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Food

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Spoonbread, coconut bread and mom's graham cracker roll

BY LYNDA KOCHEVAR
Special to the Pioneer Press

Q. My mother used to make what she called cornbread, but it was more like a soufflé. Have you seen a cornbread recipe like this?

A. That sounds like the good, old Southern classic spoonbread. This recipe is from 'The All New Good Housekeeping Cookbook' (2001).

SPOONBREAD

Makes 8 servings.

- 3 cups milk
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1 cup cornmeal
- 4 tablespoons butter, cut into pieces
- 3 large eggs, separated

To prepare oven, baking dish: Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Generously butter shallow 1½-quart baking dish. Set aside.

To prepare spoonbread: In 4-quart saucepan, combine milk, salt and pepper. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Remove from heat. Using wire whisk, whisk in cornmeal. Add butter, stirring until it melts. Let stand for 5 minutes.

To finish spoonbread: Add egg yolks, 1 at a time, to cornmeal mixture, whisking until blended. In small bowl, using mixer at high speed, beat egg whites just until soft peaks form when beaters are lifted. Gently fold half of egg whites into cornmeal mixture. Gently fold in other half. Pour evenly into prepared baking dish.

To bake spoonbread: Bake for 40 minutes or until spoonbread is set. Serve immediately.

Q. Will you please try to get the recipe for the killer brownies at Lunds?

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A. I tried, but Lunds wouldn't share. Merrilee Goligowski from Lunds Food Call Center said the recipe is proprietary.

Q. We ate at the Anderson House in Wabasha, Minn., where we were served coconut bread. I would love to have the recipe. Can you help me?

A. The Historic Anderson House recently added this bread to its bread tray.

COCONUT BREAD

Makes 2 loaves.

Bread:

4 eggs

2 cups sugar

1 cup vegetable oil

2 teaspoons coconut extract

3 cups flour

½ teaspoon baking powder

½ teaspoon baking soda

1 cup buttermilk

1 cup coconut

1 cup chopped nuts, optional

Glaze:

1½ cups sugar

3 tablespoons butter

¾ cup water

1 teaspoon coconut extract

To prepare oven, bread pans: Preheat oven to 325 degrees. Spray 2 (9-by-5-inch) loaf pans with nonstick cooking spray. Lightly flour pans. Set aside.

To mix bread: In large bowl, combine eggs, sugar, oil and extract. Gradually add flour, baking powder and baking soda alternately with buttermilk. Stir in coconut and nuts. Pour mixture into prepared pans.

To bake bread: Bake for 1 hour or until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool slightly in pans on wire rack. Remove from pans.

To prepare glaze: In medium saucepan, combine sugar, butter, water and extract. Bring to a boil. Boil for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Pour over warm loaves. Let stand for 3 to 4 hours. Store in refrigerator.

Q. My mother used to make a dessert with dates, nuts, marshmallows and crushed graham crackers. It was not baked or cooked but wrapped in foil and refrigerated, then sliced and served with whipped

cream. I would love to find this '50s recipe and make the cookies, just to see if they taste as good as I remember.

A. Here's your recipe, and I hope that it brings back a flood of good memories. I found it at www.post-gazette.com.

MOM'S GRAHAM CRACKER ROLL

Makes 3 rolls.

1 pound graham crackers

1 pound marshmallows

1 pound dates

1 cup walnuts

½ pint whipping cream, whipped

Additional whipped cream for serving (optional)

To prepare graham crackers: Roll crackers fine. (Note: Easily done in large resealable plastic bag and using heavy rolling pin.) Reserve ½ cup crumbs to finish rolls.

To prepare marshmallows and dates: Cut marshmallows and dates into bite-sized pieces. (Note: If using miniature marshmallows, use 10-ounce bag.)

To prepare nuts and cream: Chop nuts. Mix with whipped cream.

To finish roll: Combine graham cracker crumbs, marshmallows, dates and nut mixture. Divide into 3 portions. Sprinkle one-third of reserved crumbs over piece of wax paper. Roll one-third of mixture into cylinder approximately 14 inches long, covering with reserved crumbs. Repeat with remaining rolls. Wrap wax-paper rolls in aluminum foil. Refrigerate.

To serve graham cracker roll: When cold, cut into slices with a sharp knife. Top with additional whipped cream, if desired.

Q. I lost my recipe for chicken taco soup made in the crockpot. I don't remember the ingredients, but chicken breasts were placed on top, cooked for 5 hours, then removed, shredded and stirred back into the soup and cooked for 2 more hours. Can you find this recipe?

A. This one follows your directions to a T. I found it at www.cdktichen.com.

CHICKEN TACO SOUP

Makes 8 servings.

1 onion, chopped

1 can (15 ounces) chili beans

1 can (15 ounces) black beans

1 can (15 ounces) whole-kernel corn, drained

1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce

1 can or bottle (12 ounces) beer

2 cans (10 ounces) diced tomatoes with green chilies, undrained

1 package (1.25 ounces) taco seasoning

3 skinless, boneless chicken breast halves

Garnishes (optional):

Shredded cheddar cheese

Sour cream

Crushed tortilla chips

To prepare soup in slow cooker: Place onion, chili beans, black beans, corn, tomato sauce, beer and diced tomatoes in slow cooker. Add taco seasoning. Stir to blend. Lay chicken breasts on top of mixture, pressing down slightly until just covered by other ingredients.

To cook soup: Set slow cooker on low heat. Cover. Cook for 5 hours.

To shred chicken: Remove chicken breasts from soup. Allow to cool long enough to handle. Shred chicken. Stir back into soup. Cook for 2 hours.

To serve soup: Ladle soup into bowls. Top with cheese, sour cream, and/or crushed tortilla chips.

Q. I'm looking for a recipe for sausage and peppers. Can you find one?

A. In this one (from 'The New York Cookbook' by Molly O'Neill (Workman Publishing, 1992) you can use either hot or sweet Italian sausage or a combination of both.

ESPOSITO'S HOMEMADE ITALIAN SAUSAGE WITH PEPPERS AND ONIONS

Makes 4 servings.

2 pounds sweet or hot Italian sausage links

2 red bell peppers, stemmed, seeded and cut lengthwise into ¼-inch strips

2 green bell peppers, stemmed, seeded and cut lengthwise into ¼-inch strips

2 tablespoons olive oil (optional)

4 large Bermuda onions, thinly sliced

4 cloves garlic, coarsely chopped

Salt and pepper, to taste

4 hero rolls, sliced lengthwise

To cook the sausages: In large skillet, fry sausage over medium-low heat with a few drops water added to prevent sausage from sticking. As water evaporates, fry sausage, turning frequently, for 15 minutes or until sausage is golden brown. Drain on paper towels. Keep warm. (Note: Or cook sausage on grill over high heat for 10 minutes.)

To cook peppers: Sauté peppers in sausage fat over medium heat for 5 minutes or until softened. Add olive oil, if needed. Add onions and garlic. Season with salt and pepper. Cook for 10 to 15 minutes or until vegetables are lightly browned. Serve sausage and vegetables on sliced rolls.

Q. I bought a pizzelle iron at a yard sale, but there was no recipe in the box. Could you find one? I'd like to try to make them for Christmas.

A. The batter for these Italian cookies is easy to make, but baking them can be time consuming. Here's the recipe from 'Betty Crocker's New Christmas Cookbook' (1993).

PIZZELLES

Makes 3½ dozen cookies.

2 cups flour

1 cup granulated or packed brown sugar

¾ cup (1½ sticks) butter, melted and cooled

1 tablespoon anise extract or vanilla

2 teaspoons baking powder

4 eggs, slightly beaten

To prepare batter: In medium bowl, mix together flour, brown sugar, butter, anise extract or vanilla, baking powder and eggs.

To bake cookies: Heat pizzelle iron according to manufacturer's directions. Drop 1 tablespoon batter onto each design of heated pizzelle iron. Close iron. Bake for 30 seconds or until golden brown. Carefully remove pizzelle from iron. Cool on wire rack. Repeat with remaining batter.



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