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MAR/APR 2020

VOLUME 6, ISSUE 2

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*Cheesy Bacon Biscuit Bites*  
**MELTY, GOOEY, PULL-APART PERFECTION**

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March/April 2020

Volume 6, Issue 2

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## EDITORIAL & ADVERTISING OFFICE

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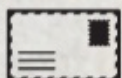
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# SPRING INTO THE SEASON

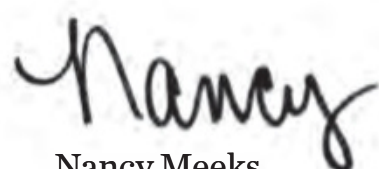
There's no better time of year than the start of spring to step outside and explore all the beauty that's beginning to blossom across the South. But I can't look ahead to the new season without first reflecting on some of the incredible things we accomplished in the past few months—namely our inaugural Southern Cast Iron Cook-Off™! Held in Lake Charles, Louisiana, the two-day event featured cast iron cooking demonstrations, exhibitions from cast iron makers, artisan food vendors, live entertainment, and of course, the cook-off where teams competed within four categories. If you weren't able to experience the fun in person, check out our recap on page 57, and keep up with us on social media for updates on this year's cook-off.

Do you collect cast iron? Whether you're an experienced collector with a lot of pieces or you want to learn more about the heirloom pans you have, check out the Ask the Expert column on page 101 for tips about how to identify genuine cast iron from reproductions. But of course, the best way to get to know your cast iron is to use it, and this issue is packed with delicious recipes for all your pans.

Chicken is at the top of my go-to list for meals, and on page 21, you'll find hearty, satisfying roasted chicken recipes you'll want to incorporate into your family dinners. Speaking of satisfying, who doesn't love the dynamic duo of bacon and cheese? Together, they're unstoppable, like in our cover recipe on page 82, but each are stars in their own right. Check them out on pages 37 and 77.

If you love to bake in cast iron, you'll find plenty of options to explore in this issue. Flip to page 47 for a batch of beautiful cakes, and on page 85, you'll find sweet and savory hand pies featuring buttery, flaky crusts and indulgent fillings.

There's a lot more for you to enjoy in this issue, and I know you'll find something new every time you pick it up. Happy cooking!



Nancy Meeks  
Editor



For daily cast iron recipes, tips, and stories you don't want to miss, be sure to follow us on social media and show us your cast iron pride by using [#southerncastiron](#).





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# MISSISSIPPI

## Every Region of the State Is a Culinary Destination

Mississippi is home to a plethora of local delicacies. Whether you like seafood or soul food, there's something for everyone.

### THE DELTA

#### *Hot Tamales and Local Catfish*

You don't forget your first descent into the Delta. Whether you take the back roads or Highway 61 from Memphis, one minute your car winds through the tree-dotted, hilly landscape, and the next it levels out into flat farmland as far as the eye can see. As diverse as the crops that grow here and the music that made it famous, the Mississippi Delta is a melting pot of cultures. And in no way is the Delta's diversity more apparent than in its restaurants and quintessential dishes.

The Delta's famous hot tamales have origins in the early 20th century, when Mexican laborers came to the Mississippi Delta to assist in harvesting crops. Mississippi locals adapted the traditional tamale from their Mexican compatriots, creating Delta hot tamales that were smaller and boiled in a spiced liquid instead of steamed. Hot tamales have become a staple of Delta cuisine, available in beloved restaurants, roadside trailers, and gas stations. Some of the area's most famous tamales can be found in Greenville at **Doe's Eat Place**, founded in 1941 as a honky-tonk.

There's nothing better than fried Mississippi catfish farm-raised in the Delta. For some of the best fried catfish, visit **Gino's Hamburgers & Catfish** in Greenville for their fried catfish sandwich or **Larry's Fish House** in Itta Bena for the buffet—and don't forget the hushpuppies. If you're in Mississippi on April 4, be sure to stop in downtown Belzoni for the **45th World Catfish Festival** with over 150 art vendors, live entertainment, a catfish-eating contest, and the Miss Catfish Pageant.

### THE PINES

#### *Family Cafés and Mississippi State University Cheese*

This region acquired its name because of the prevalence of the longleaf pine tree. The densely populated wooded bluffs and national forests make for scenic driving. Outdoorsmen love this area because of the easy access to wilderness camping and hunting on some of the most beautiful terrain in the state. The small towns here harbor big flavors. With everything from barbecue joints to beloved bakeries, the tastes of this region

take their influences from early Native American heritage, as well as those who came on the railroad lines that brought lumber, cotton, and other goods into the area.

Family-owned restaurants are a staple of the Pines. From roadside shacks to downtown squares, generations of Mississippi residents have carried on the traditions of those who have gone before them. **The Starkville Café** in the city of Starkville has been in operation on Main Street since 1945 and continues to serve favorites, like country-fried steak and shrimp po' boys. For a more formal affair, take a trip to **Weidmann's** in Meridian. Opened in 1870, Weidmann's is set in a lovely, historic brick building and seats guests at tables covered with white tablecloths. The dinner menu is heavy with seafood items, like Crab Cakes, Grilled Salmon, and Trout Almondine.

**Mississippi State University** in Starkville is known for, among many things, its cheese production from the campus' dairy cows. Since 1938, the Dairy Science Department has been producing varieties of cheese, including Edam, Cheddar, Vallagret, and others.

#### FROM LEFT TO RIGHT

Fried Mississippi catfish; fresh gulf oysters; Award Winning Pepsi-Cola Glazed Baby Back Ribs; Smoked Mac & Cheese, Comeback Cole Slaw, and toast from Pig & Pint; Delta hot tamales.





## THE CAPITAL/RIVER REGION

### *Soul Food and Comeback Sauce*

The Capital/River Region is a blend of old and new. From a mighty river and antebellum mansions to glittering downtowns with exciting nightlife, the restaurants here boast eclectic menus and authentic experiences.

For Southern soul food, head over to **Bully's** restaurant in Jackson and choose from barbecue ribs or a meat-and-three plate. While you're in town, grab BBQ tacos, brisket pork rind nachos, or smoked wings from **Pig & Pint** and pair it with one of over 200 beer selections. If you're near Vicksburg, stop at **Bovina Cafe** for homestyle cooking. The restaurant is tucked behind a closed service station and serves platefuls of turnip greens, black-eyed peas, fried chicken, and biscuits.

Try **Mayflower Café** in downtown Jackson for their comeback house dressing, a mixture of mayonnaise and red chili sauce. Comeback sauce can be found in restaurants throughout the region.

## THE HILLS

### *Grills and Groceries*

The Hills of northern Mississippi are filled with stories of folks gathered around tables with platters of time-honored Southern dishes. Even today, a meal in the Mississippi Hills doesn't just feed the body, it ministers to the soul.

For an authentic taste of Mississippi, a famous slugburger from **Corinth** is absolutely necessary. This burger, dating back to 1917, was a way to stretch meat supplies by adding potato flour to the patty. Today soy grits are typically used as the extender for slugburgers, which are then deep fried in canola oil and served on a bun. Developed by the Weeks family and sold on carts around town, the recipe has been handed down through the

family and a few local butchers. It is now available throughout the region and is even celebrated annually with a festival in July.

**Taylor Grocery**, in the town of Taylor, is known for its laid-back style, fried catfish, wide porch, and live acoustic music. Owner Lynn Hewlett bought the small country grocery store in 1997 and turned it into a catfish destination. Students from Ole Miss in nearby Oxford and visitors from farther away make the trek to Taylor to enjoy an evening of sitting on the porch, catching up with friends, and enjoying plates of catfish.

## THE COAST

### *Classic Seafood and Cajun Influences*

The Coast offers tourists a little of everything: golf, gambling, art, architecture, and, of course, great food. Years ago, immigrants from all over the world came in search of employment in the seafood industry. This delicious blend of cultures has seasoned the cuisine here with a flavor you won't find anywhere else.

For a fine dining experience, visit **Purple Parrot** in Hattiesburg, where you can sample seared sea scallops, local caviar, and fresh-caught Gulf fish. Purple Parrot has been named the Best Fine Dining Restaurant in Mississippi and offers a wide menu that, in addition to its seafood focus, also features Short Rib Osso Bucco, Braised Lamb Shank, and Wagyu steaks.

Find the best seafood in Gulfport at **Blow Fly Inn**, named after a humorous saying from a rival restaurateur who would tell inquiring customers to "follow the string of blow flies" to the restaurant's location. The menu offers Gulf oysters and sautéed crab claws along with Cajun recipes for seafood gumbo and fried oyster po' boys. You're always sure to find an abundance of fresh seafood in southern Mississippi.

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## TASTES & TOOLS



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# TENNEY FLYNN

## HOW ONE SOUTHERN CHEF ANSWERED THE CALL OF THE SEA

BY DANIEL DUBUISSON



If you told a young Tenney Flynn that he would one day become one of the South's foremost authorities on seafood, he probably would have told you to scoot yourself right out of his dad's kitchen so he could get back to work. From an early age, he was brought in to help out with odd jobs like washing dishes and shelling black-eyed peas at his father's restaurant in Stone Mountain, Georgia. Moving to a city like New Orleans and opening a place of his own wasn't even in his realm of possibilities. Now he's the proud co-owner of GW Fins, a can't-miss stop for quality seafood in the heart of the French Quarter.

"I remember early on when I had to stand on a dish rack to reach the counter to be able to sort the silverware that was coming out of the dishwasher," Tenney says. As a child completely immersed in the chaos of a full-service kitchen, he couldn't help but be captivated by the world he witnessed daily. The cooking didn't stop in the restaurant, either.

"Bacon, eggs, and sausage were almost always in rotation at home in Mom's 10-inch Griswold skillet," Tenney says. "To this day, it is always sitting on her stove next to the bacon grease."

His time spent observing all the different facets of Southern cuisine cultivated a deeply rooted passion for cooking as a whole, so his decision to attend a culinary program was just a natural progression for him. After graduating, he further developed his skills at esteemed steak houses in the Atlanta area. He worked with the freshest produce, and he took on new roles like breaking down the seafood regularly featured on the restaurants' menus. It was around this time that fond memories of the fish his mom often made came rushing back. Tenney chuckles to himself when he remembers how even then he knew that there were better tasting fish in the sea.

"When I started actually butchering seafood, I sort of had my epiphany," Tenney says. "I was seeing fish I had never even heard of until then, and I was amazed by how good it all was."

At last, he finally had access to hundreds of species of sea life, and he wanted to master all the ways to prepare them. Tenney's passion grew each time he worked with the fish and shellfish on the menus, and from searing to blackening, he learned that everything was better fresh out of a hot and greased cast-iron pan.

CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLE DU BOIS





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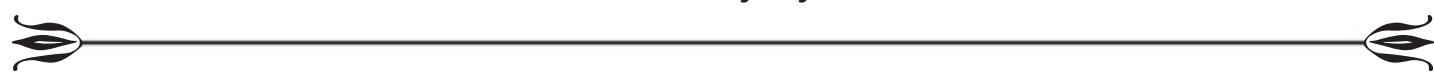






**“ONCE I HAD THE TIME TO COME UP WITH A CONCEPT FOR MYSELF,  
I KNEW THAT IT COULD ONLY BE SEAFOOD FOR ME.”**

—Tenney Flynn



Several years of sharpening his skills went by before he realized he had started to shift his interests solely toward seafood. That’s about the time when he decided to take a leap of faith and open up his own space.

“Once I had the time to come up with a concept for myself, I knew that it could only be seafood for me,” he says. “I just wanted to work with what I loved and found most interesting.”

He eventually brought GW Fins to the Crescent City, but it wasn’t without its challenges.

“This was about 20 years ago, and the city of New Orleans did not really have a dedicated seafood restaurant at the time,” he says. “But a lot of people thought I had no right to want to bring that kind of food to them when I was from way up north in Atlanta.”

Tenney and his team built up a level of trust with the community. They dedicated themselves to shedding any doubt about the food they served and ensuring that if it was on the menu, it’s something to be proud of. Since the beginning, they’ve sourced

almost all their fish fresh from the Gulf of Mexico, and they have a pretty unique policy when it comes to what they’ll take from local purveyors.

“We buy new inventory every day, but we buy it whole and butcher it in-house,” he says. “We tell people, ‘We’ll buy nearly anything and find something to do with it.’”

Competition among other buyers over popular Gulf species like red drum and amberjack isn’t something Tenney concerns himself with. Their menu changes daily, so substituting a less commonly known yet equally delicious variety like sheepshead or lionfish is an aspect of the business he enjoys quite a bit. To him and his well-seasoned team, the opportunity to serve a transformative dish no matter the species takes precedence.

“There are so many great things to eat in the world, and it’s important for people to appreciate that these days,” he says. “If we can give someone—local or not—a meal that’s actually going to open their eyes, it’s incredibly satisfying.”





## PARMESAN-CRUSTED FLOUNDER WITH CRAB AND ASPARAGUS

Makes 2 servings

*“Dredging fish fillets in finely grated cheese instead of flour is an easy way to add extra flavor and crunch without a bunch of extra ingredients. For this recipe, a seasoned cast-iron skillet is essential for forming a crispy, golden crust that does not stick. This is not a hard dish, but you do need to have everything ready as it comes together really fast.”*

- 3    tablespoons vegetable oil, divided**
- 1    tablespoon capers, drained**
- 6    large spears asparagus, with bottom third of each spear peeled**
- 2    (5- to 6-ounce) flounder or other thin fish fillets (alternatives are sheepshead, snapper, or trout)**
- Vegetable oil spray**
- ½    cup finely grated Parmesan cheese**
- 2    tablespoons salted butter**
- 1    lemon, juiced**

- 1    teaspoon minced fresh parsley**
- 4    ounces jumbo lump crabmeat, picked through**

- 1.** Line a small plate with a paper towel.
- 2.** Heat 1 tablespoon oil in a small skillet on medium-high heat. Add capers and fry for just a few seconds, until the buds open and they become crispy. Quickly remove with a slotted spoon and drain on paper towel.
- 3.** Meanwhile, bring a large pot of salted water to a boil over high heat. Have a large container of ice water ready. Add the asparagus to the boiling water, and let boil for 3 minutes until crisp-tender but not limp. Remove the asparagus with tongs (keep water hot for reheating) and transfer to the ice bath to stop cooking. Drain on paper towels.
- 4.** Place a cast-iron skillet large enough to accommodate both fillets on medium heat. Coat the fillets liberally with the vegetable oil spray. Spread the grated cheese on a plate, and dredge the skinless (or rounded) side of the fillets in it, coating well.
- 5.** Add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil to the hot

pan, then place the fish, cheese side down, in the hot oil. Do not disturb for about 4 minutes. Put 1 tablespoon cheese directly into the skillet as a test at the same time you add the fish. When you can slide a spatula under the fried cheese medallion, you can carefully loosen the fillets and turn them. A golden brown, fried cheese crust that completely coats the fish is what you’re looking for here. (Lower the heat if it’s browning too quickly.) Cook about 2 minutes on the uncoated side.

**6.** While the fillets cook, return the asparagus to the pot of hot water for another minute or so to reheat. Move the fillets to a warm plate. Wipe the pan out with a paper towel; immediately return it to the heat and add the butter. When the butter is medium brown (take care not to burn), add the lemon juice, parsley, and crabmeat. Turn off the heat.

**7.** Using tongs, divide the hot, drained asparagus between 2 heated plates. Place the fish on top of the asparagus spears, spoon the brown butter and crabmeat mixture over the fish, and sprinkle with the fried capers. 🍴



# BREAKFAST FOR DINNER

HASH IT OUT WITH THIS SIMPLE ONE-SKILLET MEAL

## CORNEB BEEF HASH

Makes 6 servings

*Get a colorful, crowd-pleasing meal on the table in no time with this easy St. Patrick's Day-inspired recipe.*

- 3 russet potatoes, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 4 tablespoons canola oil, divided
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 2 teaspoons paprika, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
- 2 green bell peppers, cut into ½-inch pieces
- ½ red onion, cut into ½-inch pieces
- ½ cup chopped green onion
- 1 pound corned beef, shredded into large pieces
- 3 cloves garlic, minced

Fried eggs, to serve

Garnish: sliced green onion, paprika

1. Preheat oven to 375°.
2. Rinse potatoes under cold water until water runs clear; dry potatoes well.
3. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, toss together potatoes, 3 tablespoons oil, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon paprika, and ½ teaspoon pepper.
4. Bake until tender, about 30 minutes, stirring halfway through baking. Remove potatoes from skillet.
5. In same skillet, heat remaining 1 tablespoon oil over medium-high heat. Add bell pepper, red onion, and green onion. Cook until vegetables are lightly browned, 3 to 4 minutes. Stir in corned beef, garlic, remaining 1 teaspoon salt, remaining 1 teaspoon paprika, and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper. Cook until vegetables are tender and corned beef is lightly browned, 5 to 7 minutes. Add potato mixture, and cook until heated through, 2 to 3 minutes. Serve immediately with fried eggs. Garnish with green onion and paprika, if desired. 🔪



PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE / FOOD STYLING BY ERIN MERHAR









# OVEN BIRDS

WARM UP WITH THESE ROASTED AND BRAISED MEALS  
FEATURING JUICY, FLAVOR-PACKED CHICKEN



PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM DICKEY / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY KATHLEEN KANEN, TRICIA MANZANERO, AND IRENE YEH  
FOOD STYLING BY KELLIE GERBER KELLEY









STOUT-BRAISED  
CHICKEN AND  
MUSHROOMS  
page 27











## CHEESY SPINACH STUFFED CHICKEN WITH ROASTED BROCCOLI

Makes 4 servings

*This one-pan meal kicks classic Italian flavors up a notch with a cheesy stuffed chicken your family will request again and again.*

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
  - 1 cup chopped fresh baby spinach (about 2 ounces)
  - 4 ounces cream cheese, softened
  - ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
  - ¼ cup chopped fresh basil
  - 1 clove garlic, grated
  - 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts (about 2 pounds)
  - 2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
  - 1 teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
  - 4 cups fresh broccoli florets
  - 2 teaspoons dried Italian seasoning
  - 1 cup tomato-basil pasta sauce
  - 1 cup shredded mozzarella cheese
- Garnish:** fresh basil

1. Preheat oven to 400°. Brush a 14-inch cast-iron baking pan with 1 tablespoon oil.
2. In a medium bowl, stir together spinach, cream cheese, Parmesan, basil, and garlic until well combined. Using a small sharp knife, cut a horizontal slit into the thick side of each chicken breast, cutting to within ¼ inch of opposite side, to form a deep pocket. Sprinkle 1½ teaspoons salt and ¾ teaspoon pepper all over chicken. Stuff pockets with spinach mixture (about ¼ cup each). Place on prepared pan.
3. Bake for 10 minutes.
4. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, toss together broccoli, Italian seasoning, remaining 2 tablespoons oil, remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper. Spread broccoli mixture in a single layer around chicken.
5. Continue baking for 5 minutes. Spoon tomato sauce onto chicken; sprinkle with mozzarella. Continue baking until broccoli is tender and an instant-read thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 165°, 5 to 8 minutes. Garnish with basil, if desired. Serve immediately.

## HONEY-GARLIC ROASTED CHICKEN

Makes 4 to 6 servings

(photo on page 22)

*Don't be scared of the seemingly huge amount of garlic in this dish; as it cooks, the garlic perfumes the chicken and turns into a sweet paste.*



- 1 (4-pound) whole chicken, giblets discarded
  - 3 tablespoons vegetable oil, divided
  - 4 teaspoons kosher salt
  - 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
  - 40 cloves garlic (about 4 heads), peeled and divided
  - 4 sprigs fresh thyme, divided
  - 4 sprigs fresh rosemary, divided
  - 4 sprigs fresh sage, divided
  - 1 medium orange, quartered
  - 2 heads garlic, halved
  - ½ cup honey
  - 2 tablespoons fresh orange juice
  - 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- Garnish:** fresh sage, fresh rosemary

1. Pat outside and cavity of chicken dry. Brush outside of chicken with 1 tablespoon oil; sprinkle salt and pepper all over outside and cavity of chicken and under skin. Let stand at room temperature for 1 hour.
2. Preheat oven to 375°.
3. Pat chicken dry again. Stuff cavity with 6 cloves garlic, 2 sprigs thyme, 2 sprigs rosemary, and 2 sprigs sage; tie legs with butcher's twine.

4. In a 12-inch enamel-coated cast-iron braiser, toss together orange, halved garlic heads, remaining 34 garlic cloves, remaining 2 sprigs thyme, remaining 2 sprigs rosemary, remaining 2 sprigs sage, and remaining 2 tablespoons oil until combined. Place chicken on top of garlic mixture.
5. Bake until chicken is golden brown and an instant-read thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 160°, about 1 hour, rotating pan and stirring garlic mixture once halfway through baking.
6. In a small bowl, stir together honey, orange juice, and Worcestershire; brush three-fourths of mixture onto chicken.
7. Continue baking until an instant-read thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 165° to 170°, 5 to 8 minutes more. (Watch chicken so honey mixture does not burn.) Brush chicken with remaining honey mixture, and baste with pan drippings. Let stand for 20 minutes before serving. Garnish with sage and rosemary, if desired.

### ◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

*Squeeze out the caramelized cloves from the heads of garlic and spread onto crusty bread to serve alongside the chicken.*



## STOUT-BRAISED CHICKEN AND MUSHROOMS

Makes 4 servings  
(photo on page 23)

Full-bodied stout beer forms the base of the savory cooking liquid for this chicken. Serve it over mashed potatoes to soak up every last flavorful drop.

- 4 bone-in skin-on chicken thighs (about 2½ pounds)
- 2¼ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 4 cups fresh whole baby portobello mushrooms, halved or quartered
- 1 cup chopped yellow onion
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup stout beer\*
- ¼ cup tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon firmly packed light brown sugar
- 3 sprigs fresh thyme
- 1 teaspoon apple cider vinegar
- Mashed potatoes, to serve
- Garnish: fresh thyme leaves

1. Preheat oven to 425°.
2. Trim any excess fat from chicken. Let stand at room temperature for 20 minutes. Sprinkle 2 teaspoons salt and pepper all over chicken.
3. In a 12-inch enamel-coated cast-iron braiser, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken, skin side down; cook until browned, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Remove from pan. Add mushrooms and onion to pan. Cook until softened and mushrooms begin to release liquid; about 3 minutes. Add garlic; cook for 1 minute. Remove from heat. Return chicken, skin side up, to pan.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together stout, tomato paste, and brown sugar; pour mixture onto chicken. Add thyme sprigs to pan and cover.
5. Bake until an instant-read thermometer inserted in the thickest portion of chicken registers 165°, about 25 minutes. Stir in vinegar and remaining ¼ teaspoon salt. Discard thyme sprigs. Serve with mashed potatoes. Garnish with thyme, if desired.

\*We used Good People Brewing Company Coffee Oatmeal Stout.

## ROASTED CHICKEN QUARTERS WITH BRAISED WHITE BEANS

Makes 4 to 6 servings  
(photo on page 24)

Creamy white beans, crisp-tender veggies, fragrant herbs, and juicy chicken—what’s not to love about this? The beans braise in the pan juices while the chicken roasts, infusing them with deep flavor.

- 4 chicken quarters (about 3¾ pounds total)
- 3 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1½ teaspoons ground black pepper, divided
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 2 cups chopped white onion
- ⅓ cup finely chopped celery
- 4 cloves garlic, sliced
- 2 (15.8-ounce) cans great Northern beans, rinsed and drained
- ½ cup chopped carrot
- ½ cup chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 tablespoon red wine vinegar
- Garnish: fresh rosemary

1. Preheat oven to 425°.
2. Trim any excess fat from chicken. Let stand at room temperature for 20 minutes. Sprinkle 2½ teaspoons salt and 1 teaspoon pepper all over chicken.
3. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Cook chicken in batches until browned, 2 to 3 minutes per side. Remove from skillet. Add onion and celery; cook until lightly browned, about 3 minutes. Add garlic; cook for 1 minute. Return chicken, skin side up, to skillet.
4. Bake for 25 minutes. Remove chicken from skillet. Stir beans, carrot, broth, rosemary, remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper into skillet. Place chicken on beans.
5. Continue baking until a meat thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 165°, about 20 minutes more. Stir in vinegar. Garnish with rosemary, if desired.

## MAYO-ROASTED SPATCHCOCK CHICKEN

Makes 4 to 6 servings

Spatchcocking is a technique that removes the backbone of a bird to ensure that it cooks evenly. Save the backbone and leftover carcass to make homemade chicken stock.

- 3 tablespoons olive oil, divided
- ¾ pound baby Yukon gold potatoes, halved (about 8)
- ¾ pound baby carrots, halved lengthwise
- ½ medium red onion, cut lengthwise into quarters
- 3 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 2 teaspoons ground black pepper, divided
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1 teaspoon packed lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 (3- to 4-pound) whole chicken, giblets discarded
- 1 lemon, cut into 4 wedges
- Garnish: crumbled feta cheese, pitted Kalamata olives, fresh oregano

1. Preheat oven to 425°. Brush a 14-inch cast-iron baking pan with 1 tablespoon oil.
2. In a large bowl, toss together potatoes, carrots, onion, 1½ teaspoons salt, 1 teaspoon pepper, and remaining 2 tablespoons oil. In a small bowl, stir together mayonnaise, garlic, oregano, and lemon zest and juice.
3. On a cutting board, place chicken, breast side down, with tail end closest to you. Using kitchen shears, cut along both sides of backbone to remove. Turn chicken, breast side up. Flatten chicken by pressing firmly on breastbone until it cracks. Sprinkle remaining 1½ teaspoons salt and remaining 1 teaspoon pepper all over chicken. Spread mayonnaise mixture all over chicken. Place chicken, breast side up, on prepared pan. Tuck wings under to secure. Turn legs inward.
4. Bake for 20 minutes. Arrange potato mixture and lemon wedges around chicken. Continue baking until chicken is golden brown, a thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 165°, and vegetables are tender, about 30 minutes more, loosely covering chicken with foil to prevent overbrowning, if necessary. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. Garnish with feta, olives, and oregano, if desired. 🍴







# SPRING *Vegetables*

VIBRANT RECIPES FOR A FRESH NEW SEASON

RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY MELISSA GRAY / FOOD STYLING BY KELLIE GERBER KELLEY



CARAMELIZED  
FENNEL AND  
SAUSAGES  
page 35











ROASTED  
SPRING VEGGIES  
WITH CREAMY  
HERB DRESSING  
page 36







CHEESY ASPARAGUS  
WITH SMOKED  
ALMONDS  
page 36





## CARAMELIZED FENNEL AND SAUSAGES

Makes 4 to 6 servings

(photo on page 30)

Your favorite link sausage will work great in this recipe.

- 5 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 (20-ounce) package spicy Italian sausage links
- 5 medium fennel bulbs, quartered, fronds chopped and reserved
- 6 cloves garlic, smashed
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup bourbon
- 2 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 teaspoons fresh lemon zest
- $\frac{3}{4}$  teaspoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground black pepper

1. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high heat. Add sausage; cook, turning occasionally, until browned, about 5 minutes. Remove and let drain on paper towels.
2. To pan, add fennel and garlic; cook, turning once, until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Return sausage to skillet. Add bourbon, brown sugar, lemon zest, salt, and pepper. Reduce heat to medium-low; cover and cook until a food thermometer inserted in sausages registers 150°, about 15 minutes more. Stir before serving. Top with reserved fennel fronds.

### ◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

When cutting the fennel bulb, leave the core intact to keep pieces together for easier cooking and caramelization.

## SOUTHERN SPRING QUICHE

Makes 1 (10-inch) pie

(photo on page 31)

Collards don't have to be stewed to be delicious. Their peppery taste pairs deliciously with goat cheese and leeks for a satisfying skillet breakfast.

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
  - 2 cups packed shredded collard greens
  - 1 cup thinly sliced leeks
  - 1 (14.1-ounce) package refrigerated piecrusts
  - 6 large eggs
  - 1 cup whole milk
  - 1 cup heavy whipping cream
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon kosher salt
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground black pepper
  - 1 cup frozen peas, thawed
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  cup shredded Parmesan cheese
  - 1 (8-ounce) log goat cheese, crumbled and divided
  - 2 cups fresh arugula, divided
- Pickled Radishes (recipe follows)

1. In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium heat. Add collards and leeks; cook, stirring frequently, until tender and moisture has evaporated, 10 to 15 minutes. Transfer vegetables to a bowl. Wipe skillet clean; let cool.
2. Preheat oven to 400°. Spray cooled skillet with baking spray with flour.

3. On a lightly floured surface, unroll 1 piecrust, and lightly brush with water. Unroll remaining piecrust; place directly on top, gently pressing to seal. Roll into a 13-inch circle. Transfer to prepared skillet, pressing into bottom and up sides. Crimp edges as desired. Top with a piece of parchment paper, letting ends extend over edges of skillet. Add pie weights.

4. Bake for 15 minutes. Carefully remove paper and weights.

5. In a large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, cream, salt, and pepper; stir in collards mixture, peas, Parmesan, half of goat cheese, and 1 cup arugula. Pour mixture into crust; top with remaining goat cheese. Loosely cover edges of crust with foil.

6. Bake until center is set and beginning to brown, 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack for 30 minutes. Top with remaining 1 cup arugula and Pickled Radishes just before serving.

## PICKLED RADISHES

Makes 1 pint

- 1 cup matchstick-cut radishes
- 2 sprigs fresh dill
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup distilled white vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$  tablespoon juniper berries
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon mustard seeds
- 1 clove garlic

1. In a pint-size Mason jar, layer half of radishes, dill, and remaining radishes, tightly packing jar.

2. In a medium saucepan, bring vinegar,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup water, salt, juniper berries, mustard seeds, and garlic to a boil over medium-high heat; cook for 5 minutes. Remove from heat; let cool for 10 minutes.





**3.** Pour liquid onto radishes until covered. Seal jar, and let stand at room temperature for at least 24 hours before serving. Refrigerate for up to 3 months.

## ROASTED SPRING VEGGIES WITH CREAMY HERB DRESSING

Makes 6 to 8 servings  
(photo on page 32)

*A simple mix of roasted vegetables is hard to beat, and a drizzle of creamy lemon dressing amps up the flavor.*

- ½** pound asparagus, cut diagonally into 2-inch pieces
- ½** pound Brussels sprouts, trimmed and halved lengthwise
- ½** pound multicolored carrots, peeled and cut diagonally into ½-inch pieces
- ½** red onion, halved lengthwise and cut into wedges
- 3** tablespoons olive oil
- 1** teaspoon kosher salt
- ½** teaspoon ground black pepper
- Creamy Herb Dressing (recipe follows)**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 375°.
- 2.** In a large bowl, toss together asparagus, Brussels sprouts, carrots, onion, olive oil, salt, and pepper, tossing to coat. Spread vegetables in a single layer on a 14-inch cast-iron baking pan.
- 3.** Bake until vegetables are tender and browned, 30 to 35 minutes. Serve with Creamy Herb Dressing.

## CREAMY HERB DRESSING

Makes about ¾ cup

- ½** cup mayonnaise
- 1** clove garlic, minced
- 1** teaspoon lemon zest
- 2** tablespoons lemon juice
- 2** tablespoons minced fresh rosemary
- 1** tablespoon water
- 1** tablespoon whole-grain mustard
- 1½** teaspoons light brown sugar
- 1** teaspoon hot sauce
- ½** teaspoon kosher salt

- 1.** In a medium bowl, whisk together all ingredients until well combined. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 weeks.

## SPRING PEA AND BACON FLATBREAD

Makes 1 (14-inch) flatbread  
(photo on page 33)

*A quick blend of mint, peas, and garlic produces a bright and flavorful sauce for this tasty flatbread.*

- 1** (16-ounce) bag deli pizza dough
- 2** tablespoons olive oil
- 2** cups fresh peas
- 4** sprigs fresh mint
- 2** cloves garlic, smashed
- 2½** teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- ½** cup sour cream
- ½** teaspoon ground black pepper
- 6** slices bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 2** cups fresh baby spinach
- 1** cup shredded Gruyère cheese
- Garnish:** fresh mint, crushed red pepper

- 1.** Preheat oven to 450°. Spray a 14-inch cast-iron baking pan with cooking spray.
- 2.** On a floured surface, roll dough into a 14-inch circle; transfer to prepared pan. Prick all over with a fork, and brush with oil.
- 3.** Bake until light golden brown, 8 to 10 minutes.
- 4.** Meanwhile, in a small enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven, bring peas, mint, garlic, 2 teaspoons salt, and enough water to cover by 1 inch to a boil over medium heat. Cook until peas are tender, 3 to 4 minutes. Drain, discarding mint sprigs.
- 5.** In the work bowl of a food processor or container of a blender, pulse together pea mixture, sour cream, pepper, and remaining ½ teaspoon salt until smooth.
- 6.** Spread pea mixture onto prepared crust, leaving a ½-inch border. Top with bacon, spinach, and cheese.
- 7.** Bake until golden brown, about 10 minutes. Garnish with mint and red pepper, if desired.

## CHEESY ASPARAGUS WITH SMOKED ALMONDS

Makes 6 to 8 servings  
(photo on page 34)

*A mix of Parmesan, smoked Gouda, and smoked almonds takes the unique flavor of this treasured spring vegetable to a new level.*

- 2** pounds fresh asparagus, trimmed
- 2** tablespoons olive oil
- 1** tablespoon sherry vinegar
- 2** shallots, thinly sliced
- 2** cloves garlic, minced
- 1** teaspoon Dijon mustard

- ½** teaspoon kosher salt
- ½** teaspoon ground black pepper
- ½** cup shredded Parmesan cheese, divided
- ½** cup shredded smoked Gouda cheese, divided
- ⅓** cup chopped smoked almonds

- 1.** Preheat oven to 375°.
- 2.** In a large bowl, toss together asparagus, oil, vinegar, shallots, garlic, mustard, salt, and pepper until well coated. Spread half of asparagus mixture onto a large cast-iron griddle. Sprinkle with ¼ cup Parmesan and ¼ cup Gouda. Spread remaining half of asparagus mixture onto cheeses; sprinkle with remaining ¼ cup Parmesan and remaining ¼ cup Gouda.
- 3.** Bake until asparagus is tender and cheeses are bubbly and beginning to brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Top with almonds. Serve immediately. ●





# BACON

*everything*



FROM AN UPSIDE-DOWN CORNBREAD AND CHEESY SLIDERS TO A SWEET AND SALTY QUICK BREAD, THESE RECIPES ARE SURE TO SATISFY ANY BACON-FUELED CRAVING

RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY MELISSA GRAY  
FOOD STYLING BY KATHLEEN KANEN / STYLING BY CAROLINE BLUM









BACON-FRIED  
CHICKEN TENDERS  
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BACON UPSIDE-DOWN  
CORNBREAD  
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BACON-PEANUT  
BANANA BREAD  
page 45



### Thick-Cut

Our choice for cooking until crisp and serving alongside eggs and other foods, thick-cut bacon slices are typically between  $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch and  $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness and produce a good amount of drippings when cooked.



### Regular

The standard for sliced bacon, it cooks up thin and crispy for that melt-in-your-mouth texture. Regular bacon slices are great for crumbling to use as a topping or adding to baked goods.



### Center-Cut

This slab of bacon has the fat trimmed off both sides. These slices are, as the name indicates, from the center of the slab. Center-cut bacon is generally meatier than regular or thick-cut and produces less drippings when cooked.



### Slab

A bacon slab is the whole piece of cured pork belly before it's sliced. It provides flexibility when cutting, whether cubed, thin strips, or extra-thick slices. Cubing slab bacon is ideal for browning and using as a seasoning meat.



### Canadian

Cured in a similar fashion to American bacon, Canadian bacon is made from pork loin, not pork belly. It's leaner but still packs a lot of flavor and is an ideal choice for using in a breakfast sandwich or in a grilled cheese.





## BACON-FRIED CHICKEN TENDERS

Makes 4 servings  
(photo on page 39)

*Adding bacon drippings to the frying oil gives this chicken a subtle but irresistibly smoky flavor.*

- 1½ cups whole buttermilk
- 1 tablespoon hot sauce
- 3 teaspoons kosher salt, plus more for sprinkling, divided
- 8 chicken tenderloins
- 8 slices bacon, chopped
- 3 cups vegetable oil
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper, plus more for sprinkling
- ¾ teaspoon onion powder
- Honey mustard and hot sauce, to serve

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together buttermilk, hot sauce, and 1½ teaspoons salt. Add chicken; cover and refrigerate for at least 6 hours or overnight.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, cook bacon over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until crisp, about 10 minutes. Remove using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Reserve bacon drippings in skillet. Reserve ¼ cup bacon; finely chop remaining bacon.
3. Add oil to drippings in skillet, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 350°.
4. In a shallow dish, whisk together finely chopped bacon, flour, pepper, onion powder, and remaining 1½ teaspoons salt. Remove chicken from marinade, discarding marinade. Working in batches, dredge chicken in flour mixture, pressing gently to adhere and shaking off excess. Place chicken on a wire rack.
5. Fry chicken in batches, turning halfway through, until a food thermometer inserted in thickest portion registers 165°, about 8 minutes. Let drain on paper towels. Sprinkle with reserved ¼ cup bacon, salt, and pepper. Serve with honey mustard and hot sauce.

## BACON CHEESEBURGER PULL-APART SLIDERS

Makes 12  
(photo on page 41)

*We promise these burger-meets-Sloppy Joe sandwiches will be the first thing to go at any party.*

- 1 (12-ounce) package Hawaiian sweet rolls, halved lengthwise
- 2 cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese, divided

- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 pound ground sirloin
- ½ cup minced yellow onion
- 1 tablespoon Montreal steak seasoning
- 3½ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce, divided
- 1 tablespoon tomato paste
- ¼ cup chopped green onion
- ½ pound bacon, cooked and crumbled
- 2 tablespoons melted bacon drippings
- 1 tablespoon firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard
- 1 teaspoon sesame seeds

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Place bottoms of rolls, cut side up, in a 9-inch square cast-iron skillet. Sprinkle with 1 cup cheese.
2. In a large cast-iron skillet, heat oil over medium-high. Add beef, onion, and steak seasoning; cook, stirring occasionally, until beef is browned and crumbly and onion is tender, about 8 minutes. Stir in 1½ teaspoons Worcestershire sauce and tomato paste; cook for 1 minute. Stir in green onion. Spoon beef mixture in an even layer on rolls; top with bacon, remaining 1 cup cheese, and rolls, cut side down.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together melted bacon drippings, brown sugar, mustard, and remaining 2 teaspoons Worcestershire until smooth. Brush onto rolls; sprinkle with sesame seeds.
4. Bake until golden brown and heated through, about 20 minutes. Serve immediately.

## CREAMY GARLIC BACON PORK CHOPS

Makes 4 servings

*This hearty skillet main is quick enough for a weeknight but fancy enough for company.*

- 4 (8-ounce) bone-in pork chops
- 2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper, divided
- 6 slices thick-cut bacon, chopped
- 1 small yellow onion, thinly sliced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1½ teaspoons chopped fresh rosemary
- ½ cup dry white wine
- 1½ cups heavy whipping cream
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard
- ½ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- Garnish: chopped fresh rosemary

1. Sprinkle pork chops with 1½ teaspoons salt and ½ teaspoon pepper. Let stand at room temperature for 15 minutes.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, cook bacon over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until crisp, 10 to 12 minutes. Remove using a



- slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Reserve 2 tablespoons drippings in skillet. Add pork chops; cook until browned, turning once, about 3 minutes per side. Remove from pan.
3. Add onion; cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and rosemary; cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add white wine; cook until reduced by half, about 1 minute. Stir in cream, mustard, remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and remaining ½ teaspoon pepper; bring to a simmer. Reduce heat to medium; cook, stirring occasionally, until slightly thickened, about 3 minutes. Whisk in cheese until smooth.
  4. Add pork chops; continue cooking until a food thermometer inserted registers 150° and sauce is thickened, about 10 minutes more. Stir in bacon before serving. Garnish with rosemary, if desired.





# BACON UPSIDE-DOWN CORNBREAD

Makes 1 (10-inch) loaf

*Loaded with cheese, herbs, and bacon, this hearty cornbread is practically a meal in itself!*

- 5 slices thick-cut bacon**
- 6 slices thick-cut bacon, chopped**
- Melted bacon drippings or vegetable oil, as needed**
- 2 cups white cornmeal**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 tablespoon baking powder**
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme**
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- 2½ cups whole buttermilk**
- 2 large eggs**
- 1½ cups shredded Gruyère cheese**
- Garnish: chopped fresh thyme**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 425°.
- 2.** In a 10-inch cast-iron skillet, cook bacon slices over medium-high heat until almost crisp, about 10 minutes. Remove bacon, and let drain on paper towels. Add chopped bacon to pan; cook, stirring occasionally, until crisp, about 12 minutes. Remove chopped bacon using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Pour off drippings into small a bowl, adding additional melted bacon drippings or oil as needed to equal 8 tablespoons. Wipe skillet clean.
- 3.** Add 2 tablespoons reserved bacon drippings to skillet, and place in oven to preheat, about 8 minutes.

- 4.** In a large bowl, whisk together cornmeal, flour, baking powder, thyme, salt, and pepper. In a small bowl, whisk together buttermilk, eggs, and remaining 6 tablespoons reserved bacon drippings. Make a well in center of dry ingredients. Add buttermilk mixture, stirring until just combined. Stir in cheese and reserved chopped bacon until just combined. Carefully place reserved 5 slices bacon in bottom of preheated skillet. Pour batter onto slices.
- 5.** Bake until golden brown and a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 30 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Invert onto a serving plate. Garnish with thyme, if desired.

## ◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

*Wiping the skillet clean removes any caramelized bits from the pan so the crust on the cornbread doesn't bake too dark. If you prefer a darker crust, you can skip that step.*

# BACON-PEANUT BANANA BREAD

Makes 1 (8x4-inch) loaf

*This easy bread makes an indulgent breakfast, dessert, or snack.*

- Streusel:**
- 2 slices bacon, finely chopped**
  - ¼ cup all-purpose flour**
  - 3 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar**
  - ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon**

- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter, melted**
- 2 tablespoons chopped salted peanuts**

## Bread:

- 6 slices bacon, chopped**
- 1⅔ cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt**
- 1½ cups mashed very ripe banana (about 3 medium bananas)**
- 1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar**
- ½ cup unsalted butter, melted**
- ¼ cup whole buttermilk**
- 2 large eggs**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- ¾ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ¼ cup chopped salted peanuts**

## Glaze:

- ½ cup confectioners' sugar**
- ¼ cup creamy peanut butter**
- 3 to 5 tablespoons whole buttermilk**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Spray an 8x4-inch cast-iron loaf pan with baking spray with flour.
- 2.** For streusel: In a large cast-iron skillet, cook bacon over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until crispy, about 8 minutes. Remove using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Reserve ½ tablespoon bacon drippings.
- 3.** In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, brown sugar, and cinnamon. Stir in melted butter and reserved ½ tablespoon bacon drippings. Stir in bacon and peanuts until crumbly. Refrigerate until ready to use.
- 4.** For bread: In a large cast-iron skillet, cook bacon over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until crispy, about 15 minutes. Remove using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Reserve drippings for another use.
- 5.** In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. In a large bowl, whisk together mashed banana, brown sugar, melted butter, buttermilk, eggs, vanilla, and cinnamon. Fold flour mixture into banana mixture just until combined. Fold in bacon and peanuts. Spoon batter into prepared pan; top with streusel.
- 6.** Bake for 30 minutes. Cover with foil, and bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 1 hour more. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire rack.
- 7.** For glaze: In a medium bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, peanut butter, and buttermilk until smooth. Drizzle onto cooled loaf.







# BEAUTIFUL BAKES

CAST-IRON FLUTED CAKE PANS ARE PIECES OF BAKEWARE WITH GREAT HERITAGE, PRIZED FOR THEIR UNIQUE SHAPES AND DURABILITY. WE LOVE USING THEM FOR THE DELICIOUS SUGARY CRUSTS THEY PRODUCE ON THE FINAL CAKE, AND WE'VE CREATED A COLLECTION OF RECIPES THAT YOU'LL LOVE AS MUCH AS WE DO.



STRAWBERRY  
ALMOND CAKE  
page 56







LEMON POPPY SEED  
CORNMEAL CAKE  
page 53

















## LEMON POPPY SEED CORNMEAL CAKE

Makes 1 (6-cup) cake

(photo on page 49)

*Poppy seeds and cornmeal give a slight crunch to this refreshingly tangy cake.*

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 1½ cups sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon lemon zest
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 cup finely ground plain yellow cornmeal
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- ⅓ cup whole buttermilk

### Boiled Lemon Sugar Glaze (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 325°.
2. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in lemon zest and juice, and vanilla.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cornmeal, poppy seeds, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition.
4. Spray a 6-cup cast-iron fluted cake pan with cooking spray with flour. Spread batter into prepared pan. Gently tap pan on counter lined with a kitchen towel a few times to release air bubbles.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, about 45 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 10 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack, and let cool completely. Spoon Boiled Lemon Sugar Glaze on top and sides of cake.

## BOILED LEMON SUGAR GLAZE

Makes about 1 cup

- 1 cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons lemon zest
- ½ cup lemon juice
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a small saucepan, whisk together confectioners' sugar, lemon zest and juice, and salt over medium heat. Bring to a boil, stirring frequently, until sugar dissolves and thickens slightly, about 2 minutes. Spoon hot glaze onto top and sides of cake.

## CLASSIC POUND CAKE

Makes 1 (13-cup) cake

(photo on page 51)

*This rich and buttery pound cake is perfect for any occasion.*

- 1½ cups unsalted butter, softened
- 2¼ cups sugar
- 3 large eggs, room temperature
- 1½ teaspoons vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1¼ teaspoons kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon baking soda
- ¾ cup whole milk

1. Preheat oven to 325°.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extracts.
3. In another large bowl, whisk together flour, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition.
4. Spray a 13-cup cast-iron fluted cake pan with baking spray with flour. Spread batter into prepared pan. Gently tap pan on counter lined with a kitchen towel a few times to release air bubbles.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 15 minutes. Let cool on a wire rack in pan for 15 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack, and let cool completely.

## CHOCOLATE CARROT CAKE

Makes 1 (13-cup) cake

*This spin on classic carrot cake tastes even better the day after it's baked.*

- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1 cup firmly packed dark brown sugar
- 1 cup vegetable oil
- 4 large eggs
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon ground cinnamon
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground ginger
- ½ teaspoon baking soda
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 3 cups shredded carrots
- ¾ cup chopped semisweet chocolate, plus more for garnish

### Cream Cheese Glaze (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together sugars, oil, eggs, and vanilla until well combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cinnamon, baking powder, salt, ginger, baking soda, and nutmeg. Gradually add flour mixture to sugar mixture, whisking until just combined. Fold in carrots and chocolate.
4. Spray a 13-cup cast-iron fluted cake pan with baking spray with flour. Pour batter into prepared pan. Gently tap pan on counter lined with a kitchen towel a few times to release air bubbles.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, 45 to 50 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack, and let cool completely. Top with Cream Cheese Glaze. Garnish with chopped chocolate, if desired. Refrigerate until ready to serve.

## CREAM CHEESE GLAZE

Makes about 1 cup

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened
- 2 tablespoons confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons whole milk
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In a medium bowl, beat cream cheese with mixer on medium speed until smooth. Add confectioners' sugar, milk, and salt, beating until well combined and smooth.











## STRAWBERRY ALMOND CAKE

Makes 1 (16-cup) cake

*Coating the pan in almonds creates a lovely pattern and crust on this cake.*

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened
- 2 $\frac{2}{3}$  cups granulated sugar
- 4 large eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon almond extract
- 3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup almond flour\*
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 $\frac{2}{3}$  cups whole buttermilk
- 2 cups diced fresh strawberries
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup sliced almonds

**Garnish:** confectioners' sugar

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and granulated sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extract.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Fold strawberries into batter.
4. Spray a 16-cup cast-iron fluted cake pan with baking spray with flour. Sprinkle bottom and sides of pan with sliced almonds. Spread batter into prepared pan. Gently tap pan on counter lined with a kitchen towel a few times to release air bubbles.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 10 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack, and let cool completely. Sift with confectioners' sugar, if desired.

*\*We used King Arthur Blanched & Super Finely Ground Almond Flour.*

## CHURRO AND CHOCOLATE POUND CAKE

Makes 1 (13-cup) cake

(photo on page 50)

*This decadently spiced and generously drizzled cake was inspired by one of our favorite south-of-the-border sweet snacks.*

- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$  cups unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups plus 2 tablespoons firmly packed light brown sugar, divided

- 5 large eggs, room temperature
  - 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
  - 3 cups all-purpose flour
  - 2 teaspoons ground cinnamon, divided
  - 1 teaspoon kosher salt
  - 1 teaspoon baking powder
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  teaspoon ground nutmeg
  - 1 cup sour cream
  - $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole milk
  - $\frac{1}{4}$  cup granulated sugar
  - 2 tablespoons melted unsalted butter
- Chocolate sauce, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and 2 cups brown sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in vanilla.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, 1 teaspoon cinnamon, salt, baking powder, and nutmeg. In a medium bowl, whisk together sour cream and milk. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with sour cream mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition.
4. Spray a 13-cup cast-iron fluted cake pan with baking spray with flour. Spread batter into prepared pan. Gently tap pan on counter lined with a kitchen towel a few times to release air bubbles.
5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, about 1 hour and 10 minutes. Let cool in pan on a wire rack for 15 minutes. Invert cake onto wire rack, and let cool completely.
6. In a small bowl, stir together granulated sugar, remaining 2 tablespoons brown sugar, and remaining 1 teaspoon cinnamon. Working in sections, brush cake with melted butter and coat with sugar mixture, pressing gently to adhere. Serve with chocolate sauce. ●

### ◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

*If you don't have a fluted cast-iron cake pan, these recipes work great in a standard Bundt pan.*









# THE INAUGURAL

## Southern **CAST IRON** COOK-OFF™

A FUN-FILLED WEEKEND  
IN LAKE CHARLES,  
LOUISIANA, PROVES CAST  
IRON COOKING IS ALIVE  
AND WELL

BY NANCY MEEKS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY NICOLE DU BOIS



What do you get when you combine cooking demonstrations, a culinary competition, local food trucks, artisan makers, and live entertainment? The inaugural Southern Cast Iron Cook-Off™, held over two days in Louisiana last fall.

Nearly 2,000 attendees from 17 states ventured to the city of Lake Charles, Louisiana, the first weekend of November for a fun-filled, family-friendly weekend devoted to all things cast iron. From the moment the doors opened on Friday, November 1, people were able to immerse themselves in the world of cast iron. The exhibit area, anchored on one end by a well-stocked General Store, was the perfect spot to pick up a weekend souvenir. From must-have cast-iron cookware from makers including Lodge, Milo, American Skillet Company, and Carolina Cooker, as well as useful cast iron

cleaning and seasoning products from Crisbee, Caron & Doucet, and Lovett Sundries, this was your one-stop shop. Other featured products included an array of cooking accessories like gorgeous leather handle holders from Black Jacket Tackle Company, oyster knives from Toadfish Outfitters, and American-made Cutco cutlery. Plus, herbaceous seasoning blends from Spiceology and open-fire cooking expert Derek Wolf only sweetened the deal.

A farmers' market area featuring homemade food products, cast iron cooking and collecting clubs, and cast iron restoration services were also on-site, adjacent to the General Store. Guests leisurely strolled their way through the exhibitions, sampling tasty bits from Camellia Beans, Bocage Crawfish, Savoie's Sausages, and Slap Ya Mama while boozy offerings from Bulleit Frontier Whiskey were the perfect sip. Local small-batch foods offered guests delicious items





like tamales, cakes and pies, local honey, and zingy pickles, while food trucks served up a variety of Cajun classics including boudin, jambalaya, beignets, and other regional specialties.

Opposite the General Store was the Demonstration Stage where professional chefs, cast iron makers, and *Southern Cast Iron* editors wowed crowds as they shared the best cooking and cleaning techniques to get the most out of their traditional and enameled cast iron collection. Cooking demos, led by *Southern Cast Iron* Food Editor Sarah Ward and emcee Kevin Masse, included masterful tips on perfecting breakfast staples like bacon, eggs, and buttermilk biscuits, as well as classic Southern cornbread. The team was also joined on stage by the Walker brothers of Slap Ya Mama, who shared their must-try method for the ultimate skillet steak, and Stu Shank from Stargazer Cast Iron, who shared the best ways to season, clean, and care for cast-iron skillets.

But demonstrations didn't stop there. Chefs also took the stage for demos that included spicy New Orleans-Style Barbecue Shrimp with Ryan Trahan from Lafayette, picture-perfect Cast Iron Seared Scallops with Beurre Blanc by Chef Andrew Green of 1910 in Lake Charles, and out-of-this-world Low and Slow Alligator and Andouille Sauce Piquante by Lyle Broussard with L'Auberge Casino Resort.











GENO DELAFOSE AND  
FRENCH ROCKIN' BOOGIE

CAST IRON  
RESTORATION

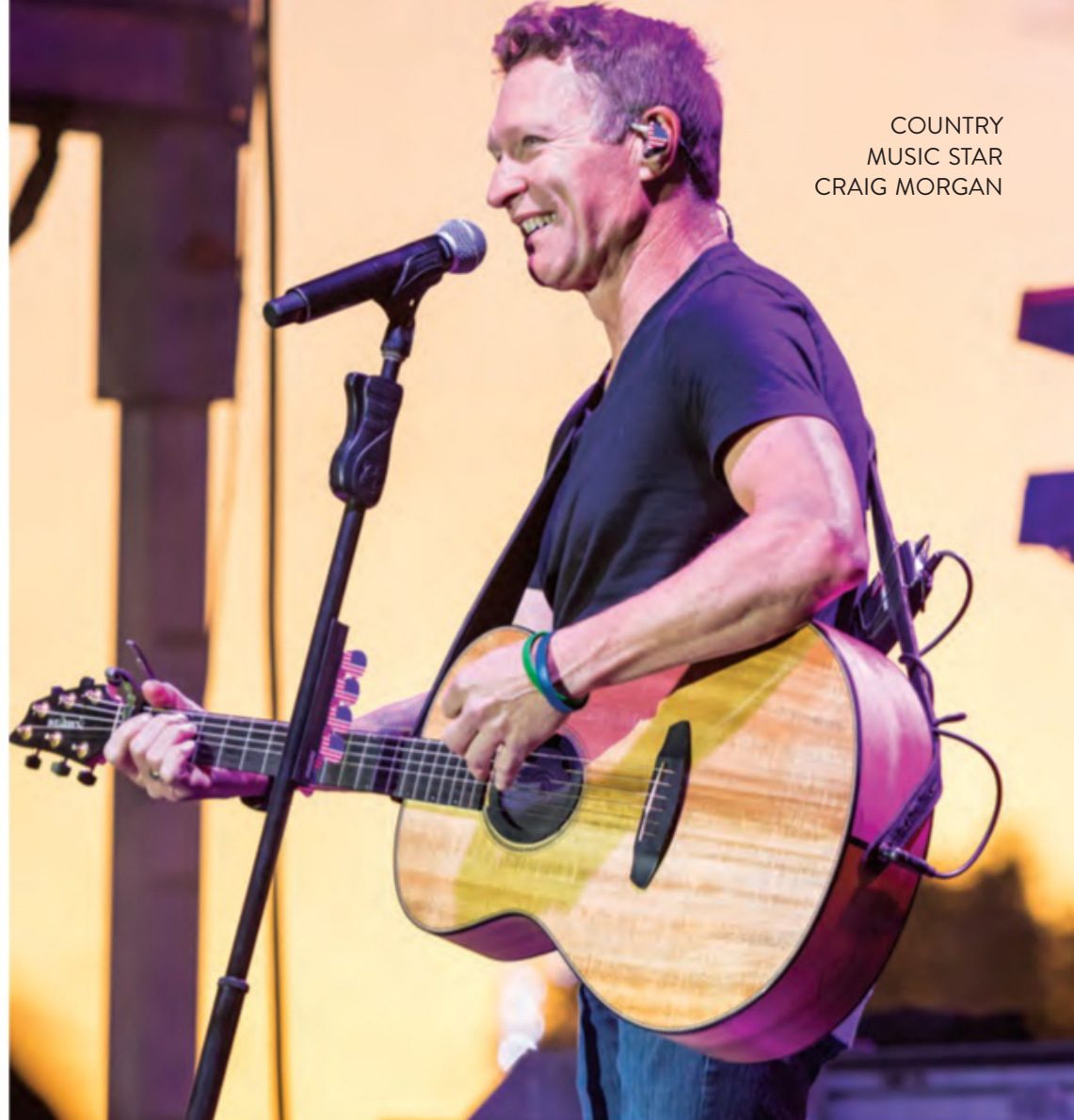


CRAWFISH  
CORNBREAD





FARMERS'  
MARKET WARES



COUNTRY  
MUSIC STAR  
CRAIG MORGAN



ATTENDEES VISIT VENDOR BOOTHS



CAMP STOVE  
COOKING





CHEF LYLE BROUSSARD COOKS HIS  
LOW AND SLOW ALLIGATOR AND  
ANDOUILLE SAUCE PIQUANTE



KEVIN MASSE, STU SHANK OF STARGAZER CAST IRON,  
AND SOUTHERN CAST IRON FOOD EDITOR SARAH WARD



COOK-OFF JUDGING

MEAT & GAME





# 2019 SOUTHERN CAST IRON COOK-OFF™ WINNERS

Teams of judges comprised of well-versed culinary writers, *Southern Cast Iron* editors, local chefs, popular cast iron bloggers and influencers, and event sponsors chose their top-three dishes in four categories: Meat & Game, Seafood, Vegetables & Sides, and Baking. Each team was required to cook all dishes on-site using only cast-iron cookware, but the sky was the limit for their flavors, ingredients, and cooking methods.

## FIRST-PRIZE-WINNING RECIPES

<b>Meat &amp; Game</b>	Pork Loin with Sweet Potato Purée and Brussels Sprouts
<b>Seafood</b>	Shrimp and Crawfish Dressing
<b>Vegetables &amp; Sides</b>	Crawfish Cornbread
<b>Baking</b>	Sweet Potato Pie with Caramel and Cream Cheese Drizzle
<b>Professional Division</b>	Hot Pepper Glazed Doughnuts with Smoked Cheddar

Winning teams were rewarded with more than just bragging rights. Prize packs included goods ranging from Blacklock cast-iron cookware from Lodge and Slap Ya Mama seasoning blends to Crisbee cast iron seasoning products, Camellia beans, and magazine subscriptions—all tucked neatly into a Yeti cooler.

On the morning of Saturday, November 2, the exhibit hall was buzzing with excitement as the second day of the Southern Cast Iron Cook-Off™ commenced. Vendors were back with an array of goods while cooking demonstrations entertained the crowds. But just outside was the main event—10 teams from four states competing in amateur and professional divisions of the cook-off for their share of more than \$10,000 in cash and prizes.

By the cook-off area, local musicians playing everything from zydeco and Cajun music to cover tunes kept crowds entertained with singing and dancing all day long, and after the cook-off winners were announced, country music star Craig Morgan performed a set filled with his biggest hits. As the sun set, it was the perfect way to end a great weekend of fun, food, and cast iron.

Thank you to our host sponsors Visit Lake Charles, Louisiana Travel, and Louisiana Seafood Promotion & Marketing Board.



THE 2020 SOUTHERN CAST IRON FESTIVAL IS COMING SOON! FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA FOR THE LATEST UPDATES ON THIS YEAR'S EVENT.





# BETTER SEAFOOD THAT'S BEST SHARED

LOT AD

Come to Louisiana to enjoy our incredible seafood, or pick some up today and cook up a party wherever you are. Dig into plenty of recipes at [LouisianaSeafood.com](http://LouisianaSeafood.com).

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**LOUISIANA  
SEAFOOD**

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# CRAWFISH MAQUE CHOUX

A fun seafood spin on  
a traditional Louisiana side dish

COOK/PREP TIME: **30 Minutes**

SERVINGS: **4**

## INGREDIENTS

- 1 lb. Louisiana crawfish tails
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 bell pepper, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 cup okra, thinly sliced
- 2 cups tomato purée
- 1 cup fresh corn
- 1 Yukon Gold potato, diced & roasted
- 4 cups seafood stock or water
- ¼ lb. (1 stick) of butter
- ½ cup flour
- 2 bay leaves
- 1 tsp. dried thyme
- 1 tsp. dried oregano
- 1 tsp. cayenne pepper
- Salt, pepper, and hot sauce to taste



Crawfish Maque Choux

## DIRECTIONS

- 1 ) Melt butter in large saucepot over medium-high heat. Add flour and whisk for two minutes to incorporate to make a blonde roux.
- 2 ) Add onion, bell pepper, celery, garlic and okra to roux and cook until onions are translucent.
- 3 ) Reduce heat to medium. Add tomato purée, corn, bay leaves and stock or water, and simmer for 20 minutes.
- 4 ) Add thyme, oregano, cayenne, potato and crawfish, and cook for 5 more minutes.
- 5 ) Season with salt, pepper and hot sauce.

## WANT MORE LOUISIANA SEAFOOD DISHES?

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[LouisianaSeafood.com/Recipes](https://LouisianaSeafood.com/Recipes).





# celebrate

**RING IN THE CHANGE OF SEASONS WITH A  
DELICIOUS YET CASUAL SUPPER PARTY MENU**

PHOTOGRAPHY BY WILLIAM DICKEY / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY TAYLOR FRANKLIN WANN  
FOOD STYLING BY KELLIE GERBER KELLEY / STYLING BY MARY BETH JONES





SPRING









## EASY, NO-COOK APPETIZER

These mini skillets hold the perfect make-ahead appetizer that can be personalized for each guest. Simply roll 1 (8-ounce) log goat cheese in 2 tablespoons finely chopped mixed dried fruit; roll another (8-ounce) log goat cheese in 2 tablespoons finely chopped fresh herbs and ground black pepper. Cut each log into 6 to 8 slices; serve with crackers in mini skillets.





ROASTED LAMB  
SHOULDER  
page 74





GARLIC-TARRAGON  
MASHED POTATOES  
page 76







# WHAT IS AVAXHOME?



# AVAXHOME-

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## SWEET AND TANGY VINAIGRETTE

Makes about 1 cup

*This easy vinaigrette is so versatile you'll want to make it monthly so you always have a fresh jar on hand.*

- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup fig preserves
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup spicy brown mustard
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{3}$  cup olive oil
- Salad greens, to serve**

**1.** In a small bowl, whisk together preserves, mustard, salt, and pepper. Slowly whisk in oil. Serve with greens. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 4 weeks.

### ◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

*Vary this simple vinaigrette by using assorted mustards, jams, oils, and vinegars as you like.*

## ROASTED ONION FLOWERS

Makes 6 to 8 servings

*Onion blossom takes on a new meaning in this gorgeous side dish. The onions can be cut, wrapped in plastic, and refrigerated a day ahead to make cooking day-of that much easier.*

- 6 medium red onions, peeled**
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chopped fresh mint**
- 1 tablespoon garlic powder**
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt**
- 1 cup butter, softened**
- Garnish: fresh mint leaves**

**1.** Preheat oven to 375°.  
**2.** Trim root end of onions; cut a  $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch slice from stem end of onions. Place 1 onion, root end down, on cutting board. Using a paring knife, make a cut across onion, stopping within  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch from base of onion. (Do not cut all the way through onion.) Rotate onion and repeat twice, making 6 equal wedges around onion. Gently spread sections apart; place in a 12-inch cast-iron skillet. Repeat process with remaining onions.

**3.** In a small bowl, stir together mint, garlic powder, salt, and butter. Using your hands, spread butter mixture between onion sections and all over tops of onions.

**4.** Bake until onions are soft and browned around edges, about 50 minutes. Cover with foil, and bake 5 minutes more. Garnish with mint, if desired.

## ROASTED LAMB SHOULDER

Makes 6 to 8 servings

(photo on page 71)

*With a generous coating of garlic and fresh herbs that make a flavorful pan sauce, serve this delicious roast straight from the skillet for more casual suppers.*

- 6 cloves garlic, minced**
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary**
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon**
- 2 tablespoons fresh lemon juice**
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard**
- 3 teaspoons kosher salt**
- 2 teaspoons hot sauce**

- 1 teaspoon ground cumin**
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 (3- to 4-pound) lamb shoulder, trussed**
- 2 lemons, halved**
- Garnish: fresh rosemary, fresh tarragon**

**1.** Preheat oven to 325°.  
**2.** In a medium bowl, whisk together garlic, rosemary, tarragon, lemon juice, mustard, salt, hot sauce, cumin, and pepper. Slowly whisk in olive oil until a paste is formed.  
**3.** In a large enamel-coated cast-iron braiser or Dutch oven, heat olive oil over medium-high heat. Add lamb; cook until browned on all sides, about 4 minutes per side. Remove lamb from pan; brush garlic mixture all over lamb. Return lamb to pan. Add lemon halves, cut side down, to pan; cover with lid.  
**4.** Bake until a thermometer inserted in thickest portion of lamb registers 135°, 45 to 55 minutes. Let stand for 20 minutes before serving; serve with lemons. Garnish with herbs, if desired.







## GARLIC-TARRAGON MASHED POTATOES

Makes 6 to 8 servings

(photo on page 72)

*Thanks to cast iron's excellent heat retention, you can bake the potatoes up to an hour ahead of time and still serve them warm.*

- 4 large russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 2-inch cubes**
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons kosher salt, divided**
- ¼ cup unsalted butter**
- ½ cup sour cream**
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1 cup grated Parmesan cheese, divided**
- 2 tablespoons chopped tarragon**
- 4 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper**
- Garnish: fresh tarragon, ground black pepper, butter**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 375°.
- 2.** In a large Dutch oven, bring potatoes, water to cover by 2 inches, and 2 tablespoons salt to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook until potatoes are fork-tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Drain potatoes; transfer to a large bowl.
- 3.** Mash potatoes with a potato masher until desired consistency is reached; stir in butter, sour cream, cream, ½ cup Parmesan, tarragon, garlic, pepper, and remaining 2 teaspoons salt. Spoon potato mixture into a 10-inch cast-iron skillet. Top with remaining ½ cup Parmesan.
- 4.** Bake until top is lightly browned, 40 to 45 minutes. Garnish with tarragon, pepper, and butter, if desired.

## FROSTED ORANGE BLONDIES

Makes 10 to 12 servings

*A make-ahead dessert is a must for any dinner party. We love the citrus punch these blondies pack, from the batter and the frosting to a dollop of melted preserves served on top.*

- 1 cup unsalted butter, softened**
- 2½ cups sugar**
- 3 large eggs**
- 2 teaspoons orange extract**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 1 teaspoon orange zest**
- 3 cups all-purpose flour**
- ½ teaspoon baking powder**
- ⅛ teaspoon kosher salt**
- Orange Cream Cheese Frosting (recipe follows)**



**Warm orange marmalade, to serve**  
**Garnish: orange zest**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with baking spray with flour.
- 2.** In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in extracts and zest.
- 3.** In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Spread batter into prepared pan.
- 4.** Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out with moist crumbs, about 35 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Spread Orange Cream Cheese Frosting on blondie. Serve with marmalade. Garnish with orange zest, if desired.

## ORANGE CREAM CHEESE FROSTING

Makes about 2 cups

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened**
  - ½ cup unsalted butter, softened**
  - 1 tablespoon packed orange zest**
  - 1 teaspoon orange extract**
  - 2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 1.** In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and butter with a mixer at medium speed until smooth. Beat in zest and extract. With mixer on low speed, gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until smooth. Use immediately. 🍴

### ◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

*Blondies can be frosted, covered, and refrigerated for up to 3 days. Let come to room temperature before serving.*





# Cheese PLEASE

WE DREAMED UP OUR GOOIEST,  
TASTIEST CHEESE-FILLED RECIPES  
YET, SURE TO SATISFY ANY CRAVING

GARLIC AND HERB  
CHEESE DIP  
page 83

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAC JAMIESON  
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY TAYLOR FRANKLIN WANN  
FOOD STYLING BY ERIN MERHAR



*cover  
recipe*



CHEESY BACON  
BISCUIT BITES  
page 82

















## RICOTTA-PARMESAN SPINACH STUFFED SHELLS

Makes 6 servings

*This easy and filling skillet supper is perfect for your meatless Mondays—or any other day of the week.*

- 1 (10-ounce) package frozen spinach, thawed, drained well, and squeezed dry**
- 3 cups whole-milk ricotta cheese**
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese**
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten**
- 1 teaspoon lemon zest**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt**
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- 1 (24-ounce) jar marinara sauce, divided**
- 21 jumbo pasta shells, cooked according to package directions**

**Garnish:** grated fresh Parmesan

**1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray.

**2.** In a large bowl, stir together spinach, ricotta, Parmesan, egg, lemon zest, garlic, salt, and pepper.

**3.** Spread 1 cup marinara in bottom of prepared pan. Divide spinach mixture evenly among pasta shells, and place in prepared pan. Pour remaining marinara sauce onto shells. Spray a piece of foil with cooking spray; cover pan, spray side down.

**4.** Bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake until hot and bubbly, about 10 minutes more. Let stand for 5 minutes before serving. Garnish with Parmesan, if desired.

## CHEESY BACON BISCUIT BITES

Makes 32

*A golden-brown biscuit exterior conceals gooey cheese and smoky bacon—it's heaven in a bite.*

- 2 (16.3-ounce) cans refrigerated homestyle biscuits\***
- 1 (8-ounce) package shredded Colby-Jack cheese**

**1 (12-ounce) package thick-cut bacon, chopped and cooked**

**1 large egg, lightly beaten**  
**Everything bagel seasoning**

**1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Spray a 12-inch cast-iron skillet with baking spray with flour.

**2.** On a clean work surface, cut each biscuit in half crosswise. Gently press each biscuit piece to ¼-inch thickness. Add about 1 tablespoon cheese and 1 teaspoon bacon to center of each dough piece; wrap dough around filling, pinching seams to seal. Starting at sides of pan, place biscuits, seam side down, in concentric circles. (Biscuits will fit snugly, with sides touching, in pan.) Brush egg onto biscuits; sprinkle with everything bagel seasoning.

**3.** Bake until golden brown, 28 to 30 minutes. Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Serve warm.

*\*We used Pillsbury Grands! Southern Homestyle Buttermilk Biscuits.*





## ROASTED BROCCOLI CHEDDAR SOUP

Makes about 6 cups

*Roasting the broccoli gives this soup a deeply savory flavor with a great contrast of creamy and crunchy textures.*

- 1½ pounds fresh broccoli, heads cut into florets and stems grated**
- 4 tablespoons olive oil, divided**
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt, divided**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- 1 cup chopped yellow onion**
- 2 cloves garlic, minced**
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 2 cups chicken stock**
- 1 cup dry sherry**
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1 cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese, plus more for serving**
- 2 ounces cream cheese**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 400°.
- 2.** In a large bowl, stir together broccoli florets and grated stems, 2 tablespoons oil, ½ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper. Spread in an even layer on a large cast-iron baking pan.
- 3.** Bake until lightly browned and tender, about 15 minutes.
- 4.** Reserve ⅓ cup broccoli mixture in a small bowl. In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse remaining broccoli mixture until florets are well chopped but not puréed, 6 to 10 times.

- 5.** In a large enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven, heat remaining 2 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat. Add onion; cook until tender, 7 to 10 minutes. Add garlic and flour; cook, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes. Add stock, sherry, remaining ½ teaspoon salt, and remaining ¼ teaspoon pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, for 10 minutes.

- 6.** Reduce heat to medium-low. Whisk in heavy cream, Cheddar, and cream cheese until combined, about 2 minutes. Stir in chopped broccoli mixture. Top servings with reserved roasted broccoli mixture and Cheddar, if desired.

## FRIED GOAT CHEESE BALLS

Makes 24

(photo on page 80)

*Tangy goat cheese helps cut through the richness of these crunchy little nuggets.*

- 2 (8-ounce) logs goat cheese, softened**
- 3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives**
- 2 teaspoons hot sauce**
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- Vegetable oil, for frying**
- 4 large eggs**
- 3 cups finely crushed salt-and-pepper kettle chips**
- Buffalo sauce and honey, to serve**

- 1.** Line a small baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 2.** In a large bowl, stir together goat cheese, chives, hot sauce, and garlic powder until well

combined. Scoop mixture into 1-tablespoon portions; firmly roll each portion into a ball, and place on prepared pan. Freeze for 15 minutes.

- 3.** In a large cast-iron Dutch oven, pour oil to a depth of 4 inches, and heat over medium-high heat until a deep-fry thermometer registers 350°.

- 4.** In a shallow dish, beat eggs. Place crushed chips in another shallow dish. Working in batches, dip cheese balls in egg, letting excess drip off. Dredge in crushed chips, gently pressing to adhere. Repeat procedure to double-coat each ball.

- 5.** Working in batches, fry balls until lightly browned, about 1 minute. Remove using a slotted spoon, and let drain on paper towels. Serve warm with Buffalo sauce and honey.

## GARLIC AND HERB CHEESE DIP

Makes 10 to 12 servings

*This warm, bubbly dip is the ultimate party snack.*

- 1 (8-ounce) package cream cheese, softened**
- ½ cup sour cream**
- 4 cloves garlic, minced**
- 1 (14-ounce) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained well and coarsely chopped**
- 1 (8-ounce) package shredded mozzarella cheese**
- 1 cup shredded Parmesan cheese**
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano**
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh thyme**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground black pepper**
- Toasted baguette slices, to serve**
- Garnish: chopped fresh thyme, chopped fresh oregano**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°. Spray an 8-inch cast-iron skillet with cooking spray.
- 2.** In a large bowl, beat cream cheese with a mixer at medium speed until creamy. Stir in sour cream and garlic. Fold in artichokes, half of mozzarella, Parmesan, oregano, thyme, salt, and pepper. Spoon into prepared pan. Sprinkle with remaining mozzarella.
- 3.** Bake until hot and bubbly, about 30 minutes. Serve with toasted bread. Garnish with thyme and oregano, if desired. 🔪













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# HIGH FIVE FOR HAND PIES

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DISCOVER THE DELICIOUS WORLD OF HAND PIES AND  
LEARN A FEW TYPES OF HOMEMADE PIE DOUGH THAT MAKE  
THESE HANDHELD TREATS STURDY YET DELIGHTFULLY FLAKY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAC JAMIESON / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD STYLING BY SARAH WARD / STYLING BY CAROLINE BLUM





SAUSAGE, EGG, AND  
CHEESE PIES  
page 92





MAY DAY HAND PIES  
page 93





STRAWBERRY-  
ALMOND  
HAND PIES  
page 93











## LEMON CREAM CHEESE HAND PIES

Makes 18

*The combination of cream cheese and butter creates a tender yet sturdy pie dough with beautiful flaky layers.*

**1 large egg**

**1 teaspoon water**

**Cream Cheese Pie Dough (recipe follows)**

**9 tablespoons lemon curd, divided**

**Garnish: confectioners' sugar**

**1.** Line a large rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. In a small bowl, beat egg and 1 teaspoon water.

**2.** On a lightly floured surface, roll Cream Cheese Pie Dough into a 16-inch square. Make 6 (2½-inch-wide) cuts lengthwise, and 6 (2½-inch-wide) cuts crosswise, creating 36 (2½-inch) squares.

**3.** Using a ¼-inch round cutter, cut a circle in center of half of squares. Brush remaining half of squares with egg wash. Place 1½ teaspoons lemon curd in center of brushed squares. Top with cutout dough squares and dough circles, if desired; press edges to seal. Transfer pies to prepared pan; cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.

**4.** Preheat oven to 400°. Brush top of pies with egg wash. Transfer pies to cast-iron baking pans or large griddles.

**5.** Bake until crust is golden brown, about 20 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired.

## CREAM CHEESE PIE DOUGH

Makes 18 (2½-inch) hand pies or 2 (9-inch) piecrusts

**3 cups all-purpose flour**

**½ teaspoon kosher salt**

**¼ teaspoon baking powder**

**6 ounces cold cream cheese, cubed**

**¾ cup cold unsalted butter, cubed**

**6 tablespoons cold water**

**2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar**

**1.** In the work bowl of a food processor, pulse together flour, salt, and baking powder to combine. Add cream cheese, and pulse until mixture resembles coarse meal. Add butter, and pulse 4 times.

**2.** In a small bowl, combine 6 tablespoons cold water and vinegar. Pour water mixture into flour mixture in a slow, steady stream, pulsing until butter is pea-size and dough holds together when pinched, about 6 times.

**3.** Turn out dough onto a work surface, and knead a few times just until dough comes together. Shape into a square, and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 3 days. If refrigerating for more than 1 hour, let dough stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before rolling.

## SAUSAGE, EGG, AND CHEESE PIES

Makes 8

(photo on page 87)

*These breakfast pastries look impressive but are actually quite simple to execute with store-bought puff pastry dough.*

**¼ pound ground breakfast sausage**

**2 green onions, chopped**

**1 (17.3-ounce) package puff pastry, thawed according to package directions**

**1 large egg, lightly beaten**

**½ cup shredded Gruyère cheese, divided**

**8 medium eggs**

**Kosher salt, to taste**

**Garnish: ground black pepper**

**1.** Preheat oven to 400°.

**2.** In a large cast-iron skillet, cook sausage over medium-high heat until browned and crumbly. Stir in green onions; cook for 2 minutes. Remove from heat.

**3.** On a lightly floured surface, unfold both puff pastry sheets. Cut each sheet in half horizontally and vertically to create 8 squares. Fold each square in half to form a triangle. Position triangle so folded side is at the bottom (A in photo below). Starting at 1 inch down from top point of triangle and ½ inch inward from one side of triangle, make a straight cut down through bottom fold. Repeat the cut on opposite side of triangle (B in photo below). Unfold dough back into a square, and brush with beaten egg (C in photo below). Fold one border corner to meet opposite inner corner. Repeat with opposite corner, forming a diamond shape with twisted top and bottom ends (D in photo below). Repeat procedure with remaining squares. Transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Brush top of exposed pastry with beaten egg. Freeze for 15 minutes.

**4.** Transfer frozen pastry to cast-iron baking sheets or large griddles. (To bake in batches, keep pastry frozen until ready to bake.) Divide sausage mixture among centers of frozen pastry. Sprinkle each with 1 tablespoon cheese.

**5.** Bake for 20 minutes. Crack one egg in center of each pastry, and season with salt. Continue baking until egg whites are set, about 8 minutes more. Garnish with pepper, if desired. Serve immediately.







## MAY DAY HAND PIES

Makes 14

Our version of this classic Kentucky pie is miniaturized and utilizes the convenience of refrigerated pie dough while still packing a flavor punch with bourbon and dark chocolate.

- ½ cup firmly packed light brown sugar**
- ¼ cup bourbon**
- 1 egg yolk**
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- 1 cup chopped walnuts**
- 1 (14.1-ounce) package refrigerated piecrusts**
- 1 large egg, lightly beaten**
- 2 (2.6-ounce) bars dark chocolate, chopped**
- 2 tablespoons heavy cream**
- Garnish: finely chopped walnuts, chocolate sprinkles**

**1.** In a small Dutch oven, whisk together brown sugar, bourbon, egg yolk, cornstarch, and salt.

Bring to a simmer over medium heat, whisking frequently. Stir in butter and walnuts; cook, stirring constantly, until thickened, about 3 minutes. Transfer to a heatproof bowl, and let cool for 1 hour. Cover and refrigerate until mixture holds its shape when scooped, about 2 hours or up to 24 hours.

**2.** Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

**3.** Unroll each piecrust on a lightly floured surface. Cut 7 (3¾-inch) circles from each piecrust. Brush with beaten egg. Scoop about 1 tablespoon filling into center of each circle. Fold dough over filling, forming a semicircle; crimp edges with a fork dipped in flour. Brush with beaten egg. Prick top of each pie with a fork. Place on prepared pan, and freeze for at least 1 hour or up to overnight.

**4.** Preheat oven to 375°. Transfer frozen pies to a cast-iron baking pan or large griddle.

**5.** Bake until crust is golden brown, about 23 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack.

**6.** In a small microwave-safe bowl, microwave chocolate and cream on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each until chocolate is melted, about 2 minutes. Spoon chocolate onto cooled pies. Garnish with walnuts and sprinkles, if desired. Let chocolate set before serving.

## STRAWBERRY-ALMOND HAND PIES

Makes 14

(photo on page 89)

Mixing graham cracker crumbs into the pie dough gives these bite-size treats the sweet flavor that would come from a crumb crust with the flaky goodness of a traditional piecrust.

- 8 tablespoons granulated sugar, divided**
- 6 tablespoons salted butter, softened**
- 1 large egg**
- 1 egg white**
- ½ teaspoon almond extract**
- ¾ cup almond meal**
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 tablespoon cornstarch**
- 1½ cups thinly sliced strawberries**
- 2 teaspoons lime juice**
- Graham Cracker Pie Dough (recipe follows)**
- Garnish: confectioners' sugar**

**1.** Preheat oven to 400°. Spray 2 (7-well) cast-iron mini cake pans with baking spray with flour.

**2.** In a medium bowl, beat 6 tablespoons granulated sugar, butter, egg, egg white, and extract with a mixer at medium-low speed until smooth. Add almond meal and flour, beating until combined.

**3.** In a small bowl, whisk together cornstarch and remaining 2 tablespoons granulated sugar; stir in strawberries and lime juice until well combined.

**4.** On a lightly floured surface, roll Graham Cracker Pie Dough to ⅛-inch thickness. Using a 4½-inch round cutter, cut dough into 14 rounds, rerolling scraps as necessary. Transfer dough rounds to wells of prepared pans, pressing into bottoms and up sides. Spoon about 1½ tablespoons almond mixture in center of each well. Top almond mixture with strawberry mixture.

**5.** Bake until crust is golden brown and filling is slightly puffed and bubbly, about 25 minutes. Let cool completely in pan on a wire rack. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired.

## GRAHAM CRACKER PIE DOUGH

Makes 14 (3½-inch) hand pies or 1 (10-inch) piecrust

- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup graham cracker crumbs**
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt**
- 1 cup cold unsalted butter, cubed**
- ¾ cup cold water**
- 2 teaspoons apple cider vinegar**

**1.** In a large bowl, whisk together flour, cracker crumbs, and salt. Using a pastry blender, cut in butter until pea-size pieces remain.

**2.** In a small bowl, combine ¾ cup cold water and vinegar. Stir ½ cup vinegar mixture into flour mixture with a fork. Stir in remaining vinegar mixture, 1 tablespoon at a time as needed, until a shaggy dough forms and holds together when pinched. (Some dry spots will remain.)

**3.** Turn out dough onto a clean work surface, and knead 3 to 4 times until dough forms a loose ball. Shape into a disk, and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 3 days. If refrigerating for more than 1 hour, let dough stand at room temperature for 15 minutes before rolling.

## ◦ KITCHEN TIP ◦

If you don't have two cast-iron mini cake pans, you can bake the pies in batches of 7 at a time in one pan. Cut the dough in half before rolling out, and refrigerate one portion while rolling out the other portion.



## COUNTRY HAM AND CHEESE PIES

Makes 6

(photo on page 90)

*A nod to our favorite grab-and-go sandwich pocket of the '90s, we packed our version with country ham and tangy mustard.*

### Buttermilk Pastry Dough (recipe follows)

- 6**   teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 12**   thin slices country ham, divided
- 3**    slices provolone cheese, halved and divided
- 1**    large egg, lightly beaten
- Flaked sea salt**

- 1.** Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 2.** On a lightly floured surface, roll Buttermilk Pastry Dough into an 18x12-inch rectangle, trimming edges to straighten, if necessary. Cut dough in half lengthwise. Make 6 (3-inch-wide) cuts crosswise, creating 12 (6x3-inch) rectangles.
- 3.** Spread 1 teaspoon mustard each in center of 6 rectangles, leaving a ½ inch border. Top each with 2 ham slices and 1 cheese piece, folding or cutting slices to fit within border. Brush edges of dough with beaten egg. Top with remaining dough rectangles. Press edges to seal. Brush top of dough with beaten egg; cut 3 slits in top of each pie. Sprinkle tops with salt. Place on prepared pan; cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours.
- 4.** Preheat oven to 400°. Transfer pies to a cast-iron baking pan or large griddle.
- 5.** Bake until crust is flaky and golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool on pan for 15 minutes. Serve warm.

### BUTTERMILK PASTRY DOUGH

Makes 6 (4x6-inch) hand pies or 2 (9-inch) piecrusts

- ¾**   cup cold whole buttermilk
- 3**    egg yolks
- 4½**   cups all-purpose flour
- 1½**   teaspoons kosher salt
- 1½**   cups cold unsalted butter, cubed

- 1.** In a small bowl, whisk together buttermilk and egg yolks.
- 2.** In the bowl of a food processor; pulse together flour and salt. Add butter, pulsing until butter pieces are the size of almonds. Slowly pour buttermilk mixture into flour mixture, pulsing until a dough ball forms.
- 3.** Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and shape into a square. Wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 30 minutes or up to 3 days. If refrigerating for more than 30 minutes, let dough stand at room temperature for 10 minutes before rolling. ●

## KNOW YOUR DOUGH

### CREAM CHEESE PIE DOUGH

While we are true advocates and lovers of all-butter pie doughs, there are times when additional fats are helpful for texture and flavor. This is where cream cheese comes in to play. In this recipe, we treat it like a fat, but we don't treat it the same way as butter. The cream cheese is cubed and worked into the flour mixture in the food processor until it's very fine prior to any other fat or liquid being added. This makes the dough more pliable without becoming glutenous (i.e. chewy or dense). Pulsing the butter after the cream cheese is already worked in ensures we have bigger butter pieces for producing flaky layers. A small amount of baking powder is used to add some extra lift when baking, creating a dough that is tender and flaky without being too delicate to eat out of hand.

### BUTTERMILK PASTRY DOUGH

Egg- and dairy-enriched doughs are the perfect go-to when a sturdy crust is needed. They are often used in savory pies with heavy or creamy fillings or sweet pies with dense custard fillings. In this case, we chose it to create a large (6x3-inch) double-crusted hand pie because we wanted the pie to hold together when eaten on the go. The acid in buttermilk and fat from the milk and egg yolks help to prevent gluten from forming in the dough while also binding the dry ingredients together so the dough is easy to work with when shaping the pies.

### GRAHAM CRACKER PIE DOUGH

To achieve the flavor of a crumb crust with the iconic flaky texture of classic pie dough, we treated graham cracker crumbs like flour, swapping out 1 cup all-purpose flour for 1 cup cracker crumbs. The rest of the recipe proceeds as a standard pie dough would—cut in the butter, fold in the liquids, and let rest in the fridge to let the dry ingredients hydrate. This dough may feel a bit crumblier than a classic dough before chilling, but it rolls out beautifully smooth after refrigerating. And make sure you keep those butter pieces big! That's key to producing those distinctive flakes and that melt-in-your-mouth texture.



# GERMAN AND CZECH TEXANS

HOW THEIR UNIQUE HERITAGE HAS SURVIVED  
FOR CENTURIES IN THE LONE STAR STATE

BY GEORGIA CLARKE



CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOHN O'HAGAN





WURST PLATTE FROM  
OTTO'S GERMAN BISTRO  
IN FREDERICKSBURG



DOWNTOWN  
NEW BRAUNFELS



DOWNTOWN  
FREDERICKSBURG

Stop into any town in Texas' 268,820 square miles, and you might find a plateful of authentic Mexican tacos and piping hot tamales or a pastry counter brimming with freshly baked Czech pastries with jammy fruit or sausage fillings called kolaches. A town over, Vietnamese bánh mì sandwiches and ginger-spiced crawfish could be on the menu, and just down the street, tender beef brisket and house-made sausages inspired by European smokehouses abound. The Lone Star State is home to a large number of heritages, many of which have kept a strong identity for generations. Some of the best-preserved cultural traditions belong to German and Czech Texans.

With town names like New Braunfels, Fredericksburg, and Weimar, it's easy to see that Texas' German heritage is thriving. The first German family to call the Republic of Texas, which was still part of Mexico at this point, home was that of Johann Friedrich Ernst, who arrived in the province in 1831. He'd originally set sights on Missouri but chose Texas after hearing of its favorable living conditions. After he was settled and had acquired about 4,428 acres of present-day Austin County land

through a grant, Ernst wrote letters back to friends in Germany boasting of the prosperity he'd found. He told them of the year-round warm climate and the abundance of game, fish, and rich, farmable land. To Germans facing hardship in Europe, Texas sounded like a Eutopia. One of Ernst's letters was published in a newspaper in northwestern Germany, and soon a trickle of German immigrants descended upon Texas.

The 1840s saw the largest emigration of Germans to the newly independent region. The Adelsverein (as it's known for short) was the Society for the Protection of German Immigrants in Texas, which helped thousands make the arduous trip across the Atlantic Ocean to find their new home in Texas. It was this group of newcomers who founded towns like New Braunfels in 1845 and Fredericksburg the following year. Like the Germans, the Czechs settled in Texas in the 1840s in search of economic prosperity. Many worked in agriculture and tended to live near German communities because of their familiarity with the language and customs.





DUCK SCHNITZEL FROM  
OTTO'S GERMAN BISTRO



TEXAS HAS THE LARGEST  
POPULATION OF CATTLE IN  
THE UNITED STATES



SOFT  
PRETZELS  
AND BEER

German and Czech immigrants were a significant part of 19th-century Texas. By 1930, the U.S. Census Bureau reported that Germans comprised 36 percent of the state's foreign white population, with immigrants from then Czechoslovakia following at 11.5 percent. When these families had ventured to Texas, many came in small groups, side by side with neighbors and friends. And when they arrived and settled, rather than dispersing, they formed these clusters of familiarity.

These settlements were often isolated, but with such strong European influence, this meant the language and traditions were held intact. Many of these towns functioned solely on the German language, creating German schools, churches, and shops, in addition to newspapers and magazines published in German. They

also left their imprint on the architecture of these towns, with Gothic churches and stone buildings. After the World Wars there was a dip in Germanic pride, with some families even anglicizing their last names by changing Schmidt to Smith; but in many of these isolated towns, the culture survived.

When owner of New Braunfels' Alpine Haus restaurant Christopher Hammond emigrated from Kitzingen, a town in the German state of Bavaria, to South Texas, in 1976, there was little German presence in the area due to isolation. Two or three hours away, there were vibrant German communities eating the cuisine and even some still speaking the language, but where the Hammonds lived, there was nothing. His mother had worked on an American military base so she knew English, but for Christopher





SCENES FROM  
A POPULAR  
GERMAN  
FESTIVAL



PASTRIES FROM  
CLEAR RIVER IN  
FREDERICKSBURG



MEAT AND CHEESE  
OFFERINGS FROM  
OTTO'S GERMAN BISTRO



ONE-THIRD OF  
THE PEACHES  
GROWN IN  
TEXAS COME  
FROM GILLESPIE  
COUNTY, WHERE  
FREDERICKSBURG  
IS LOCATED

and his two younger brothers, the language barrier was difficult.

“I was in the third grade when we moved and [I] spoke no English at all. Being children, we learned quickly, but it was sink or swim,” he says. “We had no option but to learn English because we couldn’t communicate with anyone.”

In addition to the language, there were cultural norms that didn’t translate. He remembers a particular instance while visiting a restaurant called Wienerschnitzel soon after moving to Texas.

“A *wiener schnitzel* in our German tradition is a piece of pork pounded out, breaded, and fried. When we first went there, we were expecting a German *schnitzel*, and instead we got a hot dog,” he remembers. On another occasion, when they tried tamales for the

first time, they didn’t realize the Mexican tamales were wrapped in a corn husk and they tried to eat the outer casing. “It was things like that,” says Christopher. “Until I learned the difference in culture, it was hard.”

Back in Germany, Christopher and his family had fallen in love with a restaurant they lived near and ate at daily. It was an old-fashioned kind of restaurant serving up dishes that an *oma* (grandmother) would make. When they opened Edelweiss in Corpus Christi, it was this restaurant his family sought to re-create in hopes of sharing their cultural identity with their new home. Years later, he shifted his focus to New Braunfels, where the German heritage was already strong. His restaurant, Alpine Haus, is housed in one of the original 1850s homesteads built in





LUCKENBACH, TEXAS'  
HISTORIC POST OFFICE

New Braunfels. They serve traditional German cuisine that he describes as meat-and-potatoes-type comfort food. There are schnitzels topped with various gravies and served with noodles and potato dumplings made from scratch daily. There's also house-made sausages, traditional Black Forest cake, and strudels. In places like New Braunfels, this kind of authentic German cuisine is popular, but that's not all that Germans had their hand in.

A look into Texas' impressive barbecue scene reveals obvious German and Czech roots. When settlers came to the region, they brought their pit-style smoking and sausage-making skills. Many German and Czech immigrants started butcher shops in Texas, like the Kreuz Market in Lockhart which opened in 1901, and Patek Grocery & Market that opened in Shiner in 1937. This was the birth of what we consider Texas-style barbecue today—a combination of European technique and Texas cattle. Many of the age-old market-style barbecue shops where you may find sausages and briskets sitting atop a smoky pit and can purchase meats by the pound were started by these very immigrants. And others were inspired by them.

The most well-known food contribution in Texas from the Czechs is the kolache. When they were first brought to the area in the 19th century, they seamlessly fit into the culinary culture. They were known as delicious pastries filled with fruit preserves and were made almost exactly as they had been in their previous home. But as time passed, they became a hybrid—much like Texas barbecue—using a European technique but utilizing Texas-found ingredients. They evolved into pastries filled with things like dewberries and prickly pear fruits, while others went the savory route (an option you'd never find in the Czech Republic), stuffing their kolaches with spicy sausages and hams.

Today, the German and Czech histories are protected through food, but also through a number of festivals where copious amounts of beer and sausage accompany waltzes and polkas.

"It's been a main priority for the towns to preserve the German heritage," says Christopher. "I think older generations feel it's important for the younger generation to know these things or all of these experiences will be forgotten."

*Try our Czech-inspired kolaches for a sweet taste of Texas history at home.*



## APRICOT KOLACHES

Makes 20

*Kolaches (pronounced koh-LAHchees) are delicious, slightly sweet pastries traditionally filled with fruit. They were brought to west Texas by the Czech immigrants who settled there. Today, annual kolache festivals are held in the Texas cities of Caldwell and East Bernard.*

### Dough:

- 1½ cups warm whole milk (105° to 110°)**
- ⅓ cup granulated sugar**
- 1 (0.25-ounce) package active dry yeast**
- 2 large eggs**
- ½ cup unsalted butter, melted**
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt**
- 4¾ cups bread flour**

### Filling:

- 1 (6-ounce) package dried apricots, chopped**
- 1 cup water**
- ¼ cup granulated sugar**

### Topping:

- ¼ cup all-purpose flour**
- ¼ cup firmly packed light brown sugar**
- 2 tablespoons cold unsalted butter**

**1.** For dough: In a large bowl, combine warm milk, granulated sugar, and yeast; let stand until foamy, about 5 minutes. Add eggs, melted butter, and salt; beat with a mixer at medium-low speed until combined. Gradually add flour, beating until a soft dough forms.

**2.** Turn out dough onto a heavily floured surface, and knead until smooth and elastic, about 8 minutes. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray; place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until dough is doubled in size, about 1 hour.

**3.** Spray 2 (14-inch) cast-iron baking pans with cooking spray.

**4.** Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and divide dough into 20 equal pieces; shape each piece into a ball. Place balls on prepared pans, and flatten each ball into a 3-inch disk. Cover and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°) until doubled in size, about 45 minutes.



**5.** Preheat oven to 350°.

**6.** For filling: In a small enamel-coated cast-iron Dutch oven, bring all ingredients to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat, and simmer, stirring frequently, until mixture is very thick, about 15 minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool completely.

**7.** For topping: In a small bowl, whisk together flour and brown sugar. Using a fork or pastry blender, cut in butter until mixture is crumbly.

**8.** Using the back of a spoon, make a deep indentation in center of each dough disk. Spoon about 1 tablespoon filling into each indentation; sprinkle with topping.

**9.** Bake until lightly browned, about 20 minutes. Serve warm, or remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days. 🍴



# Q: I'M NEW TO CAST IRON COLLECTING. HOW CAN I TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AUTHENTIC PIECES AND FAKES?

BY MARY THEISEN

**A:** It's all in the details. Whether you're interested in collecting just one or two brands of antique cast iron or you're curious to know more about the family heirloom pieces you already have, a little research and a keen eye will go a long way.

Authentic Griswold cast-iron cookware is one of the most prized and valuable brands among collectors, but you might be surprised to learn that not all vintage cast-iron pans marked "Griswold" were made by the company. The Griswold Manufacturing Company of Erie, Pennsylvania, was in business from 1865 to 1957. Later that same year, the Wagner Manufacturing Company of Sidney, Ohio, acquired the Griswold patterns and began producing cookware marked "Griswold."


Some of these Wagner-made pans are marked with both the Griswold and Wagner trademarks; some are simply marked "Griswold" without the inscription "Erie PA" below the trademark. Wagner-made Griswold pans are not typically considered collectible. Some pans marked "Griswold" were actually manufactured by other companies after Griswold closed its Erie plant in 1957, while others are outright fakes that were made to capitalize on the success of the brand.

Griswold was not the only company to have some of its cast-iron products reproduced, though they certainly had the most products copied by others. (A list of many known reproductions with photos is at the Educational Links page at [wag-society.org](http://wag-society.org).) The indicators that a piece marked "Griswold" is not an authentic Griswold-made piece can vary depending on the particular product, and although there are some common characteristics of reproduced "Griswold" skillets, not all are present in every piece. Here are three common ways to tell a reproduction from an authentic Griswold-made skillet.

**QUALITY OF THE CASTING:** A hallmark of a genuine Griswold is fine casting. Authentic Griswold pieces have a very smooth surface with an almost satin-like texture. Reproductions typically have a rough, pebbly, or bumpy surface and have often been poorly finished. If you find a poorly finished pan marked "Griswold," walk away.

**LETTERING:** If you find a pan marked "Griswold" that has messy, uneven, or poorly spaced lettering, it is almost surely a reproduction. Authentic Griswold lettering is crisp and clear.

**POUR SPOUTS:** Pour spouts on authentic Griswold skillets are well rounded on both the exterior and interior surfaces. Reproduction skillets may have a less rounded and more triangular shape on the interior of the pour spout.

Although this information is specific to Griswold cast iron, the same principles can be applied to antique and vintage cast iron from other shuttered foundries. By learning the signature characteristics of a brand, you'll be able to reasonably determine whether a piece is authentic or a reproduction. 

*Pans courtesy of cast iron collectors Larry and Marg O'Neil of Tacoma, Washington. Mary Theisen is a vintage cast iron enthusiast and blogs at [vintagecastironllc.com](http://vintagecastironllc.com).*



# ORIGINAL



Smooth finish with clearly defined text



Clearly defined number zero

Smooth finish

Even pour spouts



# REPRODUCTION



Rough casting and finish

Poorly formed number

Sloppy, poorly formed letters and inconsistent depth and spacing of text and circles

Uneven pour spouts







# DUMPLIN'S DEMYSTIFIED



THIS CLASSIC RECIPE IS ONE EVERY SOUTHERN COOK SHOULD KNOW,  
AND WE'LL WALK YOU THROUGH EACH STEP OF THE PROCESS, FROM  
HOMEMADE CHICKEN BROTH TO LIGHT AND FLUFFY DUMPLINGS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JIM BATHIE / FOOD STYLING BY ERIN MERHAR

## CHICKEN AND DUMPLINGS

Makes 6 to 8 servings

*Comforting, tasty, and just like your mama used to make, this tried-and-true dish is a Southern staple for a reason.*

### Stew:

- 4 tablespoons canola oil, divided
- 1 (3-pound) whole chicken, cut into 8 pieces
- 5 large carrots, peeled and diced
- 4 stalks celery, diced
- 1 large onion, diced
- 1 large leek, halved lengthwise and sliced into ½-inch pieces (white and light green parts only)
- ¼ cup plus 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 5 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 quarts water
- 2 tablespoons plus 2 teaspoons chicken bouillon paste
- 2 dried bay leaves
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper
- ¼ cup chopped fresh parsley

### Dumplings:

- 2 cups self-rising flour
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 3 tablespoons cold unsalted butter, cubed
- ½ cup whole milk

1. For stew: In a large Dutch oven, heat 3 tablespoons oil over medium-high heat. Add chicken pieces; cook until browned, 4 to 5 minutes per side. Remove chicken, reserving drippings in pot.
2. To pot, add remaining 1 tablespoon oil, carrots, celery, onion, and leek. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables are tender, 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Stir in all-purpose flour and garlic. Cook for 2 minutes. Stir in 2 quarts water, bouillon paste, bay leaves, and pepper; bring to a boil. Return chicken to pot. Reduce heat to medium; cover and cook until an instant-read thermometer inserted in thickest portion of chicken registers 165°, about 45 minutes.
4. Remove chicken and bay leaves from pot. Let chicken cool enough to handle. Shred chicken, discarding skin and bones.
5. Return chicken to pot, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Reduce to a simmer. Stir in parsley.
6. For dumplings: In a medium bowl, whisk together self-rising flour and kosher salt. Using a fork, cut butter into flour mixture until crumbly. Stir in milk just until dry ingredients are moistened.
7. Turn dough out onto a lightly floured surface. Knead until dough comes together, 3 to 4 times. Roll to ⅛-inch thickness. Cut into 2-inch squares.
8. Drop dumplings, a few at a time, in simmering soup. (Do not stir.) Cover and gently shake pot in a circular motion; cook until dumplings float, 3 to 4 minutes. Serve immediately.

TURN THE PAGE FOR MAKING DUMPLINGS STEP BY STEP.



# PREP STEPS

## 1. CUTTING IN BUTTER

Dumplings are essentially thin biscuits. Just like biscuits, cutting in butter is an important step. While the dumplings cook, the butter will melt and generate steam, creating tiny pockets that result in a light and fluffy texture.



## 2. STIRRING IN MILK

Gently stir in milk until most of the flour is moistened. Just like biscuits, the dough will look slightly dry. Overmixing the dough until it's completely wet will result in chewy dumplings.



## 3. KNEADING DOUGH

Gently knead the dough to bring it together; knead just enough until a cohesive disk is formed, 3 to 5 times.





#### 4. SHAPING DUMPLINGS

Some recipes call for forming the dumpling dough into balls versus rolling out the dough. While you can do either with this dough, we prefer rolled dumplings for faster cooking and to avoid a doughy center. You can cut the rolled dough into any shape you prefer.



#### 5. DUMPLING DROP

Carefully and gently drop dumplings randomly into the pot of simmering broth. Do not stir the dumplings or place them fully on top of each other; this will cause them to either break apart or stick together. Gently shake the pot in a circular motion after each addition to help the dumplings settle and not stick together. 🔍





# THE PERFECT PAN

**WE KICKED OFF SPRING WITH A VISIT WITH NASHVILLE-BASED FOOD WRITER AND AUTHOR ANNE BYRN, WHOSE AFFINITY FOR COOKING AND BAKING IN CAST IRON IS THE INSPIRATION FOR HER NEWEST COOKBOOK AND THIS EASY POUND CAKE**

BY ANNE BYRN

I like to say that my love affair with cast iron did not begin 40 years ago, even though that's when I bought my beautiful, old 12-inch Griswold at an Atlanta estate sale. The skillet was shiny and smooth from years of good cooking, but I never showered it with praise. That was saved for copper pans I brought back from cooking school in Paris. You could say that this humble iron skillet with the perfect patina had been like a relief player in my kitchen, waiting for the one recipe, the opportunity to get my attention.

And one July afternoon two years ago, on a whim, I grabbed the skillet and poured in a favorite pound cake batter. It was a cake my mother taught me to bake in a tube pan, and the notion of turning that precious batter into an iron skillet seemed crazy.

Yet that skillet pound cake rose straight up the sides of the pan. The crust on top was golden and crackly. And the interior crumb was even and smooth. The aroma in the kitchen was irresistible. In short, I had never baked such a perfect pound cake. My skillet, practiced and ready, performed like a seasoned pro and knocked that cake right out of the park. In that instant, I fell crazy in love with my skillet. And that cake!

What is it about a pound cake that bakes so beautifully in an iron skillet? And what is it about a skillet that bakes such a perfect pound cake? The pound cake batter begs for a sturdy pan, one with solid sides and that's able to retain heat so the crumb is evenly baked, from the inside out. And the iron skillet is just that pan, built to seal the pound cake in a crisp exterior crust so the interior stays moist.

Pound cakes bake so beautifully in the iron skillet. And it's amazing how the simple addition of chopped strawberries turns my favorite pound cake into the perfect cake for springtime gatherings. If you don't have strawberries, you can always add blueberries or raspberries. And if you want to easily unmold a skillet pound cake—versus slice and serve right from the pan—run a knife around the pan edges as soon as the cake comes out of the oven. And for the easiest process of all, line the bottom of the skillet with a round of parchment paper.

Praise be to the iron skillet and pound cake!

*Anne Byrn is the author of the cookbooks Skillet Love, American Cookie, American Cake, and more. For more information, visit [annebyrn.com](http://annebyrn.com).*

Recipe and photograph excerpted from *SKILLET LOVE: From Steak to Cake: More Than 150 Recipes in One Cast-Iron Pan*. Copyright © 2019 by Anne Byrn. Photography by Danielle Atkins. Reprinted with permission of Grand Central Publishing. All rights reserved.





# STRAWBERRIES AND CREAM POUND CAKE

Makes 1 (12-inch) cake

*Pound cakes always bake so beautifully in the iron skillet.*

- 1 cup plus 1 teaspoon unsalted butter, softened and divided
- 3 cups all-purpose flour\*
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 cups granulated sugar
- 6 large eggs, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 1 cup chopped fresh strawberries (about ¼-inch pieces)

Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

Sweetened whipped cream and sliced fresh strawberries, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 350°. Grease a 12-inch skillet with 1 teaspoon softened butter.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together flour and salt.
3. In a large mixing bowl, beat remaining 1 cup softened butter with a mixer on medium-low speed until creamy, about 1 minute. Beat in the sugar, a cup or so at a time. Increase the mixer speed to medium, and beat until pale in color, about 1 minute more. Turn the mixer to low speed, and add the eggs, one at a time, beating each egg until thoroughly incorporated before adding the next. Blend in the vanilla. Scrape down the sides of the bowl.
4. With the mixer on low speed, add the flour mixture and cream alternately, beginning and ending with the flour, and beat until combined. Scrape down the sides of the bowl. Dump the batter into the prepared skillet, smoothing the top with the spatula. Scatter the chopped strawberries over the top.
5. Bake until the cake is golden brown and crackly on top and a toothpick inserted near the center of the cake comes out clean, 1 hour and 10 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes. Run a knife around the edges of the skillet, and let the cake cool in the pan for 30 minutes.
6. Give the pan a good shake, invert the cake onto a plate or your hand, then invert it again onto a wire rack. Let it cool for 1 hour before slicing. Serve with a dusting of confectioners' sugar or top with whipped cream and sliced strawberries. Wrap leftovers in aluminum foil, and store at room temperature for up to 5 days or in the freezer for up to 6 months.

\*I use King Arthur.







# CAST IRON USE & CARE

If you take the time to properly care for your cast-iron cookware, it will reward you and your family with generations of loyal service. Follow these tips to keep your heirlooms—whether seasoned or enameled iron—in tip-top shape.

## SEASONED

### KEEP THEM CLEAN

Be sure to clean your pans as soon as they're cool enough to handle. Scrub gently with a stiff-bristle brush or a non-scratch scouring pad. Water leads to rust, so avoid submerging your cast-iron cookware. As to whether to use soap—that's up to you. We avoid it when possible to protect the seasoned surface.

### KEEP THEM DRY

After rinsing, it's crucial to dry your cookware completely. Wipe dry with a clean kitchen towel and then apply a very thin coat of vegetable oil, rubbing it into the surface. Heat on the stovetop over medium-low heat or in the oven at 300° until dry, about 10 minutes. Let cool; wipe surface with a clean kitchen towel, and heat for 5 more minutes.

### RESPECT YOUR CAST IRON

Taking care of your cookware means understanding its likes and dislikes. Cooking with fats, cleaning gently, and storing in a clean, dry place are the keys to preserving your pans' seasoning. Harsh abrasives, acidic foods, and exposure to water can break down the finish or cause rust.

## ENAMELED

### BE GENTLE

The finish on enameled cast iron can be fragile, so handle your pieces with care to avoid chipping and never use metal utensils since they can scratch the surface.

### GREASE THEM UP

Unlike regular cast iron, enameled cast iron is not nonstick. To avoid sticking, cook over medium heat using adequate amounts of oil or fat. If sticking does occur, use dish soap, water, and a non-scratch scouring pad to scrub away the mess. Or try boiling water in the piece with a bit of dishwashing liquid for extra-stubborn bits.

### MAKE THEM SHINE

Over time, enameled cast iron can become stained. To help remove stains, soak the cooking surface in peroxide mixed with baking soda and then scrub with dish soap, water, and a non-scratch scouring pad to keep your enameled cast iron looking as good as new.



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# SAVORY BREAKFAST

**THIS CREATIVE CASSEROLE COMBINES SUBTLE SWEETNESS WITH DELICIOUS SAVORY FLAVOR FOR A BREAKFAST DISH YOU CAN SERVE ANY TIME OF DAY**

## MAPLE-SAUSAGE FRENCH TOAST CASSEROLE

Makes 6 to 8 servings

*If you're searching for a sweet breakfast treat that still packs a hearty protein punch, look no further than this dish that's the best of both worlds.*

- 1 pound mild ground pork sausage
- 1 (9-ounce) bag fresh spinach
- 1½ teaspoons kosher salt, divided
- 3 cups whole milk
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream
- 5 large eggs
- 2 tablespoons sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- ⅛ teaspoon ground nutmeg
- 1 (1-pound) loaf challah bread, sliced 1 inch thick
- 2 cups shredded Parmesan cheese, divided
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes
- Maple syrup, to serve

1. Preheat oven to 350°.
2. In a 12-inch cast-iron skillet, cook sausage over medium-high heat, until crumbly and only a little pink remains, about 3 minutes. In batches, stir in spinach and ½ teaspoon salt until spinach is wilted. Remove from pan, and let drain on paper towels. Wipe skillet clean; spray with cooking spray.
3. In a large bowl, whisk together milk, cream, eggs, sugar, cinnamon, pepper, nutmeg, and remaining 1 teaspoon salt. Dip each bread slice in milk mixture, and transfer to a rimmed baking sheet.
4. Stir 1½ cups cheese, tomatoes, and sausage mixture into remaining milk mixture. Pour half of cheese mixture into bottom of prepared skillet. Shingle bread slices vertically on top of cheese mixture. Pour remaining cheese mixture onto bread slices. Sprinkle with remaining ½ cup cheese. Loosely cover with foil.
5. Bake for 30 minutes. Uncover and bake until browned and a thermometer inserted in center registers at least 160°, 15 to 20 minutes more. Serve with maple syrup.

RECIPE DEVELOPMENT BY LAURA CRANDALL / FOOD STYLING BY ERIN MERHAR









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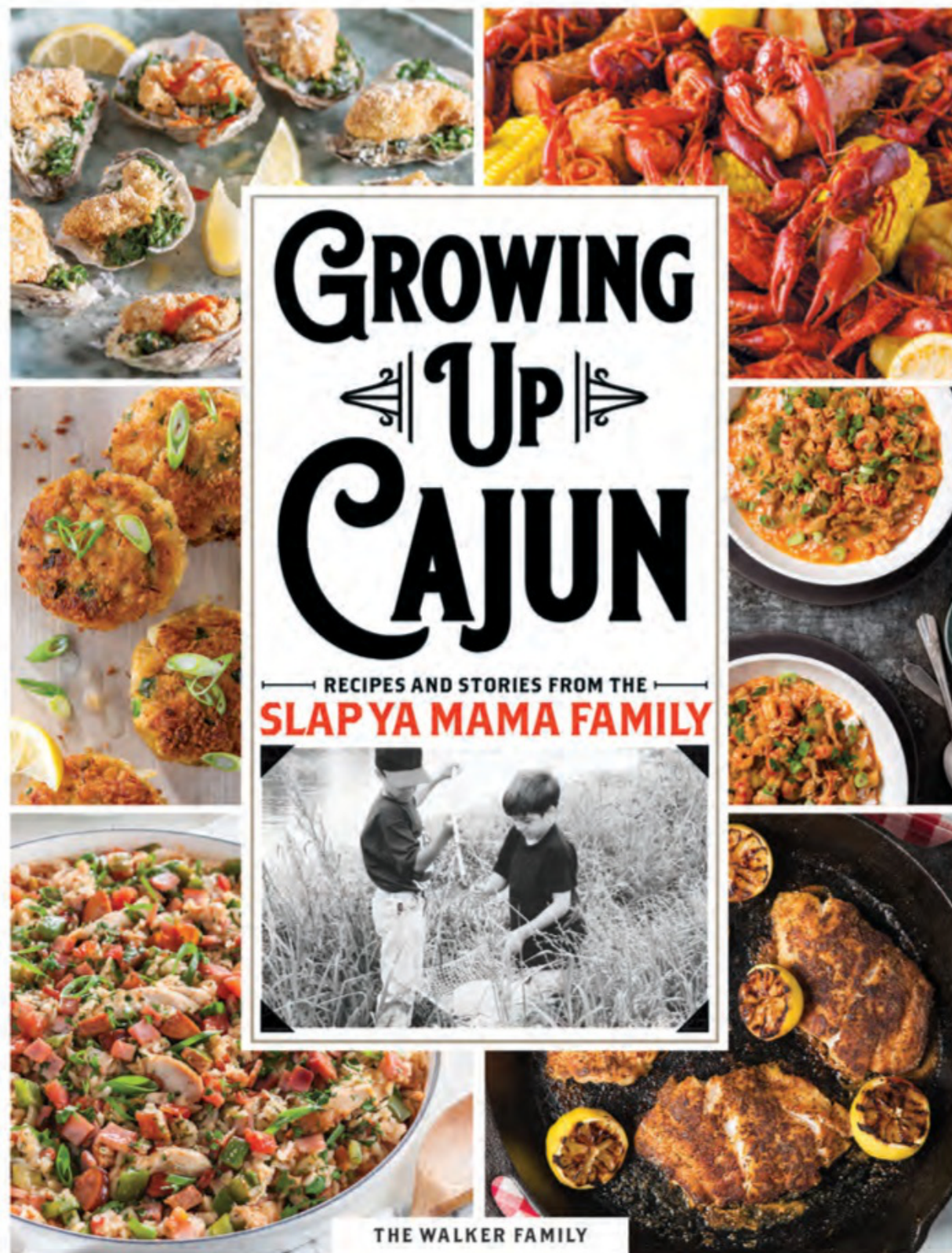
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