, you'll manage, as my grandfather did.

Traditional version: bone-in, skin on

Total cook time varies widely depending on conditions and size of the chicken, 40-60 minutes total (even longer for half-chickens). Use your judgment and a meat thermometer.

When ready to cook, turn burners under chicken to "off," leaving other burners on "medium" or "low" as needed to maintain 350°. (A slow cook is required for larger cuts.) Place chicken on grill skin side up (so that the skin doesn't crisp up and get brown too quickly). After 25 minutes, turn flip chicken over (skin side down) and turn all the burners (except searing burner) on high until the skin is nicely browned (about 5 minutes). Then gently turn over the chicken (so as not to rip the browned skin—a spatula helps); turn burners under chicken "off" again, and other burners back to low to maintain 350°. Cook as long as needed. Aim for 165° degrees internal, but get them off the grill no later than 160°. Temp will continue to rise after they are removed. The internal temperature will stay stubbornly low until the end, when it skyrockets up. Put the done ones on a plate and tent with tinfoil.

Cheater version: boneless, skinless

Place boneless, skinless chicken on a high flame or "searing station." Cook both sides until beautifully browned (2-4 minutes per side). Turn off flame below the chicken and continue cooking at 350° until done, which will be soon. Total cook time is about 20-25 minutes.

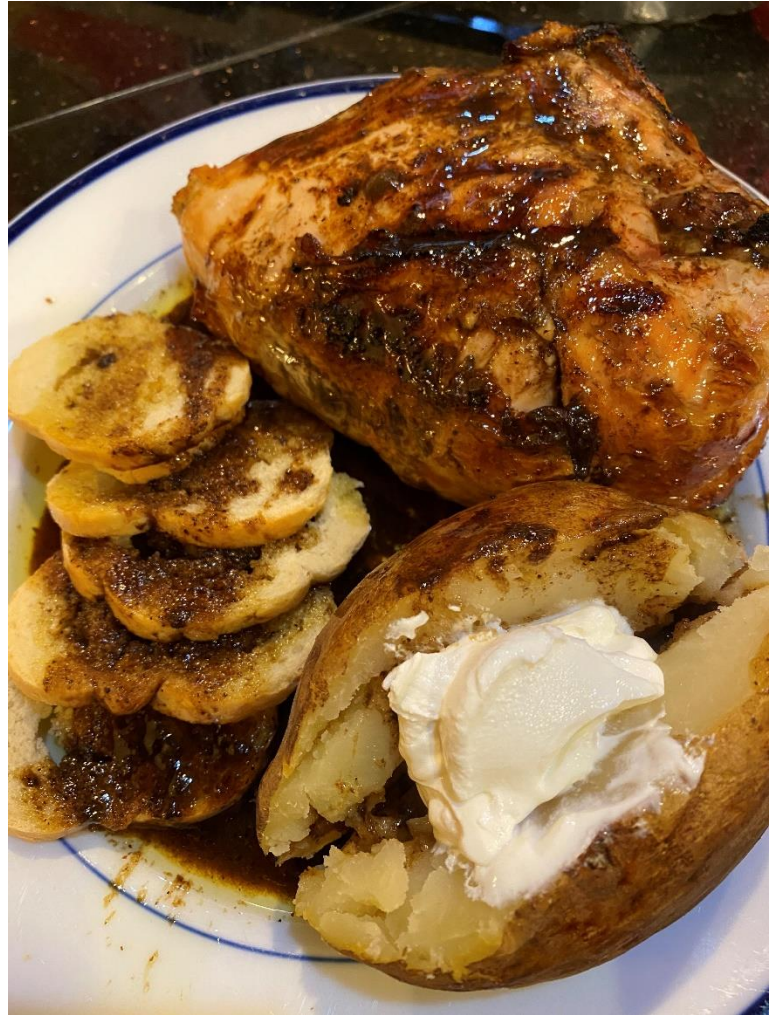
BBQ Sauce

Unlike most BBQ'd chickens, this chicken is grilled plain (w/o BBQ sauce). The non-traditional BBQ sauce is then generously applied afterward, when plated. While chicken is cooking, prepare the secret Grandpa sauce. In a small pot, combine the butter and Worcestershire sauce in equal proportions, and add tons of pepper. Cover and put it into a warming oven while the chicken cooks. Or heat on stove gently. Don't boil the sauce! Even lowest setting may cause it to boil eventually. Keep warm until dinner.

Plating

Remove the chicken, tent it and let it rest a while. (Optional: After it has rested, cut deep gashes in the chicken before saucing – allowing it will soak up more sauce.)

Plate the chicken, the bread, and the baked potato. Pour lots and lots of BBQ sauce over all three. You may add a dollop of sour cream to the potato, too. Serve more sauce tableside.



This batch happened to be made with left-over baguette slices from yesterday's dinner party. Any good bread works!

Orange & Banana Salad

By tradition, originating with my grandmother, Grandma Meyer's chicken must be served with a "salad" of orange and banana slices (sprinkled with sugar and allowed to macerate) finished with some little marshmallows (prized by the grandchildren). I wish this was allowed on our diet! My sister Beth Zienty adds other fruits like strawberries. Alternatively, serve with Jean Carey's fabulous fruit salad (look up "honey lime rainbow fruit salad" on the internet).

Notes:

This recipe dates to the Great Depression. Accordingly, Grandpa Meyer used margarine, not butter. His more observant grandchildren stick with this, as a point of honor and respect. Grandpa Meyer grilled half chickens. Karen and I prefer breasts halves (skin-on, bone-in). The bread and sauce is most delicious when eaten in a single bite with some chicken.

WINE-BRAISED CHICKEN WITH OLIVES, ARTICHOKE, AND ORZO

Ingredients	2 Servings (very generous)
<i>Brown the chicken</i>	
Chicken thighs (boneless, skinless), or Chicken breast (boneless, skinless) (cut in half lengthwise to make thinner), or Bone-in chicken thighs	1 ½ lbs. (boneless thighs) (4 thighs) 1 ½ lbs. (boneless breast) (2 breast halves) 2 lbs. (bone-in thighs)
Salt & pepper	Generously
Grapeseed oil (better browning) or olive oil	2 Tbsp. to start—a thin glaze on the pan
<i>Toast the orzo and garlic</i>	
Butter	3 Tbsp.
Garlic	2 Tbsp. from jar, or 6 cloves
Orzo (dry)	1 ¼ cup
<i>Deglaze with wine</i>	
Good white wine	¾ cup
<i>Into the oven</i>	
Chicken broth	¾ cup
Pitted green olives (e.g., Mezzetta brand pitted Castelvetrano Olives) or, if you can get them, Sable & Rosenfeld's Topsy Lemon Olives in Gin	5 oz. jar (and use the liquid)
Marinated artichoke hearts (no need to chop) (Napoleon brand is good)	8-12 oz. jar (and use the liquid)
Lemon juice and zest	2 lemons (or less if you prefer)
<i>Plate</i>	
Feta cheese (crumbled) (optional)	½ cup

Equipment:

If you have a Dutch oven, this is a one-pot meal. Use your largest Dutch oven to brown the chicken, sauté the garlic and orzo, and then braise the chicken. If you are cooking for the Queen (oh, now the King), you could use a cast iron or other frying pan for browning, and then braise the chicken in a Romertopf. Everything in a Romertopf tastes better, but this is more clean-up. If using a Romertopf, follow the instructions for pre-soaking and start in a cold oven.

Directions:

Prep the chicken

Salt and pepper the chicken generously. (If using boneless chicken breasts, cut them in half lengthwise to make them thinner.)

Sear the chicken

Brown the chicken in just a touch of olive oil on high heat until golden (4 minutes per side, 8 minutes total, on very high heat). Drizzle a tiny bit more oil onto the chicken during cooking only if needed. Less oil = better browning.

Chicken should be only barely, partially cooked at this point. Otherwise, you will end up with over-cooked, dried out chicken.



Toast the orzo and garlic

Remove the chicken from the Dutch oven leaving any wonderful juice in the Dutch oven. Add the butter, garlic, and orzo to the Dutch oven. Sauté 2 or 3 minutes on very high heat until garlic is fragrant and orzo is toasted.

Deglaze with wine

Add the wine to the orzo. Stir and scrape to deglaze (scrape up the browned bits) a couple minutes.

Put everything together

Add the chicken broth, artichoke hearts and their juice, olives and their juice, lemon zest, and lemon juice. Bring to a boil. Put the chicken and any accumulated juices back in.

Finish in oven – uncovered!

Put the Dutch oven (uncovered) into the oven at 375°. After 20-25 minutes (perhaps longer for a big batch), the liquid should be absorbed into the orzo and the chicken should be completely cooked.

Serve at once, or cover and let rest on the counter for a while. If need be, it could be covered and put into a warming oven for a while.

Plate

Plate the chicken, orzo, olives, and artichokes.
If you wish, top with a sprinkle of crumbled feta cheese.
Serve with a light salad. Or vegetable of your choice.

MOROCCAN CHICKEN WITH APRICOTS, PRUNES, AND ALMONDS

Ingredients	2 Generous Servings
<i>Season and brown the Chicken</i>	
Chicken thighs (bone-in/skin-on is great, or use boneless/skinless)	2.0 lbs. (4 thighs bone-in) 1.5 lbs. (boneless)
Poultry seasoning (e.g. Kinder's Buttery Poultry Blend) (or Paul Prudhomme's Chicken Magic) (or just salt & pepper)	Generous sprinkle on all sides of chicken
Olive oil	As needed for sauté
<i>Sauté the onion, tomato paste, garlic, and red chili flakes</i>	
Olive oil	As needed for sauté
Onion (chopped fine)	1 large onion
Tomato paste	3 Tbsp.
Garlic (minced) (from jar or fresh)	1 Tbsp. (about 5 cloves)
Red chili flakes	½ Tbsp.
<i>Other spices</i>	
Fresh rosemary (pull leaves off stem and mince fine) (or dried)	4 large sprigs (1 tsp. dried)
Cardamom (dried)	⅔ tsp.
Turmeric (dried)	⅔ tsp.
Ginger (dried)	½ tsp.
Ground cinnamon (or cinnamon sticks)	½ tsp (or four sticks)
Honey	2 Tbsp.
<i>Fruits, nuts, and broth</i>	
Dried apricots	5 oz.
Dried prunes	5 oz.
Whole dried almonds	⅔ cup
Chicken broth	14.5 oz. (more as needed)
<i>Thicken the sauce – probably unnecessary</i>	
Butter	2 Tbsp.
Flour	2 Tbsp.
<i>Plate it</i>	
Couscous (see recipe on page 206)	
Fresh cilantro (fine chop)	A good handful

Equipment

Traditionally, the tagine (or Dutch oven) is also used for the browning process. I prefer to brown the chicken and the onions mixture in a large copper frying pan or cast iron pan. (Better browning; easier clean-up.) I then transfer everything to the tagine, Dutch oven, or Romertopf.

Traditionally, this is prepared in a tagine on the stove top. I find it much more manageable to braise the chicken (after browning) in the oven using a Le Creuset Dutch oven, a glazed ceramic tagine, or a Romertopf. If using either of the latter, start in a cold oven to avoid cracking the clay.

Prep the chicken

Thighs are definitely better for this dish. I prefer bone-in, skin-on, but boneless thighs are good, too. If using boneless, cut any really large pieces in half. Sprinkle poultry seasoning (or just salt and pepper) onto all sides of the chicken pieces.

Brown the chicken

Brown the chicken on very high heat in a thin layer of olive oil, turning 3 or 4 times for bone-in or a couple of times for boneless (8 minutes total for bone-in, less for boneless). This will not cook the chicken, just brown it. Remove the chicken and set aside. (Note to self: on my Thermador stove, my wok burner at half level is plenty hot.)

Sauté the onion, garlic, and red chile flakes

In the same frying pan, sauté the onions in olive oil gently for at least 10 minutes until soft and translucent (deglazing some or all of the browned bits off the bottom of the frying pan). If you have time, do the onions very slowly (a half hour or so), to achieve caramelization. Then add the garlic and red chile flakes, and continue cooking at high heat another few minutes until garlic is cooked. Blend in the tomato paste and honey. Finally, add the remaining dry spices to the mixture, and let them blend in under low heat.

Combine everything in Tagine or Dutch oven

Pour half of the chicken broth into the Dutch oven or tagine. Add the onion/spice mixture and blend together.

Place the browned chicken (including any accumulated juices) in the Dutch oven or tagine. Add the apricots, prunes, and almonds. Add additional chicken broth as needed to not-quite-cover the chicken.

If you're using a tagine, this is traditionally cooked on the stove over a very low flame. However, I prefer to place the tagine in the oven (which requires less tending). If using a tagine, start in a cold oven to avoid cracking the clay.

Bake in a tightly covered Dutch oven or tagine in a 285° oven for 3.5 hours. (Remember to start cold if using a tagine.) Remove from oven and let rest for 10 minutes (allowing liquids to settle down and thicken).

Note: Yes, this is a very long cooking time. After all, we all know that a chicken can be cooked in 45 minutes. This gentle, low-temperature, multi-hour slow-cook is aimed at getting things extremely tender, transforming those fruits, and letting the remarkable braising sauce emerge.

If something goes wrong—Remove the broth and thicken it

When braising is done and the pot has rested had 10 minutes, the sauce will still be on the thin side, but just thick enough to qualify as a gravy. In the unlikely event the sauce is too soupy, here's the fix: I make a roux in the same frying pan I used before, with all the tasty bits. (A roux is melted butter with flour stirred in, that is cooked for a few minutes to remove the flour taste.) Then pour most of the liquid from the Dutch oven into the frying pan with the remaining roux. (Getting the braising liquid out without messing up the chicken is tricky—pour it into the frying pan while holding the lid to keep the chicken and stuff in the Dutch oven.) Bring the sauce to a strong simmer and stir gently until it thickens (five minutes or so). Then return the sauce to the Dutch Oven or Tagine and mix it in.

Serve over couscous

Plate the chicken, fruits & nuts (and delicious sauce), with couscous on the side. Sprinkle with chopped cilantro.

Source:

I read about 14 recipes and then made this up. It continues to be re-worked.

SPANISH BRAISED CHICKEN WITH SAFFRON AND SHERRY (POLLO EN PEPITORIA)

Ingredients	4 Generous Servings
<i>Boil the eggs:</i>	
Eggs	5 eggs
<i>Brown the chicken:</i>	
Bone-on, skin-on chicken thighs (substitute boneless, skinless chicken breast if required)	3 lbs.
Salt & pepper	generously
Olive oil (garlic or rosemary is nice!)	2 Tbsp. and more as needed
<i>Prep the tomato sauce:</i>	
Onion (chopped fine)	1 ½ to 2 onions (depending on size)
Olive oil	Just a bit for sauté
Garlic (chopped)	3 Tbsp.
Bay leaf	2 leaves
Ground cinnamon	½ tsp.
Dry sherry (or white wine) ¹	1 cup
Chicken broth	1 cup
Canned crushed or chopped tomatoes with the liquid (San Marzano are best)	28 oz. can
<i>Tomato sauce – Step #2:</i>	
Hard-boiled egg yolks	5 eggs
Blanched almond slivers (toasted in oven)	½ cup
Saffron threads	A generous pinch
Fresh parsley (chopped)	2 Tbsp.
Lemon juice	1 lemon (2 tsp.)
<i>Presentation:</i>	
Egg whites (hard boiled, chopped)	2 eggs
Fresh parsley (chopped)	1 Tbsp.

Equipment: Brown the chicken and make the tomato sauce in a very large frying pan. Then transfer it to a Le Creuset Dutch oven, Romertopf, or anything ovenproof with a cover. Could also use a lasagna pan.

Boil the eggs

Boil and peel the eggs. (See “How to boil an egg” on page 38.)

When they cool thoroughly, remove the shells. Separate the white from the yolk. Chop the white. Place white and yolks in separate bowls and refrigerate.

Toast the almonds

Place the almond slivers in a jellyroll pan or whatever. Toast them in a 300° oven for 30 minutes. They should just begin to turn a bit darker and taste wonderful. Set them aside. And don’t eat them, though you will be sorely tempted.

¹ Julia Child on wine: “I enjoy cooking with wine. Sometimes I even put it in the food.” “Everything in moderation . . . including moderation.”

Brown the chicken

If substituting chicken breast, cut them into thigh-size piece.

Pat the chicken dry with paper towels. Season generously with salt & pepper.

Heat a bit of olive oil in large frying pan until just smoking. Add chicken and brown on high heat for 2-3 minutes per side. Transfer chicken to plate.

Prep the tomato sauce

Add chopped onion, a bit more olive oil, and some salt to the now empty frying pan. Sauté on medium high heat until softened (about 3 minutes).

Add garlic, bay leaf, and cinnamon. Cook until fragrant (another minute).

Deglaze with the sherry, scraping up any bits, until sherry starts to thicken (about 3 minutes).

Add the chicken broth and tomatoes. Bring to simmer. This will yield a very thin tomato sauce, which is good for braising.

Braise

Transfer the tomato sauce to the Dutch oven or lasagna pan. Add the chicken, pushing them part way mostly into the sauce, but not submerging them.

Cover and bake at 300° for 50 minutes. This is a slow oven, but sufficient to complete the cooking of the chicken.

Remove the chicken to a plate, remove & discard skin, and cover with tin foil.

Discard the bay leaves.

Tomato sauce Step #2 (boat motor)

Add hard-boiled egg yolks, almonds, saffron, lemon juice, and some parsley to the pot with the tomato sauce.

If you have a boat motor (electric immersion blender), use it to chop and blend everything together (about 2 minutes).

Otherwise, you will need to transfer the tomato sauce to a blender or Cuisinart with chopping blade.

If the sauce not thick enough, return to heat and simmer, whisking frequently, for a few minutes.

Plate

Arrange chicken pieces on plate. Pour sauce on the chicken. Sprinkle on the chopped egg whites and more chopped parsley.

Serve with Karen's Onion Rice, orzo, risotto, or pasta.

Source: Cooks Illustrated (9/2015) (now known as Cook's Country). I have made a number of adjustments. Most notably, Cooks calls for discarding most of the tomato sauce. A crime! My version yields a vast quantity of sauce compared to the more authentic Spanish version in Cooks.

PAPRIKÁS CSIRKE (CHICKEN PAPRIKASH)

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Brown the chicken:</i>	
Chicken thighs (boneless, skinless)	1 ⅓ lbs.
Olive oil	Just a bit, for sautéing
<i>Sauté the vegetables:</i>	
Onion (large chop)	1 medium onion or ½ large onion
Red pepper (or any color) (large chop)	½ pepper
Mushrooms (sliced)	8 oz.
Garlic (minced)	2 Tbsp.
Crushed red pepper	1 Tbsp.
<i>The roux:</i>	
Butter	3 Tbsp.
Flour	3 Tbsp.
Hungarian Paprika	3 Tbsp.
Chicken broth	1 cup
<i>The sauce:</i>	
Can of crushed tomatoes (Mutti brand is good)	14 oz.
Paul Prudhomme's poultry magic (or other seasoning)	⅔ Tbsp.
Salt	1 tsp.
Pepper	1 ½ tsp.
<i>Last minute:</i>	
Sour cream	8 oz.
<i>The starch:</i>	
Serve over egg noodles, fettuccini or other pasta, onion rice, or spätzle.	½ lb. (8 oz.) dry pasta

Equipment: One could do whole thing in a large Dutch oven (including browning of chicken and sauteing vegetables). But they are hard to clean after browning. So I do the browning in a large frying pan. I prefer copper, but any will do. Then use the large Dutch oven for the oven. Alternatively, use a Romertopf. Everything in a Romertopf tastes better (as Don Anderson will tell you, see page 227), but they are also harder to clean. If using a Romertopf, follow the instructions for pre-soaking and starting in a cold oven.

Chicken: You may substitute boneless skinless chicken breast, in which case, cut in half lengthwise to make it thinner. Or substitute bone-in chicken thighs (in which case, increase weight).

Brown the chicken

Brown the chicken in olive oil on high heat (approx. 3 minutes per side). Set aside on a plate and tent with tinfoil.



Sauté the vegetables

In the Dutch oven (with chicken removed), sauté the mushrooms, onions & peppers together in olive oil, but give the mushrooms a one-minute head start. Then add the garlic and red chili flakes. Sauté the vegetables on high heat until nicely done (15 minutes or so) adding a splash of olive oil as needed. Remove the vegetables to a plate.

The roux

Using the now empty Dutch oven, combine butter and flour. Stir for a couple of minutes to remove the “floury” taste. Gradually add chicken broth to the roux to make a brown sauce (same idea as a white sauce made with milk).

The paprika sauce

Then add the paprika, poultry seasoning, and crushed tomatoes to the roux.

Bake the casserole

Return the vegetables and the chicken (with any accumulated juices) to the sauce in the Dutch oven. Cover and bake at 350° for one hour.

And add sour cream

Remove from oven and add the sour cream. Stir it in gently without unduly molesting the chicken. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Plate

Serve over pasta, rice, or other starch. The dish is traditionally served with a short and stubby Hungarian spätzle known as *nokedli*.

Culture Note:

In Bram Stoker’s novel, *Dracula*, Jonathan Harker (the English solicitor and main protagonist) dines on this dish on his journey to Dracula’s castle in Transylvania, where he barely escapes becoming a tasty meal himself. The handsome Harker soon finds himself the Count’s prisoner, about to be fed to the Brides of Dracula. He manages to escape. But Harker finds all this quite unsettling, and suffers a nervous breakdown while recuperating in a convent. Upon recovering, the young attorney vows to destroy Dracula and send “his soul forever and ever to burning hell.” The only thing good to happen in this tragedy was the Chicken Paprikash.

FRAN'S PARMESAN-CRUSTED CHICKEN

Ingredients	2 servings w/ leftovers
<i>The chicken:</i>	
Boneless, skinless chicken breasts (cut lengthwise to make thinner)	2 large breasts halves (1.5 lbs. total)
Butter (melted)	2 ½ sticks (10 oz.) (yes, this much)
Garlic (minced)	2 ½ Tbsp.
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (grated)	1 cup
Panko breadcrumbs	1 cup
<i>The pasta:</i>	
Tagliatelle, fettuccine, or egg noodles	8 oz. (dry)
<i>Before plating:</i>	
Lemon wedges (to squeeze on chicken)	2 lemon slices

Equipment: A medium sized skillet for the garlic butter sauce. (Chicken is dredged individually in this pan, so no need for a large frying pan. There is no frying of the chicken.)

To bake the chicken: A medium (9 x 12") uncovered lasagna pan (for this size recipe). It needs to be large enough to lay out each chicken breast in one layer. It will be used later to mix the "dirty pasta." A pot large enough to boil the pasta, which is not used for anything else.

Directions:

Cut the chicken

Trim any fat from chicken pieces. Slice each chicken breast half in half lengthwise to make thinner.

Mix panko and parmesan

Mix equal parts of parmesan cheese and Panko crumbs in a mixing bowl.

Garlic butter sauce

Melt butter in frying pan. Add garlic and sauté about 4 minutes on moderate heat. (If needed, cover to avoid splattering.) You want them barely toasted, not turned dark brown.

Prep and bake the chicken

Move skillet with garlic butter to counter. Set out a plate and add cheese/crumb mixture to the plate as necessary while breading the chicken. One at a time, dredge the chicken pieces in the garlic butter. Then press the chicken into the parmesan crumb mixture on the plate and pat down to completely cover with as much crumbs as possible on both sides.

Place the breaded chicken breasts into the lasagna pan, side by side (using more pans if needed for a large batch).

Sprinkle the leftover breadcrumbs (from the breading plate and bowl) around the chicken in the lasagna pan. (No need to press them on; they will brown, fall off, and end up in the dirty pasta.) It looks like too much stuff on the chicken, but it will be good in the end.

Drizzle all of the remaining garlic butter (scraping up all the garlic in the frying pan) over the breadcrumbs around the chicken with only a little on top of the chicken. If you put too much on the chicken itself, it will not brown nicely.

Bake uncovered at 410° for 30 minutes until nicely browned. Don't overcook. There is no need to turn the chicken over.



Boil the pasta

While the chicken is baking, boil the pasta in tons of roaring salted water until *al dente*. Drain pasta in a colander.

Remove the chicken

When chicken is done, remove the chicken to a serving platter (or plate it), leaving the remaining butter & crumbs in the lasagna pan. Squeeze a lemon slice onto each chicken breast.

The dirty pasta

After the chicken is removed, dump the drained pasta into the lasagna pan with the remaining butter and browned crumbs. Mix together.

Serve

Plate the chicken with the pasta on the side.

Serve with a salad, sauteed spinach, or other vegetables.

Source & notes:

Fran is Fran Adams (Karen's mom), of course! She called it "chicken parmesan," but we changed the name to "parmesan-crust" to avoid confusion with the red-sauce dish called "chicken parmesan" served in Italian-American restaurants.

Fran served it with mashed potatoes. I switched to pasta and made up the part about the "dirty pasta" covered with the garlic butter and crumbs. (Think of "dirty rice" in Louisiana cooking.)

Fran used whole chicken breasts halves (without cutting in half). I've modified by cutting in half to make thinner breasts halves. When I say breast half, I'm referring to the pieces of breast you find in a grocery store. A whole chicken breast is composed of two halves that are divided before packaging.

CHICKEN FRANCESE WITH SPICY WHITE BEANS AND SPINACH

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Chicken cutlets:</i>	
Boneless skinless chicken breasts – cut & pounded	1 breast half (¾ lb.)
Flour	½ cup
Kosher salt	Generously
Freshly ground pepper	Generously
Olive oil	As required for sauté
<i>Beans & Spinach:</i>	
Onion – diced coarsely (Vidalia or other sweet onion is lovely)	½ onion
Fresh rosemary (or substitute dried)	2 Tbsp. after trimming (¼ of a box of fresh rosemary), or ⅔ tsp. (dried)
Flour	1 Tbsp.
Low sodium chicken broth	½ cup
Cannellini beans (canned, with juice)	15 oz. can
Fresh spinach	4 oz.
Fly by Jing Sichuan Chili Crisp (from Whole Foods) or Vietnamese chili garlic sauce	⅔ Tbsp. (more if you like it hot)
<i>Serve with:</i>	
Karen's Onion Rice	See recipe.
Lemon wedges (cut in wedges)	1 lemon. Optional, but highly recommended to squeeze onto chicken.

Equipment: This whole meal is made stove-top in one very large frying pan. Takes over an hour with all the prep, but goes straight from pan to plate.

Chop chop:

Coarsely dice the onion. Set aside (sauté comes later).

Pull the stalks off the rosemary, leaving just the leaves and tender stems. Chop the rosemary.

Rice prep:

If doing Karen's onion rice, chop and sauté the onions; set aside. Start the rice 20 minutes before everything else will be ready to serve.

Pound the cutlets:

Carefully cut each breast in half lengthwise—to make them thinner. One at a time, place chicken in a Ziploc bag and pound with the flat side of a meat tenderizer to ⅛ inch thick. (This is traditionally done with waxed paper, but the bag is easier.)

Dredge the cutlets:

In a large plate, combine flour, salt & pepper. Dredge cutlets in flour mixture and set aside. Quickly dredge one more time before frying.

Brown the cutlets:

Sauté cutlets in just a generous splash of olive oil (barely enough to slosh around the pan) on very high heat 1 ½ minutes or so per side. Drizzle more olive oil as needed. Do just two at a time; don't crowd. Should be golden brown and barely white inside. If heat is too low, they will not get past yellow before they're done, but they will still be delicious. Don't overcook them trying to achieve golden status. Remove to a plate and cover with tin foil; keep warm in 170 degree oven (or reheat later if oven is occupied).

Beans & Spinach:

After removing chicken, add more olive oil to frying pan. Sauté the diced onion on high heat about 5 minutes until a dark golden color. Add rosemary and flour to the pan with the onion; cook

3 minutes to form a sort of roux. (It won't look like a roux, but it will work!) Gradually add chicken broth to deglaze the pan and create a sort of oniony rosemary gravy. Add beans and chili sauce and cook for a few minutes to bring to heat. Add the chopped spinach and cook a couple more minutes to completely wilt.

Rice:

Meanwhile cook the rice (see recipe for Karen's Onion Rice on page 204).

Presentation:

Plate the chicken next to (or over) the bean/spinach mixture, with the rice separately on the side. Serve with lemon slices. (We love a generous squeeze of lemon juice on the chicken, but this is optional.)

Note: This may be made with kale instead of spinach.

KAREN'S ROAST CHICKEN WITH GRAVY

Ingredients	2-4 Servings
Whole chicken (remove giblets and neck)	Chickens measure between 3 to 5 lbs. (5-pounder will serve 4 people generously.)
<i>Dry seasonings</i>	
Paprika	generously
Lawry's Seasoned Salt	generously
Paul Prudhomme's Chicken Magic or anything that suits you	generously
<i>Wet seasonings</i>	
Olive oil (any will do, but the best is Olivin's Tuscan Spice)	generously
Kikkoman soy sauce	generously
<i>Into the cavity</i>	
Whole lemon, cut in half	1 lemon
Bay leaf	2-3 leaves

Equipment

A Romertopf (German clay pot) is ideal; it releases water to steam the chicken while cooking. You may also use a Dutch oven, or just a roasting pan with tinfoil over the chicken. If using a Romertopf, you must take steps to ensure that it does not crack while cooking. Submerge both the top and bottom in water (if not completely submerged, at least put them on the counter and fill them with water) for 20 minutes or more before cooking. Then begin cooking in a COLD oven.

Wash the chicken

Remove the giblets and neck from the cavity of the chicken. Toss them. (Then again, they make a great stock. If you're of a certain age, the giblets go in the gravy. If you don't eat them, you may roast the giblets and feed them to the dogs.)

Wash the chicken thoroughly in the sink (including the cavity). Dry the chicken with paper towels (so that the seasonings stick).

Season the chicken

(This part is easier with two people.)

Place the chicken in the Romertopf or other roasting dish.

Very very generously season the interior cavity of the chicken with the dry seasonings.

Very generously pour the wet seasonings over the exterior of the chicken and smear all over. Flip the chicken and repeat.

Add the lemon halves to the cavity.

Finally, rather generously sprinkle with the dry seasonings on both exterior sides (finishing with the breast side up in the pan). Smear them around nicely (this will make the final browning look nicer).

Roast the chicken

Roast at 400° for a total of about 1 ½ hour, depending on size. But remove the lid (or tin foil) after 45 minutes or an hour, to let the chicken brown. That browning step might take 20-30 minutes. If not yet done, cover again and keep cooking. Cooking times will vary. The internal temperature is what's important: 165°. It will approach this temperature very slowly, and then suddenly jump up. Note that temperature will continue to rise 5° or so after removed from oven.

Remove and tent with tin foil for 10 minutes before carving.

Save the juices that collect in the bottom of the roaster. Use them to make gravy.

Serve

Serve however you like, but we carve it like a turkey, and serve with mashed potatoes, gravy, stuffing, and cranberry sauce. Just like Thanksgiving.

CHICKEN SCHNITZEL (SEE WEINER SCHNITZEL ON PAGE 73)

SEAFOOD

SOLE MEUNIÈRE

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Dredge:</i>	
Fillet of Dover sole or Petrale sole	1 lb. (½ lb. per person). (This is generous)
Flour	1 cup
Salt & pepper	Sprinkle
<i>Sauté:</i>	
Canola or vegetable oil	2 Tbsp. (a generous splash)
Butter	2 Tbsp.
<i>Sauce:</i>	
Butter	⅔ stick
Lemon juice (fresh squeezed)	2 lemons
Parsley (chopped)	1 tsp.
<i>Plate:</i>	
Parsley (chopped)	1 tsp.

Serve with:

The sole may be paired with a starch such as Orzo Giovani, Risotto alla Milanese, Karen's Onion Rice, Potatoes Southcombe, Smashed Greek Potatoes, or mashed potatoes. (All in the *Lockdown Cookbook*.)

Equipment:

A large frying pan (I prefer copper). The sauce will be made in the same pan used to sauté the sole. For God's sake, don't clean the pan after cooking the fish; all that stuff goes into the sauce. If cooking for a crowd (more than four), use two frying pans. But, after cooking the fish, combine the remaining butter, etc. into one pan for making the sauce.



Directions:

Prep and dredge the sole

Rinse the sole and pat dry with paper towels.

Spread the sole out on a large cutting board. Lightly score the fillets with a sharp knife – not too deep, just enough to let in the goodness during the cooking process.

Mix together flour with salt and pepper on a plate.

Dredge sole in flour; shake off excess. If you dried them well before adding the flour, just the right amount of flour will adhere (not much).

After dredging, spread them out separately on a plate or something (not stacked or overlapping). They can sit for no more than 30 minutes. If they sit longer, they'll get soggy and the end result will be a disappointment.

Just before frying, you may quickly dredge them in the flour again, but only if the initial flour layer was very thin to begin with. Don't overdo the flour; you're not making fish & chips.

Prep the lemon & parsley

Prepare lemon slices and lemon juice. Chop the parsley.

Sauté the sole

Heat a couple tablespoons of cooking oil in frying pan until hot and shimmering. Then add an equal amount of butter. Use quite a bit of oil/butter, but not don't go overboard. You are sautéing, not deep fat frying.

When foaming of butter subsides, add the sole. They won't all fit in the pan; cook in batches. Add more oil & butter, as needed.

Fry for a minute or two per side (more for first side, less for second) on high heat until beautifully golden outside and opaque on the inside. Getting the right temperature is key. In order to achieve some browning without over-cooking the fish, you want it quite hot, but not screaming hot. (I use the highest setting on my medium burner.) Don't overcook the fish trying to achieve the perfect golden color!

Place the cooked fish on plates and tent with aluminum foil.

Prepare the sauce

The sauce will be prepared at the last minute in the same pan used to sauté the fish. After fish is removed, add a lot more butter to frying pan and heat it until almost brown. To aid in thickening, you may toss in a pinch of flour, but no more. (The flour that dropped off the fish will serve as a thickening agent.) Then add the lemon juice. It will boil like crazy! Sprinkle in some chopped parsley, reserving the rest. Let the sauce simmer for a couple of minutes (with some stirring). It will thicken just a bit to produce a nice lemon butter sauce. The sauce will still be quite thin—we're not making gravy. Don't overdo the reduction, or you will end up with a sauce that is too intensely flavored.

Plating

After plating the fish, drizzle on the heavenly lemon butter sauce.

If you wish, top each serving with one slice of wilted lemon. (The lemon slices entirely for show, but they do show nicely!)

Notes:

Julia: Sole meunière was the first meal Julia Child ate upon her arrival in France and has been credited as inspiring the chef, who called it “the most exciting meal of my life” in her memoir, *My Life in France*. (Wikipedia.)

Etymology: “Sole Meunière” is sometime written as “Sole a la Meunière.” Either way, the French name means “sole prepared in the manner of a miller’s wife” (because it is dredged in flour). BTW, the word “fillet” (both noun and verb) is spelled with two l’s in English. The French word “filet”(with one “l”) is reserved for classic French dishes such as filet mignon. There is no agreement as to whether to write “fillet of sole” for filet of sole.”

Which sole: Sole meunière is classically made with Dover sole, but Petrale sole is an excellent upgrade. Dover sole is a smaller fish and more readily available. Petrale sole is larger, more expensive, and considered by some to be better. To quote Russ Parsons writing for the L.A. Times: “It may be true that in the eyes of God, all soles are equal. But on the California dinner plate, petrale is king.”

Bone-in: At a fancy restaurant, this sole would be prepared bone-in and then dexterously filleted tableside. I wish I could do that. But the pre-filleted version will taste just as good, and will save you the cost of quitting your job and going to cooking school.

Capers: You will encounter recipes calling for capers. Adding capers converts the dish to sole piccata. If you want that, see my separate recipe in the *Lockdown Cookbook*.

Source: Based loosely on a recipe in the *French Country Table* (Xmas gift from Andy), also influenced by Julia Child’s book, “*How To Cook*.”

SEA SCALLOPS WITH ANGEL HAIR PASTA

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>The Scallops:</i>	
Sea scallops (preferably dry-packed) (size U15 or larger size) (frozen is fine)	11 to 14 oz. (about .8 lbs.)
Grapeseed or olive oil	A very thin layer (less than 1/8 inch) covering the pan.
<i>The Sauce:</i>	
Shallot (fine chop) Onion (fine chop) Or scallions	2 or 3 large shallots or: 3/4 medium onion or 1/2 large onion or: 3/4 bunch of scallions (the white part)
Butter	3 Tbsp.
White wine	3/4 cup
Heavy cream	1 1/4 cup
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese	2 Tbsp.
Pasta water	1/3 cup or more (reserve 1 cup, use as needed). Be generous.
<i>Broiled Tomatoes (optional):</i>	
Cherry tomatoes	8 oz.
<i>The Pasta:</i>	
Angel hair pasta	5 oz. (don't increase or else other measurements will be off)
Salt	Salt the boiling water generously
<i>Plate:</i>	
Parsley (fresh or dried)	Just a tiny bit for color
Broiled halved cherry tomatoes	A handful per person

Alternatives to scallops:

King crab leg meat	Up to 4 legs or claws (1.5 lbs.)
Lobster tails	Up to 4 tails (2 per person)

Notes on scallops: See notes under “Scallops (types and sizes)” on page 41.

Extremely important: Remember to reserve some pasta water before draining the pasta.

Equipment:

A cast iron skillet is best for searing the scallops. A copper frying pan is second best. Heat retention/control is important for browning the scallops quickly, but not too quickly.

If making just for two people, you may combine everything (including the cooked pasta) in the skillet.

You will need a pot for the pasta, too. If making a large batch, it may be used for the final combination.

Prep:

Fresh (well, they're probably previously frozen) scallops require little attention. Pat them dry and set them on a plate to bring to room temperature. If necessary (probably not), remove and discard side tendons.

If frozen, thaw the scallops well in advance (over an hour). Set them on a plate with a paper towel to let them dry. Replace damp paper towels, pat dry, and repeat as necessary. (Drying is important. We want to fry them, not steam them.)

Finely chop the onions or shallots.

Optional: Cut the cherry tomatoes in half, and place on broiling pan.

Heat water for the pasta.

Directions:

Sauté the scallops

Heat the skillet to pretty darned high heat, but not crazy hot. (On my Thermador stove, medium-high heat on the lower right burner.) Add a generous splash of grapeseed oil and swirl it around with a paper towel. Getting just the right amount of oil is critical. You want a very thin layer (less than 1/8 inch) that covers the pan. Add a tiny bit more during cooking as needed to maintain a thin layer.

Sauté the scallops for a total of 6 or 7 minutes, turning once after about 3 minutes. They will stick to the frying pan, so use a spatula to “cut them loose” before flipping. Do not overcook them! If cooking for more than two people, do in batches.

Set them aside on a plate WITHOUT a paper towel and let them rest. They will yield a “scallop water” that you will add back to the sauce. If need be, they can sit for a half hour or so.

Broil the cherry tomatoes (optional)

Drizzle the halved cherry tomatoes with olive oil. Broil in oven for about 5 minutes.

Sauté the shallots

After the scallops are removed from the skillet, don't clean it. Sauté the shallots in butter for 1 or 2 minutes (until translucent).

Add the wine

Then add the wine to the skillet and deglaze the burned bits gently stirring with a spatula. This will turn the wine a bit brown. Don't worry. That is a good thing. Continue to boil the wine fairly vigorously for 2 or 3 minutes until wine is reduced by about half.

Add the cream

Turn down heat and add cream to the wine and shallots in the frying pan. Simmer the cream sauce gently for 5 to 10 minutes to reduce by a third.

The pasta

While the cream is simmering, cook the pasta in plenty of salted boiling water. Angel hair takes only 4 minutes. Before draining the water, reserve at least 1 cup (for two servings) of pasta water (extremely important). Drain the pasta in a colander.

The combination: cream sauce, scallops, pasta, parmesan, pasta water.

Add the scallops and “scallop water” (accumulated on the plate) to the cream sauce in the skillet. Stir to warm the scallops adding heat as necessary.

For a small batch, add the drained pasta to the frying pan with the cream/wine sauce. For a larger batch, combine pasta, scallops, and sauce in the emptied pasta pot.

Keep it on a very low burner, just enough to keep it warm. Add the parmesan cheese. (Cheese in a seafood pasta violates every tradition. If you're a purist, you may skip this. But I think it's quite good.)

Add the reserved pasta water (1/2 cup for two people). Stir and let sit. In a minute or two, the pasta will absorb the pasta water creating an unbelievable creamy texture.

Be generous with the pasta water, adding more if necessary. By the time this is served (minutes later) it will dry out a lot. Err on the side of being a wee bit sloppy wet.



Plate

Place the pasta & seafood onto individual plates.

Sprinkle with chopped parsley.

Optional: Add a handful of broiled, halved cherry tomatoes to each serving (as would The Tavern).

Optional: Add some sautéed spinach (as would the Cottonwood Grille).

Serving suggestion

Goes well with sautéed spinach or zucchini, or grilled asparagus.

Or a simple salad of lettuce and tomato with oil and vinegar.

Or Caprese salad.

Alternatives to scallops:

Crab legs

If doing crab instead: Steam them in covered pot for 5 minutes. Don't go a minute over. Remove and let cool. Remove crabmeat and chop into bite-size pieces.

Broiled lobster tails

If doing lobster instead: Preheat oven to 350°. Bring the lobsters to room temp. Cut the shells (on top) to expose the lobster. Drizzle very generously with melted butter. Season with paprika, salt & pepper. Put lobster tails in oven at least 12 inches from boiler. Switch oven to "low" broil. Broil them for about 8 minutes until meat is translucent. (If the lobsters are a bit frozen, this could take twice as long! And they won't taste as good.) Remove from oven and let cool. Cut each tail entirely through the shell. Then gently rip the lobster meat out. Cut into pieces.

Source:

I woke up dreaming about this recipe. Then I found it on the internet. I have modified it, of course. And continue to tinker with it. Versions of this are served at Cottonwood Grille and The Tavern in Boise. They are very good, but not the same at all as my version, which I prefer.

BLUE CHEESE SOLE

Ingredients	2 Servings
Fillet of Dover sole or flounder	1 lb. (generous, but it's so good you'll eat it)
Butter (melted)	1 stick
White wine	¼ cup
Blue cheese (crumbled)	4 oz.
Parsley	A smidgeon

Equipment: A “jelly roll” pan or other flat baking pan, big enough to spread all the fish out. Invest in one of those “floppy” fish spatulas. Perfect for serving this very delicate fish without messing up the gorgeous browned tops of the fish.

Pre-heat oven to 400°.

Melt butter.

Lay the fish out in the pan. Pour on some of the melted butter. Flip the fish, and drizzle on the rest of the butter. Pour the wine into the pan around the fish. Sprinkle the fish with blue cheese crumbles. (Yes, it's a lot.)

Turn oven to high broil. When piping hot, pop in the fish.

Broil until cheese just begins to brown deeply and everything is bubbly (6-7 minutes).

Garnish with parsley.

Serve immediately. With Karen's “onion rice” and vegetable of choice.

Source: Old standby from Fran Adams.

Note: If other things need to be baked, instead of broiling you may bake at 375° or 400° for about 18 minutes.

Etymology: Is it blue cheese or bleu cheese? Both are correct. Bleu is the French spelling of blue.

SEA SCALLOPS WITH BROWNE D BUTTER, CAPERS & LEMON

Ingredients	4 Servings
<i>Prep the scallops</i>	
Sea scallops (preferably dry-packed scallops) (size U15 or larger size) (smaller number = larger scallop)	1.5 lbs.
Salt	a sprinkle
<i>Brown the scallops</i>	
Grapeseed oil	1 tsp.
Butter	4 Tbsp.
Scallions (cut, white part only) (save the green part)	2 scallions
Capers (drained)	¼ cup
<i>Add lemon to sauce</i>	
Lemon juice (freshly squeezed)	1 lemon
Lemon zest (from the same lemon)	
Salt and pepper	to taste
<i>Plate</i>	
Scallion greens (chopped)	(from the same scallions)
Lemon wedges	1 lemon (a second lemon)

Equipment:

I prefer a copper skillet. A cast iron frying pan is also excellent. The goal is plenty of heat.

Directions:

Salt and dry the scallops

Fresh (well, they're probably previously frozen) scallops require little attention. Pat them dry and set them on a plate to bring to room temperature. If necessary (probably not), remove and discard side tendons. If frozen, thaw the scallops well in advance (over an hour). Set them on a plate with a paper towel to let them dry. Replace damp paper towels, pat dry, and repeat as necessary. (Drying is important. We want to fry them, not steam them.)

Prep the lemons

Zest one of the lemons. Set aside the zest. Make lemon juice from the zested lemon. Cut the other lemon into wedges for serving.

Sauté the scallops

Add a tiny bit of grapeseed oil to frying pan and heat until the oil is barely smoking. It must be very hot in order to brown them. But not crazy hot, or they will get scorched.

Place scallops in hot pan. Don't molest them until they are golden brown (2 to 4 minutes). Flip them and let them barely brown on the other side (about 2 minutes) but still under-done. Don't turn them, just leave them in the pan and add the butter, scallion whites, and capers. Sauté everything for a minute, swirling the pan and spooning the butter sauce over the scallops. When done, the butter sauce should begin to brown and smell nutty; the scallops should be opaque.

Add lemon and zest

Remove the scallops. Add the lemon juice and lemon zest to the sauce. Add salt and pepper to taste. Keep warm until ready to serve. If necessary, warm the scallops by putting them back in the sauce just before serving.



Plate

Plate the scallops, topped with a sprinkle of chopped scallions.

Serve with Orzo di Giovanni (p. 205) on the side, ladling the sauce over the scallops and the orzo.

Serve lemon wedges for people to squeeze extra juice as desired.

Source: Christopher Kimball's Milk Street Cookbook: *The World in a Skillet* (2022), which Andy Meyer gave me for Father's Day 2022.

Notes: This recipe is basically an Italian piccata. Kimball's recipe calls for olive oil; I use grapeseed oil because of its higher smoke point. It browns the scallops nicely.

See notes under "Scallops (types and sizes)" on page 29.

DAD'S FROM SCRATCH CRAB CAKES

Ingredients	6 very large crab cakes (3 people as main course)
<i>Chop the breadcrumbs (in Cuisinart):</i>	
Homemade breadcrumbs from French bread (or any white bread) (chopped super fine)	1 ½ cup (total): ½ cup for crab mixture & 1 cup outside of the crab cakes
<i>Combine ingredients:</i>	
Egg (beaten)	1 egg
Some of the homemade breadcrumbs	¾ cup
Green onions (finely chopped – use white part & a little of the green stem) or substitute shallots	2 small green onions (2 Tbsp.) or 1-2 shallots (2 Tbsp.)
Melted butter	2 Tbsp.
Mayonnaise	½ cup
Worcestershire sauce	½ tsp.
Fresh lemon zest	zest of 1 lemon
Fresh lemon juice	juice of ½ lemon (save the rest for the remoulade)
Grey Poupon Dijon mustard	1 tsp.
Parsley flakes (dry)	1 tsp.
Old Bay seasoning	½ tsp.
Red chili pepper flakes	½ tsp.
Salt	¼ tsp.
<i>Add the crab last:</i>	
Phillips brand fresh lump crab meat from Costco is very good (\$23/lb.—jumped to \$37/lb. in 2022). Can also use fresh blue swimming crab or Dungeness crab from grocery store.	1 lb. (16 oz.)
<i>Final step:</i>	
More homemade breadcrumbs (to coat crab cakes)	1 cup
Melted butter	1 stick
<i>Remoulade sauce: (see recipe on page 45)</i>	

Equipment

An electric griddle is best. It can maintain a steady, precise temperature. Use a large mixing bowl to combine the crab ingredients.

Directions

Breadcrumbs

See recipe for breadcrumbs. Basically, put bread cubes in a Cuisinart with chopping blade. Don't toast them.

Combine in mixing bowl

First, add the egg to empty mixing bowl and beat it. Then add all other ingredients EXCEPT THE CRAB. Mix together. Finally, gently fold the crab into the mixture.

Form the patties

Measure out the crab mixture into balls. Press them into patties, squeezing out any "juice." For main course, make them the size of a hamburger. For appetizers, they can be as small as you like.

Chill out

Chill in refrigerator for at least ½ hour, up to 24 hours. This chilling will solidify the crab cakes somewhat, but they will still be very mushy and will require delicate handling on the griddle. Bring them out of the fridge 30 minutes or so before frying, to bring them to room temperature.

Fry 'em up

When ready to fry, sprinkle on additional raw breadcrumbs (on both sides) and gently press them in.

Heat electric skillet to 285°. This slow cooking temperature is essential to heat them all the way through before they brown—especially for larger crab cakes. You could get away with a higher temperature for small crab cakes.

Place each crab cake on top of a little melted butter on the electric skillet.

Brown well – This may take 8-12 minutes per side for large crab cakes, but keep an eye on them. Drizzle some more butter on top of each cake before turning. These cakes are quite fragile and will tend to fall apart. So flip them gently and carefully.

All done

Keep cakes warm in oven until ready to serve.

Serve with lemon wedges and remoulade sauce

(or, if you're in a rush, substitute a Midwestern homemade tartar sauce of mayonnaise and sweet pickle relish).



HAZELNUT-CRUSTED SOLE

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Prep the sole</i>	
Dover sole fillets	0.8 lbs.
Chopped hazelnuts (coarsely ground—finer than chopped)	3.5 oz. ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup)
Fresh rosemary (remove leaves, chop very fine)	2+ tsp. (approx. 3 twigs)
Eggs (beaten)	2 eggs
<i>Cook the sole</i>	
Butter	$\frac{1}{2}$ stick = 4 Tbsp. (to start, adding more for each batch)
<i>Plate and serve</i>	
Lemon (in wedges)	1 lemon

Equipment:

All you need is a large frying pan. Copper gives the best heat control.

Prep the sole

Put the chopped hazelnuts in a mini-chopper. Grind briefly (perhaps 20 seconds) to a course grind.

Take the leaves off the fresh rosemary (run your fingers in the down the stem in the “wrong” direction so the leaves get mad and fall off). Chop very fine. Combine the hazelnuts and rosemary on a plate. Beat eggs in a separate bowl (use the whole egg).

Spread out the sole, and salt them on both sides. Dredge sole in the egg on one side only (or brush it on). Place the egg side of the sole in the hazelnut/rosemary and press down gently to create a crust on one side only. Set aside the soles, crusty side up.

Prep the sole

Melt 2 or 3 tablespoons of butter in frying pan. In batches, place the sole in the sizzling butter, crusty side down. Cook without disturbing over medium heat—just enough heat for a good sizzle—for about three minutes until nicely browned. Flip them over and cook another minute. Remove to a clean plate.

Plate

Plate and serve at once with lemon wedges. Goes nicely with Karen’s Onion Rice and a grilled or stir-fried vegetable.

Source: This recipe appeared in *Food & Wine* magazine (11/2019). As the article points out, rosemary is not a classic pairing with delicate fish, but it works here with the hazelnut crust offset by lemon wedges. I have added detail and explanation, but have not fundamentally changed the recipe. The recipe comes from chef Jacques Thorel, who runs L’Auberge Bretonne in Brittany, France—an important destination for food lovers. He has published several cookbooks, including *Loving Breton Cuisine*.

EASY FISH FRY

Ingredients	2 Servings
Neptune Brand Pub Style Halibut (from Costco)	4-5 halibut pieces (½ of 32 oz. box.)
Vegetable oil	½ to 1 gallon
<i>Serve with:</i>	
Lemon wedges	1 lemon
Remoulade sauce or	(separate recipe)
Tartar sauce	(separate recipe)

Equipment:

For retrieving the fish, try the following:

- A Chinese wire & wood wok thingy.
- Super long metal tongs with wood handle.

You can use an electric fryer. But they are a fuss to clean up.

I use a large, heavy Calphalon pot. It needs to be at least 8 inches tall, because things may “boil” up like mad when first put in (if even a tiny bit wet). (More of an issue for French fries.)

If you’re only doing the fish (and no fries), you can get by with less oil.

If you don’t have a stove with high BTUs, it can be hard to achieve and maintain the cooking temperature needed. So plan ahead and keep heating that oil pot (with a lid on) while other things happen. And don’t turn it off between stages, or you’ll waste 15 minutes bringing it back to temp. I’ve tried adding a lot of oil, but that is very hard to re-heat on a stove w/o massive BTUs. It is best to do this in multiple batches if making for more than two people.

Directions:

Fry them

Thaw the halibut pieces in advance of frying.

Heat oil (which may have been used for French fries first). You want to cook them at 350°, but temperature will drop. So start at 360°, but not higher (to avoid browning them before they are done inside). You want them to cook through before they get brown. This may take 3-4 minutes.

If necessary, keep in a warming oven (not a hot oven) for a few minutes until fries are completed. Serve as soon as possible.

Serve

Serve with lemon wedges and remoulade sauce or tartar sauce (separate recipe).
And homemade French fries (separate recipe).

SALMON ON THE TRAEGER

Ingredients	2 Servings
Salmon fillet (Alaska sockeye is great)	1 lb.
Olive oil (Olivin is best)	½ cup
White Balsamic vinegar (Olivin is best)	¼ cup
Fresh squeezed lemon juice	½ lemon
Your choice of seasoning: Traeger Salmon Shake seasoning (even chicken will do), or Cajun's Choice Blackened Seasoning	

Prepare marinade: olive oil, white vinegar, and lemon juice.

Place the salmon fillets flesh up on a large jelly roll or other pan. Drizzle with all of the marinade. After a while, flip them over. Marinate for 30 to 60 minutes.

When ready to cook, shake on the seasoning on both sides (liberally on the skin side, moderately on the other).

Place the salmon (skin side down) directly on the grill of the Traeger smoker (preheated to 350°). Close lid and don't peek for: 18 minutes (very thin fillets), 20 minutes (medium fillets), 25 minutes (huge, thick salmon). Adjustments may be required, but be cautious about going longer. They may rest a short while, but serve soon.

COQUILLES ST. JACQUES AU GRATIN (SCALLOPS)

Ingredients	4 Servings (large appetizer)
<i>Breadcrumb mixture</i>	
Fresh breadcrumbs (chopped in Cuisinart)	⅔ cup
Butter (melted)	3 Tbsp.
Minced parsley (fresh or dried)	1 Tbsp.
Salt	½ tsp.
Pepper	⅓ tsp.
Greyère cheese (grated) –put ⅔ into the breadcrumbs, reserve the rest	5 oz.
Or substitute Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (finely grated)	¾ cup
<i>Shallots, mushrooms, wine, cream & scallops</i>	
Butter	2 Tbsp.
Shallots (minced) (or substitute onions)	4 large shallots
Garlic (minced) (optional)	½ tsp. (just a touch)
Fresh mushrooms (cleaned and sliced)	8 oz.
Salt	A nice sprinkle
Crushed red pepper or cayenne	a generous sprinkle
Dry white wine	⅔ cup
Sea scallops (feel free to substitute bay scallops)	1 lb. (12-15 scallops, 3+ per person)
Heavy cream	1 cup
Egg yolk (optional)	1 egg
Scallop water (collected after the poached scallops have rested)	all of it
Paprika or cayenne	A tiny shake
Salt and pepper	To taste
Whole fresh tarragon leaves (two in a “cross” for each serving)	Two per serving

Recipe variations:

This dish is traditionally prepared in individual scallop shells, with the scallops placed on a bed of sautéed mushrooms in a wine/cream sauce. Alternatively, it can be served surrounded by piped mashed potatoes (see alternative recipe below). Either may be topped with breadcrumbs and cheese (or just cheese)—“au Gratin.” If you wish to break the rules (as I have done), you may go overboard by doing all three. Feel free to pick and choose.

Scallop notes:

See notes under “Scallops (types and sizes)” on page 41.

Equipment:

You will need a good, large frying pan to prepare the food. I prefer copper, but that is hardly necessary.

This is classically served in individual portions in a clean shell of the scallop—which you may purchase and reuse. Porcelain shell-shaped dishes are also available. Or they may be served in individual “gratin” dishes or ramekins. Alternatively, they may be combined in a larger serving dish, to be divided and distributed to plates after cooking.

Directions:

Breadcrumb mixture

Combine breadcrumbs, melted butter, ⅔ of the cheese (reserving the rest), and the spices in a bowl. Mix together and set aside.

Sauté the shallots, garlic, and mushrooms

Sauté the shallots in butter for a minute. Add the garlic (optional) and continue sautéing a couple more minutes until shallots are softened but yet golden. Add the mushrooms and continue

sautéing until they are nicely done, just beginning to brown—perhaps 7 minutes, but this will vary. During the sauté, season with salt, and crushed red pepper.

Add wine and sauté the scallops

Add the wine, bring to a light boil, and let it reduce for a couple of minutes. Add the shallots and simmer them in the wine sauce with the mushrooms. (If making a large amount, do this in batches.) Turn them and let them cook until they are no longer translucent and are beginning to firm up, about four minutes total depending on their size (much less for bay scallops).

Set aside scallops, and add cream

Remove the scallops to a plate or bowl, and let them sit. Strain out and reserve the mushrooms and shallots; return the wine sauce to the frying pan. Add the cream to the mushroom sauce and cook to reduce by half or more. Add all of the “scallop water” that has collected in the bowl holding the poached scallops. When the cream has reduced, remove from heat and quickly whisk in an egg yolk. Season with cayenne, tarragon, lemon juice and zest. Taste the sauce, and add salt and pepper as required.

Assemble the dish

Very optional and non-traditional: Do as below (with the mushrooms), but start each shell with a thin layer of mashed potatoes (separate recipe). Or finish them up by piping some mashed potatoes in a circle around the scallops at the end.

Place the mushrooms and shallots on the bottom of each shell or dish. Top each shell with 3 or 4 large sea scallops (or more bay scallops). Spoon the cream sauce over the scallops. Top with a sprinkle of the breadcrumb mixture (optional). Top with a sprinkle of cheese. Finally, top with a tiny sprinkle of paprika or cayenne.

If you are making ahead, you may refrigerate them until ready for broiling.

Broiling

If using shells (which are tippy), first place a layer of scrunched up tinfoil on a sheet pan. Otherwise, place gratin dishes on a flat layer of tinfoil on a sheet pan.

If broiling right away, broil on high (10 inches or more away from the broiler) for 5-8 minutes until hot and bubbly and caramelized. Serve immediately.

If the scallops were refrigerated, first place in a 350° oven for about 15 to warm them up. Then finish them off under the broiler.

Alternative recipe – with piped mashed potatoes:

Skip the mushrooms. Sauté the shallot. Add wine and reduce. Sauté the scallops in the wine sauce, then remove them. Add a béchamel sauce (without seasonings) to the wine sauce. Stir in and melt the gruyère. Then add the scallops back into the creamy sauce. Place scallops and sauce on the shells. Surround by a piping of mashed potatoes. Sprinkle on more gruyère cheese. Sprinkle with chopped parsley (or tarragon) and a touch of paprika or cayenne. Broil until golden brown (5-8 minutes).

Etymology:

For some reason, the French put a hyphen in “Coquilles St.-Jacques.” I omit it.

“Coquilles St. Jacques” simply means “scallops” in French. In other words, the name of the main ingredient is also the name of the dish. (Similarly, “scampi” means shrimp in Italian and also refers to a dish of pasta and shrimp. The American chain restaurant habit of calling this dish “Shrimp Scampi” amounts to ignorant redundancy.)

To break it down, “coquille” means shell (which in which this dish is traditionally served). St. Jacques, of course, is a saint (see below). But here it refers to the variety of big scallops from the northeast Atlantic (aka great scallop or king scallop; the Latin name for the species is *pecten maximus*). Oddly, the French don’t typically use the smaller Mediterranean scallop for this recipe despite the fact that the Latin species name refers to the Saint (*pecten jacobaeus*). In any event, the U.S. equivalent (harvested on our side of the Atlantic) is the sea scallop (Latin species name,

placopecten magellanicus). The American alternative to sea scallop is the smaller, sweeter, and more tender bay scallop).

If topped with broiled breadcrumbs and/or cheese, the dish becomes “au Gratin.” Julia Child, prefers “gratinéed.” This is simply French for “by grating”—as in grating cheese. However, the “au Gratin” or “gratinéed” term is often omitted from modern American recipes.

So what does this have to do with St. Jacques? The saint in question is not just any saint, but James the Great, one of the first Apostles to join Jesus and the first to be martyred. He is now the patron saint of Spain. Santiago is Spanish for St. James, and the city’s cathedral is believed to house his relics. The Apostle James had preached in Spain before returning to the Holy Land, where he was martyred in 44 AD at the hands of Herod Agrippa. According to legend, his disciples managed to return his headless body to his beloved Galicia (in Spain) with the assistance of a marvelous, rudderless stone ship navigated by angels. There, St. James was buried at a secret location and forgotten. Forgotten, that is, until a 9th century hermit was guided by a star to the gravesite. Shortly thereafter, the saint—now dead then for several hundred years—miraculously joined in the Battle of Clavijo pitting outnumbered Christians against the invading Muslims. This, in turn, inspired Christians to march in the Crusades.

Since the Middle Ages, pilgrims have walked *The Way* (Camino de Santiago) for penance and enlightenment. The scallop shell, found on the shores of Galicia, is their symbol. The connection is unclear. One version is that as the boat carrying the Saint’s body back to Spain approached the land, a wedding was taking place ashore. The groom, on horseback, fell into the sea when his horse was spooked. He emerged miraculously (with the help of the deceased saint), covered in scallop shells. In any event, ever since, pilgrims have worn a scallop shell attached to their clothing. Originally, it was collected in Galicia, to prove they had made the journey. Later, the shells were handed out to the pilgrims at the beginning of the journey.

When employed in the context of St. James, the shell always is displayed with its outer convex surface showing. In contrast, when the shell refers to the Goddess Venus, the same scallop shell is shown with its concave interior surface showing. Think of Botticelli’s *The Birth of Venus* (aka *Venus on the Half Shell*) on display at the Uffizi in Florence.

According to the 1931 version of *The Joy of Cooking*, the term “scalloped” may be traced to this recipe for Coquilles St. Jacques. It derives from the fact that this French recipe for scallops was made with cream. Over time, any creamy thing came to be referred to as scalloped (as in scalloped potatoes or scalloped oysters), which, of course, has nothing to do with scallops.

The Shell Oil Company (technically Royal Dutch Shell) takes its logo from this shell.

Sources:

Irma Rombauer, et al, *Joy of Cooking* (1997); Julia Child, *The Way To Cook*, Julia Child, et al., *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*; Ina Garten’s NYT recipe; foodwishes.blogspot.com (Chef John); clubfoody.com (Chef Frankie); thespruceeats.com.

Notes:

One recipe (thespruceeats.com) calls for curry powder. I tried this, and it was good. But I left it out because it is so non-traditional.

One classic recipe called for mincing the mushrooms, so that you end up with more of a mushroom sauce.

CRAB LEGS

Ingredients	2 Servings (generous)
King crab legs	2 ½ lbs.
or Snow crab	3 ½ lbs.
Butter (melted)	¾ stick per person

Shopping:

After years of experience, the best crab legs come from Costco. Indeed, their snow crab legs are nearly as big as the King crab legs (and nearly as expensive).

If you buy snow crab, buy a little more (ratio of meat to shell is not as high).

Directions:

The crabs are fully cooked. Do not steam them until you are ready to sit down to dinner. Steam them in a giant pot (with 1 inch of water, you may skip the vegetable steamer) for 7 minutes to warm them. They should be piping hot. That's all. If they get a bit cool during dinner, don't worry. They will be delicious—so long as you didn't overcook them at the outset.

Serve:

Serve at once. You may leave some in the pot and bring it to the table. Take off the lid to keep them from continuing to cook and soften the shell.

They go well with roasted red potatoes and a simple vegetable or even coleslaw. We serve them on Christmas Eve as a second course after Swiss fondue. But you'll want a long break in between courses to recover your appetite!

SOLE PICCATA (SEE PICCATA ON PAGE 154)

PASTA & ITALIAN

EARTHQUAKE SPAGHETTI

Ingredients	4 Servings
<i>Choice of sauce:</i>	
Spaghetti sauce from jar, such as: Williams Sonoma Organic Creamy Vodka Sauce (the best!) Rao's Vodka Sauce Rao's Arrabbiata Michael's of Brooklyn Arrabbiata sauce. Michael's of Brooklyn Home Style Gravy Lucini Rustic tomato vodka sauce (Co-op) DeLallo Pomodoro Fresco - Creamy Vodka	32 oz. jar (high ratio of stuff to sauce) (or two 24 oz. jars if you want more sauce)
<i>Choice of meat:</i>	
Store-bought raw meatballs (Carando brand Sicilian meatballs—spicy, regular, or Mozzarella Rustica—from Albertsons are good)	16 oz.
Kielbasa (Boar's Head smoked uncured kielbasa is good) (chopped into big pieces, then cut in half)	16 oz.
Linguica Portuguese sausage	11 oz.
Zatarain's Andouille Smoked Sausage	14 oz.
Falls Brand Basque Chorizo	12 oz. (½ of 24 oz. package)
Homemade meatballs with ground beef & Italian sausage (add breadcrumbs before mixing)	14 oz. (meat) ⅛ cup (breadcrumbs)
<i>If using vodka sauce (add in last 10 minutes):</i>	
Vodka	2 oz.
Cream	⅓ cup
<i>Sautéed vegetables:</i>	
Mushrooms (sliced or quartered)	8 oz.
Green, red, or yellow peppers	1 pepper
Onions	1 medium onion
Olive oil	as needed for sauté
Chile flakes (optional)	a sprinkle on vegetables
<i>Pasta:</i>	
your choice of penne or any other pasta Rummo brand dried fettuccini (imported from Italy) is great!	1 lb. (16 oz.) (dry weight)
<i>Cheese:</i>	
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (grated)	Sprinkle to taste

Equipment: I use a large copper frying pan for sauté. The sauce goes into a Dutch oven (or any oven-proof covered pot). Finally, use a separate pot to boil the pasta.

Prep time:

50 minutes to chop and sauté everything, with opera playing. Another hour of happy relaxing time in the oven.

Directions:

Chop the kielbasa:

Cut very thick slices, then cut each slice in half. This second cut will greatly simplify the browning, allowing you to toss randomly w/o burning.

Brown the kielbasa:

Brown the sausage in a touch of olive oil on high heat for about 8 minutes. Remove sausage to colander, leaving any grease or oil in the pan to be used for sautéing the vegetables.

Sauté the vegetables:

Sauté mushrooms, green peppers, and onions together on high heat. Give the onions a 5-minute head-start, add the mushrooms and cook another 3 minutes, then add the green peppers. Add tad of olive oil as needed. Total cook time might be 15-20 minutes. I recommend adding some chile flakes to veggies while sautéing to kick up the heat.

If you are so inclined, instead of sautéing, caramelize the onions separately by cooking them at low heat for a very long time (about 50 minutes).

If you are doing raw meatballs, you may add them to the vegetables during the last 5 or 10 minutes of cooking to give them a bit of a browning. No need for them to cook through. That will happen in the sauce.

Into the colander:

After sauté, move everything to a single colander over a plate to drain the grease and oil.

Put sauce in the oven:

Put spaghetti sauce in a Dutch oven or other large oven-proof pot. Add sautéed sausage or raw meatballs and the sautéed vegetables. Cover and place in oven: For raw meatballs, 350° for at least 1 hour. For cooked meats, 290° for up to 1 hour. If you like, you make keep the sauce in the oven longer at a lower temperature.

(Raw meatballs should reach internal temperature of 170°.)

If using vodka sauce:

If using vodka sauce, when only 10 minutes are left, add vodka and cream to make it even more creamy and vodka-y. This will make the sauce soupy; return to oven with lid off for ten minutes. If you are keeping the sauce in a warming oven longer, put the lid back on.

Drain and plate:

Drain the pasta, add it to the sauce in the pot, toss. Serve with grated Parmesan or Romano.

Name: For years, we called this School Night Spaghetti (or Tuesday Night Spaghetti), because it's easy to make, and we make it a lot. On 3/31/2020, while I was making this spaghetti (and Karen was on a Zoom writing class meeting during Lockdown), a 6.5 magnitude earthquake hit near Stanley, which rattled everyone in Boise for a couple of minutes! We then renamed this dish Earthquake Spaghetti.

Source: Based on a meatball recipe in Food and Wine (11/2015).

Notes: Sounds crazy to put raw meatballs in the sauce, but it works very nicely. So long as your cook it an hour. Surprisingly, they don't release that much grease. Whatever you do, don't use store-bought cooked meatballs—terrible.



These browned kielbasa pieces and sauteed vegetables are sitting on top of the sauce before being mixed in and put in the oven.

PASTA ALLA VODKA

Ingredients	4 Servings
<i>The sauce:</i>	
Butter	3 Tbsp.
Pancetta (chopped fine) or prosciutto (chopped into medium/small pieces)	3 oz. (or more!)
Red pepper flakes	¼ tsp.
Garlic	1 Tbsp.
Tomato paste	2 ½ Tbsp.
Passata (uncooked tomato puree) (Mutti brand is good)	2 cups (24.5 oz jar)
Heavy cream	½ cup
Salt	¾ tsp.
Pepper	½ tsp.
Vodka	½ cup (8 Tbsp.)
Parmigiano-Reggiano or Grana Padano cheese (finely grated) or Pecorino Romano (graded—regular blade of Cuisinart)	¼ cup
More vodka	1 Tbsp.
Pasta water (reserve 1 ½ cup)	as needed (¼ cup or more)
<i>The pasta:</i>	
Rigatoni or penne pasta	1 lb. (16 oz.) (dry weight)
<i>The plate:</i>	
Fresh basil leaves (whole or chopped) or fresh parsley (finely chopped)	Add a little as a garnish, if you like (mostly for show)
More cheese	Sprinkle to taste

Equipment: I use a Le Creuset Dutch oven to brown the meat, prepare the vodka sauce, and mix the sauce & pasta. Or you may use a frying pan large enough to mix the sauce & pasta. Use a separate pot to boil the pasta.

Timing: This is a quick meal. Get the pasta water boiling early. Put in the pasta so that it finishes at same time as sauce.

Directions:

Brown the pancetta or prosciutto

Melt butter in Dutch oven over medium heat. Add pancetta and red pepper flakes. Cook, stirring frequently, until golden brown and fond begins to form (that's the flavor-packed browned bits of goodness in bottom of pan). 4-5 minutes for pancetta. Prosciutto takes less time and does not produce a fond.

Add garlic, tomato paste

Add garlic and cook for another minute. Add tomato paste, stir, and cook for another 30 seconds.

Add vodka

Add vodka. Stir, scraping up the fond, until vodka has mostly evaporated and the meat begins to sizzle (3-4 minutes).

Add passata, cream, salt & pepper

Add the passata, cream, salt & pepper. Adjust heat to a gentle simmer. Cook uncovered for about 10 minutes.

Add cheese (optional)

Add finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano or other cheese to the sauce, and allow it to melt in. Cover and keep on super-low burner to keep it warm until pasta is ready.



Cook the pasta, reserve pasta water

Meanwhile, cook the pasta in vigorously boiling, salted water. RESERVE PASTA WATER before draining.

Combine pasta and vodka sauce

At the last minute, add another splash of vodka to the sauce, and mix it in. Add the drained pasta to the sauce in the Dutch oven. Add reserved pasta water as necessary (probably ¼ cup or more). You want it a tad on the soupy side, because it will thicken a bit after plating.

Plate it

Optional (to show off): Garnish with fresh basil leaves or fresh parsley.
Serve with additional grated Parmesan or Romano for guests to sprinkle on.

- Source:** This recipe is largely based by one in *Cook's Illustrated* (Sept./Oct. 2024).
- Passata:** The distinguishing feature and genius of the *Cook's Illustrated* recipe is the use of passata, an uncooked tomato puree (aka raw strained tomatoes) rather than a traditional Italian tomato sauce. Passata is available in some US grocery stores and on Amazon.com.
- Vodka:** This dish does not taste like vodka. It is added early, and the alcohol burns off. (The splash of vodka near the end adds complexity with only a whisper of vodka flavor.) Vodka is a critical flavor enhancer that also keeps the cream from separating. According to the NYT: "The alcohol is said to help fat disperse more evenly, keeping the sauce emulsion glossy and creamy." According to *Cook's Illustrated*: "The flavor compounds in the tomato, pancetta, and garlic are primarily fat-soluble, but they're also soluble in alcohol. When those flavor compounds dissolve in alcohol, they're more volatile than if dissolved in fat—meaning they can disperse in the air and thus into our noses, allowing us to taste them more fully."
- Variations:** Most recipes for pasta alla vodka do not include meat. Those that do, usually call for pancetta. But I rather like prosciutto, which almost seems to disappear into the sauce, infusing it with goodness. Some recipes have incorporated grilled chicken. There is debate over butter vs. EVOO. Butter wins.
Recipes vary over whether to add cheese to the sauce itself. If you do, Parmigiano-Reggiano or Grana Padano cheese are traditional. Or you may cheat and use Pecorino Romano, which is creamier.
Some recipes, including some by famous chefs, call for sauteed minced onion. *Cook's Illustrated* gave the onions an unambiguous thumbs down. I agree.
- Origin:** This is not an ancient recipe. Its origin is unclear, but it became popular in 1980s in both Italy and the US. In both countries, it was associated with the raging discotheque scene. In fact, it was referred to at the time as "disco sauce." The idea of enhancing the flavor of tomato sauce with vodka was first recorded just a half century ago in the 1974 memoir, *L'abbuffone* (the gluttony), by the Italian comedic actor Ugo Tognazzi. He described his recipe for *penne all'infuriata* (furious pasta) which included a full glass of Polish chile-infused vodka. Tognazzi is best remembered on this side of the Atlantic for his role in the 1978 French comedy *La Cage aux Folles* which became the highest grossing foreign film ever released in the U.S.
- Arrabbiata:** Tognazzi called his dish "furious penne." Another word for "angry sauce" is sugo all'arrabbiata. This is a Roman dish dating to the 1950s and 60s, when hot food was in vogue in the Lazio region of Italy. Pasta all'arrabbiata appears in Fellini's *Roma* (1972). Arrabbiata sauce bears some resemblance a vodka sauce, with amped up red chili peppers and no vodka. The best Arrabbiata I ever tasted was prepared by Mario Batali at his restaurant in Las Vegas.
- SNL:** The dish was lampooned in a sketch on *Saturday Night Live* (5/4/2024), in which it was depicted as an uninspired but affectionately tolerated dish universally served in a "big ass aluminum tray" at weddings, funerals, anniversaries, and graduations.

SPAGHETTI ALLA CARBONARA

Ingredients	2 servings (generous)
<i>Sauté the pork:</i>	
Thick sliced bacon (coarsely chopped-- $\frac{3}{4}$ inch pieces) or Guanciale (pork cheek) (chopped into slender elongated cubes) or Pancetta (cut into pieces or coarsely chopped if you get your hands on a whole chunk of pancetta)	$\frac{2}{3}$ lb. (this is a lot, use less if you prefer)
<i>Vegetables (my non-traditional add-on):</i>	
Shallot (finely chopped)	2 large (or 4 smaller ones) or substitute one thick slice of an onion
Frozen peas (thawed to room temperature)	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup ($\frac{1}{2}$ cup if married to Karen)
<i>Egg, pepper & cheese mixture:</i>	
Eggs (room temperature)	9 eggs (7 yolks and 2 whole eggs)
Freshly ground pepper	A few generous turns of the grinder
Parmigiano-Reggiano or Grana Padano Cheese (finely grated—micro blade of Cuisinart)	$\frac{1}{3}$ cup (If you don't have Romano, use $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of Parmesan)
Pecorino Romano (graded—regular blade of Cuisinart)	1 cup
<i>The pasta:</i>	
Bucatini, spaghetti, linguini, or fettuccini	8 oz.
Water (unsalted)	Not a ton, just enough to cook the pasta. You want the pasta water to be starchy.
Pasta water (reserve before draining the pasta)	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup. But reserve more just in case. If you forget to reserve pasta water, add cream or half & half instead.
<i>Plate:</i>	
Top each serving with a generous turn of freshly ground pepper, followed by more cheese.	

Before you start: Set out eggs to bring to room temperature. Put frozen peas into an empty colander resting on a plate. (Bacon & shallots will be added later.)

Equipment: I use a large copper frying pan for sauté and a separate pot to boil the pasta. Don't wash the frying pan after sauté. For a small batch, it will be used for the final combination including the pasta. If cooking for more than 3 people, use the empty pasta pot for final combination.

Famous Chef Luciano Monosilio uses a bain-marie (double boiler) to combine the pasta and egg/cheese mixture. Fuggedaboutit (unless you have a lot of money to spare).

Directions:

Sauté the bacon & shallots together

If using bacon, you may sauté the bacon and the shallots together in one step, but give the bacon a 10-minute head start. They each benefit from a very slow sauté on low heat. You may need to add a touch of olive oil, as the bacon will not provide much grease at this low temperature. This sauté should take 25 minutes, or so, which allows the shallots to caramelize and the bacon to achieve a chewy (not crunchy) texture that mimics much more expensive guanciale (which is the classic ingredient).

Remove the bacon and shallots, putting it on top of the peas in the colander. Put colander in a warming oven.

Sauté the guanciale or pancetta separately from the shallots

If using guanciale or pancetta, sauté it gently in a frying pan. Guanciale requires no olive oil. Pancetta will need a bit of olive oil. Remove pork, and sauté the shallots in the same pan.

Prep the eggs

Use a mixing bowl large enough to hold the eggs and cheese. Gently crack each egg in half over the sink. Hold the yolk in one of the half-shells, then move it to the other empty half-shell, so that the white part runs out of the half-shell into the sink. Drop the precious yolk into bowl. Don't worry about some of the egg white getting into the bowl. Add the additional whole eggs to the same bowl. Scramble them up with a fork.

Boil the pasta

Meanwhile, boil the pasta in unsalted water. (The pasta will be plenty salty with all the bacon.) Don't use a ton of water; just enough to cook the pasta. You want a starchy pasta water. Before draining, reserve plenty of pasta water. Drain the spaghetti in a colander.

Add the cheese & pepper to egg mixture

While pasta boils, add the cheese and pepper to the beaten eggs. Stir together with fork until completely blended. Set aside. (Do not add the cheese to the eggs more than 10 minutes in advance.)

Put it together

If cooking for 3 or fewer, put the drained pasta immediately back into the frying pan. For a larger batch, put the pasta back into the empty pasta pot. Add the specified quantity of pasta water to the drained pasta. Re-heat the pasta gently for a minute. Then turn off the heat and stir in the egg/cheese/pepper mixture. It will be very soupy at this point. Cover with a lid and allow the egg mixture to rest in the warmth of the pan for a couple minutes, occasionally lifting the lid to stir. The carbonara mixture will thicken some, but it should still be just a tad on the soupy side. It will continue to absorb the liquid even after it is plated.

Finally, add the pork, peas, and shallots that have been patiently waiting in the colander in the warming oven.

Corrections

If too soupy, cover and let sit over a very low heat for a minute or two. Do so very gently to avoid "scrambling the eggs."

If too thick, add another splash of pasta water and keep stirring to keep it creamy.

Plate

Serve at once. Topping each serving with another grind of pepper and more cheese (Romano or Parmesan).



Notes:

Most American restaurants add cream to their so-called carbonara (because that is easier to make and tastes more Americanized). Authentic carbonara has no cream. The creamy texture is accomplished solely with raw eggs, cheese & pasta water—cooked by the heat of the pasta, which is tricky to get right.

Occasionally, you will see a recipe with sautéed garlic. But that is rare.

Vegetables:

The vegetables (shallots and peas) are my add-on. They have no place in a classic carbonara, but Karen and I love them. Feel free to leave them out. Or go all-the-way-in and add sautéed mushrooms and green peppers, too! That is even more in-authentic, but a tasty switch-up on occasion.

Source:

My mother first made this dish for the Meyer family when we lived in Florence in 1969. I have loved it ever since, and eat it nonstop when in Rome (or anywhere else I can get the real thing). The technique is influenced by Luciano Monosilio, known as the King of Carbonara (who earned his first Michelin Star at age 27 and whose restaurant in Rome is Luciano Cucina Italiana). But my approach differs in a few ways—notably reheating the pasta and pasta water before adding

the egg mixture, and letting it rest. And, of course, the vegetables are a purely Meyer addition that have no place in a proper carbonara.

Etymology:

The origin of the term is uncertain. One theory is that the hearty dish was favored by the Carbonari (charcoal men), a secret society prominent in the early stages of Italian reunification. Or it may have referred to actual charcoal workers. Contrary to my dear mother's impression, it has nothing to do with feeding the omni-present Carabinieri (the national police).

RAVIOLI WITH BURNT BUTTER, LEMON, AND SAGE

Ingredients	2 Servings
Rana brand lobster ravioli (from Costco) or Ferranti brand butternut squash ravioli (from the Co-op) Artisola brand cacio e pepe (from Whole foods)	13 oz. package 12 oz. package 8 oz. package (or two!)
Salted butter (unsalted butter seems to explode more)	1 ⅓ sticks
Fresh sage (tear off leaves, no stems)	1 ⅓ oz. (2 packages— ² / ₃ oz. each) Yes, this is double what other recipes call for.
Fresh lemon juice	2 lemons
Lemon zest	
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (or Romano and asiago)	Sprinkle <u>very</u> lightly on top, when plated

Equipment:

If cooking for two to four, a medium size frying pan is adequate for the butter/sage/lemon sauce. You must have a good lemon zester.

Timing:

Aim to have the sauce and pasta finish at the same time. Put on the pasta soon after starting the sauce.

Directions:

Prep

Put the butter out to warm (better for bringing quickly to heat when making browned butter).

Put on the pasta water to boil.

Zest the lemons (with a lemon zester) before cutting them, and save the zest. Then cut each bare-naked lemon in half and press it for its juice, like it were a Salem witch.

Tear off the sage leaves from the stems.

Sage sauce

Melt the room-temperature butter in a frying pan. As soon as it melts, turn heat to high until butter has foamed (about 3 minutes). (I don't know why, but if you melt butter too slowly or pause after melting it, it will not foam properly when you bring it back to high heat. As a result, the sage leaves will not crisp up properly.) After foaming the butter, reduce heat to medium-high.

Dump whole sage leaves into the browned butter. It will foam again. After 30 seconds, add the lemon zest – it will foam again.

Finally, add the lemon juice. It will go crazy. Then stop.

Sage leaves should be crispy, not mushy. If the ravioli is not done, remove the fried sage leaves to a separate plate, and put the sauce on very low heat until ready to plate.

Ravioli

Boil ravioli in lots of water, plenty of salt, and a splash of olive oil. Follow package directions (probably 4 minutes).

Put it together

Use a slotted spoon to gently remove the ravioli from the water and onto a spare plate. Tilt the plate to pour off excess water. Then carefully move and artistically arrange them onto individual plates.

Pick the sage leaves out of the butter (if not already removed) and distribute them with further artistry over the ravioli. Pour the butter sauce over the ravioli.

Allow guests, if they choose, to sprinkle with grated parmesan, Romano, or asiago cheese.



LOBSTER RAVIOLI WITH LEMON CREAM SAUCE

Ingredients	2 Servings (this is generous)
<i>Cream Sauce</i>	
Limoncello (or just use more lemon juice)	1/3 cup
Lemon juice	1/3 lemon
Lemon zest	1/3 lemon (or more, use what you have)
Butter	1 1/2 sticks
Heavy cream	1/3 cup
Crab meat (entirely optional)	whatever is on hand (perhaps 1/2 cup)
<i>Lobster ravioli</i>	
Lobster ravioli (fresh, pre-made) from Costco (Rana brand)	
<i>Plate and serve</i>	
Parsley (finely chopped)	A tiny sprinkle
Parmigiano Reggiano (fresh, finely grated)	As desired

Equipment:

Use a medium frying pan or small pot for the sauce. A giant pot for the ravioli.

Timing:

This is a quick dinner. Start the sauce cooking about the time you put in the ravioli.

Directions:

The cream sauce

Zest the lemon. Combine Limoncello, lemon juice, lemon zest in a pan and bring to heat over medium heat. Stir in the butter cubes until melted. Finally add the cream and whisk to mix. Turn off heat.

Optional: If you happen to have some cooked crab meat on hand (which I sometimes keep in the freezer), you may add that to the cream sauce in time to warm it.

Boil the ravioli

Get everything ready and prepped for the sauce. Cook the ravioli in tons of salted, vigorously boiling water for about 4 minutes. They should float.

Plate and serve

Plate the raviolis. Drizzle the lemon cream on top. Garnish with parsley and serve with parmesan cheese.

FETTUCCINI ALFREDO

Ingredients	2 servings (way generous!) 4 servings (side dish)
<i>Alfredo sauce:</i>	
Unsalted butter	½ stick butter
Heavy whipping cream (or half and half)	1 ½ cups
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (finely grated) Optional: Also include some Gruyere or Asiago cheese (grated)	8 oz. (total for all cheeses)
Pasta water (reserved after cooking pasta)	Reserve 1 cup; use as needed (perhaps ⅓ cup)
<i>Optional add-ins:</i>	
Frozen peas (thawed) or fresh asparagus tips (cooked)	1 cup
Mushrooms (sliced)	8 oz.
Prosciutto de Parma (fresh), pancetta (fried & chopped), ham (finely diced), bacon (fried & crumbled), or blackened chicken (finely chopped)	¼ lb. (prosciutto or pancetta) ⅓ lb. (ham, bacon, or chicken)
<i>Pasta:</i>	
Fettuccine, bow ties, tortellini, or other pasta	8 oz. (dry pasta); 12 oz. (fresh tortellini)
Salt	good sprinkle added to the pasta water (not too much, the cheese is salty)

Equipment: A large frying pan for the alfredo sauce (big enough to add the pasta later). Another frying pan to sauté the mushrooms & ham. A giant pot for the pasta.

Remember:

Reserve the pasta water!

Directions:

Alfredo sauce:

Melt the butter in large frying pan. Add cream and bring to gentle boil. Reduce heat and simmer uncovered 30 to 40 minutes to reduce, stirring frequently. After the cream is reduced, slowly stir in the cheese.

Add-ins (optional):

While the cream is reducing, sauté mushrooms until nicely browned. Add in ham. Brown the bacon. Boil the asparagus.

When alfredo sauce is ready, stir any vegetables & meat.

Pasta:

Cook pasta in tons of water, lightly salted. RESERVE SOME PASTA WATER. Drain. Add the drained pasta to the pan with the alfredo sauce (so as not to waste the heavenly sauce).

The alfredo sauce will have thickened. Add pasta water as necessary to bring it back to a fairly thin, velvety consistency.

Plate:

Plate and serve at once (within 5 minutes—this does not keep well).

Offer guests more grated Parmigiano-Reggiano . . . but you really don't need any.

Notes:

Classic Alfredo uses only Parmigiano-Reggiano and butter. Italian versions rarely include cream. Cheeses (other than parmesan) and the add-ins are non-traditional, but tasty modifications.

If you order Fettuccini Alfredo in any American chain restaurant, you will get a creamy roux-based version (made with butter and flour) that does a great job of hiding the taste of the low-quality cheese they use. In short, you've got macaroni and cheese, which is fine. But it is not Fettuccini Alfredo.

The recipe above employs a flourless cream reduction. It corresponds closely to the one in *The Essential Pasta Cookbook* (published by Borders). Others, such as Jane & Michael Stern's *Carbone's Cookbook* (recipes from the incredible Italian restaurant in Hartford, Connecticut), don't bother to reduce the sauce (which I'm convinced is a mistake). The cream reduction used here produces a velvety sauce that doesn't mask the flavor of the cheese, like a white sauce does.

Mixing in some Asiago cheese is heretical, but quite good for a change.

The Gruyere/Parmesan/peas/prosciutto combination comes from a recipe in *Cook's Illustrated* (4/2015). It is divine. That recipe calls for sautéing some diced shallots at the beginning and adding a bit of the prosciutto (minced) to the sauté (the rest added uncooked later).

This recipe is all about the cheese. The pre-grated stuff you can buy at the grocery store is dreadful (even the fresh "gourmet" version in the cheese aisle). Use real Italian Parmigiano-Reggiano and grate it yourself. This is most easily done in the Cuisinart with a special very fine slicer made just for this purpose. But I've seen this done on a cooking show with the chopping blade, too. (Don't use the regular-size cheese grater. It is way too thick!) Or you can get equally good results (and a good workout) using a microplane zester/grater. If you use Asiago or Gruyere, those are soft cheeses that may be grated with a regular cheese grater.

The person who first taught me to cook this is my dear friend, Judge Cheri Copsey, who spontaneously whipped up a batch for a hungry cocktail party guest, much to my amazement. I am still in awe. Hers is still the best.

History:

Most sources agree that the original recipe was developed by Alfredo Di Lelio² in 1914 at his restaurant in Rome, Alfredo alla Scrofa. (Mario Batali disputes this, contending that the origin is uncertain.) Anyway, according to legend, the dish became internationally popular when silent movie stars Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. and his wife, Mary Pickford had the dish on their honeymoon in 1927 and spread the word upon their return to Hollywood. In gratitude, Chef di Lelio sent them a gold fork and spoon, and began serving the dish with gold utensils to other stars of the day. Alfredo di Lelio retired in 1938 and sold his restaurant intact to Mario Mozzetti's grandfather.

The original restaurant (which still operates in Rome) opened branches at Rockefeller Center in New York and at Epcot Center. Both are now closed. Karen and I have eaten at both, and both were insanely delicious—far more intense in flavor than the subtler, creamier version presented in this recipe.

But the real story is that Karen ate at the original Alfredo's in Rome when she lived there as a student in 1980. She dined with her brother and father. The pasta was prepared at the table, and, according to tradition, the prima donna (Karen in this case) is served her pasta in the coveted bowl in which the pasta for the table was mixed (because it has the most wonderful taste).

The authentic original recipe is built with just butter and parmesan cheese with a splash of pasta water. This approach is reflected in Mario Batali's *Moto Italiano* and Michele Scicolone's *1,000 Italian Recipes*. Batali just dices the butter and adds it with the cheese to the cooked pasta, with pasta water as needed.

² According to Jane & Michael Stern's *Carbone's Cookbook*, the last name is di Lello, but this appears to be in error.

This differs somewhat from Alfredo's original (according to Wikipedia), in which Alfredo added butter to the bowl both before and after the pasta—indeed, tripling the butter for his pregnant wife. Scicolone (who claims to be the grandson of Alfredo) says that the recipe in his book is the same as that used in Alfredo's restaurant in New York (now closed): "Let the butter soften at room temperature for 30 minutes, then mix it with the grated Parmigiano-Reggiano with an electric mixer before adding to the cooked, drained pasta, along with a splash of cooking water as needed."

Although Fettuccini Alfredo is a household word in America, the dish is not known by that name in Italy. In Italy, you must order it as "pasta al burro" in the south or "pasta in bianco" in the north. And it has none of the popularity that the dish continues to have in the U.S.

LASAGNA ALLA BOLOGNESE

Ingredients	8 servings (small pan)
<i>The soffritto (plus pancetta):</i>	
Pancetta (whole (not sliced) from deli at Boise Co-op, then dice)	5 oz. (almost 1/3 lb.)
Onions (cut then chop in Cuisinart)	1 large or 1 1/2 small
Celery (cut then chop in Cuisinart)	2 stalks
Carrots (cut then chop in Cuisinart)	1 carrot
Garlic (I cheat and use chopped garlic in a jar)	1 Tbsp. from jar or 4 large cloves
Unsalted butter	approx. 3/4 stick (6 oz.) (as needed)
Olive oil	approx. 6 oz. (as needed)
<i>Gently cook the raw meat:</i>	
Ground veal (or ground beef—80% lean)	1 lbs.
Ground pork (preferably Duroc, a high quality breed) Or substitute hot Italian sausage (raw)	1/2 lb.
Salt & pepper	1/2 tsp. each
<i>Add milk, seasonings, tomatoes & broth to the ragù:</i>	
Whole milk	1 1/2 cups
Red wine (or use white wine, which is more traditional)	1/2 cup
Tomato paste	12 oz. (two small cans)
Nutmeg	a pinch
Bay leaves	2 leaves
Fresh thyme (tied in a bunch) Or dried thyme	5 oz plastic box 2 tsp. (if dried)
Dried oregano	2 tsp.
Red pepper flakes	2 tsp.
Salt & pepper	1 tsp. each
Canned crushed tomatoes	42 oz. (1 1/2 28 oz. cans)
Beef bone broth (may substitute chicken or beef stock)	1 cup (8 oz.)
<i>Besciamella with Ricotta & Parmigiano:</i>	
Butter	3/4 stick
All-purpose flour	1/3 cup
Half & half or whole milk (I use half of each)	about 2 cups (as needed)
Nutmeg (preferably grated from the nut)	1/4 tsp
Ricotta cheese	2/3 lb. (11 oz.)
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese	1/3 cup
Salt & pepper	1/2 tsp. each (to taste)
<i>The sheet noodles:</i>	
<i>First choice:</i>	
Ferranti fresh lasagna sheets are fabulous (the green noodles— with spinach to color them—are exceptional) (from Boise Co-Op).	2 packages (8 oz. each)
<i>Excellent second choice:</i>	
Fresh roll of sheet pasta by “Pasta etc. of Sonoma County” (vegan—no eggs) (available at Whole Foods)	1 package (12. oz.)
<i>Distant third choice:</i>	
Dried lasagna noodles	1 lb. box
<i>Cheese for the lasagna:</i>	
Fresh mozzarella cheese (cut into small cubes)	12 oz. (3/4 lb.)
Fresh mozzarella cheese (grated)	4 oz. (1/4 lb.)



Equipment:

The lasagna needs a small, uncovered lasagna pan (9 x 12 ¾" for this recipe). If you use a large lasagna pan (10 x 14¼"), double the recipe! Really, it goes from 2 quarts to 4 quarts.

For this quantity of *ragù*, you need a very large pot. I use my giant Dutch oven or largest Calphalon pot.

The entire sauce, including the sauté of soffritto and meat, may be done in the same pot. But I prefer to do the sauté in a separate, very large frying pan and then transfer the soffritto and meat mixture to the large pot before adding the tomato, milk, etc.

I use my largest frying pan for the *besciamella* (any pan would work).

Timing:

This is a full day of work. Better yet, make the *ragù* the evening before. Resting the sauce overnight improves it. The simmer time on the Bolognese sauce is a minimum of 2 hours, and it appreciates longer. Another thing: This lasagna keeps well. It may be better the next day. It even freezes well, if it is vacuum-sealed. Leftover sauce may be refrigerated for 1 day or frozen for 1 month.

Recipe::

The soffritto (plus pancetta):

Cut the onions, celery, carrots in to big pieces. Then chop them – separately – with chopping blade in the Cuisinart into a fine chop (or mince by hand). Combine the chopped vegetables with the minced garlic and diced pancetta in large pan. Sauté in butter and olive oil. Give them a head start, then add the garlic and pancetta and continue sautéing until tender, but not browned – perhaps 30 minutes for this large quantity. If you have time, you can turn this down to very low heat and cook up to an hour to caramelize things.

Gently cook the meat:

Add the raw meat (veal and pork or whatever) to the pan with the soffritto. Mash the meats and vegetables together. Season with salt and pepper. Cook until the meat loses its pink color (about 10 minutes). Do not brown (if you want tender meat). If using a frying pan, when finished, move the mixture from the frying pan to the large pot.

Add milk, wine, broth, tomatoes & seasonings to the ragù:

Add the milk to the meat and soffritto mixture. Simmer until most of the milk evaporates (about 15 minutes). Then add the wine and simmer again until nearly evaporated (about 5 minutes).

Add the tomato paste, canned tomatoes, broth, and seasonings (nutmeg, bay leaves, thyme, oregano, red pepper, salt & pepper). Stir to mix. Once heated, reduce heat and let it simmer for another two hours or longer. Start uncovered; add lid partially or completely as needed to achieve correct thickness. Low and slow is the key. It should not boil rapidly, but just bubble or “blip.” If you are sure you have the temperature adjusted correctly, you may leave the sauce unattended for an hour or longer without stirring.

Adjust seasoning with salt & pepper, if needed.

Overnight pause (strongly recommended):

If you are doing the sauce the day before, put it in a covered pot that fits in your refrigerator. Reheat the next day on the stove. Adjust if the sauce is too thin by heating without the lid (or add more broth if too thick). Carefully find and remove the thyme and bay leaves. The re-heated sauce may continue to simmer quietly for another hour or longer.

Besciamella with ricotta & parmesan:

Melt butter. Stir in flour and cook the roux for three minutes. Slowly add half & half or milk until proper consistency (on the thin side). Cook gently about 10 minutes altogether. Season with nutmeg, salt, and pepper. Near the end, blend in the ricotta and parmesan cheese. Adjust seasoning. Add more milk if necessary. It will continue to thicken.

Cut and wet the noodles:

Cut the sheets of fresh pasta into pieces that will fit fill the lasagna tray.

Put hot water in a very large bowl or pan. Soak each piece of noodle in the warm water for just a minute before putting into the lasagna.

Build the lasagna:

Layer as follows: Begin with a thin layer the ragù on the bottom of the lasagna pan.

Then build the layers: noodles, besciamella, ragù, mozzarella. Repeat until done (probably 5 layers). But for last layer, SKIP the cheese.

Go light the sauce, especially the besciamella. If you have extra besciamella, don't use it; just throw it away.

Reserve extra Bolognese sauce for plating (to serve on top).

Bake:

Bake uncovered 35 minutes at 350°.

Remove from oven and increase temperature to 390°.

Sprinkle the grated mozzarella on the top. Return to 390° oven for another 15 minutes. This should create a nice glaze of mozzarella on top. The edges of the lasagna should be browned and sauce bubbling.

Remove from oven and let it rest for 20 minutes before serving. Serve with additional Bolognese sauce and a sprinkle of Parmigiano-Reggiano.

Notes on Soffritto vs. Sofrito:

Sofrito is a sautéed vegetable sauce used as a base in Spanish, Portuguese, and Latin American cooking. Ingredients vary, but it is typically focused on garlic, tomatoes, peppers, onion, and olive oil. The Italian version, spelled soffritto, tends to be more focused on onions, carrots, celery. A soffritto (or sofrito) is usually chopped finely. This recipe uses a Cuisinart to chop even finer, almost a paste. This recipe adds the pancetta (or prosciutto) into the soffritto before it is sautéed, rather than adding it to the sauce later. Nod to Emilie Raffa for this suggestion.

Notes on Ragù alla Bolognese:

Ragù is a generic term for meat sauce. The word “ragù” is most commonly associated with Southern Italian “red sauces,” e.g., ragù alla Napolitano, which are heavy on tomatoes and garlic and made with red wine.

American restaurants often misapply the term Bolognese sauce to what is really ragù alla Napolitano.

Ragù alla Bolognese is the typical sauce of Bologna, Italy. Its traditional function is to dress tagliatelle, pappardelle, or fettuccine and to make lasagna alla Bolognese. Its distinguishing ingredients are milk and a soffritto that includes carrots, milk, and white wine. A Bolognese sauce typically has little or no garlic. Its focus is on the milky meat texture, with much less tomato. The meat may be veal, beef, or pork (often a combination) with some minced pancetta incorporated.

My version of Bolognese is pretty authentic, but includes a tilt toward a Southern red sauce by using red wine, more tomatoes, and more Southern Italian spices.

Notes on Besciamella (Béchamel sauce):

To me, it's not lasagna if it doesn't have a béchamel sauce. The Italians call it *besciamella*. It is just a fancy word for a white sauce (the mother sauce of French cuisine) made of butter, flour, and milk. It is named after Louis de Béchamel, Marquis de Nointel, who held the honorary post of chief steward to King Louis XIV of France. Originally, it was a more complicated sauce involving veal and root vegetables.

The idea of mixing in Ricotta with the Béchamel sauce comes from the Kitchen Bible cookbook. I've never seen that elsewhere, but it works nicely. Then I added the parmesan, because that simplifies the building of the lasagna.

For making the white sauce, all the cookbooks tell you to slowly add all of the milk, then let it thicken. I have better luck approaching it my way: I add the milk to the roux gradually, adding more as soon as the roux absorbs each new dose of milk. This allows me to continue thinning the roux until right consistency is achieved, and then stop. I get a nice, thick sauce this way, without the guesswork.

Noodle options

If you're brave, make your own fresh noodles! They are the best, of course.

If you can't find fresh noodles in the store, you may use dried noodles, which must be boiled first (obviously). But they won't be the same.

Under no circumstances should you buy dry “no boil” cheater noodles.

Source of my recipe and variations thereon:

Derives from an amalgam of cookbooks by Mario Batali, Joyce Goldstein, Michele Scicolone, Borders, and *The Illustrated Kitchen Bible* (Lasagna al Forno). Also influenced by recipe for Lasagna all'Emiliana (Chef Massimiliano “Max” Bartoli of Miss Williamsburg Italian Restaurant in Brooklyn, NY.) An excellent online recipe is available from www.theclevercarrot.com (by Emilie Raffa). The tip on the final glaze comes from Mama La Forge.

The Illustrated Kitchen Bible says just beef, Batali uses veal and pork.

Some cookbooks call for milk only, others for beef stock, some both. Some call for adding the milk during the long simmer, others at end. I compromised and added it during last hour.

Batali uses white wine, with milk and no stock.

White wine is, indeed, more traditional than red.

Batali uses 3 oz. tomato paste instead of tomatoes!; *Kitchen Bible* calls for 14.5 oz. tomatoes; Lasagna all'Emiliana calls for 56 oz. of tomatoes.

I added the mozzarella “by mistake” on 5/3/2020 when I discovered that I had only half the needed ricotta. Now I'm sold; gives it more texture.

BURNT BUTTER AND MIZITHRA WITH ANGEL HAIR

Ingredients	2 Servings
Mizithra (a hard Greek cheese) (buy solid, in a block, then grate super fine) (available ungrated at the Co-op).	1/3 lb. or so
Butter	1 stick
Angel hair pasta (Capellini)	1/3 lb. (dried) (don't exceed)
Salt	lots (about 4 Tbsp. dumped into boiling water for pasta)
Pasta water	reserve more than a cup for 2 people

Remember:

Reserve the pasta water! Don't dare to forget. This pasta is more about the pasta water than it is about the burnt butter.

Equipment:

The burnt butter requires a medium frying pan or sauce pan for 2 people, a large one for 4 or more.

The pasta is most easily prepared in a very large Dutch oven or other substantial pot. Use a fine strainer to add the burnt butter to the pasta.

Directions:

Grate the cheese:

Grate the Mizithra cheese in super-fine cheese grater in a Cuisinart (the same one you would use for parmesan cheese). Set aside.

Burnt butter:

Phase 1: Melt butter in medium-sized frying pan. Heat over medium heat about 4 minutes.

Phase 2: Turn heat to high and cook for another 4 minutes or so. During this 2nd phase, butter will foam up and rise to fill pan. Monitor constantly during this phase and stir as needed to keep from overtopping pan. Foaming will then subside and butter will turn to a dark amber color. It should have a pleasant caramel aroma.

Phase 3: Take butter off heat and let rest a couple of minutes so that burned bits settle to bottom.

Pasta:

Meanwhile, cook pasta in tons of water with lots of salt. Reserve lots of pasta water. Drain pasta and quickly return pasta to pot while pasta is still hot and wet.

Combine:

Add the Mizithra to the pot with the cooked pasta. Then pour on the browned butter through a strainer to catch the burned bits. Toss thoroughly. Add the pasta water bit by bit and stir. Let it absorb that, rest, and then add some more. Let it rest again, add more pasta water as needed. You will be stunned by how much pasta water is required, and by how it seems perfect, and then, two minutes later, needs more again. The pasta water is what makes this work! Oh, so creamy tasting, with no cream!

SPAGHETTI AGLIO E OLIO

This could may be a stand-alone dish, but is often served as a side to accompany another dish such as eggplant or veal parmigiana.

Ingredients	2 Servings (side dish)
Spaghetti, linguini, or angel hair pasta	1/3 to 1/2 lb.
Salt (for boiling the pasta)	Generously (about 3 Tbsp.)
Chopped garlic (fresh or from jar)	1 1/2 Tbsp. (about 8 large cloves)
Crushed red pepper flakes	1/2 Tbsp.
Olive oil	1/3 cup
Reserved pasta water	1 cup
Parmesan cheese	Generously (about 1/2 cup)
Optional: fresh parsley (minced)	1/3 cup

Equipment:

Use a large frying pan for the garlic and oil sauté. Use a very large Dutch oven or large pot to boil the pasta. If your frying pan is large enough (e.g., a large risotto pan), you may put the drained pasta into the frying pan with the sautéed garlic and oil. Otherwise, return the drained pasta to the pot and pour in the sautéed garlic and oil.

Directions:

Boil the pasta in large pot of salted water. Reserve plenty of pasta water. Drain the pasta.

While pasta is boiling, sauté the garlic in olive oil over medium heat in pan large enough to hold the spaghetti (copper risotto pan is good). After a couple of minutes (don't overcook the garlic), add the red pepper flakes and cook another 30 seconds. Add the reserved pasta water. Let it simmer vigorously (uncovered) about 5 minutes until reduced by 1/3. Remove from heat.

Combine the drained pasta and the garlic, oil, and pasta water. Add cheese and parsley, and toss.

Let it rest five minutes until it absorbs the sauce. Serve with additional parmesan cheese on the side.

PICCATA (CHICKEN, VEAL, SOLE, OR PORK) WITH PENNE PASTA

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Prep the cutlets</i>	
Boneless, skinless chicken breasts (or substitute veal or pork cutlets, or fillet of sole)	1 half breast (.7 lbs.) (1/3 lb. per person) (this is a modest size, increase for healthy appetites)
Egg white (lightly beaten)	1 1/2 egg
Flour	1/2 cup
Salt	1/2 tsp.
Pepper	1/2 tsp.
<i>Sauté the cutlets:</i>	
Extra virgin olive oil	1/4 cup
Butter	1/2 stick (4 Tbsp.)
<i>Piccata sauce:</i>	
Shallot, minced (may substitute onion)	1 whole shallot (or 1/3 onion)
Juice of fresh lemon	1 lemon
Chicken broth	1/3 cup
Dry white wine	1/3 cup
Heavy cream	1/3 cup
Capers	1/4 cup (half of 4 oz. jar)
Flat leaf parsley, finely chopped	1/4 cup (save extra to sprinkle at end)
Flour	1 tsp. or so, if needed to thicken
Lemon slices (with skin on, sliced thick)	3/4 lemon
<i>Pasta (or other starch)</i>	
Penne pasta	1/3 lb. dried pasta
Water	Tons of water
Salt	Generously
Some of the reserved butter/olive mix	A nice splash
<i>Plate</i>	
Flat leaf parsley, finely chopped	Just a sprinkle
Parmigiano Reggiano (finely grated)	Let guests apply as desired

Equipment:

Use a huge pot to boil the pasta. Everything else is done in done in a large frying pan. I prefer copper. Cast iron is also good.

Prep work

Mince the shallots, set aside.

Mince the parsley, set aside.

Squeeze the lemons, set aside.

Slice more lemons, set aside.

Combine broth and wine in a stovetop pot, set aside. (Don't add the lemon juice just yet, it's acidic and might interact if this sits too long.)

Combine flour, salt & pepper in a mixing bowl, set aside.

Separate egg whites into bowl, beat them with a fork to fluff, and set aside.

Combine butter and olive oil in a large measuring cup with pour spout, and place in warming oven to melt the butter and combine with the oil.



Pound the cutlets

(This step is for chicken only. No need to pound if using veal or pork cutlets or filet of sole, which are already thin.)

Cut chicken breasts in half crosswise. Place each half on cutting board with cut side down. Then cut them in half again lengthwise (to make them thinner). One at a time, place them in plastic bag and pound them to within an inch of their lives ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch, to be precise).

Flour the cutlets

Dip each cutlet in egg whites. Dredge the cutlets in the seasoned flour, shaking off excess. Set them aside on clean plates (a little overlap is okay). Put them in fridge for an hour or so, if doing this early.

Reduce the broth/wine/lemon

The sauce takes quite a while to reduce. I suggest giving it a head start while browning the cutlets. Combine the broth, wine, and lemon juice in a pan, and bring to a vigorous simmer. The goal is to reduce by half.

Brown the cutlets

Pour some of the oil/butter mixture in large frying pan, $\frac{1}{3}$ inch deep, and heat to high temperature. Brown the cutlets barely 3 minutes on one side then 2 minute on the other side until nicely browned and barely cooked through. (Less time for sole.) If they brown more quickly than that, the temperature is too high; if not browned by then, the temperature is too low. Add more butter and oil as necessary to maintain $\frac{1}{3}$ inch deep. As each is done, plate them (spread out, with not much overlapping) and set them in a warm oven (170°) to keep warm. Do not clean the frying pan. Those flavors will be used for the sauce.

The piccata sauce

Using the same frying pan, sauté the shallots over high heat for nearly 3 minutes using the same oil/butter mixture. When shallots are soft, add the reduced lemon juice, wine, and chicken broth. (If not previously reduced, simmer vigorously until reduced by half.) Add the cream, the capers, parsley, and the lemon slices. Continue simmering several more minutes, stirring occasionally, to reduce the cream. Note: Even when reduced, this is a thin sauce. Do not expect a gravy. But if too thin, you may add a bit of flour to thicken.

Pasta

Meanwhile, boil the pasta in tons of water, liberally salted, at a vigorous boil. Drain in a colander and return to the empty pot. Add a little of the left-over butter & olive oil to the pasta to moisten it.

Serve

Plate the chicken. Place the pasta on the side (or serve with risotto or mashed potatoes). Drizzle the piccata sauce generously over the cutlets and the pasta. Arrange the lemon slices on the plate, as well, for presentation purposes. Top with a sprinkle of minced parsley. Finally, allow guests to add parmesan cheese to the pasta and/or chicken.

Notes:

This is traditionally a veal recipe. Chicken is popular substitute. Pork cutlets are pretty rare. It also works very well with Dover sole, tilapia, or turbot. Some recipes think you need to finish cooking the chicken (or whatever) in the sauce at the end. My experience is that the chicken (if thin) will be cooked through during the browning process. And I prefer to serve it crispy looking, with the sauce drizzled very generously on top.

MELANZANE ALLA PARMIGIANA (EGGPLANT PARMESAN)

Ingredients	6 Servings (two large slices each)
<i>Salt the eggplants:</i>	
Eggplant (skin on, sliced fairly thin: 3/8 inch)	1 1/2 lbs. (should yield 12 large slices, more small slices) (1 to 3 eggplants, depending on size)
Kosher salt	Very generously applied
<i>The marinara:</i>	
Onion (finely chopped)	1 onion
Green, red, or yellow pepper (finely chopped)	1 pepper
Good olive oil	As needed for sauté (a few Tbsp.)
Michael's of Brooklyn Home Style Gravy (or other high quality jarred marinara sauce)	Two 32 oz. jars (64 oz. total) (this will yield some extra to serve on side of pasta)
<i>The crumb mixture:</i>	
Homemade breadcrumbs	1 1/2 cups
Panko	1 1/2 cups
Parmigiano Reggiano cheese (freshly grated)	3/4 cup
Salt	1 tsp.
Pepper	1 tsp.
<i>Prep the eggplants:</i>	
Flour	1 cup
Eggs (beaten)	6 eggs
<i>Fry the eggplants:</i>	
Olive oil	enough to cover pan about 1/4 inch deep (replenish for each batch)
Butter	2 pats per batch
<i>Build the casserole:</i>	
Fresh basil (coarsely chopped) (or: Italian parsley or basil)	small container or 3/4 of a small "live plant" container: about 20 leaves, depending on size
Mozzarella (best is the little pearls, otherwise grated or small dice)	1 lb.
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (freshly grated)	a generous sprinkle for each layer (perhaps 1/3 cup total)

Equipment:

For breadcrumbs: Cuisinart with the slicing blade.

Use a large colander for salting the eggplant.

For the sauté: a large frying pan

For the marinara: a covered Dutch oven (or anything oven-proof)

For the eggplant casserole: a lasagna pan, sized to hold 2 or 3 layers of eggplant. A smallish (13" x 9") lasagna pan is sufficient for 4 people.

The breadcrumbs:

Coarsely chop good French bread (with crust on) into cubes. Pulse it in the Cuisinart with the slicing blade long enough to get very fine crumbs. There is no need to dry them. (These freeze well for future use! But don't freeze cubed bread; crumb them before freezing.)

Salt, wash, and dry the eggplants:

Slice the eggplants somewhat thin. Just how thin is a matter of taste. The thicker they are, the longer they will need to fry. (Older Italian cookbooks say to peel the eggplants, but that seems a pointless effort.) Follow the salting instruction under the "Basics" section of this cookbook.

Sauté the vegetables:

Sauté the finely diced green pepper and onions on medium heat for a total of 15-20 minutes until they are quite done but not browned. I do them separately, but they could probably be combined.

The Marinara:

Put the marinara sauce in a Dutch oven and add the sautéed vegetables. Cover and place in 340° oven for an hour.

(Note: Eggplant parmigiana is traditionally made with a quicker and lighter marinara sauce made with canned tomatoes, sautéed garlic, crushed red pepper, basil, and salt, cooked just 20 minutes. Do that if you want to be authentic. I like this deeper, more robust sauce.)

Set up the crumb mixture, flour, and eggs:

In a small mixing bowl, combine the fresh breadcrumbs, the panko, salt and pepper. Pour some of the crumb mixture onto a plate.

Put flour on another plate, and add salt and pepper to it, too. Finally, beat the eggs in another bowl.

Use a clean plate for the breading process. And more clean plates to hold the finished ones.

Bread the eggplants:

Put a small amount of the crumb mixture on a separate plate. Use tongs (so you don't have to constantly wash egg flour goo off your hands). Dredge each eggplant slice in flour. Then submerge the eggplant in the eggs long enough to become fully coated. Let the egg mixture drain off before laying them in the crumb mixture on the plate. Flip them back and forth in the crumbs, gently pressing in the crumbs. Don't stack the finished slices; spread them out on plates or a jelly roll pan. Use the bowl of fresh crumb mixture to replenish the plate as needed. This avoids getting the crumb mixture goopy with egg during the breading process.

Fry the eggplants:

Fry the breaded eggplant in batches in olive oil and butter over medium heat until nicely browned. Carefully adjust the heat in order to brown them slowly, in order to cook the eggplant: 3-4 minutes per side. If you have very thin slices, you could do this faster at a higher temperature. Set aside the fried eggplants (don't stack).

Build the casserole:

Spread a thin layer of marinara sauce on the bottom of the lasagna pan. Add a layer of fried eggplants. Sprinkle on the chopped basil. (Use all of it, if you are only doing two layers of eggplant.) Top with a generous sprinkle Parmigiano-Reggiano, marinara, and mozzarella in that order. Repeat for one or two more layers, stacking the slices into towers. This allows each tower to be easily served to one person.

Cover with tinfoil and bake at 350°. Remove cover after 20 minutes. Continue baking for a total of 45 minutes until bubbly. Let rest 10 minutes before serving. Serve with more grated parmesan cheese.

Serve with a side of pasta, topped with more of the marinara, or serve with spaghetti or linguini *aglio e olio* (sautéed garlic and olive oil)—and don't mispronounce it: the "g" is silent.

Source: Made up from amalgam of various cookbooks, notably *Rao's Recipes from the Neighborhood*.

Notes: If you want to go the extra mile (as some recipe books say you must), place another sheet pan on top of the salted eggplants, and weigh it down with a few cans. I've done it both ways, and can't tell the difference.

SALTIMBOCCA ALLA ROMANA

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Veal, chicken, or pork scallops:</i>	
Veal scaloppini Or: Boneless, skinless chicken breast Or: Pork cutlets	0.6 lbs. (6 veal or pork scallops) Or: 1 large breast (really a half breast) up to 1 lb. – will produce 4 scallops
Prosciutto (If from deli, ask butcher to slice paper-thin.)	2.5 oz.(one slice for each scallop)
Fresh sage leaves	0.66 oz. plastic box is twice what you need: up to 5 leaves per scallop
Flour	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup (more than enough)
Salt	1 tsp. (don't go overboard, the prosciutto is salty)
Pepper	1 tsp.
Frying:	
Butter	3 Tbsp.
Olive oil	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Sauce:	
Butter	Only if needed
Flour	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ Tbsp.
Dry white wine	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Chicken stock	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Juice of fresh lemon	1 lemon
Lemon zest	$\frac{1}{2}$ lemon
Top with (optional):	
Top quality provolone cheese (imported if possible)	

Equipment: All you need in a large frying pan.

Pound the cutlets

If using chicken, use cut breast in half, then cut again the long way (horizontally) to make them thinner. Remove any gristle or tendons.

Put veal or chicken into large freezer bag and pound until as thin as possible, about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick. These thin slices of meat are called “scallops,” not to be confused with bivalve marine mollusks.

Prepare the cutlets

Place sage leaves on each scallop (as many as 5 leaves on a large scallop).

Then cover with a piece of the prosciutto, and press down. It should cling without toothpicks.

Combine flour with salt and pepper on a plate.

Dredge the scallops in the flour mixture. Set aside on a separate plate.

Fry the cutlets

Bring butter and olive oil to a pretty high heat in a large frying pan. Brown the scallops with the prosciutto side up about 2 minutes. Turn over and brown the prosciutto side for another 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ minutes. You want them to be nicely browned if possible, but don't overcook. Transfer cooked pieces to plate or serving platter and repeat until all pieces are done.

Optional: Cover each scallop with a little cheese and put in oven briefly to melt.

Make the sauce

Don't clean the skillet. There should be plenty of oil & butter left over. If not, add some more butter. Add some flour to make a roux. (Not too much; we're not making Thanksgiving gravy.) Then the wine (to deglaze). Add the lemon zest. Continue gradually adding the chicken stock

and lemon juice to achieve a very thin sauce. Note: You'll end up with more sauce than you need. Don't feel compelled to use it all.

Presentation

Remove scallops from oven and drizzle with a little sauce (or allow guests to do their own). Goes nicely with creamy polenta.

Entomology: Saltimbocca derives from the Italian "Mi salta in bocca" (it jumps into my mouth). This means that the dish is so appetizing, it figuratively jumps from the plate into your mouth.

History: The dish is believed to have originated in Brescia, Italy, but was adopted by the Romans in the 1800s, who claimed it as their own. It is popular throughout Italy, as well as in Switzerland and Greece.

Prosciutto: I think it's best to get it in the deli. Black Forest brand with juniper berries is very good; Prosciutto di Parma is excellent; Boars head is good; Fiorucci brand from Co-op is excellent.

Notes: Although this dish is traditionally made with veal, chicken and pork are authentic substitutes used in Italy. Recipe books vary a bit on making the sauce. You can skip chicken stock and use just wine. Or vice versa. Don't go beyond this amount of lemon. This is not sole meunière.

Source: Karen found this recipe in Food & Wine (using chicken or quail!). I modified slightly after reading about a dozen recipes from various Italian cookbooks.

MACARONI

DAD'S MACARONI & CHEESE

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>4 servings</i>
<i>The white sauce:</i>	
Butter	3 tsp.
Flour	¼ cup
Whole milk	1 cup
Heavy cream	1 cup
Paprika	¼ tsp.
Crystal Extra Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	½ Tbsp.
Red chili flakes	½ tsp.
Worcestershire sauce	½ Tbsp.
Salt	Little
Pepper	Lots
<i>The cheese:</i>	
A mixture of: Sharp Cheddar (grated) Velveeta cheese (or mild cheddar) Camembert, or Gouda	12 oz.
More milk as necessary	could be as much as 1 cup
<i>The pasta:</i>	
Penne pasta, macaroni, or other pasta (Garofalo Gemilli from Costco is very good!)	12 oz. (1 ½ cups)
Tons of salted water	
<i>More cheese (broiling or baking):</i>	
Sharp cheddar (grated)	4 oz. (or more)
Paprika	a tiny sprinkle
Pasta water	
<i>Optional topping:</i>	
Panko (or other bread crumbs)	A sprinkle



Directions:

White sauce:

Melt butter in small sauce pan. Stir in flour to make a roux. Cook 3 minutes. On low heat, slowly add the milk & cream to the roux a little at a time so that each splash warms up before adding the next. (If you do this, you can skip pre-heating the milk.) Keep adding milk until you achieve a creamy consistency – on the thin side. Indeed, it should be very thin—it will thicken up.

Cheese sauce:

Add the various cheeses to the roux in small bunches; mix in to melt. If necessary, add more milk to achieve creamy texture.

Pasta:

Meanwhile, boil the pasta in tons of water and some salt until al dente.

Reserve some pasta water. Drain pasta in a colander and let it cool for a couple of minutes. Put the pasta back into the empty pot with a splash of pasta water to keep it from sticking.

Macaroni & cheese:

Add the cheese sauce to the pasta in the big pot.

It is acceptable to serve just like this, at once. But the broiling/baking is what takes it to the level.

Move to lasagna pan(s):

Spread the cheesy pasta into a lasagna pan. If the cheese mixture is looking too thick, pour some pasta water on top.

Sprinkle generously with additional grated cheese.

Top with a tiny sprinkle of paprika.

Optional: Sprinkle with panko.

(You could skip this step and leave it in the Dutch oven. The purpose of this step is to increase the surface area so that you end up with a nice layer of bubbly cheese on top.)

Bake:

Bake uncovered for 25 - 40 minutes at 400° (depending on size, how cold it was, etc.) (or 300° for longer time). Turn on high broiler for last 10 minutes to just barely brown the top of the cheese.

Take out of oven and let rest 10 minutes before serving.

Source & notes:

Recipes and experiments over the years. Including: Recipe in Idaho Statesman 1/25/2019 by Eduardo Jordan (JuneBaby restaurant in Seattle). He uses macaroni. His trick is Camembert (rather than Gouda) plus sharp cheddar, mild cheddar and parmesan. He insists on very thinly spreading it out in individual pans or one large -cast iron pan, before adding more grated cheese cheddar and parmesan. He then broils it until the cheese is brown, rather than baking it. I bake it and then broil. He also says to cool it down before combining pasta and cheese. Otherwise his roux-based recipe is virtually identical to mine (using fewer spices, only paprika). The Velveeta comes from some other famous chef (seriously), I forget whom.

MEXICAN

KAREN'S ROMANTIC TACOS

Serve with Karen's frijoles refritos (see recipe on page 166).

Ingredients	2+ Servings (10 small tacos)
<i>Sauté the onion</i>	
Onion (chopped)	1/3 onion
Canola oil	A generous drizzle
<i>Brown the beef</i>	
Ground beef (80% lean, or Wagyu if you can get it)	1 lb.
<i>Combine beef, onions & spices</i>	
Chipotle chile powder	1 Tbsp.
Good salsa (e.g., Mateo's Gourmet Salsa, El Pinto Hatch Valley Chile) (medium heat)	12 oz.
Hot sauce	1 tsp.
<i>Prep and bake the tacos</i>	
Taco shells (store bought)	1 box
Sharp cheddar cheese (grated)	generously (about 6 oz.)
<i>Present at table</i>	
Lettuce (chopped)	generously
Tomato (chopped small)	2 large tomatoes
Good salsa	generously

Equipment: Use one medium skillet for the onions (which are used for both the tacos and the frijoles) and a large skillet to brown the beef. When the onions are done, that frying pan can be used again for the frijoles (see recipe on page 166).

Directions:

Sauté the onion

Sauté the chopped onion in oil. Put in colander to drain.

Note: If making frijoles refritos, sauté the onion for both dishes at the same time.

Brown the beef

Brown the ground beef until barely cooked. Tilt the frying pan and spoon out the grease (and discard it).

Combine beef, onion & spices

Add the sautéed onion to the drained beef in the frying pan. Mix in the Chipotle chile powder, salsa, hot sauce, and red chile flakes (optional).

Optional Pause

If you are not ready for dinner, the prepared beef may be kept warm on a very low burner for quite a while. Do not do the next step until you are ready to put the tacos in the oven. If you do it earlier, the meat grease will soak through the taco shells and they will come apart.

Prep and bake the tacos

Place wire taco holders onto cooking sheets.

Place empty taco shells into taco holders.

Add beef to each shell. Top with grated cheddar. Place in 350° oven for about 5 minutes to melt the cheese.

Optional: Make some of the tacos with Karen's frijoles refritos (see recipe on page 166) with or without the beef.

Final prep and serving

Chop the lettuce and tomato.

Serve the tacos at the table with lettuce, tomato, salsa, and hot sauce on the side, for people to dress the tacos as they like.

Origin: This was the first meal Karen made for me at her new apartment in Boulder, Colorado when we were dating all so many years ago (in the 1980s).

Source: Tacos are not supposed to be put in the oven to melt the cheese. But Karen's brain came up with this delicious idea somehow. She used to make these for me before we were married and I'd visit her apartment in Boulder for dinner. Hence, they are "Karen's Romantic Tacos."

Notes: You may make meatless tacos with Karen's frijoles refritos. Or you may put both beef and beans in the taco shell.

If you are in a dreadful rush, you may skip the fried onions and substitute dried onion flakes. But you'll be sorry and hate yourself.

KAREN'S FRIJOLES REFritos (REFRIED BEANS)

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>The onion:</i>	
Onion (fine chop)	½ onion
Grapeseed oil or canola oil (or whatever you like)	Drizzle as needed (about 1 Tbsp.)
<i>The beans:</i>	
Canned pinto beans (use all the liquid) E.g., El Mexicano (30 oz. from WinCo), S&W Chipotle Pinto Beans, 365 brand pinto beans from Whole Foods, or Bush's White Chili Beans (Great Northern Beans)	15 oz. can
Crystal Extra Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	1 tsp.
Ground cumin	½ tsp.
Water (fill the empty pinto bean can with water)	As needed (a can or more)

Equipment: A large frying pan.

Directions:

Sauté the onion

In a large frying pan, sauté the onion in oil until golden brown (8 to 10 minutes). Don't drain the oil off.

Fry the beans

Add the beans and "bean juice" from can. Add the onions (sloppy with some of the oil from the sauté). Add the spices. Using a potato masher, smash beans into the onion, and fry. (Don't pulverize the beans; smash them just enough so that you can still tell they were a bean once.) Add a lot of water and stir it in, then let sit on low heat or a long time (20 minutes or so, as you do other things), attending as necessary. You can make it very watery. The water will steam off during the long simmer. Add more water, as needed to keep it creamy.

Etymology: In Spanish name, frijoles means beans and refritos means well-fried. It does not mean "fried again." But in English, people take "refritos" to mean "refried." Hence, this is referred to incorrectly as refried beans.

Source: Made it up. Then, years later (2014), found a recipe in the *Statesman* for the exact same thing! Except the recipe used cumin, chili powder, and cayenne pepper instead of hot sauce.

Notes: S&W Chipotle Pinto Beans are very good. As are Bush's White Chili Beans (Great Northern Beans).

ENCHILADAS DE MOLE CON POLLO

Ingredients	4 Servings (perhaps 14 small enchiladas)
<i>Chicken:</i>	
One whole rotisserie chicken (from store)	approx. 30 oz. (typically 1 lb. 14 oz.)
<i>Mole Sauce:</i>	
Doña Maria brand mole sauce	1 jar (8.25 oz.)
Chicken broth	29 oz. or more
Dark chocolate (Green & Black's is good)	3 oz. (to taste)
Olive oil (I like Olivin's Tuscan)	1 Tbsp.
<i>Tortillas:</i>	
Corn tortillas	1 package
Cooking oil	1/3 to 1/2 cup, depending on size of frying pan
Queso Fresco cheese (substitute Monterey Jack if you absolutely have to)	12 oz.

Equipment: A small frying pan will do for wilting the tortillas (you'll be doing them one at a time). Use a large lasagna pan to hold the enchiladas.

Chicken

Buy a rotisserie chicken and pull off all the meat. You may buy the chicken the day before and keep in fridge. But if you do, warm the chicken meat in the oven before building the enchiladas. You want everything to be warm when it goes in. If it is in the oven too long, it turns into a delicious "lasagna."

Mole Sauce

Getting the lid off the Mexican mole jar is a challenge. Find some tool that will allow you to pry the lid at three points successively. Combine mole ingredients except the chicken broth in medium pot over medium/low heat. Start with 2/3 of the chicken broth, then add more as needed. Stir and mash as necessary to get the hard mole sauce from the jar to meld in. This will take 10-20 minutes of attention. Keep adding chicken broth (or water) as necessary. Don't skimp on the liquid. You want a thin, pourable sauce (not hot fudge for a Sundae). It will continue to thicken, so, let me repeat, err on the side of being runny.

Tortillas

Heat a little cooking oil in small frying pan. Heat should be pretty high, so you'll need to keep moving. Cook tortillas one at a time, flipping them back and forth three or four times, no more than 9 seconds total. Just enough to "wilt" them. Don't be tempted to cook them longer. As they are cooked, stack them on a plate, separated by paper towels. (The towels are important. Otherwise the mole sauce won't stick quite as well.)

Enchiladas

Build the enchiladas: Dredge a tortilla in the mole sauce to coat one side. Not too much! Lay on a plate. (As sauce builds up on plate, just dredge on the plate.) Put in a little chicken. Roll up. Place each one in a lasagna pan.

Pour remaining mole sauce on top. Sprinkle shredded Mexican cheese on top. Pop in 350 degree oven for 20 minutes to melt the cheese and warm everything up nicely.

Alternatively, warm the enchiladas for just 10 minutes without the sauce or cheese. Then plate and pour the sauce on top (make sure it's thin), followed by a sprinkle of cheese (unmelted).

Serve with homemade refried beans and/or Mexican rice.

Alternatively:

Instead of using a rotisserie chicken, you may simmer 1 ½ lbs. boneless chicken breast in 29 oz. of chicken broth with garlic, onion powder, red chili flakes, and salt. Doing so would be closer to authentic. But why bother?

Chicken:

Instead of using a rotisserie chicken, you may simmer 1 ½ lbs. boneless chicken breast in 29 oz. of chicken broth with garlic, onion powder, red chili flakes, and salt. Doing so would be closer to authentic. But why bother?

Notes:

Most recipes call for adding toasted slivered almonds to the mole sauce when cooking it. I've never done that. If you use almonds, chop them first.

10/17/2016: Karen thought the chocolate level was perfect, but I thought it a tiny bit sweet. So I dialed back the chocolate from 4 Tbsp. to 3 Tbsp.

6/28/2020: It comes out like a lasagna, not like in a Mexican restaurant. So, for next time, I adjusted to put the mole sauce on just one side.

TAMALES

Ingredients	2 Servings
Fresh tamales from store or farmers market (wrapped in corn husks)	4 tamales
Green or red enchilada sauce in can (we prefer "medium" hot) or Mark Schlereth's Stinking Good chili from Costco or Nanita's Finest New Mexico Style Green Chili Sauce (in jar, from Whole Foods, for a small fortune)	28 oz. (yes, that's a lot!)

Equipment: A large covered pot and steamer for the tamales. Another covered pot for the enchilada sauce.

Put enchilada sauce in a pot. Cover and put in oven at 290 degrees for up to an hour. If dinner is not ready after an hour, reduce heat to 200 degrees.

Put a steamer in a large pot with a little water. Add the tamales (with corn husks left on) and cover. Steam the tamales for 15 minutes if they are at room temperature, 20 minutes if frozen.

IMPORTANT: Let them rest for 2 minutes or so before removing corn husks. They will be less likely to fall apart.

Remove corn husks, plate them, and serve with lots and lots of sauce.

Excellent with Karen's frijoles refritos (on page 166) and Mexican rice (on page 204).

PRETTY AUTHENTIC MEXICAN RICE

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Sauté the onion & garlic:</i>	
Onion (chopped fine)	$\frac{2}{3}$ onion
Garlic (chopped fine or from jar)	3 cloves or 1 heaping Tbsp. from jar
Tomatoes (chopped small)	1 or 2 tomatoes
Salt	$\frac{1}{4}$ sp.
<i>Rice prep (optional):</i>	
Rice	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Butter & vegetable oil	
<i>Cook the rice:</i>	
Chicken broth	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups
Butter	1 pat
Hot pepper flakes	A good shake
Fresh salsa, tomato sauce, or tomato puree	Just a bit for color. This is completely optional. Do this if you happen to have some in the fridge.

Sauté the onion & garlic:

Sauté the onion in butter in frying pan for 5 minutes. Add the tomatoes and garlic. Continue to sauté for another 5 minutes. Put the sautéed tomatoes & garlic into a mini-chopper and pulse half a second (figuratively); don't turn it to complete mush.

Sauté the rice (optional):

Optional, but highly recommended: Gently fry the rice in butter and cooking oil for about 20 minutes. This will cause the rice to "open up" when cooked. It will taste much more delicious and authentic.

Cook the rice:

Combine the rice and the sautéed vegetables in a rice cooker or in the frying pan. Add chicken broth, butter, hot pepper flakes. Optionally, add a bit of salsa, tomato puree, or tomato sauce (for color).

Source: Based loosely on authentic Mexican rice recipes.

POLISH

PIEROGI & KIELBASA

Ingredients	2 Servings
Fresh pierogi from Whole Foods (Pappardelle's) or frozen Mrs. T's from Fred Meyer	16 oz. (12 pieces)
Kielbasa or other good sausage (sliced, then halved)	6 oz.
Olive oil	A touch (for the kielbasa)
Onions (cut into thick rings, then halved)	3 medium or 2 large onions
Butter	2 sticks
Good mustard	(to serve with kielbasa)



Equipment: Use a big frying pan, even for two people (necessary for the massive quantity of onions). If you can, brown the kielbasa first. Don't clean it. Use the same frying pan to do the onions, so that they get all the browned goodness left over by the kielbasa. Use any big pot of water for the pierogi.

Directions:

Brown the onions:

Cut onions into thick slices, then cut each disk in half. Sauté in butter over medium/low heat for 45 minutes to brown and caramelize.

Chop the kielbasa:

Cut the kielbasa into very thick slices, then cut each slice in half. This second cut will simplify the browning, allowing you to toss randomly w/o burning.

Brown the kielbasa:

Brown the sausage in a touch of olive oil on high heat for about 8 minutes. Remove sausage to colander, leaving any grease or oil in the pan to be used for browning the onions.

Boil the pierogi:

Meanwhile, thaw the pierogi, if frozen. Bring large pot of water to vigorous boil. Boil the pierogi 3 minutes (after water returns to boil).

Plate:

Plate the pierogi, putting butter and onions on top. Serve with kielbasa and mustard on the side.

Etymology: "Pierogi" is plural (in Polish). The word for a single dumpling is Pierog. Everyone in America says Pierogies, but that is not technically correct.

Polish**version:**

This is the easy, store-bought version. There is also an all-day, from-scratch version for Polish friends and relatives, which involves lots of aprons, flour, yakking, and love.

Origin:

Chris first tasted pierogi and kielbasa when visiting Karen's family in Connecticut, before they were married. Karen's Polish grandmother, Momu, was the master chef, working with assistance from everyone at hand. Karen, of course, grew up with homemade pierogi. We have made them from scratch for many family gatherings and, on one fine occasion, for Barbara and Tom Haines, the owners of Tres Bonne Cuisine on Overland Road. Oh how we miss Tres Bonne.

Wrong way:

Some cookbooks say that, after boiling the pierogi, one should briefly sauté them in butter to brown them up. We never do this, and it contradicts Karen Adams' family tradition.

ASIAN

KIMMY'S SWEET AND SOUR MEATBALLS

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>2 servings</i>	<i>3 servings (or 2 with leftovers)</i>
<i>The main event:</i>		
Red, yellow, or green pepper (very coarse chop)	2/3 pepper	1 pepper
Vidalia onion (very coarse chop)	2/3 of medium/large onion	1 medium/large onion
Aidells' Teriyaki & Pineapple Meatballs (from Costco)	about 3/4 lb.	about 1 lb.
Pineapple chunks (with the juice)	8 oz. (small can)	8 oz. (small can)
Tsang brand stir-fry oil (or substitute any cooking oil)	generous splashes as needed	generous splashes as needed
Sesame oil (we keep in fridge, not sure if that is necessary)	Generous drizzle on with the stir fry oil	Generous drizzle on with the stir fry oil
Red chili flakes	a generous sprinkle	a generous sprinkle
Sweet and sour sauce (e.g., Sun Luck Restaurant Style or P.F. Chang's Mango Sweet & Sour Sauce)	1/2 cup	2/3 cup
<i>The rice:</i>		
White rice (basmati or jasmine)	5 oz. (almost 2/3 cup)	1 cup
Water	10 oz. (1 1/4 cup)	2 cups
Salt	1/4 oz. (just a pinch)	1/3 oz. (just a pinch)

Equipment:

For 2 or 3 people, this will fit in a large skillet. For more people, use a wok.

Note:

Aidells' meatballs are fully cooked. The sauté here gives them a nice browning. They come in a 46 oz package (almost 3 lbs.) containing 2 pouches. I open them both and divide into 3 vacuum-sealed bags of almost 1 lb. each (for 3-person servings). Or you could divide them into 4 bags of about 3/4 lb. (for 2-person servings).

Timing:

This dish should be served as soon as it is ready.

Directions:

Prep:

If you have frozen the meatballs, thaw them in advance. Chop the onion and green pepper. If you have a warming oven, use it to warm the plates.

Rice:

When the vegetables are chopped, start the rice. When rice is ready, let it rest, fluff with a fork, cover and let rest again. (See "How to cook rice" on page 38.)



Sauté & simmer everything:

Sauté the pepper and onions together (with red chili flakes) in stir fry oil and sesame oil for 3 minutes on rather high heat (to give them a head start). Then add the meatballs, and continue sautéing on fairly high heat for another 6 minutes until everything is nice and browned. Finally, add the pineapple chunks and juice. Simmer another 3 minutes to reduce. Finally, add the sweet and sour sauce and go another 2 minutes.

Plate:

Serve the meatballs etc. over the rice.

This goes nicely with spinach sauteed in garlic as shown here.

Completely different options:

The Aidells package suggests these alternatives.:

- (1) Wrap meatballs in lettuce leaves with bean sprouts, shredded carrots, and cilantro. Drizzle with hoisin sauce.
- (2) Simmer meatballs in chicken stock with ginger and garlic. Add udon noodles, sliced bok choy. Drizzle with soy sauce and sesame oil.

Chef Aidells

Chef Bruce Aidells is a real chef, cookbook writer, restaurateur (founder of Poulet in Berkely), and owner of his namesake sausage company. But he has no formal training in cooking. He earned his a Ph.D. in biology from the University of California Santa Cruz, and has described his politics as “left-wing hippie radical capitalist.” As of this writing, he is 79 years old.

TURKEY & FIXINGS

THANKSGIVING TURKEY (IN TIN FOIL)

Figure 1.5 pounds per person (15 pound turkey for 10 people) (with zero left-overs).
Make that 2.0 pounds per person for a smaller turkey (ratio of meat/bones is different).

Goal = 170°. Take it out of the oven at 167° (temperature will continue to rise a few degrees). If you go over 170°, don't fret. The tinfoil process is very forgiving.

<i>Foil wrapped (w/o stuffing) – 450° (longer if stuffed)</i>		<i>For comparison purposes: Unwrapped – 325°</i>	
7-9 lbs.	about 2 ½ - 3 ¼ hrs.	6-8 lbs.	3 ½ to 4 hrs.
10-13 lbs.	about 3 - 3 ¾ hrs.	8-12 lbs.	4 to 4 ½ hrs.
14-17 lbs.	about 3 ½ - 4 ¼ hrs.	12-16 lbs.	4 ½ to 5 ½ hrs.
18-21 lbs.	about 4 - 4 ¾ hrs.	16-20 lbs.	5 ½ to 6 ½ hrs.
22-24 lbs.	about 4 ½ - 5 ½ hrs.	20-24 lbs.	6 ½ to 7 ½ hrs.

Equipment:

You need a good roasting pan (no cover) and a rack that will hold the turkey. The roasting pan will be used later to make the gravy. Buy a ton of tin foil, the wider the better.

If you have a thermometer that plugs into the stove, good for you. But I don't trust them. The only thermometer I trust is the \$100 "Thermapen" brand.

Directions:

Prep the turkey

Remove the neck and giblets (and plastic pieces!). Throw out the neck. Cook the giblets and serve to dogs. Unless you are my mother, in which case, chop up the giblets and put them in the gravy.

Thoroughly rinse the turkey for a long time in the sink.

Cover bird generously with olive oil. Salt and pepper generously. Repeat on other side.

Salt and pepper interior, too.

Place 6 very long (45") pieces of tin foil on the kitchen counter, overlapping only partly and spread out so that the turkey can be placed in the middle.

Place the turkey on the six pieces of tin foil breast side up.

Insert a meat thermometer that may be left in (with a long cord that plugs into oven or reaches outside).

One at a time, fold each leaf of tin foil loosely around the turkey. If you press them too tightly, they may stick to the skin while cooking. (The tin foil makes it unnecessary to tie the legs and wings!)

Add a final (7th) piece of foil on the top.

Lift the wrapped turkey and place it (breast side up) onto the rack in the turkey roasting pan.

This wrapping (from bottom up, except for the last sheet) will allow you to easily unwrap and check temperature and then re-wrap.

Roast the turkey

Place turkey in 450° oven. Start checking temperature an hour before it should be done.

When turkey is (157°) (approaching done) remove top foil sheet and fold back all the others to reveal as much of the turkey as possible (about ⅔ of the turkey).

Return to oven uncovered and increase temperature to 490°. In about 10 minutes (watch carefully!) the turkey will turn from white to golden brown. If needed to brown quickly without more cooking, use the broiler for that last couple minutes.

Ideally, removed the golden brown turkey from the oven at 167°. The temperature will continue to rise. You're aiming for 170°, but a degree or two over is fine.

Tent with tin foil. Let rest 45 minutes before carving.

Notes:

Some say that it is better to roast the turkey upside down (so the juices flow to the breast). That may be, but this foil method keeps everything juicy and succulent. And it looks so much nicer if you can avoid those awful marks on the breast from roasting it upside down. The tinfoil method solves the problems of (1) having to tuck in the wings, (2) some parts cooking before the rest, (3) the need to baste. Spatchcocking a turkey also solve some of these problems, too. But tin foil is easier and very forgiving, even if you cook it a bit too long.

TURKEY GRAVY

Ingredients	8 Servings
Pan juices from the turkey (add some butter or bacon grease if pan juices are inadequate)	1 ½ cup
Flour	1 cup (follow this ratio based on however much pan juices you have)
Half & half or whole milk (or some of each)	as needed, up to 2 cups
Chicken broth	as needed, up to 4 cups (ratio is twice as much broth as half & half)
Salt & pepper	Generously (to taste)

Equipment:

Use the roasting pan to make the gravy.

Directions:

Remove turkey from the roasting pan, leaving in all the juices (drippings) and “burned stuff” in the pan.

Put roasting pan on the stove under medium flame.

If you are short on pan juices, add some butter or bacon grease.

Add flour (in 1.5/1.0 proportion to the amount of fat) to make a roux. This is a lower proportion of flour than a normal roux, but I find it works better. Stir and cook the roux a few minutes, deglazing the pan at same time.

Add the whole milk or half & half very slowly to make a “white sauce.”

Continue to thin the gravy with chicken broth until it is fairly runny.

This will take a lot of chicken broth. Make it quite thin; it will thicken up more later.

Salt & pepper to taste.

Perfectionism:

Perfectionists will tell you to let the pan juices separate in a measuring cup (or special separating device). Then use just the top part to make the roux. And add in the rest of the pan juices later as liquid for the gravy. But you don't really have to fuss about this. I don't.

CHEATER CHICKEN GRAVY

If you don't have enough chicken juice (or turkey drippings), make a roux with an equal part of flour to whatever drippings you have, followed by chicken broth and/or half & half to thin. Then supplement the inadequate amount of gravy you have with a jar of store-bought chicken gravy. Season with salt & pepper.

CRANBERRY SAUCE

Ingredients	Big family (6-10)	Really big family (10 or more)
Fresh cranberries (in bag)	24 oz.	32 oz.
Granulated sugar	2 cups	2 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups
Water	2 cups	2 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups

Put the cranberries in a colander and rinse thoroughly. In large saucepan, stir sugar into water. Bring to a boil. Then add the cranberries. Bring to a boil again. Then reduce to a simmer. Stir occasionally for perhaps 15-20 minutes until the cranberries pop. Turn off heat and allow to cool to room temperature. The refrigerate until served.

Source: Directions on the bag of cranberries.

KAREN'S TURKEY TETRAZZINI

Ingredients	3 Servings
Spaghetti (broken into thirds)	10 oz.
Mushrooms (sliced)	4 oz. can or 6 whole mushrooms
Onion (chopped)	$\frac{3}{4}$ medium onion
Olive oil	A splash
Butter (for sauté)	A couple pats
Butter (for roux)	2 pats
Butter (for pan)	2 pats
Flour	2 Tbsp.
Evaporated milk	13 oz. can
Cream of chicken soup	10 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz. can
Marjoram	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp.
Celery salt	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.
Salt	To taste
Pepper	To taste
Crystal Extra Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	2 tsp.
Sharp cheddar cheese (grated)	8 oz.
Turkey (or chicken) torn into small pieces	12 oz. (2 cups)
Pimento (chopped)	2 Tbsp.
Parmesan cheese (grated)	4 oz. ($\frac{2}{3}$ cup)

While preparing sauce, cook the spaghetti (broken into thirds) in salted water. Drain.
If using real mushrooms, slice and sauté in butter and olive oil.
Chop onion and sauté in butter and olive oil.
Make roux of butter and flour (cook a couple minutes).
Gradually add mushroom water (if using canned) and evaporated milk to make white sauce.
Then add the chicken soup.
Add the cheese, and stir to melt.
Season with marjoram, celery salt, and hot sauce (plus salt & pepper to taste).
Add the turkey meat, pimento, onions, and mushrooms.
Put cooked spaghetti into large, buttered casserole dish.
Top with the cheese/turkey sauce.
And sprinkle with the parmesan cheese.
Bake uncovered at 325 for 30 minutes

MASHED POTATOES (SEE RECIPE UNDER “POTATOES”)

CANDIED SWEET POTATOES WITH CHAMBORD (SEE RECIPE UNDER “POTATOES”)

OYSTER DRESSING (SEE RECIPE UNDER “STUFFING”)

STUFFING WITH CURRANTS AND CHUTNEY (SEE RECIPE UNDER “STUFFING”)

DAD’S THANKSGIVING SPINACH CASSEROLE (SEE RECIPE UNDER “VEGETABLES”)

STUFFING & BREADCRUMBS

NANCY MEYER'S OYSTER DRESSING (AKA SCALLOPED OYSTERS)

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>5 people</i>
French bread (cut into cubes)	1 $\frac{2}{3}$ cups
French bread crumbs	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup
Saltine crackers (crushed)	1 of a sleeve (3 oz. = 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ cups)
Celery (chopped) - raw	$\frac{2}{3}$ cup (3 stalks)
Green onion (chopped, using white & green parts) – raw (or substitute shallots)	1 bunch ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup when cut)
Reserved liquor of the oysters	All of it
Heavy cream	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Butter (melted)	1 stick
Paprika	$\frac{1}{3}$ tsp.
Salt	Sprinkle
Oysters – fresh in jar (from grocery store) (leave them whole)	10 oz. jar

Equipment:

Le Creuset deep casserole dish or Dutch oven (with cover) is ideal. You will also need a big mixing bowl, and a colander set over a bowl (for the oysters).

Directions:

Make the breadcrumbs

Cut bread into large cubes.

Leave half as cubes. Turn the other half into crumbs.

Run and pulse the Cuisinart until they turn into crumbs – a minute or two.

Make a lot, measure out what you need, and freeze the rest.

Drain the oysters

Drain the oysters in a colander or sieve over a bowl. Set aside the oysters, reserving the precious “oyster liquor.”

Prepare the dressing mixture

Crush the crackers into a large bowl.

Add the bread cubes and crumbs, celery (raw), green onion (raw), salt & paprika, oyster liquid, cream, and melted butter. The result should be soft and damp, add more cream if necessary.

Build the casserole

Grease the casserole dish with butter.

Put $\frac{1}{2}$ of crumb mixture into the casserole dish.

Arrange the whole (uncut) oysters on the crumbs.

Add remaining crumb mixture as a second layer.

(Note: For a double batch, do 2 layers of oysters, separated by $\frac{1}{3}$ of the crumbs in 3 layers.)

Sprinkle on some more paprika for beauty.

Cover with lid (or tin foil).

Bake at 350° for about 35 minutes (five minutes longer for a double batch). Take out when piping hot and steaming. Don't overcook or you will have chewy oysters.

Source: Nancy Meyer, who followed the recipe from an ancient *Joy of Cooking*.

Notes:

This is really just a stuffing with oysters in it. But it is traditionally called “oyster dressing” or “scallop oysters.”

Mom's recipe calls for twice as much oysters and half as much dressing (bread and crackers).

My version gives you a wonderful, delicate, fluffy dressing with a strong influence of oysters. If

you really want something all about the oysters, switch the ratio back to Mom's version. If you want to "hide" the oysters, you could cut them in half or thirds.

HEAVENLY STUFFING WITH CURRANTS AND CHUTNEY

"It's so heavenly, even atheists love it."

	8 servings
Onion (or shallots), chopped fairly small	1 or 2 onions (1 lb.)
Celery, chopped fairly small	4 sticks celery
Dried bread cubes (French bread)	¾ lb. (dry weight) = 1 lb. loaf of bread
Cornbread stuffing mix (or leftover cornbread).	6 oz. box (If box comes with separate seasonings, I toss them. But you may use them if you like.)
Chutney – your choice: Hot Mango Chutney (Crosse & Blackwell) Major Grey (Crosse & Blackwell) Sharwood's from Whole Foods	1 jar (9 oz.) Don't be tempted to put in more; it will overwhelm.
Zante currants (raisins may be substituted)	½ cup (4 oz.) (If they are a little dried out, poach them in the chicken broth first to plump them up.)
Chicken broth	32 oz. (as needed to moisten)
Crystal Extra Hot Sauce or Tabasco (or substitute Sriracha)	1 tsp. – add it to the broth!
Crushed red pepper flakes	1 tsp.
Parsley (dried)	1 Tbsp. dried
Marjoram (dried)	½ tsp. dried (If using fresh marjoram, use ½ of a small plastic container. Hold the stem and gently slide fingers down the stem to remove tender leaves.)
Sage (dried)	1 tsp.
Salt	None or very little
Pepper	Medium amount

Equipment:

A giant Le Creuset Dutch oven (with cover) is ideal. And a giant mixing bowl.

Bread cubes:

If making home-made, cut French bread into smallish cubes. Place on cookie sheet and spread out. Dry in oven at 200 degrees for 45 minutes (but not longer—don't toast them, just dry them a bit so they absorb more liquid).

Dry ingredients:

In huge bowl, combine the breadcrumbs and cornbread stuffing mix.

Toss with raw onion and celery, raisins, & chutney.

Liquids and spices:

In a measuring cup, combine the chicken broth, Tabasco, red pepper flakes, parsley, marjoram, salt & pepper. (This way, seasoning coats evenly).

Pour broth & seasonings over stuffing, stir. If necessary, add more chicken broth to fully moisten.

Bake it:

If cooking separately (not in the turkey), place in casserole, cover, and bake at 350 for 60 minutes (max).

Bread Note: I prefer to make my own bread cubes from fresh French bread, but you may use store-bought dried bread cubes. Sometimes at holidays the stores sell "homemade" bread cubes in a bag with seasoning pouch. Just throw out the seasoning packet.

Cornbread Note: Ignore directions on box of cornbread stuffing. Just mix it in dry.

“Good with”: This is our Thanksgiving stand-by for turkey. In the turkey, separately, or both.
Also excellent with roasted chicken, especially game hens.
Also good with pork chops.

HOMEMADE BREADCRUMBS

Ingredients
Your choice of bread: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• French baguette• Soft French bread• Artisan bread• Pretty much anything
Optional: olive oil and/or melted butter

Notes:

I never remove the crust. It becomes part of the breadcrumbs.

If using really soft, spongy French bread, slice it and allow it to dry overnight.

Always make extra and freeze them. They keep well for a couple of months.

Make the crumbs:

Cut bread into large cubes. Put into Cuisinart with slicing blade.

Pulse the Cuisinart until they turn into crumbs. For many recipes, you want these super fine.

For crunchier crumbs:

For crunchier breadcrumbs (not necessary for most recipes), spread them on a cookie sheet.

Optional: Drizzle with olive oil and/or melted butter.

Bake at low temperature (@220 degrees) for 1 hour.

POTATOES

POTATOES ANNA (POMMES ANNA)

Ingredients	6 servings
Potatoes (large Idaho russet)	3 lbs.
Butter (melted)	1 stick (8 Tbsp.)
Paprika	lightly on each layer
Salt	lightly on each layer
Pepper (or seasoned pepper)	lightly on each layer

Equipment: I get good results from a Calphalon paella pan, whose smooth rounded bottom makes it easy to get the potatoes out with a spatula. A cast iron frying pan would work, too.

For slicing the potatoes, you may do them by hand or use a Mandolin, but it is easiest to use a Cuisinart (potatoes cut in half and placed cut side down) with a 4 mm slicing blade. That's between $\frac{1}{4}$ and $\frac{1}{8}$ inch.

Quantity: You can make a larger batch than this (4 lbs. will yield 5 layers). And it will still be delicious. But you cannot achieve the Potatoes Anna crispiness when it is that thick. Likewise, if you add too much butter, it will impair the crisping.

Directions:

Prep

No need to peel the potatoes. Just scrub them well with water and a scratchy pad. Slice them quite thin (4 mm – between $\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ inch). If doing ahead, put the sliced potatoes in a pot of water to keep them fresh looking; then empty them into a colander when ready. Melt the butter.

Build the casserole

Dribble some butter in the bottom of the pan and swirl it around with a potato slice. Build the first layer of potatoes starting in the middle and laying the slices slightly overlapping in a gradually expanding spiral. (Don't go up the edges of the pan; just lay them flat. If the pan is flared, each layer will be a little larger circle than the one before, so it will all get filled up.) Sprinkle each potato layer rather generously with salt, pepper, paprika, and a light drizzle of butter. Repeat until potatoes are gone. Should be four or five layers. Press them down firmly.

Weigh it down

Cover tightly with three sheets of tin foil and press it down around the potatoes. Place weights on top. I use a heavy meat press and two super-heavy bricks.

Stovetop (3 minutes)

Place the pan of potatoes on the stovetop over high heat for 3 minutes. (On my not very professional gas stove, it's the hottest burner, full blast.) This short time will not get anything brown. But it will jumpstart the browning process in the oven.



Oven (one hour)

Bake at 450°. After 30 minutes, then remove the weights and tinfoil covering (save the foil). Bake another 30 minutes (or as needed) without any covering so that it browns on top. Use judgment here. Potatoes should be very tender and beginning to brown on top. The bottom will be even more browned, so don't worry about getting the top perfectly brown.

Invert the potatoes

Remove from oven and re-cover with the "used" tinfoil. Let rest 5 minutes.

Carefully run a skinny spatula under the potatoes to separate them from the pan.

Place a dinner plate (or something big enough to hold the potatoes) on top. Carefully invert (flip them over) so that the potatoes fall onto the plate, with the browned underside on top. This pretty much requires two people. If you can't pull off this step, just serve them out of the pan. They will taste just the same.

Cut like a pie and serve in wedges.

Origin: This classic French dish dates to Napoleon III's era. It was created by the head chef at Café Anglais, the top French restaurant of the day. He is said to have named the dish after one of the *grande cocottes* (aka, courtesans, which were high class prostitutes) at Napoleon's court. It is disputed which Anna was the namesake.

Tradition: The paprika is not traditional. Leave it out if you crave authenticity. Also, technically, this should be made with clarified butter. A true Pommès Anna is made with a special copper pan (\$485) designed to be flipped over from time to time during the baking process so that both top and bottom brown. Like mine, Julia Child's version is done on the stovetop first, to brown. But she follows with a medium oven. I find I get better results with a hot oven.

MASHED YUKON GOLD POTATOES WITH SOUR CREAM

Ingredients	2 servings	6 Servings
Yukon Gold potatoes (cubed) (or substitute russet baking potatoes)	1 ⅓ lb. (⅔ lb. per person)	4 lbs. (⅔ lb. per person)
Salt for the cooking water	lots	lots
Butter	½ stick	1 ½ sticks
Sour cream (or substitute a wee bit of cream cheese)	almost ½ cup (3 ⅓ oz.)	1 ¼ cups (10 oz.)
Half & half and/or whole milk	⅓ cup (as needed)	1 cup (as needed)
Garlic salt (Lawry's brand is preferred)	½ Tbsp.	1 ½ Tbsp.
Pepper	⅓ Tbsp.	1 Tbsp.
Cream or half & half (if in warming oven)	a drizzle	a drizzle

Equipment:

We use a large Dutch oven—large enough to avoid boiling over. But any large pot will do.

Directions:

Peel and chop the potatoes. (Quartering them is adequate.)

Boil in tons of salted water until soft (20 minutes or so—if starting from boiling water). (But no need to pre-boil the water; you may add them to the hot tap water, but that will take you past 25 minutes.)

Drain the potatoes in a colander, return to pot, and mash them with the other ingredients.

Don't mash too much; leave some "flavor bursts" (tiny chunks of potato). This tip, thanks to Jennifer Meyer, from growing up in Grinnell.

If making ahead, put the potatoes in baking dish or Dutch oven and top with a generous splash cream. Cover and keep warm in 250° oven for up to 1 hour, or 200° for up to two hours. There will be cream sitting on top; mix it into the potatoes before serving.

Note:

The *Electric Kitchen Cookbook* suggests putting fresh peeled garlic cloves (cut in half) into the water when boiling the potatoes. Then season with all of the above plus dried parsley, oregano, thyme, and salt (skipping the garlic salt). That would be worth a try for comparison.

KAREN'S OVEN-FRIED POTATOES

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>2 Servings</i>
Potatoes – unpeeled (cut into large pieces)	1 potato
Olive oil	1/8 cup
Garlic salt	1/2 tsp.
Paprika	3/4 Tbsp.
Choice of: Kinder's Buttery Poultry Blend Cajun's Choice Blackened Seasoning Johnny's Chicken & Pork Seasoning Mrs. Dash Paul Prudhomme's Vegetable Magic Emeril's Essence	1/2 tsp.
Chili flakes or red pepper	1/2 tsp.
Dried minced onion (or onion powder)	2/3 Tbsp.

Equipment: Use a “jelly roll” pan (flat baking sheet with a rim). Do not line with foil. That would interfere with the browning process.

Directions:

Cut unpeeled potatoes into large cubes (1/2 to 1 inch).

Put potatoes into a mixing bowl. Douse with oil and add the spices.

Stir to coat evenly.

Spread potatoes on flat pan so they barely touch. Use two pans if necessary to spread out.

Bake at 450° for up to 25 minutes (longer for larger potato pieces). If you wish, you may turn them over with a spatula half-way through. But this is not necessary.

Serve immediately, or move them to a warming oven (200°).

ANDY'S GREEK SMASHED POTATOES

Ingredients	6-8 servings
Small red potatoes (washed & dried, but not peeled) (or mix small red and white potatoes)	2 ½ lb. (20+ very small potatoes)
Olive oil (Use a good one. Tuscan herb from Olivin is divine)	very generously (perhaps ½ cup by the time you're done)
Kosher salt	generous sprinkles
Pepper	generous sprinkles
Dried rosemary	A light sprinkle
Minced garlic (fresh if possible, or from jar)	Three cloves = 6 Tbsp.

Note: Total baking time = over an hour. Start early!

First bake

Heat oven to 450°.

Put the potatoes (whole, with nothing on them) on baking sheet. Bake for 45 minutes until tender enough to squish.

Smash 'em

Smash them onto the same pan. (Place a spatula on the potato and hit it with a tenderizing hammer.) You want the skin to break, but not be completely smashed—about an inch thick. Don't worry if some of the potato breaks off.

Drizzle the smashed potatoes generously with olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Put a tiny dollop of garlic on each potato and spread it around. Sprinkle them with dried rosemary.

Optional rest time

If you wish, you may now pause for a couple of hours. Put potatoes in a cool place.

Second bake

Increase oven temperature to 500°, and cook for about 20 minutes until they are brown on the bottom.

Source: Based loosely on Tom Douglas, *Tom's Big Dinners* (2003). Andy bought this book in Seattle for my Father's Day. I have modified the recipe over time.

EMERIL'S SCALLOPED POTATOES

Ingredients	6 servings	8 servings	10 servings
<i>Simmer potatoes in cream</i>			
Yukon gold potatoes (if necessary, substitute Russet bakers)	2 ½ lbs.	3 ¼ lbs.	4 lbs.
Heavy cream (enough to cover the potatoes)	5 cups	6 ½ cups	8 cups
Hot sauce (Crystal Extra Hot, Cholula, Frank's Red Hot, Tabasco, or Sriracha)	2 ½ Tbsp.	3 ¼ Tbsp.	4 Tbsp.
<i>Butter the pan</i>			
Butter	Generously grease the lasagna pan		
<i>Build the casserole</i>			
Salt	A very light sprinkle on each layer		
Pepper	A sprinkle on each layer		
Jalapeño Jack (my preference) Or Tillamook extra sharp cheddar, Or any other nice cheese or combination of cheeses.	19 oz.	25 oz.	31 oz.
Hungarian paprika	A generous sprinkle on each layer		

Cheesiness:

My version is very cheesy—more of an au Gratin. Reduce the amount cheese if you want a more traditional version of scalloped potatoes, which is more creamy than cheesy.

Equipment:

Simmer the potatoes & cream in a very large, covered Dutch oven or other pot, big enough that it doesn't boil over. Use a large (10' x 14") uncovered lasagna pan to bake the scalloped potatoes.

Directions:

Scrub and slice the potatoes

Scrub the potatoes hard with a green scrubby thingy to get them clean. There is no need to peel them, especially if using Yukon golds. I slice them in a Cuisinart with an 8 mm (really thick) chopping blade. A mandoline (not to be confused with a mandolin) also works well. Or use a knife.

Simmer the potatoes in cream

Place the potatoes in a larger than necessary pot (lest you not pay attention and let it boil over). Add enough cream to barely cover them. Add hot sauce. (You can skip the hot sauce if you're really scared. But I promise you, it won't be hot by the time you're done. Instead, it will leave ... je ne sais quoi.) Cover the pot with a lid and gently bring to a simmer. This is not like boiling potatoes in water. You want no more than an active simmer. (Or, if you prefer to spend the next day cleaning the pot, crank up the heat.) Simmer until the potatoes are barely fork tender. This could take anywhere from 20 to 60 minutes depending on many variables. The potatoes on the bottom will cook faster and get mushy before the ones on top are done, so try to move them around a bit—but be gentle and don't break them into pieces. To test for doneness, a fork should pierce pretty easily but with some resistance. God forbid, please don't cook them until they are falling apart. For reasons unknown to science (or at least to me), they will not soften up much in the oven.

While the potatoes are simmering, grate the cheese.

Build the casserole

Using tongs and a spatula, gently remove each potato slice one at a time and make a layer covering the lasagna pan. Sprinkle each layer with salt, pepper, grated cheese, and paprika. However, before putting these things on the top layer, pour the remaining cream from pot onto the potatoes and spread it around. (This should not be a super huge amount; it will have reduced. If you have a lot of cream left, don't use it all.)

Repeat for 2 or 3 layers. Two is best – more crispy top (so use a large pan). Do not exceed 3 layers.

Refrigerate (optional)

If you wish, the casserole may be prepared several hours or even a day in advance and put in the fridge. If so, put it in a warming oven for 20 minutes to take off the chill before baking.

Bake

Bake uncovered at 375° for about 40 minutes. (Or at 400° for about 30 minutes. Or much longer at lower temperature.)

Rest

After coming out of the oven, this will need to rest about 10 minutes to soak up the cream and solidify enough to be served elegantly.

Source: This recipe is based loosely on:
Wine Spectator Magazine (8/2004), which published the Emeril Lagasse version.
Food & Wine Magazine (11/2021) featured a remarkably similar version as their cover story, but with a variety of root vegetables. And it called for only parmesan cheese. The recipe on Emeril's website (www.emerils.com) uses the same amount of cream and just a little Swiss cheese, and it calls for Idaho bakers.

FRIED MASHED POTATO PANCAKES

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Make mashed potatoes</i>	
(See recipe on page 193)	
<i>Turn them into potato pancakes</i>	
Flour	1/3 cup
Eggs (beaten)	2 eggs
Progresso breadcrumbs (plain or seasoned)	1/3 cup
Butter	

Equipment:

Just a frying pan.

Directions:

Make mashed potatoes (see separate recipe).

Form them into pancakes the size of a small hamburger.

Dredge the potato pancakes in flour, then beaten egg, then fine breadcrumbs.

Fry in butter (not too hot) for quite a while until nicely browned.

Keep in warm oven until ready to serve.

Notes:

I cheat and use Progresso breadcrumbs. You may make your own breadcrumbs if you have time, but you want something pretty fine, like Progresso makes. Panko is too crunchy.

These are a very rough Midwestern and Southern alternative to the much more sophisticated Jewish dish, Potato Latkes, which I desperately love but apparently lack the skill to make properly, though I have tried so hard.

FRENCH FRIES (POMMES FRITES)

Ingredients	2 Servings	4 Servings
Burbank russet potatoes (Idaho bakers)	2 large potatoes	4 large potatoes
Canola oil - Experts say use Peanut oil	3 quarts (¾ gallon)	4 quarts (1 gallon)
Sea salt		
<i>Serve with:</i>		
Mayonnaise (if in Belgium, or your name is Karen)		
Ketchup (if a True American)		

Equipment:

A Chinese wire & wood wok thingy is the best thing for retrieving the fries.

You may use an electric fryer. But they are a fuss to clean up.

I use a very large, heavy Calphalon pot. It needs to be at least 8 inches tall, because things may “boil” up like mad when first put in (if even a tiny bit wet).

If you don’t have a stove with high BTUs, it can be hard to achieve and maintain the cooking temperature needed on the second fry. I’ve tried adding a lot of oil, but that is very hard to re-heat on a stove w/o massive BTUs. It is best to do this in multiple batches if making for more than two people.

Directions:

Potato prep:

Remove any significant blemishes, but don’t peel the potatoes.

Slice the potatoes (peel on). This can be done by hand, with a mandoline, or with the 6 mm French Fry blade in the Cuisinart, which will produce very thin, McDonald’s like fries.

My preference is the mandoline (not to be confused with a mandolin, which, if possible, should be playing in the background).

Soak them in water at least 20 minutes. Drain in a colander and set out to dry on paper towels for 30 minutes. To speed the drying, move them to fresh paper towels after a few minutes. This drying process is important; wet fries in hot oil will boil up.

First Fry:

Fry at 330° for 3-5 minutes. They should look wilted, not crispy. Remove and set out to rest on paper towels. (Temp will drop precipitously when you add the potatoes, so the oil should be 345° before you put them in.)

Rest for 30 minutes if possible (this matters).

Second Fry:

Fry a second time at 375° until golden brown (3-4 minutes, use judgment).

Drain on paper towels. Salt generously. Serve immediately.

Source: Gourmet Magazine (4/2009) (325/350°); Fine Cooking (8/2011) (330/360°)

Notes: Some aficionados say the trick is to let the cut potatoes soak in water for two hours (changing the water once). Supposed to produce a crispier fry.

After second fry, potatoes can be kept warm in the oven (spread out on baking sheet) for a while, but are best when served immediately.

Or try this: Based on an internet recipe, I parboiled them in water, salt and 3 Tbsp. of white vinegar for 10 minutes before double frying them. If you do this, increase the last fry to 400 degrees to achieve crispness. This produces a very nice tender result, although it will remind you a bit of McDonalds.

CANDIED SWEET POTATOES WITH CHAMBORD

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>8 servings (plenty for Thanksgiving)</i>
Sweet potatoes (inexplicably called yams out West) (whatever you call them, you want the dark sweet ones)	2 ½ lbs. (3-5 potatoes depending on size)
Butter (melted)	1 ½ sticks (6 oz.)
Brown sugar	1 cup
Chambord (a French liqueur)	½ cup

Equipment:

A large pot to boil them. Then a covered casserole dish.

Directions:

Peel sweet potatoes. Remove any bad spots.

Cut in half lengthwise. Then cut into spears (cutting each half potato once, twice, or even four times depending on thickness of potato). Potatoes over 8 inches long may be cut in half before making the spears.

Boil them almost tender (about 12 minutes. Watch out – they go from hard to mushy very fast!). If you plan to bake them the morning or day before, leave them a tad under-done.

Remove them carefully one-at-a-time onto something where they may cool off.

If you have goofed up and overcooked them, spray them gently with cold water to stop the cooking.

After they have cooled, arrange the potatoes in casserole.

Pour melted butter into small mixing bowl. Add brown sugar and Chambord. Mix together and pour over the potatoes.

You may pause now and put the uncooked casserole in the refrigerator (or a cool backyard) until ready for baking.

Bake covered at 350° for about 60 minutes (assuming they are put in cold).

Note: If you have not overcooked them, these potatoes hold up very well the next day. Indeed, I think they are even better if baked the day before (or in the morning) and kept in the fridge. Re-heat cold potatoes, covered, at 350° for 40 minutes.

ROASTED RED POTATOES WITH GARLIC & PARMESAN

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>First step</i>	
Small red potatoes (cut in half)	1 lb.
Olive oil	¼ cup
Minced garlic (fresh or from jar)	1 ½ tsp.
Salt	1 tsp.
Pepper	½ tsp.
Choice of: Mrs. Dash Paul Prudhomme's Vegetable Magic Emeril's Essence	1 tsp.
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (grated)	¼ cup
Parsley (chopped) (fresh is best, or use from jar)	1 ½ tsp.

Equipment:

I put the potatoes directly on the jelly roll or baking sheet. Or you may put down a layer of tin foil first.

Directions:

Wash potatoes and cut them in half (the long way if they're not round).

Place potatoes in a large bowl with the olive oil, garlic, salt, pepper, seasoning, and parmesan cheese. Toss to coat.

Spread the potatoes on a jelly roll pan or baking sheet.

Bake at 400° for about 35 minutes (until golden brown and fork tender).

Sprinkle with parsley and serve.

KAREN'S BEST EVER POTATO SALAD

Ingredients	8 Servings
<i>Boil the potatoes and the eggs</i>	
Potatoes (Yukon Gold, russet bakers, or small red potatoes) (skin-on, cut into bite-size pieces)	2 lb. (three large potatoes)
Eggs (hard boiled)	6 eggs
<i>The dressing</i>	
Mayonnaise	1 cup
Mustard	1 Tbsp.
Apple cider vinegar	1 tsp.
Green onion (chopped fine, with a little green) (or substitute shallot)	2 green onions
Gherkins (chopped fine)	4 gherkins
Paprika	½ tsp.
Salt & pepper	to taste (rather a lot)

Directions:

Boil the eggs gently (see “How to boil an egg” on page 38). When thoroughly cooled (10 minutes in cold water), carefully remove and discard the shells.

Cut the cold hard boiled eggs in half and remove the yolk. Finely chop the whites.

Chop the potatoes into small bite-size pieces (the size you want in the finished product). Boil in an ample supply of salted water until fork tender. (Some people insist on undercooking the potato, but we reject this.) Drain. No need to let cool.

Put the yolks in a large mixing bowl and mash gently with a fork. Add the mayonnaise, mustard, vinegar, green onion, pickle, paprika, salt, and pepper. Mix together.

Then add the potatoes and gently mix to coat the potatoes. This should be done while the potatoes are still warm.

Potato salad tastes best after resting in the refrigerator for a number of hours, or even the next day or two.

I think it tastes better if served at room temperature, rather than right out of the fridge.

When serving, you may add an additional dash of paprika for color.

RICE, ORZO, COUSCOUS & POLENTA

KAREN'S ONION RICE

Ingredients	2 Servings
Onion (chopped fine)	1/3 onion
Butter or olive oil	1/4 stick
Basmati or Jasmine rice Or brown rice	5 oz. (almost 2/3 cup)
Chicken broth (for white rice)	10 oz. (1 1/4 cup)
Chicken broth (for brown rice)	Add an extra 1/2 cup

Equipment:

Works well in rice cooker. Can also do in covered pot.

See notes under "How to Cook Rice."

Directions:

Brown the onion well in butter or olive oil.

Combine raw rice, browned onion, and chicken stock in rice cooker or pot.

Turn on rice cooker, which will take 20 minutes.

Or bring rice to a boil, cover for 20 minutes. Keep covered and let sit for 5 minutes.

Fluff as soon as done.

Source: Loosely based on recipe in *Essential Pasta Cookbook*.

ORZO DI GIOVANNI

Ingredients	6 servings
<i>Sauté onion:</i>	
Onion (minced)	1 small onion
Olive oil	3 Tbsp.
<i>Brown the orzo:</i>	
Orzo	16 oz. (just over 2 cups dry)
Olive oil	1 Tbsp.
<i>Add the liquid:</i>	
Chicken stock or broth If you happen to be braising a lamb shank or anything else, use the braising liquid instead of chicken stock.	3 cups (24 oz.)
Water	1 cup (8 oz.) – as needed
<i>Season and serve:</i>	
Salt & pepper	To taste
Fresh Italian parsley (minced) (optional)	A generous sprinkle (1/8 cup)

Equipment: Everything may be done in one large frying pan. It must be large enough to hold the orzo and all the liquid. Otherwise, use a Dutch oven or some such.

Sauté the onion:

Sauté the minced onion in olive oil until barely soft (perhaps 3 minutes—or longer on slow heat to caramelize). (Don't over-do; the onion will cook longer with the orzo.)

Brown the orzo:

Add the orzo to the frying pan with the onion. Add a touch more olive oil, if needed. Brown the orzo and the onions over medium-high heat for another 2 or 3 minutes, turning occasionally. Don't overdo the browning. Some should be brown, some not, so that you have a nice mixture of colors.

Add the liquid:

Gradually add the broth and water to the onions & orzo a ladle at a time (as if you were making a risotto). Stir constantly, adding more liquid as it is absorbed by the orzo. This may take up to 20 minutes. **YOU MAY NOT NEED ALL THE LIQUID.** Stop adding liquid when the orzo stops absorbing it. Add only as much liquid as needed to achieve *al dente* consistency.

Season and serve:

Salt and pepper to taste. It may not need any.
After plating, sprinkle with a little minced Italian parsley, if you like.

Source: John (Giovanni) Moeller.

Notes: John's recipe calls for just water and braising liquid. I substitute chicken stock if no braising liquid is available. John's approach is a bit more complicated in that he browns half the orzo and leaves the other half raw. This creates a beautiful presentation with contrasting colors. That is visually fabulous.
Also, John browns his orzo (half of it) dry in a pan with no oil. I like to add the orzo to the pan with the sautéed onion. This is simpler, and the orzo seems to like the oil.
A similar recipe may be found as "Leon Lianides's Leg of Lamb with Orzo" in *Beard on Pasta*. It involves adding the orzo to the roasting pan, with the juices, adding more chicken stock, then baking the orzo, and topping with kasseri cheese.

COUSCOUS

Equipment

Any pot will do. I use a cast iron Le Creuset cooking pot which retains heat well.

SIMPLE VERSION

Ingredients	2 to 4 Servings
<i>Bring liquid to a boil</i>	
Mixture of watered down chicken broth (3 to 1 broth to water)	2 ¼ cups
Currants or raisins (optional)	¼ cup
Salt (optional)	¼ tsp.
Spice pack (optional)	Use half or none
<i>Add the couscous</i>	
Couscous	1 cup (this more than a typical 5.6 oz. box)
Good olive oil	A generous drizzle

The couscous

Put the liquid in a pot. (Package calls for water; I prefer watered down chicken broth).

Optional: add the currants or raisins and bring to a boil.

Add any seasonings. (I use a little or none of the seasoning packs, and use a bit of salt instead.)

Heat the liquid. As soon as it reaches a boil, turn off the heat and add the couscous. Stir and cover with a lid. Let sit for 5 minutes off heat (no peeking).

Fluff the couscous with a fork.

COMPLICATED VERSION

Sauté the garlic	
Olive oil	1 ½ Tbsp.
Garlic (minced)	3 cloves (or 1 tsp.)
Turmeric	⅓ tsp.
The couscous	
Same as above	
The add-ins	
Lemon peel (freshly grated)	Peel from up to 2 lemons
Pine nuts or slivered almonds	⅓ cup
Lemon juice	
Freshly squeezed lemon juice	1 lemon
The Presentation	
Cilantro (finely chopped)	A sprinkle

Sauté the garlic

Before making the couscous, heat olive oil the pot you will use for the couscous.

Add the garlic and sauté 1 minute.

Add the turmeric near the end and continue sautéing another minute.

The couscous

Follow instructions for “simple version” above, except . . .

Add the broth and the currants to the pot with the garlic. As soon as it come to a boil, turn off the heat and add the couscous, lemon peel and the nuts.

Cover with lid. Let sit off heat for 5 minutes (no peeking).

Before fluffing, add the lemon juice to the couscous. Then fluff with a fork.

After plating (or otherwise presenting in a bowl), sprinkle with cilantro.

Notes:

Boxed couscous often contains a package of spices. I throw them out. “Rice Select Original Couscous” (in a plastic jar) is more economical and doesn’t have the useless spice packages.

CREAMY POLENTA

Ingredients	3 Servings
Store-bought polenta in a tube (fresh) - plain version	1.1 lb. (1 tube)
Butter	1/3 stick
Cream or Half & half	1/3 cup
Chicken broth	1/3 cup (more as needed)

Equipment:

You can use just about anything. Medium size Le Creuset pot or deep copper pan is nice.

Directions:

Cut up the polenta into large chunks. Combine in pot: the polenta, butter, cream, and chicken broth. If planning a dinner party, this can be done ahead and left sitting for an hour before turning on the heat (or even longer if you have room in fridge).

Heat gently on medium heat. After it has warmed up (5 minutes or more, depending on size), smash it all up with a potato masher until it's creamy. Cover and put on low heat for 10 minutes or so to let it "meld" into creamy perfection. For a very large batch, this can take longer (30 minutes) to absorb all of the cream.

Keep warm:

If not ready to serve, cover and keep in warming oven for up to an hour.

Source: I just made this up. But it is a common recipe.

Notes: You can also make polenta from scratch: 1 cup corn meal, 3 cups chicken broth, 1 cup half & half, 1/2 stick butter (serves 3). This will take about 40 minutes to get the corn meal tender.

ANDY'S FRIED POLENTA

Ingredients	2 Servings
Store-bought polenta in a tube (fresh) - plain version	1 lb. (1 tube)
Olive oil	very little, as needed

Equipment: This is one of the rare occasions where a nonstick frying pan works better.

Recipe: Slice polenta about ½ inch thick. Sauté over fairly high heat for about 3 minutes per side in just a very little olive oil. If you use too much oil, you won't get the browning you want.

Note: Of course, you may make polenta from scratch. Pretty simple with corn meal. That would be good, but I never bother.

**WINE-BRAISED CHICKEN WITH OLIVES, ARTICHOKES AND ORZO (SEE RECIPE UNDER
"CHICKEN")**

VEGETABLES

NEDERLAND-STYLE BROILED TOMATOES

Ingredients	2 serving
<i>The tomatoes</i>	
Tomatoes (plump, bright red)	1 tomato (one half per person).
Salt & pepper	Just a bit
<i>The breadcrumb mixture</i>	
Olive oil (Olivin in Boise sells the best) (their lemon flavored olive oil is nice with this)	1 ½ Tbsp.
Grey Poupon or other good mustard	1 ½ tsp.
Panko (or other breadcrumbs)	1 ½ Tbsp.
<i>Optional:</i> Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (grated)	1 tsp.
<i>Top with parsley</i>	
Dried flat-leaf parsley	A tiny sprinkle just for color

Prep the tomatoes

Cut out the stem part of the tomato. Then cut each tomato in half with zigzag cut. Sprinkle lightly with salt & pepper.

Mix the breadcrumbs

In a small bowl, combine the olive oil, mustard, and Panko. (Add cheese if you wish, I don't.) Put a dollop on each tomato half.

The parsley

Place the tomatoes in an oven-proof dish or broiling pan. Sprinkle the prepped tomatoes with a tiny bit of parsley just for color.

Rest time

The tomatoes may be prepped a few hours ahead of time. Cover with Saran wrap and put in fridge.

Broil them in pre-heated oven

Preheat the oven to 350. Place them in the hot oven. If they need to share an oven with other things, skip the broiling and just bake them—they'll be just fine. If broiling, give them a two-minute head start in the hot oven before turning on the broiler. They just be done in 6-12 minutes total, depending on conditions. When done, the inside of the tomato will be hot and tender. Watch them carefully; they transition very quickly from perfect to mushy.

Alternatively (if you don't have oven space): Place baking dish with tomatoes on the BBQ grill (lid closed) for about 10 minutes (time may vary widely).

Source: We learned this in the 1980s from our old friend and fellow chef, Barbara Lavender, who lived in Nederland, Colorado.

IMAM BAYILDI (TURKISH EGGPLANT CASSEROLE)

Ingredients	5 Servings
<i>Prep the eggplant:</i>	
Eggplants (either the traditional large ones or the small Italian version) (skin on, sliced thin: ¼ to ⅜ inch)	2 large or 4 small eggplants
Salt (to prep the eggplant)	tons of it
<i>Sauté onions and spices:</i>	
Onion (medium chop)	1 ½ large onions
Garlic (chopped or from jar)	3 cloves or 1 tsp. from jar
Cinnamon	⅓ tsp.
Chile flakes	⅓ tsp.
<i>Add tomatoes etc.:</i>	
Tomatoes (chopped) or can of chopped tomatoes	4 tomatoes, or 14 oz. can
Tomato paste	1 Tbsp.
Salt and pepper (go light on the salt, the eggplants are salty)	to taste
Parsley (finely chopped) (half in casserole and half when served)	2 Tbsp.
<i>Yogurt topping & sesame seeds:</i>	
Plain Greek yogurt	16 oz.
Parsley (finely chopped)	(the remaining half)

Equipment:

If doing a smallish batch, everything can be done in an ovenproof cast iron frying pan (or two). Otherwise, you will need to fry things separately and move them to a lasagna pan or even a turkey roaster (for a large batch—10 people or more).

For salting the eggplant, you need something to catch the water they release: Ideally use a large wire cooling rack set over a large jelly roll pan (rimmed baking sheet pan). Or you may just place the cooling rack over paper towels on the counter. (Saves washing the jelly roll pan.) If you don't have a cooling rack, just use a jelly roll pan.

Directions:

Zebra the eggplants (optional)

Cut off the top and bottom ends of each eggplant. Use a vegetable peeler (or knife) to slice off vertical stripes of peel, leaving about half the skin on, so that it looks like a zebra. Why? This leaves enough skin to give some stability to the eggplant slices, but reduces the amount of skin (which is tougher and stronger tasting). This exercise is optional; just leave the skin on if you like.

Salt, wash, and dry the eggplants

Follow the salting technique under the "Basics" section of this cookbook.

Brown the eggplant

Fry the eggplant slices in olive oil over medium-high until golden brown on both sides, adding a bit more olive oil as needed (about 2 minutes per side). Remove and set aside.

Sauté the onion, garlic, chili flakes, and cinnamon

Fry the onion and garlic in olive oil over medium-high heat. Give the onions a head start before the garlic. Fry about 5 minutes until the onion is soft and golden and the garlic is fragrant.

Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, and parsley

Add the tomatoes, tomato paste, and ½ of the parsley. Sauté for 30 minutes. Add salt & pepper to taste as it cooks. But go light on the salt; the eggplants will still retain salt.

Prepare and bake the casserole

Make a layered “lasagna” with a little tomato sauce at the bottom, then eggplant, more sauce, and repeat. Cover with lid or foil. Bake 35 minutes at 350° (until eggplant is tender). Remove from oven and allow to rest 10 minutes before serving. Slice and serve like “lasagna” pieces. This may be served warm or at room temperature.

Yogurt topping (optional)

Top with a dollop of plain yogurt and a sprinkle of the reserved chopped parsley.

Source: I made this dish up based on the following influences:
Claudia Roden’s *A Book of Middle Eastern Food* (1968). (The book Driek Zirinsky used when she had us to dinner in 2022.)
An online recipe for “Turkish Eggplant Casserole with Tomatoes – Imam Bayildi” on feedmephoebe.com (Phoebe Lapine).
An online recipe for “Roasted Eggplant Dish” in turkishstylecooking.com.

Etymology. This dish is known throughout the Ottoman Empire by the name “Imam Bayildi.” It literally means “the Imam fainted”. According to some, the Imam was overcome with joy on tasting his wife’s dish. Others suggest he was incapacitated upon hearing the cost of the expensive ingredients. According to another tale, an Imam’s young bride used her dowry of costly olive oil to prepare this dish each of the first 12 nights of their marriage. When the olive oil ran out on the 13th night, the Imam fainted.

Notes: A thousand and one Arabic nights have been chronicled. There are at least that many Middle Eastern eggplant recipes. Many recipes call for roasting the eggplant in an oven or over a grill. The Claudia Roden version is similar to French ratatouille and, like many Middle Eastern eggplant dishes, may be served at room temperature as a side dish or appetizer. Eggplant dishes are commonly served topped with a beaten yogurt sauce.

CARROTS À L'ORANGE

Ingredients	2 generous servings 4 small servings
Fresh carrots (peeled and sliced) (heirloom or “rainbow” carrots are nice)	2 large carrots (10 oz. total)
Orange juice (fresh is wonderful) or substitute apple juice (in a pinch)	Enough to barely cover the carrots
Butter	3 pats
Orange marmalade (or apricot, peach, or mango preserves) (or mango chutney)	2 Tbsp. (1 oz.)
Allspice	A tiny bit

Quantity:

If this is a major component of the meal (the main side dish), make the quantity for “2 generous servings.” If you are serving a lot of things, and this is one more thing that people will squeeze onto their plate, make the quantity for “4 small servings.”

Equipment: Select a frying pan just large enough hold the carrots and O.J. with enough headroom that it can boil without making a mess. The pan size matters, because it determines how much O.J. will be required to cover the carrots.

Peel and cut the carrots:

First, peel the carrots.

How you cut the carrots is up to you—an aesthetic choice. You may cut the carrots lengthwise, then cut them lengthwise again (into quarters, or more for fat carrots), then cut them into 3-inch sticks. Or, if you prefer, you may slice them diagonally (into large angular pieces). This step may be done in advance. Submerge the carrots in water for as long as you like. Or submerge the carrots in the juice in the frying pan, and let them sit without heat for up to two hours.

Boil the carrots in the orange juice:

Put the carrots in a frying pan with enough juice to cover them.

Boil them rather vigorously for 15-25 minutes (could be much longer if you put them on a simmer). The carrots should be al dente (still a bit of a crunch) and the juice should be reduced almost to a sauce. Add more juice as needed, if the carrots need to cook longer.

Add butter, sweetener, and allspice:

Near the end of the boiling, add butter and your choice of marmalade, preserves, or chutney.

Finish with a tiny sprinkle of allspice.

Sauté for a few minutes until everything is caramelized and splendid.

Serve or keep warm:

If needed, the carrots may be kept warm for up to an hour before serving. Put them in a covered serving dish and put it a warming oven. Or they may be kept in the pan on the stove on very low heat. They are remarkably sturdy and will maintain their al dente feel, so long as you don't overcook them at the outset.

Lite version:

You may make a “light” version of the recipe by simply simmering the carrots in the orange juice. Skip the butter, sweetener, and allspice.

Source:

I just made this up. Have been making it for many many years.

In 2022, Idaho Power included a similar recipe with the monthly bill. Idaho Power's version adds 2 apples and 2 Tbsp. fresh ginger. That is worth experimenting with.

SPINACI ALL'AGLIO E OLIO OR SPINACI ALLA ROMANA (SAUTÉED SPINACH)

Ingredients	4 servings
For Spinaci all'aglio , use only sautéed garlic:	
Garlic (from a jar) (or make fresh if you wish)	3 Tbs.
Olive oil	Generously, as needed
Fresh baby spinach	10 or 11 oz. tub
Salt & pepper	To taste
For Spinaci alla Romana , also add these optional ingredients:	
Pine nuts	1 ¼ oz.
Currants	1 Tbsp. (don't overdo)

Equipment:

For two people, I use a very large frying pan. For anything larger, a large wok is easiest.

Wash the spinach, if not pre-washed:

If using triple-washed, ready-to-eat baby spinach, there is no need to trim or wash. If the spinach must be washed, it is essential that you fully drain and dry the washed spinach, using a colander and paper towels. Excess water will convert the sautéing process into a steaming process, resulting in a mushy mess.

Sauté the garlic, pine nuts, and currants:

Over high heat, sauté the garlic in olive oil for about two minutes. If using pine nuts, add them in half-way through. If using currants, add them near the end.

Sauté the spinach:

Over high heat, add the spinach in batches, adding more as soon as it wilts enough to allow more room in the pan. (If you have a big enough pan or wok, do it all at once.) Drizzle more oil on top (only if needed). Use tongs (better than a spatula) to turn constantly, for just a couple of minutes. Stop the moment they are completely wilted—before they turn to mush. Season with salt & pepper, and serve at once. Or put in a serving bowl and keep in warming oven for a short time.

Source: *Lidia's Italian American Cookbook* and Marcella Hazan's *Essentials of Classic Italian Cooking*.

Notes: Spinaci alla Romana has both pine nuts and currants. But it is equally wonderful with just the pine nuts. Don't overdo either, however.

GRILLED ASPARAGUS

Ingredients	For two
Asparagus	8 oz. (½ lb.)
Olive Oil	Generously
Salt & pepper	Good shake

Wash the asparagus and cut off the ends. Put the asparagus in a nice serving dish. Drizzle very generously with olive oil, and sprinkle with salt & pepper. Heat the BBQ grill pretty darned hot, but reduce heat where the asparagus will be. Grill, turning once or twice, for 6-10 minutes, depending on thickness and heat. Aim for “al dente,” as they will continue to cook and soften. Remove from grill and return to the serving dish (which still has olive oil in it). Toss them again in the olive oil.

Optional: Grate fresh parmesan cheese over the top.

SEARED ASPARAGUS OF THE GODS

Ingredients	2 Servings
Asparagus	8 oz. (½ lb.)
Olive oil	2 Tbsp.
Shallots (minced or cut in rings)	1 large shallot
Garlic (minced)	½ Tbsp. (2 cloves)
Dried red chili flakes	Large pinch
Salt	a sprinkle
Pepper	a sprinkle
<i>For lemon dressing:</i>	
Fresh lemon juice	Juice of ½ lemon
Fresh lemon zest	From ½ lemon
Extra virgin olive oil	1 ¼ Tbsp.
<i>To serve:</i>	
Parmesan cheese (shaved or grated)	

Prep:

Clean asparagus and snap off tough ends. Mince the garlic. Sliced or mince the shallot.

Sauté

Heat frying pan to high temp. Add olive oil—not too much. Sauté the asparagus first for about 2 minutes (longer for fat asparagus). Add the shallot, garlic, and red chili flakes. Sauté for another minute or two until “al dente.” Don’t overcook. Season with a tiny bit of salt and pepper. Remove to serving bowl. Top with bits of shallot and garlic from pan.

Sauce

Make sauce of lemon juice, lemon zest, and olive oil. This is not cooked; just combined in a bowl. Pour over asparagus.

Serve

Top with a sprinkle of parmesan cheese.

Can be made ahead and kept in oven. If so, cook asparagus much less. Don’t add the lemon dressing and parmesan until serving.

Source: Fine Cooking magazine. May 2003. Magazine says to slice shallots in rings. And calls for shaved pieces of parmesan.

JIFFY BEANS AND SHROOMS

Ingredients	4-5 servings
Fresh green beans	12 oz.
Mushrooms (white or baby portobellos) (sliced)	8 oz.
Butter	1 stick (so you'll have plenty left over to mix with beans)
Crushed red pepper	¼ tsp (a light sprinkle)
Salt	A shake
Pepper (or seasoned pepper)	A shake
Optional: Additional seasonings of choice: Cajun's Choice Blackened Seasoning Mrs. Dash Jimmy's Salad Elegance seasoning The Original Spike All Purpose Seasoning	A few good shakes
Optional: Parmesan or Romano cheese	4 Tbsp.

Equipment: I like to use a large frying pan that will accommodate the beans & mushrooms. You will also need a pot to boil the beans.

Recipe:

Wash and slice the mushrooms.

Fry mushrooms in lots of butter with some crushed red pepper until lightly browned (several minutes).

Wash and trim the green beans (snap off the ends, or cut them off).

The beans now need to be cooked until almost tender—but still undercooked. You have choices:

You may steam them (about 4 minutes). Or boil them in salted water. Then drain and remove the beans.

Alternatively: Sauté the raw beans on very high heat in the frying pan used for the mushrooms. This allows them to cook in the buttery sauce left over. (If you have browned some rack of lamb or something, you may use that leftover pan!)

Optional: If you just boiled or steamed the beans, you may return the beans to the frying pan with the sautéed mushrooms. If needed, add more butter to melt in.

Toss the beans and mushrooms with parmesan cheese (optional), seasoning (optional), salt and pepper.

Place in oven-proof serving dish (or just keep them in the frying pan for serving).

Add a tiny bit more parmesan on top.

Serve at once or keep in a warming oven. The beans should be “al dente” not mushy.

Pre-Make Option:

This may be made ahead (slightly underdone) and refrigerated in a covered casserole. Re-warm in 275 degree oven for 25 minutes or longer (depending on size of dish).

GREEN BEANS AND MUSHROOMS WITH CREAMY LEMON VINAIGRETTE

Ingredients	6 Servings
<i>Vinaigrette:</i>	
Zest of lemon (Meyer lemon if possible)	2 lemons (½ cup)
Juice of lemon (Meyer lemon if possible)	the same lemons
Heavy cream	½ cup
Grey Poupon or other good mustard	½ tsp.
Minced garlic (from jar is OK)	¼ tsp.
Salt	⅔ tsp
Pepper	½ tsp
Extra virgin olive oil	1 cup
<i>Mushrooms (optional):</i>	
Mushrooms (sliced)	8 oz.
Butter (or substitute good olive oil)	½ stick
Minced garlic (from jar is OK)	½ Tbsp.
Red chili flakes	a good shake
<i>Beans:</i>	
Green beans	1 lb.
Salted water	plenty

Creamy Lemon Vinaigrette:

Zest the lemons.

In a large bowl, whisk lemon juice, lemon zest, cream, salt & pepper. Then slowly whisk in the olive oil. (The beans will later be tossed in this bowl with the vinaigrette.)

(You may make the vinaigrette up to a day ahead; place in vinaigrette bottle or other container with lid and refrigerate.)

Mushrooms (optional):

Sauté the mushrooms, garlic, and chili flakes in butter until nicely browned.

Remove the mushrooms to a dish. Pour on the remaining “mushroom butter” from the frying pan. Set aside.

Beans:

Boil beans in large pot of salted water until al dente (about 4 minutes). Drain into colander. Rinse under cold water to stop cooking unless serving immediately.

If serving immediately, put beans and mushrooms in the bowl with the vinaigrette and toss.

Transfer to a serving platter and warm it in oven before serving.

Or make a few hours ahead. Layer cooked beans and mushrooms in a casserole. Refrigerate.

When ready for dinner, add the vinaigrette to the casserole and toss. Re-heat in 275° oven for 25 minutes or so until hot.

Optional - Breadcrumbs:

See recipe for Grilled Asparagus with Lemon Vinaigrette and Parmesan Breadcrumbs.

Sprinkle some breadcrumbs onto casserole or serving platter before warming in oven.

Source: Based loosely on a recipe in Fine Cooking (11/2008), which I have modified substantially.

HUNAN STYLE GREEN BEANS WITH MUSHROOMS (OR BROCCOLI)

Ingredients	2 servings
Fresh green beans (or substitute broccoli)	8 oz.
Optional: Mushrooms (sliced)	3 oz.
½ grapeseed oil and ½ sesame seed oil (if you have it, otherwise just grapeseed oil) (or wok oil or peanut oil)	Just enough to liberally cover the pan (about 3 Tbsp. total)
Vietnamese chili garlic sauce (Huy Fong Foods, Inc.)	1 Tbsp. (more if you dare, less for the elderly)
Sun Luck brand La Yu Chili Oil	½ tsp. (more if you dare, less for the elderly)
Alternatively: House of Tsang brand Szechuan spicy stir fry sauce	1 Tbsp.

Equipment:

Everything may be done together in one pan, with proper sequencing.

A wok is the classic pan for stir-fried vegetables, but a wok works best if you have a gas range that produces intense BTUs. Alternatively, use a copper frying pan (which browns better than a non-stick pan). Any frying pan will do.

Prep:

Clean and trim green beans (or cut broccoli).

Slice and chop shallot or onion. (Optional)

Clean and slice the mushrooms. (Optional)

Cook:

Turn on highest heat under pan. Start with a generous splash of grapeseed & sesame oils, and add more as needed during cooking.

Do the mushrooms first (optional). Then set aside and add at the very end.

Fry with the beans or broccoli on highest heat for about 7 minutes, adding the chili garlic sauce and/or chili oil. Don't overdo the spices – these are hot! The vegetables should show signs of browning or even blackening, but still be barely cooked (al dente). At the end, add the sautéed mushrooms.

This may be kept in a warming oven (very low) until dinner is ready.

Notes:

My source recipe calls for Chinese long beans, but we always use fresh green beans. I do not recommend frozen beans. Good with broccoli, too.

OVEN-ROASTED ZUCCHINI WITH BREADCRUMBS AND PARMESAN

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>The Squash:</i>	
Zucchini (don't peel) (cut into spears)	2 zucchinis
Olive oil	A generous drizzle
Crystal hot sauce	a splash
Salt (Kosher or flaked)	½ tsp
Pepper (freshly ground)	¼ tsp
<i>The Crumb Mixture:</i>	
Breadcrumbs (homemade)	¼ cup
Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (grated)	¼ cup
Thyme	¼ tsp.
Oregano	¼ tsp.
Dried basil	¼ tsp.
Garlic powder	¼ tsp.

Equipment: A covered baking pan or jellyroll pan

Recipe:

Cut the stems/ends off the zucchini.

Slice the zucchini into spears (cut in half long way, then cut again into halves or thirds).

Place on jellyroll pan. Drizzle generously with olive oil and hot sauce. Add salt & pepper. Toss them around on the pan.

In a small bowl, combine the breadcrumbs, parmesan cheese, and spices.

Sprinkle with the crumb/cheese mixture over the zucchini on the jellyroll pan. For best presentation, sprinkle it mostly down the middle of the zucchinis so that it's a tiny mound with fewer sprinkles elsewhere.

Then drizzle on more olive oil on top to moisten the breadcrumbs.

Bake uncovered in oven at 350° for 20 minutes (for al dente).

If they come out before other things are done, leave them on the counter until they cool a bit (so they don't continue to soften), then place in warming oven.

NANA'S CAULIFLOWER WITH STUFF ON IT

Ingredients	4 Servings
Cauliflower (cut into pieces)	1 head
Butter	2 sticks
Progresso brand breadcrumbs (garlic & herb flavor is good)	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup

Put steamer in a large pot with just enough water to nearly reach the steamer, then add the cauliflower.

Steam the cauliflower 5 or 6 minutes until barely soft (NOT TOO MUCH – AIM FOR AL DENTE. VERY AL DENTE IF THIS WILL GO INTO WARMING OVEN).

Meanwhile, melt the butter in a separate small pan.

Add the breadcrumbs to the butter and stir them in. If not measuring, add enough breadcrumbs to reach a spreadable consistency.

Plate the cauliflower and put some breadcrumb mixture on top.

To make ahead:

Be sure cauliflower is barely cooked (very al dente). Put it in serving dish and cover with the crumb mixture. Cover and keep in warming oven for up to an hour.

Source: Karen has been making this since she was in high school. She learned it from her mother, who made it up.

STIR-FRIED BROCCOLI OR BROCCOLINI

Ingredients	2 Servings
Broccoli or broccolini	6 oz. ($\frac{1}{3}$ lb.) ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup)
Olive oil	As needed (will be a lot)
Red pepper flakes	$\frac{1}{3}$ Tbsp.
Garlic (optional)	$\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp.

Equipment: I use a large frying pan with a lid. Or you could use a wok with a lid.

Chop up the broccoli into bite-sized pieces. Stir-fry broccoli in oil with chili pepper flakes and garlic (optional) over medium to high heat, turning occasionally until it shows some nice browning marks. It will “drink” a lot of olive oil at first; add as needed. This might take 10 minutes. If the broccoli is not yet cooked through, cover the pan and let it cook another minute or two. Once the lid goes on, the steam takes over (without adding any more water) and softens it very fast. So watch out! Get this off the stove while it still has a bit of crunch to it.

ACORN SQUASH

Ingredients	
Acorn squash	½ per person
Butter	2 Tbsp. per half squash
Honey	2 Tbsp. per half squash

Equipment: Line a baking dish or pan with tinfoil to facilitate cleanup. For each squash half, take a sheet of tinfoil and roll it. Then bend it into a circle. Place the squash into the circle, which will keep it upright while baking.

Cut squashes in half. Scrape out insides. Cut off a tiny bit on the bottom of each half so that it will sit flat when served. Place squash halves onto artichoke holders or make a little ring out of tin foil to hold them upright. Put butter into each half. Dribble generously with honey. Bake at 350 for one hour.

DON ANDERSON'S VEGETABLES DE LA MODE

Ingredients	6 servings
<i>Sauté the onion (and red pepper if using that):</i>	
Onion (cut into large pieces)	1 onion
Optional: Red pepper (cut into medium-length strips)	½ red pepper
Olive oil	2 Tbsp.
Butter	2 Tbsp.
<i>Cheese sauce:</i>	
Butter	6 Tbsp. (¾ stick)
Flour	6 Tbsp. (⅛ cup)
Whole milk	2 ½ cups (or as needed)
Cheddar cheese	12 oz.
Your choice of seasoning: Organics brand Cajun Seasoning Mrs. Dash extra spicy, or whatever	up to 1 tsp.
Crystal Extra Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	1 ½ Tbsp. (or less)
Chili flakes	1 tsp. (or less)
<i>Vegetables (chopped large):</i>	
Broccoli and/or Cauliflower,	1 ½ lb. (24 oz.) (<u>after</u> trimming) about 2 lbs. (before trimming)

Equipment:

The onions and cheese sauce may be done (consecutively) in the same large frying pan. Bake in a Dutch oven, Romertopf, or other covered oven-proof dish.

Sauté the onion (and optional red pepper)

Peel onion and cut in half. Slice each half into half rings. Then cut the longer ones in half again (producing medium-length strips).

On high heat, brown the onion in olive oil and/or butter (5 to 10 minutes). Or cook them on low heat for 40 minutes to caramelize them.

If you're doing red peppers, throw them in, too, after giving the onions a head start.

Remove from skillet and set aside.

The cheese sauce

Melt butter and add flour to make a roux. Heat and stir the roux for 3 minutes to eliminate the raw flour taste.. Very gradually add milk as needed to make a white sauce (a bit on the thin side).

Gradually add grated cheddar cheese. Season with hot sauce and seasonings to taste (I like it pretty hot and spicy). If sauce is too thick, add more milk.

Add the vegetables

Combine the raw vegetables, the sautéed onions/red pepper, and the cheese sauce. (You may do this in the frying pan, if you have room. They will mix more easily than in the Dutch oven.)

Put cheesy vegetable mixture into Dutch oven.

You may pause here, if you like, and put the vegetables into the fridge for a few hours. Bring casserole to room temperature before baking.

Bake covered at 325° for @45 minutes or 350° for @40 minutes until vegetables are cooked al dente and cheese sauce is bubbly. Let rest 10 minutes before serving.

Notes on Don Anderson:

This recipe (and many important life lessons) were taught to me by Don Anderson, my mentor and roommate in Washington, D.C. in the 1970s. Don taught me to cook. To his most cherished friends, he would give a Romertopf, declaring that the gift they were about to open would “change your life.” Mine did. He played the bagpipes at our wedding. He served this dish (and many others) at dinner parties he hosted at our apartment for members of Congress. I performed in many of the amateur Shakespearian productions he directed at Daniel’s Mountain along the James River in western Virginia. The stage he built was 100 feet from the graveyard of his ancestors, who worked the land as slaves and then bought it during Reconstruction. I discovered much later that my mother used to play bridge with Don’ sister in Tallahassee. Excerpts of his obituary, published in in the Washington Post, follow:

Donald Anderson Dies
By Patricia Sullivan
January 20, 2004

Donald Anderson, 71, executive director of a self-help organization for poor Southern blacks and a former congressional staff member who worked on anti-poverty legislation in the 1960s, died of cancer Jan. 17 at Washington Hospital Center.

Mr. Anderson, the great-grandson of a slave, was born in Pittsburgh and moved with his family to Washington when he was 14. His father, a geneticist and physician, began a medical internship at what is now Howard University Hospital.

Mr. Anderson graduated from the University of Michigan and served in the Army from 1953 to 1955, at one point as a skiing instructor in Colorado.

He received a master’s degree in economics from the London School of Economics in 1957 and was a 1960 graduate of the University of Michigan law school.

Unable to land a job with a blue-chip law firm, he went to Pittsburgh, where he worked as a law clerk in the Common Pleas Court and taught at what is now Carlow College.

In 1962, he learned of an opening on the staff of Rep. Adam Clayton Powell Jr. (D-N.Y.), chairman of the House Education and Labor Committee. Powell also was President Lyndon B. Johnson’s manager of the “War on Poverty.”

Mr. Anderson was hired and became general counsel for the committee in 1964. He helped draft the initial anti-poverty legislation passed by Congress.

He left Capitol Hill in 1968, with the idea of forming an organization based on Thomas Jefferson’s idea of decision-making caucuses called “assemblies,” small units of citizens who decide how to solve problems.

“He was a genius at teaching poor and illiterate citizens a process by which they were able to articulate their own needs and then discover, through his methods, a way of achieving them,” said former senator Wyche Fowler Jr. (D-Ga.), who has known Mr. Anderson for 40 years.

Mr. Anderson enjoyed opera and Shakespeare and once tried out for the Washington Shakespeare Co. On his bedside table before he died were works by Nathaniel Hawthorne and Cervantes.

Earlier in his life, he fell in love with the sound of bagpipes and immediately set out to learn that instrument, becoming proficient enough to win awards at bagpipe festivals in the Southeast.

He lived in Washington and raised prize-winning Tennessee Walker horses near Eagle Rock, Va., on land deeded to his great-grandfather, the freed slave.

KAREN'S GERMAN SWEET & SOUR CABBAGE

Ingredients	8 Servings
<i>Browning prep:</i>	
Thick-sliced bacon	½ pound
Vidalia or other sweet onion (or regular onion) (medium dice)	1 large onion
Granny Smith apple (cut into 8 slices for browning, skin on)	3 apples
<i>Cabbage:</i>	
Red cabbage (coarsely chopped)	1 cabbage
<i>The sweet/sour sauce:</i>	
Butter	⅓ stick
Flour	¼ cup (4 Tbsp.)
Chicken broth	1 ⅓ cup (or more)
Apple cider vinegar	1 ⅓ cup
Sugar	⅓ cup
Salt	½ tsp.
Pepper	½ tsp.
<i>The liquid:</i>	
Water or more chicken broth	¼ cup

Equipment: A large frying pan (preferably copper or cast iron) does triple duty: fry bacon, fry onions, make the roux/sauce. Then everything goes into a very large Dutch oven. Everything is cooked stovetop.

Note: If serving with rouladen, you may sauté enough onion and bacon for both recipes.

Fry the bacon and the onion:

Chop the bacon into ⅛ inch pieces. Fry the chopped bacon thoroughly cooked and chewy, not crunchy. Remove the bacon to a colander. Reserve some bacon grease.

Fry the diced onion in a little bacon grease until they are just beginning to brown. Remove the onion to the colander with the bacon. **SAVE THE PRECIOUS BACON FAT** for the apples.

Brown the apples:

Slice each apple into 8 slices (an apple corer is perfect).

Fry the diced apples in the leftover bacon fat on very high heat. They should quickly brown. Take them out quickly, before they turn to mush. After they are browned, cut each slice in half before adding to the cabbage.

Chop the cabbage:

Quarter the cabbage. Cut out the “stem” part from each quarter. Cut each quarter into thirds. Then cut each third into thirds (very coarse chop). Set aside.

The sweet/sour sauce:

Using the same frying pan, make a roux of butter and flour. Cook the roux 2 minutes.

Slowly stir the chicken broth and the vinegar (back and forth in roughly equal quantities) into the roux to create a gravy. Add as much as necessary to get a thin sauce.

Add a sugar, salt & pepper. If the sauce thickens up, add more liquid.

Combine everything:

Combine all ingredients (cabbage, onion, bacon, apples, and sweet/sour sauce) in giant Dutch oven or other pot. Toss to blend and cover the cabbage with the sweet/sour sauce.

Finally, add a little water (or more chicken broth), which will go to the bottom of the pot and create some steam to start the cooking. Amazingly, that’s all the liquid you need; it will make its own liquid.

Cover and put on the stovetop. Cook on medium heat until hot and bubbling, then reduce heat to barely simmering. Keep covered. After 45 minutes, testing for doneness. You want it al dente—quite tender, but with some crunch left. Cooking time can vary from 45 minutes to 1 ½ hours depending on how low the simmer is. When nearly tender, it can be kept on the stove (covered) with very very low heat for a long time without getting too mushy.

CAULIFLOWER/BROCCOLI CASSEROLE WITH CHEDDAR AND SOUR CREAM

Ingredients	2 Servings (generous)
Cauliflower (cut into florets) and/or Broccoli (chopped)	½ head (10 oz. trimmed) 10 oz.
Sour cream	12 oz.
White cheddar cheese (coarsely grated)	5 oz.
Paprika	1 Tbsp.
Thyme (fresh leaves or dried)	1 tsp.
Red chili flakes	⅔ tsp.
Salt	1 tsp.

Equipment:

If you have an ovenproof Le Creuset pan with a lid, you may use it both to steam the vegetables and as the baking dish.

Blanch the cauliflower

Steam the vegetables about 6 minutes from boil (or 10 minutes from cold water) until just before tender. (Use judgment. You want them al dente, but not too crunchy. They will not soften up a lot more in the oven.)

Place steamed vegetables in a colander and run cold water to stop the cooking.

Prepare the casserole

In the cooking pot, combine the sour cream, half the cheese, paprika, thyme, red chili flakes, and salt. Stir together. Then add the blanched vegetables, and toss together.

Sprinkle the remaining cheese on top.

Bake

Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Start covered, then remove lid after 20 minutes. When done, the cheese should be melted and the top slightly browned. Serve soon.

Source: Phoebe Lapine (*Food and Wine* magazine)

DAD'S THANKSGIVING SPINACH CASSEROLE

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>8 servings</i>
Fresh spinach or substitute frozen spinach	Fresh = two one-pound tubs (32 oz.) Frozen = two 9 oz. boxes (18 oz.)
Eggs (hard boiled, then sliced)	4 eggs
Bacon (chopped then fried)	1/3 pound
Baby bella mushrooms (sliced)	8 oz.
Onion (chopped fine)	1 small onion
Cream cheese	4 oz. (1/2 package)
Sour cream	5 oz.
Crystal Extra Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	1 Tbsp.
Mrs. Dash seasoning	1 tsp.
Salt	A tiny bit
Pepper	A good shake

Equipment: If you use a very large wok or frying pan, you use it to fry everything and then wilt the spinach. Or you may use another large pot to wilt the spinach.
Use a covered casserole for the spinach casserole.

Hard boil eggs

Boil and peel the eggs. (See "How to Boil and Egg" on page 38.)

Slice the eggs (tossing the end pieces with just egg white).

Fry the bacon, mushrooms, and onion

Cut up bacon into bite-size pieces, then fry. Set aside in colander or on paper towels.

Sauté sliced mushrooms in the same pan with leftover bacon grease until nicely browned, adding olive oil as needed. Set aside (may be combined with the bacon).

Sauté finely chopped onion in the same pan, adding olive oil as needed. Set aside separately.

Prepare the spinach

If using fresh spinach, add a cup water to the wok or frying pan (or use a separate pot). Bring to a boil. Add the spinach and cook on high to barely wilt it (about 2 minutes). Drain in a colander.

If using frozen spinach, leave it in the container, set it on a plate, and defrost it in microwave at very low heat. Don't cook it. Drain in colander.

The cream cheese sauce

Put the cream cheese in mixing bowl and microwave for 30 seconds to soften.

Add the sour cream, Tabasco sauce, Mrs. Dash seasoning, the fried onion.

Build the casserole

Put half the spinach into a casserole. Spread half cream cheese sauce on top. Cover with the egg slices, bacon bits, and mushrooms. Mix the remaining cream cheese sauce into the remaining spinach that is still in the colander. (Don't use all the sauce, if it seems like too much).

Add remaining spinach/sauce mixture to the casserole.

The casserole may be prepared and kept in the fridge a few hours, but not longer.

Bake the casserole

If chilled, bring to room temperature before baking.

Bake covered at 325° for 50 minutes.

BECKY'S VERY COMPLICATED ASPARAGUS

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>2 servings</i>
<i>The reduction (@ 20 minutes):</i>	
Balsamic vinegar	½ cup
Honey	1 Tbsp. or so
<i>Into the oven:</i>	
Asparagus	8 oz. (½ lb.)
Avocado oil	generously
Salt and pepper	generously

Directions (copied exactly from a text from Becky Anderson):

“You put asparagus in a pan and rub avocado oil into the spears and throw salt on top. Then you bake at 400 for about 10 min until slightly tender. THEN (u see how many steps there are? Getting really complicated now) you pour some balsamic reduction over the whole thing in pretty and artistic lines pretending u r a French chef. VOILA c'est tout!!!”

Balsamic reduction

This may be served hot. But it also does nicely cold, e.g., for a picnic or Shakespeare pre-theater dining.

Hot or cold

This may be served hot. But it also does nicely cold, e.g., for a picnic or Shakespeare pre-theater dining.

BREAKFAST

EGG-IN-A-HOLE (OR FAUX FRENCH TOAST)

Ingredients	1 serving
Your choice of bread: whole wheat, brioche, challah, potato bread, cinnamon/raisin bread, etc.	1 slice (with hole)
Eggs	1 egg
Butter (unsalted is nice)	several pats
Salt, pepper and/or hot sauce	If desired, on the egg
<i>Optional:</i>	
Bacon, ham, sausage, or chorizo	Be generous
Slice of tomato	1 ½ or 2 slices
Salt & pepper (or cayenne pepper)	To taste (on tomato slice)
Cheese (typically cheddar or high quality American) (sliced or shredded)	Be generous

Equipment:

A large skillet will hold two. If cooking more, an electric griddle is the easiest. Heat to 350°.

Prep:

Thaw the bread, if frozen. A few seconds in microwave works.

Use a cookie cutter to cut a hole in each slice. Use the largest size hole that the bread can comfortably accommodate.

Optional:

Cook the bacon, ham, or other meat. Slice meat into small pieces or crumble it up. Set aside. Slice the tomato. Place slices on oven-proof plate or tray. Sprinkle lightly with your choice of salt, pepper, cayenne pepper. Don't go overboard with seasonings. Place under broiler for no more than 2-3 minutes until barely tender. Set aside.

Grill:

Heat skillet or griddle to medium high. (Getting temperature right is critical.)

Place each hole on top of a tiny piece of butter. Then add a large pat of butter for each slice.

Before it melts too much, lay the bread on top (with the melting butter pat in the hole). When the butter has melted, crack an egg into each hole. If desired, add a bit of salt, pepper and/or hot sauce right on the egg. Put a bit more butter on top of bread.

Grill until nicely browned. Turn over and brown on the other side. I prefer to take them out when the egg is cooked but yolk is still runny (like an egg over easy). Take out extra early if you will be putting them under the broiler.

The extras (optional):

Set aside the holes; they don't go into broiler. Sprinkle the cooked meat onto the egg-in-a-hole. Then add the tomato slices. Finish with cheese. Broil a few minutes until cheese has melted.

Serve:

Plate the egg-in-a-hole with the hole on the side.

Serve at once with jam or apple butter, which people may add to the hole on the side.

Faux French toast:

To make a surprisingly tasty and super-easy fake French toast, use cinnamon bread, raisin bread, or challah. Skip the "extras" (serve any meat on the side). Serve with maple syrup. You'll be surprised how good this is.

Source:

The "extras" (meat, grilled tomato, and cheese) are not traditional. They are my additions, which I add only on occasion when I feel like it. Karen and I first encountered this dish (without the extras) at a bed and breakfast on our honeymoon. Being such innocents, we thought it was quite exotic. Of course, it is not exotic. Everybody makes it. This dish is as old as the hills.

Other names & etymology:

There are many other names for the dish, including “bullseye eggs,” “eggs in a frame,” “eggs in a nest,” “egg in the basket,” “hole in one,” “one-eyed Jack,” “one-eyed Pete,” “one-eyed Sam,” “pirate’s eye,” “Popeye,” “gashouse eggs,” “gashouse special,” and “gasthaus eggs.”

“Gasthaus” is an inn or country tavern in Germany. In some parts of Germany, the word “gasthof” is used instead. “Gashouse” is a colloquial American mispronunciation and misspelling of the German.

FRENCH TOAST (PAIN PERDU)

Ingredients	2 servings
Your choice of bread: croissants, soft French bread, brioche, challah, potato bread, cinnamon bread, etc.)	1 croissant or 2 bread slices
Eggs	4 eggs
Whole milk	1/3 cup (add more if you like; I prefer an eggy batter)
Vanilla	1 tsp.
Cinnamon	2 tsp. (add more as each slice is dipped)
Nutmeg	1 tsp.
Sugar (very optional)	1 Tbsp.
Butter	1 stick
<i>Optional stuffing:</i>	
Cream cheese (whipped is easier to spread)	1 oz. per person
Preserves (Apricot, peach, seedless raspberry jam, or damsonplum are all good. I think "four fruits" is too sweet.)	A nice dab for each toast
Chopped walnuts	2/3 oz. per person

Equipment:

An electric griddle is the easiest.

Heat electric griddle to 350° for bread, 300° for croissants (which cook slower).

Or use a large skillet.

Prep:

Melt butter in microwave (50 seconds for one stick) and set aside.

If using French bread, slice the bread. If using croissants, cut them in half lengthwise.

Optional: Stuffing:

Use a loaf of soft French bread for this. Slice the bread by alternatively making a complete slice and then making a partial slice into the bread leaving one edge of crust attached. The result is each "sandwich" of bread has a pocket for stuffing. Make the slices quite thin so that the whole "sandwich" isn't too fat.

Spread whipped cream cheese into the pocket of each sandwich, followed by preserves and nuts.

Batter:

Prepare batter of eggs, milk, vanilla & cinnamon. (Sugar is quite optional; I don't include it.)

Fry:

Dip bread (or croissants) in batter; leave it in the batter long enough to soak before flipping.

As each slice is dipped, add more cinnamon.

Pour some butter on griddle and place bread (or croissant with cut edge down).

Continue until all bread / croissants are on griddle.

Cook until golden brown.

Drizzle with more butter, flip, and brown other side.

Serve:

Serve with melted butter, maple syrup, bacon or sausage.

Or top with strawberries, strawberry syrup, a dusting of powdered sugar, and whipped cream. A restaurant in Dublin called San Lorenzo's tops their version with salt caramelized bananas, peanut butter, mascarpone whipped butter, and Belgian chocolate sauce.

Etymology:

The French call it pain perdu (French for “lost bread”). So named because it was a good way of using up stale bread before it is lost.

Why do we call it French toast? That is harder to answer. The dish, or something like it, can be traced to a Roman Empire era cookbook called *Apicius* (named after a Roman noble). A recipe quite similar to the modern one (except missing the milk) appears in *Le Viandier*, a Medieval cookbook credited to the French chef named Guillaume Tirel, who went by the alias Taillevent. The recipe also appears in German sources in the 14th century, where it was called arme ritter (“poor knights”). The name French toast appeared first in England in the 17th century. The dish appears in various forms around the world: Bread and butter pudding in the U.K., torrija in Spain, and rabanadas in Portugal.

Notes:

The dish traditionally uses a bit of sugar in the batter (or could use a cinnamon/sugar mix in a shaker). I dropped the sugar decades ago.

Source: I have been making French toast since I was 9 years old and could barely reach the stove.

HELLS CANYON PANCAKES

Ingredients	6 pancakes (2 people)	9 pancakes (3 people)	24 pancakes (8 people)	30 pancakes (10 people)	54 pancakes (18 people)
<i>Mix in bowl:</i>					
Eggs (add first, then beat gently)	1 egg	2 eggs	5 eggs	7 eggs	12 eggs
Bisquick	1 cup	1 ½ cups	4 cups	5 cups	9 cups
Baking powder	1 tsp.	1 ½ tsp.	4 tsp.	5 tsp.	9 tsp.
Baking soda	½ tsp.	¾ tsp.	2 tsp.	2 ½ tsp.	4 ½ tsp.
Plain or vanilla Greek yogurt	3 oz.	5 oz.	12 oz. (two 5.3 oz. containers)	15 oz. (almost three 5.3 oz. containers)	27 oz. (five 5.3 oz. containers)
Vanilla (preferably Mexican) (I use this much; you may choose to use less)	1 Tbsp.	1 ½ Tbsp.	4 Tbsp.	5 Tbsp.	9 Tbsp.
Cinnamon (double this for banana pancakes!)	¼ tsp.	⅓ tsp.	1 tsp.	1 ¼ tsp.	2 tsp.
<i>If using bananas, add:</i> Banana extract	½ tsp.	¾ tsp.	2 tsp.	2 ½ tsp.	4 ½ tsp.
Whole milk	@ ½ cup	@ ¾ cup	@ 2 cups	@ 2 ½ cups	@ 4 ½ cups
<i>After mixing batter add:</i> Melted butter to the batter. (You will need more for frying)	¼ stick	⅓ stick	1 stick	1 ¼ sticks	2 sticks
<i>Mix and match fruit (optional):</i>					
Blueberries – drop onto pancakes on griddle! Fresh are best. Costco's frozen are good. Just thaw in microwave.	¾ cup 6 oz.	1 ¼ cups 10 oz.	3 cups 24 oz. 1 ½ lbs.	3 ¾ cups 30 oz. 1.9 lbs.	6 cups 48 oz. 3 lbs.
Peaches (skin removed) or nectarines - chopped	2 peaches 1 cup	3 peaches 1 ½ cups	8 peaches 4 cups	10 peaches 5 cups	16 peaches 8 cups
Syrup from peaches (if using canned)	1/3 cup	½ cup	1 1/3 cups	1 2/3 cups	2 2/3 cups
Banana (mashed)	1 banana	1 ½ bananas	4 bananas	5 bananas	8 bananas
Banana (chopped) – and to batter last	1 banana	2 bananas	4 bananas	5 bananas	8 bananas
Banana extract	¾ Tbsp.	1 Tbsp.	2 Tbsp.	3 ¾ Tbsp.	4 Tbsp.

Directions:

Beat egg(s) in mixing bowl. Add the other ingredients (except butter). Add milk as necessary to make a good batter. They taste better and fluffier if batter is not too thin. Then add the melted butter. (Flour will clump if to you add the butter first.)

Bananas or peaches may be added directly to the batter. But blueberries must be added to the pancakes on the griddle (unless you want blue pancakes!).

Let the batter rest at least 10 minutes before using (30 minutes is even better).

Cook pancakes with melted butter on griddle at moderate heat (about 375°--depending on your griddle). Lower temperature is essential for thicker pancakes, so that they cook through. Wait till they brown up. They cook a lot longer than regular pancakes.

Serve with maple or fruit syrup and more melted butter.

Source: Peach version is based on a recipe in the Idaho Power bill – whose power comes from the mighty Hell's Canyon dam in the deepest gorge in North America. Hence the name of these pancakes.

Note: These pancakes are a bit mushy and harder to flip. This is due to the baking powder and the yogurt. But it's worth it for the incredible flavor.

Note: Idaho Power's original recipe calls for flour, baking soda, and baking powder sifted together. I usually just use Bisquick and baking powder, omitting the baking soda, without any sifting. Oddly, the Bisquick box calls for baking soda, not baking powder. Baking soda is used when there is an acid to react with. Baking powder has its own acid mixed in (cream of tartar). Yogurt is acidic, so I guess baking soda should work with that (but the Bisquick box doesn't call for yogurt. Anyway, I've had good success with baking powder only (with or without yogurt).

Note: For Givens Pursley staff breakfast, make the 54-pancake version.

HOME FRIED POTATOES, CORNED BEEF HASH, OR FLATIRON SCRAMBLE.

<i>Ingredients</i>	<i>2 servings as side dish</i>
Fried Potatoes:	
Baking potatoes (peeled & diced small)	2 potatoes (about 15 oz. total after peeling)
Onion (chopped)	1 onion
Green pepper (chopped) – skip for hash	1/8 pepper
Grapeseed oil (or other cooking oil)	Start with 1 tsp., add more as needed
Butter	Start with 1 pat, add more as needed
Salt	A little (much less for corned beef hash)
Pepper	Generously
Smoked paprika	Generous sprinkle – enough to turn potatoes reddish
Hot sauce or chili flakes (optional)	Not much
<i>Alternatively:</i>	
Karen's Oven Fried Potatoes (leftovers)	
Corned Beef Hash:	
Potatoes, etc.	As above
Leftover corned beef (cut into very small cubes) or Hereford brand corned beef (cut into large cubes)	10 oz. (more or less, depending on how meaty you want the hash)
Flatiron Scramble:	
Potatoes, etc.	Make half the quantity stated above!
Eggs (scrambled)	4 eggs
Bacon, sausage, ham, or Taylor Pork Roll (chopped or crumbled)	6 slices of bacon or other meat
Cheddar or other cheese (grated)	Generously

Fried Potatoes

Peel potatoes, then dice into rather tiny cubes (about ¼ inch). Bring large pot of salted water to a rolling boil. Add potatoes and boil for exactly 7 minutes for a 3-person batch. (A bit longer for large batch.) CAUTION: They should be barely parboiled, not soft. Drain in colander and rinse briefly.

Heat grapeseed oil and butter in the large non-stick frying pan on highest heat.

After 8 minutes (longer if a big batch), add the onions and green peppers and continue browning on high heat for another 10-15 minutes as needed. Add a touch more butter or oil only if necessary for browning, but not too much. Otherwise they will not brown properly. When done, potatoes should be in a “dry” pan with little if any oil.

Season with salt (skip salt if adding corned beef), pepper, and lots of paprika.

Consider adding some hot sauce or chili flakes.

The finished potatoes may be kept warm in the skillet on very low heat or in 200° oven while other menu items are prepared.

Corned Beef Hash

Cut the corned beef into cubes. Cut leftover corned beef into small cubes (they will not break down any more). If using canned corned beef, cut into large cubes, which will fall apart during the cooking process.

Skip the green peppers. Give the potatoes and onions at least a 10 minute head start, then, when nearly done, add the corned beef. After a while, gently smash the potatoes and corned beef together so that some of the potatoes “break” and the corned beef gets all mixed around.

Don't overdo and turn it into mush. Turn the hash occasionally and let it brown for about 10 minutes after adding the corned beef.

Flatiron Scramble

Make the fried potatoes as above, but only half the quantity. Add more butter and the crumbled meat to the fried potatoes in frying pan. When everything is very hot, add the eggs and scramble together. While the eggs are still soft (not quite done), add half of the grated cheese. Plate, and sprinkle on the other half of the cheese. Melt the cheese under the broiler for a minute.

Notes:

Home fried potatoes are typically served for breakfast, but they also make a good potato side dish for dinner. You can even add fried mushrooms, if you like.

PERFECTLY EASY HAM, EGG & CHEESE SCRAMBLE

Ingredients	2 Servings
Sliced deli ham (e.g. Boar's Head) (chopped)	6 to 8 thin slices
Red chili flakes	Generously
Butter	Lots!
Eggs (preferably brought to room temperature) (scrambled)	5 eggs
Cheese of choice (sliced or grated)	5 to 8 slices

Equipment:

I use a large copper frying pan. However, because of the cheese, a non-stick frying pan will be easier to clean (be sure to use a non-metal spatula).

Quantities:

The quantity (proportions) of eggs, ham, and cheese in each serving is very much a matter of taste. You decide.

Directions:

The ham

Lay the deli ham slices in a stack on cutting board. Slice into medium strips. Then cut in the other direction to make little squares.

Combine the chopped ham, the red chili flakes, and a few pats of butter in the frying pan. Cook over medium to medium-low heat for a long time until it is just about to start getting crispy. Leave it in the frying pan.

The eggs

Scramble the eggs in a bowl. Add more butter to the frying pan with the cooked ham. Bring to heat if it has cooled off. Add the scrambled eggs. Stir and mix with a spatula, scraping up and mixing in the ham. It will be messy looking.

The cheese

Very soon (when the eggs are not quite done), add the cheese. Reduce heat. Use spatula to flip everting over so cheese is on the bottom. Let sit a half-minute or so until cheese softens and begins to melt. Then scramble everything together. Promptly plate (before the eggs get over-done).

Serve:

Serve at once with buttered toast and jam. Eggs are best with Tabasco or other sauce.

DANIEL'S MOUNTAIN CORNED BEEF HASH

Ingredients	2 Servings
Vidalia onion (smallish chop)	½ large onion
Red chili flakes (optional)	A quick shake
Grapeseed oil (or olive oil)	Not too much
Corned beef or roast beef hash (canned)	1 can

Equipment:

This is one of the rare things that I think does better in a non-stick frying pan (and a non-metal spatula).

Directions:

The onion

Chop the onion.

Brown the onions in the skillet on highest heat with a little bit of oil. You may choose to add a sprinkle of red chili flakes. Cook until the onions are starting to brown up, but not completely done. At this point, the onions should have absorbed the oil. If not, mop up the extra oil (or drain the onions). Too much oil will interfere with the browning of the hash.

The hash

When onion is almost done, add the can of hash. Do not add any more oil (which would impair the browning).

Using spatula, mix the onions and hash in the frying pan to incorporate the onions.

Mound it together, and then press the mound down to make a neat giant round shape, about an inch thick.

Reduce heat to medium-high. Cook undisturbed for several minutes until a nice crust develops.

Carefully flip it over, on spatula serving at a time, so as to preserve the crust.

Reform into a circle and brown the other side.

Altogether this will require cooking 12 minutes or longer.

Optional: You may top with some grated cheddar cheese, and melt under a broiler.

Serve:

Serve at once with eggs and toast. Don Anderson would always make fried apples to serve on the side, which is killer.

History:

My dear friend Don Anderson used to make this on Sunday morning at his Daniel's Mountain retreat in Virginia following the annual Usufruct festivities and Shakespeare performance. (See Notes on Don Anderson on page 227.)

This is a quick and simple dish in contrast to my recipe for homemade hash. But the fried onions and browning really perk up the rather ordinary canned hash.

HUEVOS RANCHEROS

Ingredients	2 people (this is a large serving)
<i>Fry the tortillas:</i>	
Corn tortillas (recommend Casa Valdez 6" or bring home from restaurant)	4 or 6 tortillas (2 or 3 per person)
Vegetable oil	½ inch deep (or less)
<i>Fry the eggs:</i>	
Eggs	4 eggs (2 per person)
Butter	A small pat
<i>Build the tortillas:</i>	
Refried beans (bring home from restaurant) (or use separate recipe for frijoles refritos)	8 oz.
Queso fresco (Mexican cheese) (grated) Or substitute white cheddar	very generous sprinkle
Pork carnitas in red sauce from La Tapatia or your favorite restaurant (if it happens to include a bit of onion or mushroom, that is a wondrous thing)	1 cup or more
<i>Optional: choose your sauce or skip as you like:</i>	
Secret carnitas sauce from La Tapatia (or other serious Mexican restaurant)	up to 8 oz. (4 oz. per person)
Red enchilada sauce (ideally warmed in oven for 1 hour—flavor will improve)	up to 12 oz. (6 oz. per person)
<i>Serve with (optional, as desired):</i>	
Chopped cilantro	
Pico de gallo (chopped tomatoes & onions)	
Fresh salsa from supermarket (I like the hot one)	
Guacamole	
Crystal Hot sauce or Tabasco sauce	

Warm things up:

Preheat oven to 330 degrees (not too hot).

Warm up the pork carnitas and refried beans in oven or microwave.

Fry the tortillas:

Heat a little oil in frying pan to about 325°(not crazy hot).

Fry the tortillas very briefly. Cook enough to “wilt” and barely cook them, flipping once. Take them out just before they stiffen and harden. Depending temperature, this may be a 10-15 seconds per side. Be careful. If you go even a few seconds too long you’ll end up with crispy tostadas. (There is a difference of opinion on this. Some prefer crispy. But I prefer the traditional wilted version, as presented in Dianna Kennedy’s masterful Mexican cookbook.)

Place wilted tortillas on a platter, separating each one with a paper towel. If making a large batch, you may keep them in a warming oven.

Fry the eggs:

Fry the eggs sunny side up in butter. Take them out well before the yolks are hard. They will cook more in the oven. Accordingly, there is no reason to flip them over, even if that is how you usually prefer your eggs.

Plate:

Place two or three tortillas on plate (overlapping like a Venn diagram).

Add a generous dollop of refried beans and smear it around.

Sprinkle on the grated cheese. (Putting the cheese on before the other ingredients is particularly important if using cheddar; you want to hide the cheese and let the other ingredients show. If using Mexican cheese, that could go on later; it will not melt and it looks nice.)

Next, add the fried eggs.

Top the eggs with a generous scoop of carnitas. To enhance the presentation, sprinkle the pork around the egg yolk, not on top of it.

Optional: Pour on sauce (either secret carnitas sauce from La Tapatia or red enchilada sauce).

Pop in oven for about 5 minutes to heat everything up and melt the cheese.

Serve with optional toppings:

Chopped cilantro, pico de gallo, salsa, guacamole, and hot sauce.

Source: I made it up. Real huevos don't have all this stuff.

For reference, see Diana Kennedy's 1972 classic *The Cuisines of Mexico*. Diana Kennedy (age 99 and still around in 2022) is not Mexican. Nor was Julia Child French. Yet both are the 20th century arbiters of and missionaries for these cuisines to the American audience. Diana's recipe is simple and authentic (just eggs and sauce). And she subscribes to this approach for the tortillas: "Heat the oil and fry the tortillas lightly on both sides, as you would do for enchiladas—they must not be crisp."

CHIPPED BEEF ON TOAST

Ingredients	3-4 people (or 2 gluttons)
Shallot (minced) - or substitute onion (This item is optional)	1 large shallot (yielding 2 Tbsp. minced)
Butter	4 Tbsp. (½ stick)
Flour	3 Tbsp.
Whole milk	2 cups (add more if needed)
Cayenne powder (or red chili flakes)	⅓ tsp.
Paprika	¼ tsp.
Dried beef (e.g., Hormel brand) – slice into julienne strips, cut strips in half	5 oz. jar
Do not add salt! It is already too salty.	
Serve on buttered toast (artisan asiago cheese bread is wonderful)	Three slices (or six very small slices)
With a fried egg on the side	1 egg per person

Melt butter in a large frying pan. Sauté the shallots for just a minute or two. Add the flour to the shallots to make roux. Stir the roux on low heat for a couple of minutes to cook out the raw flour taste. Then add milk gradually to make a white sauce. Add a small amount of cayenne and bit of paprika. Stir in the chipped beef. Let it simmer on lowest setting a few minutes. Add additional milk as needed. (It will take a lot to keep it from getting thick. You want a creamy, almost thin, texture.)

Serve on buttered toast, with an egg on the side.

Notes: *Joy of Cooking* also calls for the following items (which I also see in other internet recipes, so she's not crazy). We don't use them, but they are fun to ponder:

<i>Optional (from Joy of Cooking recipe):</i>	
Parsley or chives (chopped)	A sprinkle
Dry sherry	2 Tbsp.
Capers or chopped pickles	2 Tbsp.

Source: Joy of Cooking (1975 ed.).

Origins: This dish has a long tradition in honest American diners (as well as chain restaurants, and even Stouffers frozen food). Karen and I grew up with it served at home. It has now all but disappeared from menus. Sadly, I no longer find it on the menu at Lowell's at Pike Place in Seattle. This dish has a deep military connection (a love-hate affair). A 1945 Navy recipe calls 7 pounds of the beef and 100 slices of toast. Here is a quotation from *Band of Brothers* by Stephen E. Ambros: "At the end of May, the men of Easy packed up their barracks bags and ... [took] a stop-and-go train ride to Sturgis, Kentucky. At the depot Red Cross girls had coffee and doughnuts for them, the last bit of comfort they would know for a month. They marched out to the countryside and pitched up tents, dug straddle trenches for latrines, and ate the Army's favorite meal for troops in the field, creamed chipped beef on toast, universally known as SOS, or Shit on a Shingle."

Beef: There is nothing "chipped" about this beef. According to Wikipedia, it is "pressed, salted, and dried beef that has been sliced into thin pieces. ... The processed meat producer Hormel once described it as "an air-dried product that is similar to bresaola, but not as tasty." Bresaola is an Italian dry aged meat concoction made with horse, venison, pork, or, preferably, top round of beef.

DESSERTS

KAREN'S KEY LIME PIE

Ingredients	One pie
<i>Pie crust::</i>	
Honey Maid graham cracker crumbs	2 cups (a 13.5 oz. box is more than needed)
Sugar	1/3 cup
Butter (melted)	1 2/3 sticks (13 Tbsp.)
<i>Pie filling</i>	
Bag of real Key limes (Do not substitute other limes.) or Key lime juice in bottle: Floribbean brand from Williams Sonoma or Nellie & Joe's of Key West from Amazon.com or Albertsons	3/4 cup of juice (requires about 1 2/3 lb. pound of limes, 30 limes)
Sweetened condensed milk	1 1/2 14 oz. cans. This is a weight measurement. It will produce only 18 oz. (not the expected 21 oz.) in a measuring cup).
Egg yolks	5 yolks
<i>Whipped cream (or substitute whipped cream from a can):</i>	
Heavy cream	1 1/2 cup
Confectioners' sugar	3 Tbsp.
Vanilla extract (Mexican is best)	3/4 tsp.



Day ahead note: Many things in life are better fresh. Curiously, however, this pie ages well. Indeed, it is even better the second day. So make it the day before serving, cover in saran wrap and refrigerate. Then prepare and add the whipped cream up to 2 hours before serving.

Bottled juice note: Although not as good as fresh Key limes, it is pretty darned close and a big time-saver. However, bottled juice has shelf-life issues. It should be refrigerated after purchase. Be sure to taste it. If it tastes "off," throw it away. It should taste very intensely like limes without any off-putting flavor.

Equipment: A good quality, fairly deep ceramic pie pan. Electric mixer for the whipped cream.

Directions:

Graham cracker crust:

(You may substitute a store-bought graham cracker crust, but it won't be as good.)
Combine graham cracker crumbs and sugar. Stir in melted butter.

Using back of spoon and fingers, press mixture into pie shell being careful to keep the thickness even. Bake the shell for 8 minutes at 350 degrees.

Note: How thick the crust should be is a matter of taste. This is enough for a rather thick crust. Use less if you prefer a thinner crust (which emphasizes the taste of the key lime).

Pie filling:

Squeeze enough Key limes to produce the required juice. Or use store-bought Key lime juice. In bowl, whisk together sweetened condensed milk and egg yolks. Then whisk in the Key lime juice. Pour the filling into pie shell and bake at 350 degrees until just set, about 15 minutes. Transfer pie to wire rack to cool, about 1 hour. Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. It actually tastes better the second day!

Whipped cream:

The whipped cream may be prepared up to 3 hours before serving. If possible, chill the mixing bowl with the whipped cream until ready to serve (don't worry if you can't.) Beat cream on medium speed until thickened, about 8 minutes. Add the sugar and vanilla and continue beating until medium-firm peaks form, about 3-5 minutes longer. Using a rubber spatula, spread the whipped cream on top of pie. Serve to eight of your best friends.

(If you must, you may cheat and substitute whipped cream in an aerosol can. Spread it around with a knife or rubber spatula to make it look as if it were homemade.)

KAREN'S LEMON MERINGUE PIE

Ingredients	1 Pie (8 Servings)
<i>Pie crust</i>	
Pillsbury ready pie crust	one pre-made pie crust
<i>Lemon filling</i>	
Sugar	1 ¼ cup
Cornstarch	⅓ cup
Salt	⅛ tsp.
Water	1 ½ cup
Fresh lemon juice	½ cup (3 lemons, or more)
Lemon zest	3 tsp (from the lemons you have)
<i>Meringue</i>	
Egg whites (at room temperature)	5 eggs
Cream of tartar	⅓ tsp.
Sugar (preferably superfine)	¾ cup
Vanilla	⅓ tsp.

Pie crust

One could do this from scratch. But it is perfectly good to use a Pillsbury pie crust.

Lay out the crust into a pie pan. Fold the excess crust under and press together to form thick crust edge. Flute with a fork around the top of the crust. Prick bottom and sides with fork. Bake at 450° 10-12 minutes until light brown. Let it cool before filling.

Lemon filling

Add the cornstarch, sugar, and salt to an empty saucepan, and whisk together. Turn on heat and gradually whisk in the water, lemon juice, and lemon zest. Bring to simmer, stirring constantly. Continue stirring for one minute. The filling should be very thick.

Pour the lemon filling into the pie crust. Press a piece of plastic wrap on the pie.

Ideally, go on immediately to the next step (according to Joy of Cooking). But one can stop here, and do the meringue the next day.

Meringue

Beat the egg whites until peaks begin to form.

Very gradually beat in the cream of tartar, then the sugar. Continue beating until peaks are stiff and glossy, but not dry. Finally, beat in the vanilla.

Make the pie

Remove the plastic wrap from the pie. Spread the meringue on top, anchoring the meringue to the edge of the crust.

Bake for 20 minutes at 325°. This should slightly brown the peaks of the meringue.

Place on rack and let cool completely before refrigerating. Pie can survive in the fridge for a day or two, but best served soon.

Source: *Joy of Cooking*

Notes: On 10/2019, CHM slightly increased the proportion of the meringue to the pie filling (over the *Joy of Cooking* quantity). The meringue is based on *Joy of Cooking's* method #2, which is easier to make but less stable than Method # 1 (*i.e.*, should be eaten the same day).

History: Karen has been making this since time immemorial.

KAREN'S CHOCOLATE PECAN PIE

Ingredients	One pie
<i>Pie shell:</i>	
9-inch pie shell	
Nestle Tollhouse semi-sweet chocolate chips (preferred over Ghirardelli)	1 cup (8 oz.)
Pecan halves (not chopped)	1 ½ cup
<i>Mix together:</i>	
Eggs (beaten)	3 eggs
Light corn syrup	¾ cup
Light brown sugar	½ cup
White sugar	¼ cup
Vanilla	2 tsp.
Cinnamon	½ tsp.
Salt	¼ tsp.

Preheat oven to 350°.

Place pie shell on foil-lined baking sheet.

Scatter chocolate chips on bottom of pie shell.

Scatter pecans over the chocolate.

In a mixing bowl, whisk together remaining ingredients (eggs, corn syrup, brown sugar, white sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, and salt).

Pour mixture over the pecans and chocolate.

Bake until set (50 to 55 minutes).

Cool before serving. Indeed, this pie does very well made the night before.

Source: This recipe is derived from an Emeril Lagasse recipe found on the internet.

Notes: For years, Karen used the recipe in Joy of Cooking. Switched to this on in 2011. Andy has always loved this pie.

KAREN'S PUMPKIN PIE

Ingredients	2 Servings
<i>Mix dry ingredients</i>	
Sugar	¾ cup
Salt	½ tsp.
Ground cinnamon	1 tsp.
Ground ginger	½ tsp.
<i>Wet ingredients</i>	
Eggs	2 eggs
Canned pumpkin	15 oz. can
Evaporated milk	1 can (12 fl. oz., 1 ½ cups)
<i>Pie crust</i>	
Pillsbury ready pie crust	

Equipment:

Small bowl to mix dry ingredients. Large bowl to mix everything. And a 9-inch pie pan (baking dish).

Mix dry ingredients

Combine in small bowl: sugar, salt, cinnamon, and ginger.

Combine all pie ingredients

Beat the eggs in a larger bowl. Stir in the canned pumpkin and the dry ingredients. Then gradually add the evaporated milk.

Make the crust

You could make a homemade crust. Or just press a pre-made crust into the pie pan.

Bake

Pour the pie ingredients into the pie shell. Place into 425° oven for 15 minutes. Drop setting to 350° and bake for another 35-45 minutes. (No need to cool the oven down; let temperature drop gradually.) It is done when a knife inserted into pie comes out clean.

Cool and serve

Cool the pie on a wire rack for 2 hours. Serve at once, or refrigerate. Serve with whipped cream.

Source: Recipe on can of Libby's 100% Pure Pumpkin. The recipe on the can calls for ¼ tsp. of ground cloves. Karen would die before putting that in anything. The Libby recipe also offers a "new fashioned" version with is identical except: a smaller amount of evaporated milk (1 cup—less than a can), the addition of one 14-oz. can (1 ¾ cup) sweetened condensed milk—and the elimination of the sugar. That would be more liquid. Don't know how that would affect the pie.

History: Karen made 1,000 times. Chris finally wrote it down on Christmas 2020.

KAREN'S CHOCOLATE FONDUE

Ingredients	8 Servings
Milk chocolate with toffee and almonds (Chocolove brand in yellow wrapper) – because no one seems to carry Toblerone anymore.	14 oz. (1.75 oz. per person) – this is generous!
Heavy cream	1 cup (0.125 cups per person)
Serve with:	
Pound cake	
Brownies	
Bananas	
Strawberries	

Heat cream in Le Creuset pot over medium heat. Break up chocolate and add to cream. Stir until melted.

Equipment: Many recipes call for a double boiler. This is not necessary.

Source: Karen has made forever.

CHRIS' STRAWBERRY TOPPING FOR ICE CREAM OR SHORTCAKE

Ingredients	6 Servings	
Fresh strawberries (sliced)	1 lb.	
Sugar	$\frac{2}{3}$ cup	
<i>Serve over:</i>		
Shortcakes or sliced angel food cake		
Vanilla ice cream		
Whipped cream		
Chocolate syrup		

Strawberry topping:

Cut off the green tops of the strawberries. (If the strawberry is very big, slice it in half; then cut off green top.) Quarter them (or into 6^{ths} or 8^{ths} depending on size). Divide into two bowls. Leave one just plain. To the other bowl of strawberries, sprinkle generously with sugar and mix. Cover and let strawberries sit at room temperature approx. 4 hours. They will break down into a syrupy joyous sauce.

Chill the plain strawberries.

Serve both. Some people like one, the other, or both.

Serve over shortcakes, sliced angel food cake and/or vanilla ice cream. Make chocolate syrup and whipped cream available as an optional addition.

Source: Who knows? Made since time immemorial .

BANANAS FOSTER

Ingredients	3 Servings
Butter	½ stick
Dark brown sugar	1 cup
Banana liqueur	2 oz.
Lemon	1 lemon
Orange	1 orange
Bananas	2 bananas
Nutmeg	A little
Cinnamon	A little
Dark rum or Grande Marnier	4 oz.
Vanilla ice cream	

Melt the butter in medium or large frying pan, then add brown sugar to form creamy paste. Cook for a minute or two, then add juice of lemon and orange. Continue to cook for another 5 minutes until reduced. Then stir in the banana liqueur, nutmeg, and cinnamon. Then add the sliced bananas and brown them for a minute on each side. Add the rum or Grand Marnier, and flambé. Carefully place banana slices on bowls of ice cream, then top with the heated sauce.

Notes: Traditionally bananas are cut lengthwise and then into half cut into four pieces. For a dramatic presentation, one chef suggests carefully slitting the banana peel, cutting the bananas into coins, and then reinserting them into the banana peel. This allows banana to be “peeled” at tableside revealing magically sliced bananas. Nutmeg is not traditional; Alton Brown calls for nutmeg and allspice instead of cinnamon. I thought the nutmeg sounded good, but not the allspice. Then toss a little cinnamon on during flambé to make a magic, sparkling powder. One chef recommends grinding cinnamon stick to make fresh. One chef suggests scooping up some of the warm liquor into a ladle, lighting it, and pouring it back into pan is a column of flame. All the traditional recipes call for rum. They use Grande Marnier at Cactus Pete’s Plateau Room, and it is quite delicious.

Cactus Pete’s:

They make Bananas Foster with some variations at Cactus Pete’s Plateau Room (which is now closed, darned it). Although non-traditional, they are quite delicious. They use Grand Marnier instead of rum. And they add juice of lemon and orange. I’ve not seen that in any of the other recipes. Of course, they do everything in about 2 minutes tableside at Cactus Pete’s. I’ve extended cooking times somewhat.

Source: Original recipe is from Brennan’s in New Orleans. Some modifications from Alton Brown and others I found on the internets.

AFFOGATO (ICE CREAM & COFFEE)

Ingredients	1 Serving
Ice cream or gelato (vanilla is traditional, hazelnut is also good) (chocolate, if you are married to Karen)	1 largish scoop or 2 small scoops
Espresso (decaf or regular)	1 shot
<i>Very optional:</i>	
Liqueur (e.g., Frangelico, Drambuie, Kahlua, Grand Marnier, Cointreau, etc.)	½ ounce (1 Tablespoon)
Whipped cream (or frothy milk from espresso maker)	a dollop

Just pour the espresso over the ice cream or gelato.

If you wish, you may add a liqueur of your choice and/or some whipped cream.

Etymology: Affogato means “to drown” in Italian. The full term is L’affogato al caffè.

Source: We had this at a restaurant in London in 2014. Brilliant. In 2024, it appeared on the menu at Ti Amo (formerly Flatbread in Bown Crossing).