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## PIONEER PRESS

Posted on Sat, Jan. 01, 2005

### Return of the classics: fondue, muffins, pudding, pie

BY LYNDA KOCHER  
Special to the Pioneer Press

#### IN THE KITCHEN

#### CLASSIC SWISS FONDUE

**Q.** We've cooked meat in our fondue pot, but now I'd like to try a cheese fondue. Do you have a recipe?

**A.** Here's one from "The All New Good Housekeeping Cookbook" that calls for the traditional cheese combination of Emmentaler and Gruyere.

#### Makes 6 first-course servings

1 garlic clove, cut in half

1½ cups dry white wine

1 tablespoon kirsch or brandy

8 ounces Swiss or Emmentaler cheese, shredded (2 cups)

8 ounces Gruyere cheese, shredded (2 cups)

3 tablespoons flour

1/8 teaspoon ground black pepper

Pinch ground nutmeg

1 loaf (16 ounces) French bread, cut into 1-inch cubes

**To make fondue:** Rub inside of fondue pot or heavy nonreactive 2-quart saucepan with garlic. Discard garlic. Pour wine into pot. Heat over medium-low heat until very hot but not boiling. Stir in kirsch. Meanwhile, in medium bowl, toss Swiss cheese, Gruyere and flour until mixed. Add cheese mixture, a handful at a time, to wine, stirring constantly and vigorously until cheese melts and mixture is thick and smooth. (Note: If mixture separates, increase heat to medium, stirring just until smooth.) Stir in pepper and nutmeg.

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**To serve:** Transfer fondue to table. (Note: Place over tabletop heater to keep hot, if you like.) Spear bread cubes onto long-handled fondue forks. Dip into cheese mixture.

## BLUEBERRY MUFFINS

**Q.** The muffins I make taste great, but they don't rise like the ones I buy at the bakery? Any suggestions?

**A.** To produce more lift, the experts at Cook's Illustrated magazine recommend whisking the egg and sugar together by hand until the sugar begins to "melt," then whisking in the remaining wet ingredients before gently mixing with the dry ingredients. This method produces more air and results in a nicely domed crown. Here's a blueberry muffin recipe adapted from the magazine's "Baking Illustrated."

**Makes 12 muffins.**

2 cups flour

1 tablespoon baking powder

½ teaspoon salt

1 large egg

1 cup sugar

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled slightly

1¼ cups sour cream

1½ cups (7½ to 8 ounces) frozen or fresh blueberries

**To prepare oven, muffin tin:** Adjust oven rack to middle position. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease 12-cup muffin tin. Set aside.

**To make muffins:** In medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder and salt until combined. Set aside. In another medium bowl, whisk egg for 20 seconds or until light colored and well combined. Add sugar. Whisk vigorously for 30 seconds or until thick and homo-genous. Add melted butter in 2 or 3 additions, whisking to combine after each addition. Add sour cream in 2 additions, whisking just to combine. Add berries to dry ingredients and gently toss to combine. Add sour cream mixture. Using rubber spatula, fold for 25 to 30 seconds or until batter comes together and berries are evenly distributed. (Note: Small spots of flour may remain and batter will be thick. Don't overmix.)

**To bake muffins:** Using large spoon sprayed with nonstick cooking spray, divide batter among greased muffin cups. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes or until muffins are light golden brown and toothpick or skewer inserted into center comes out clean. (Note: Rotate pan from front to back halfway through baking time.) Invert muffins onto wire rack. Stand upright. Cool.

## CHOCOLATE PUDDING

**Q.** When I was growing up, we used to make chocolate pudding with cocoa, sugar, milk and cornstarch. It was so rich and tasty, like a chocolate mousse. Now, I can't find the recipe. Can you help?

**A.** If your only experience with making chocolate pudding is using the packaged variety, you'll be surprised by this good and easy recipe, adapted from the 1965 "Better Homes and Gardens New Cookbook."

**Makes 6 servings.**

½ cup sugar

1/3 cup cocoa

3 tablespoons cornstarch

¼ teaspoon salt

2½ cups milk

1½ teaspoons vanilla

In medium saucepan, mix sugar, cocoa, cornstarch and salt. Gradually blend in milk. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, for 2 to 3 minutes or until mixture thickens. Remove from heat. Add vanilla. Pour into 6 small bowls. Chill.

## **MILLIE'S SWEETMUSTARD-GLAZED PORK AND HAMLOAF**

**Q.** My grandparents lived on a hog farm in Iowa, and when we visited, my grandmother frequently made hamloaf. I'd like to make this with my leftover New Year's ham. Can you find a recipe?

**A.** This hamloaf, from "Cooking for the Weekend" by Michael McLaughlin (Simon and Schuster, 1993), includes the addition of a sweet mustard glaze.

**Makes 8 servings.**

### **Sweet mustard glaze:**

1 cup packed light brown sugar

1/3 cup cider vinegar

1/3 cup water

¼ cup Dijon-style mustard

### **Hamloaf:**

1 pound baked smoked ham, trimmed of any fat and rind and cut into chunks

1½ pounds ground pork (not too lean)

1 cup (about 2½ ounces) finely crushed saltine crackers

1 cup milk

2 eggs, beaten

1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

**To prepare mustard glaze:** In small nonreactive saucepan over low heat, whisk together sugar, vinegar, water and mustard. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Simmer, uncovered and stirring once or twice, for 20 minutes. Cool to room temperature. (Note: Glaze can be prepared several days ahead.)

**To prepare oven:** Position rack in lower third of oven. Heat oven to 350 degrees.

**To make hamloaf:** In food processor, finely chop ham. In large bowl, stir together ham and pork. Add cracker crumbs, milk, eggs and pepper. Mix thoroughly. Transfer to shallow baking dish, such as 9-by-13-inch oval gratin. Form into flat loaf. Using back of knife, press crosshatched diamond pattern about ½-inch deep into top.

**To bake hamloaf:** Bake for 30 minutes. Spread one-third of mustard glaze over loaf. Bake for 15 minutes. Spread half of remaining glaze over loaf. Bake for 15 minutes. Spread remaining glaze over loaf. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes or until loaf is glazed and brown and meat thermometer inserted in center reads 165 degrees. Cool 5 minutes. Transfer to serving platter. Let stand 5 minutes before cutting.

## **AREPAS**

**Q.** When we were in Miami, we ate a sandwich called an arepa, two grilled cornmeal pancakes with some type of melted white cheese in the middle. I would love to find a recipe so I can make these at home. Can you help?

**A.** These Colombian grilled corncakes — made from fine cornmeal — vary dramatically depending on the hand that shapes them. This recipe is adapted from [www.cdkitchen.com](http://www.cdkitchen.com) and is served sprinkled with Mexican cheese.

**Makes 8 sandwiches.**

2 cups milk, divided use

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, cut into pieces

1½ cups white arepa flour (see shopper's note)

1½ tablespoons sugar

1 teaspoon salt

1 cup grated processed mozzarella cheese

Vegetable oil, for griddle

2 tablespoons butter

1¼ cups finely grated queso blanco (see shopper's note)

**To prepare dough:** In small sauce-pan, bring 1½ cups milk to a boil. Strain into bowl. Add butter. Let stand. In large bowl, stir together flour, sugar, salt and mozzarella. Make well in center. Pour in hot milk. Stir until no lumps remain. On floured surface, knead mixture, drizzling in remaining ½ cup milk, for 5 minutes or until dough is smooth and sticky.

**To form corncakes:** Between 2 sheets of wax paper, roll dough ½- inch thick. Using 3-inch round cookie cutter or rim of a glass, cut dough into circles. Reroll scraps. Cut out more circles. (Note: You should have 8 circles.)

**To cook corncakes:** Brush griddle or large cast-iron skillet lightly with oil. Heat over medium-low heat. Fry corncakes, about 4 minutes per side or until golden and crusty outside and still soft inside. (Note: Using metal spatula, keep separating corncakes from skillet to prevent sticking.) Keep cooked corncakes warm in low oven.

**To serve:** While still warm, brush with butter. Immediately sprinkle with generous coating of grated queso blanco.

**Shopper's note:** Both arepa corn flour and queso blanco cheese are available in supermarkets and most Latin markets.

## ROYAL ICING

**Q.** Whenever I decorate cookies, the icing is too runny. Store-bought cookies are always so beautifully decorated. What's the secret?

**A.** Two words: royal icing. Long used by professional and home bakers, royal icing is versatile and easy to work with because it can be thinned for spreading or thickened for piping. This recipe is adapted from "The All-American Cookie Book" by Nancy Baggett (Houghton Mifflin, 2001).

**Makes about 2 cups of icing.**

1/3 cup egg whites (about 3 large whites) at room temperature

2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice (divided)

Pinch of salt

1 box (16 ounces) powdered sugar, plus more if needed

Liquid or paste food coloring (optional)

**To make icing:** In large mixing bowl, combine egg whites, ½ teaspoon lemon juice and salt. Using electric mixer on low speed (with whisk-shaped beater, if available), beat until frothy and opaque. Increase speed to medium. Beat for 30 seconds. Gradually beat in powdered sugar, ½ cup at a time, until evenly incorporated and smooth. Increase speed to high. Beat in remaining 1½ teaspoons lemon juice for 3 to 5 minutes or until mixture stands in stiff peaks. (Note: If icing is too runny, beat in a little more powdered sugar. If icing stiffens upon standing, thin it with a few drops water.) Cover with plastic wrap or damp kitchen towel as you work.

**To store icing:** Place in airtight container in refrigerator for up to 4 days. Before using, bring to room temperature and stir well.

**To tint icing:** Divide icing among many small bowls. Stir in drops or dabs of food coloring until desired color is obtained. (Note: For most intense shades, use paste colors.)

## SWEET POTATO PIE

**Q.** My son-in-law grew up in the South, and he talks about eating sweet potato pie as a child. I've never made one, but if you can find a recipe, I'll give it a try.

**A.** This Southern classic is from "The Church Ladies' Celestial Suppers and Sensible Advice."

**Makes 2 (9-inch) pies.**

5 large baked sweet potatoes, peeled and mashed

4 large eggs

½ cup half-and-half

1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla

¾ teaspoon nutmeg

½ teaspoon cinnamon

½ cup (1 stick) butter, melted

1 (9-inch) deep-dish piecrusts, unbaked

**To make filling:** Preheat oven to 350 degrees. In large bowl, beat sweet potatoes with eggs, half-and-half, sugar, vanilla, nutmeg, cinnamon and melted butter until well blended. Taste and adjust spices. Pour mixture into piecrusts.

**To bake pie:** Bake for 30 to 35 minutes or until filling is set and pie-crusts are golden brown. Cool on wire racks. Serve warm or chilled.

**Reader to the rescue**

After reading that Joe's Valley restaurant in western Wisconsin turned down a request for their coleslaw recipe, Kathie Sanft of Shoreview sent her mother-in-law's dressing recipe with a note saying that she gets rave reviews whenever she makes it.

**COLESLAW DRESSING**

**Makes about 1 cup dressing.**

1 teaspoon butter

½ cup vinegar

½ cup sugar

1 egg, whisked

½ teaspoon salt

¼ teaspoon dry mustard

In small pan over medium-low heat, melt butter. Add vinegar, sugar, egg, salt and mustard. Cook, stirring continuously, until mixture reaches consistency of cream.

*previously published in this column, contact Customer Service at 651-222-1111.*

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*Looking for a recipe? Have a cooking question? Write In the Kitchen, St. Paul Pioneer Press, 345 Cedar St., St. Paul, MN 55101, or send e-mail requests to [lyndakochevar@earthlink.net](mailto:lyndakochevar@earthlink.net). (Please keep in mind most chain restaurants do not share their recipes.)*



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