



Bloomin' Cheddar Bacon Ranch Bread

This bread earned its name from its flower-like shape. I've found that you can stuff it with whatever toppings you like, but I really love this version with cheddar cheese, bacon, and ranch drizzled on top. This bread is a conversation starter! I've made it with other round artisan breads but have found that I love the slightly tart taste, and the sturdy texture of sourdough makes the cutting process easier.

Ingredients

1 round, unsliced loaf sourdough bread
8-12 oz. cheddar cheese, thinly sliced
1 cup cooked, crumbled bacon
6 Tbsp. butter, melted
1 rounded Tbsp. unprepared ranch dressing mix
½ tsp. garlic powder
2 Tbsp. sliced green onions

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees.

Using a serrated knife, cut the bread lengthwise and width-wise without cutting through the bottom crust. It can be a little tricky slicing the second direction, but the bread is usually very forgiving.

Place on a foil-lined baking sheet. Insert the cheese slices between the cuts. Sprinkle crumbled bacon in between the slits and on the top.

Combine the melted butter, dry ranch dressing mix, and garlic powder in a small bowl. Drizzle it over the bread. Top it with green onions.

Wrap the bread in foil completely and place it on a baking sheet. Bake for 15 minutes.

Unwrap the bread and bake for an additional 5–10 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and the top is golden brown.

Tear pieces off and eat. Dip in prepared ranch dressing if desired.

Makes 8 servings

Brazilian Rubbed Salmon

In South Florida we live in a melting pot of different cultures. One of my friends from Brazil gave me this salmon recipe. I love the citrus flavor mixed with the sweet and spicy glaze.

Ingredients

4 (6-oz.) salmon fillets
2 Tbsp. fresh orange juice
1 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice
salt and pepper
1 tsp. orange zest
2 Tbsp. brown sugar
1 Tbsp. chili powder
1 garlic clove, minced
2 Tbsp. butter, melted

Instructions

Marinate the salmon in the orange juice, lemon juice, salt, and pepper for 20 minutes at room temperature. Discard any remaining marinade. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

In a small bowl, combine the orange zest, brown sugar, chili powder, and garlic. Rub well onto the marinated salmon.

Grease a foil-lined baking sheet with cooking spray. Place the salmon on the sheet and drizzle butter on top.

Bake for 14–18 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fillets. Garnish with lemon and orange wedges.

Makes 4 servings



S'mores Cups

My kids love to make s'mores, and to be honest it's an inherently sticky mess that I dread. Sometimes I want the s'more flavor without all that mess, and these s'mores cups are just the trick with their graham cracker crust, marshmallow center, and chocolate top.

Ingredients

½ cup butter, softened
¼ cup sugar
½ cup brown sugar
1 egg
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1¼ cups flour
1 cup graham cracker crumbs
1 tsp. baking powder
½ tsp. salt
½ cup chocolate chips
1 cup marshmallow fluff
2 (1.55-oz.) Hershey's chocolate bars

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Spray a mini muffin tin with cooking spray. In a large bowl, cream the butter and sugars until light and fluffy, for about 2 minutes. Add the egg and vanilla and mix until combined.

In a separate bowl, whisk together the flour, graham cracker crumbs, baking powder, and salt. Add the flour mixture to the wet ingredients a little bit at a time until just incorporated. Gently stir chocolate chips into the dough.

Spoon marshmallow fluff into a resealable plastic bag and snip off the corner.

Press one rounded teaspoon of dough into each muffin tin. Pipe a teaspoon of marshmallow fluff on top of the dough in each muffin tin. Take a teaspoon of dough and flatten it in the palm of your hand and place it on top of the marshmallow fluff, repeating with the remaining cups.

Bake the cups for 7–9 minutes or until light golden brown.

Let the cups cool for 3–4 minutes in the muffin tins, then gently press one Hershey's chocolate square on top of each cup. Continue to let them cool in the pan. Remove and serve.

Makes 2 dozen cups

