

Things I Cook

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Chapter 1

Introduction

These are recipes that I use when I want to cook. I decided to start documenting them.

Chapter 2

Entrées

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This chapter will mainly document entrées that I make.

American Cottage Pie

Time: 2 hours (45 minutes prep, 1 hour and 15 minutes cooking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 1 pound of fresh or frozen green beans
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds ground beef
- about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt for meat, to taste
- Pepper to taste
- 1 recipe of [Cream of Mushroom Soup](#)
- 2 pounds mashed potatoes (see [Mashed Potatoes](#) recipe)
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups cheese, grated

Hardware

- 2 quart pot to boil vegetables in
- Dutch Oven
- 9x13 casserole dish

Instructions

1. If you have not made the mashed potatoes, do that first.
2. Boil or steam 1 pound of green beans to the point where they are just a bit underdone.
3. Remove green beans from heat, drain water.
4. Brown the meat in a dutch oven, adding salt and pepper to taste.
5. Remove the meat from the dutch oven.
6. Drain grease from meat.
7. If you have not yet, make the recipe of [Cream of Mushroom Soup](#).
8. When the cream is almost to the desired thickness, add in ground beef and green beans. Stir to combine.
9. Remove soup and meat from heat.
10. Place the soup and meat mixture into the bottom of a 9x13 casserole dish.
11. Place the mashed potatoes in a flat layer on top of the meat.
12. Sprinkle the grated cheese to cover the potatoes.
13. Throw the entire dish in the oven, set to 350F.
14. When the cheese is melted and the rest of the dish is warm, remove and serve.

Notes

- Recipe is based on Cyndy Watt's recipe, however growing up we used canned cream of mushroom and green beans. Obviously we did NOT use instant mashed potatoes, as we were not barbarians.
- The core difference between a cottage pie and a shepherd's pie is the use of ground beef instead of ground lamb. This recipe works fine as a shepherd's pie with lamb instead. Be careful not to overcook the lamb, as it dries out fairly easily.
- I call this American cottage pie as it is covered in cheese, while a ?? is a meat and gravy layer under mashed potatoes that are crisped slightly, no cheese. This is basically how my mom made it growing up in Texas.

Boeuf Bourguignon

Time: 4 hours (30 minutes prep, 1 hours baking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 6 cups of water
- 2 slices of thick-cut bacon, cut into lardons (strips, 1 inch by $\frac{1}{4}$ inch)
- 1 Tablespoon olive oil
- A 3+ pound chuck roast, cut into 2 inch squares
- 1 carrot, sliced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ onion, sliced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper
- 2 Tablespoons flour
- 1 bottle of red wine. Something full-bodied, young and French. (Beaujolais works well)
- 2-3 cups beef stock
- 1 Tablespoon tomato paste
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon thyme (fresh or dried)
- 1 bay leaf, crumpled
- 1 recipe of [Oignons Glacés À Brun](#)
- 1 recipe of [Champignons Sautés Au Beurre](#)

Hardware

- Oven-safe stock pot
- Colander
- Sauce pan

Instructions

1. Place 6 cups of water in stock pot and bring to simmer over medium.
2. Place lardons (bacon strips) in water, simmer for 10 minutes.
3. Drain lardons and pat dry.
4. Throw water out.
5. Heat 1 tablespoon olive oil in stock pot.
6. Sauté lardons in oil over medium heat, 2-3 minutes (lightly browned, but not too crispy)
7. Remove bacon from stock pot, leave the fat and oil.
8. Increase heat to High, allow fat to get very hot, but not quite smoking.
9. Ensure the beef is dry, pat dry if necessary.
10. brown the beef in batches. Allow all sides to brown, and do not crowd the beef.
11. Add beef to the bacon.
12. Brown the sliced carrot and sliced onion, about 10 minutes.
13. Remove from heat, pour out the fat.
14. Put lardons and beef back in the stock pot.
15. Toss the beef with 1 teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper.
16. Sprinkle on 2 tablespoons flour, toss to coat the beef.
17. Set the stock pot, uncovered in a 450F oven, bottom third, for about 4 minutes.
18. Stir the meat around and allow to cook in the oven for another 4 minutes.
19. Remove the stock pot from the oven, reduce the heat to 350F.
20. Stir in one bottle of wine and 2 cups beef stock (really just enough stock to cover the meat, usually 2 cups).
21. Add 1 tablespoon tomato paste, 2 cloves minced garlic, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon thyme, and 1 crumpled bay leaf.
22. Stir to combine.
23. Bring the stew to a simmer on the stove top.
24. Cover the stew and place in the oven to stew for about 3 hours, until the meat is easily pierced with a fork.
25. If you have not pre-made the oignons and champignons (onions and mushrooms), this is a good time.
26. Once the meat is tender pour the stew through a colander into a sauce pan.

27. Wash out the stock pot real quick.
28. Return the solid part of the stew to the stockpot.
29. You should have at least 2-3 cups of sauce, just thick enough to coat a spoon.
30. If the sauce is not thick enough to coat a spoon, reduce it over medium-high heat until it is.
31. Place the oignons and champignons over the stew.
32. Skim fat off the sauce (though leave a touch for delicious flavor).
33. Pour the sauce over the stew.

Notes

- This is based on the recipe of Julia Child, Simone Beck, and Louisette Bertholle, as seen in

Mastering the Art of French Cooking, Volume 1, page 315.

- Main differences are slightly more wine, less bacon, no bacon rind (too hard to find in the states these days), and slightly different spice amounts (salt and pepper).
- Translates to "Beef bourguignon", this is a stew from the Burgandy region of France. Originally peasant food.
- While this is technically a stew, I have placed it in the entrées as I tend to eat it as a main meal, and on a plate, served over potatoes.
- Traditionally served with ??.
- I often serve it on top of ?? or even on top of ??.

Boiled Crawfish

Time: 20 minutes (5 minutes prep, 15 minutes cooking) Serves: 2

Ingredients

- Enough water to cover food (probably about 6 quarts)
- 5 pounds live (ideally Louisiana) crawfish and/or blue crabs
- 1 pound small red potatoes, whole
- 2 ears of corn, shucked and cut in half
- 1 cups Crab Boil Spice Mixture (see [Crab Boil Spice Mixture](#)) or 1 bottle of Zatarain's Crab Boil

Hardware

- 1 really large pot
- Slotted Spoon
- Second large pot, if using spice mixture versus crab boil liquid
- Strainer, if using spice mixture versus crab boil liquid

Instructions

1. Place 6 quarts of water (enough to cover the food) in the large stock pot.
2. Dump spice mixture into water, and let water come to a hard boil.
3. Place 1 pound potatoes and 2 ears of corn into the liquid. Allow to boil for about 10 minutes.
4. Add seafood to the water.
5. Allow crawfish to boil for about 8 minutes.
6. Turn off heat, and allow crawfish and vegetables to soak for another 6 minutes.
7. Either strain the food or pull it out with a slotted spoon.

Notes

- This is mostly my own recipe. While I've not yet tried a really large boil on my own (only ever been a guest), there is a recipe for 20 people in *Acadiana Profile's Cajun Cooking, Part 1*, page 191.
- Use leftover tails in [Étouffée](#).

Boiled Shrimp

Time: 20 minutes (5 minutes prep, 15 minutes cooking) Serves: 2-4

Ingredients

- 1-4 pounds whole, large (ideally Gulf) shrimp
- 1 cup Crab Boil Spice Mixture (see [Crab Boil Spice Mixture](#))
- 1-2 cups cocktail sauce (see [Cocktail Sauce](#))

Hardware

- 2 large pots
- Strainer

Instructions

1. Place 1 quart of water per pound of shrimp you are making into a large pot.
2. Dump spice mixture into water, and let water come to a hard boil.
3. When the water has good color from the spice, strain the water into another large pot, to remove the seeds and chunky mixture.
4. Let spiced water come to a

hard boil once again.

5. Add shrimp, and let cook for about 4 minutes.
6. Strain shrimp out of water.
7. Enjoy with cocktail sauce.

Notes

- While this worked well, Zatarain's is equally as good and much easier to use. I will likely just follow the Zatarain's boil instructions and use their mix.

Cajun Tourtière

Time: 2 hours (30 minutes prep, 45 minutes cooking, 45 minutes baking)

Serves: 6-8

Ingredients

- 2 Pounds ground pork
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped celery
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped green bell pepper
- 1 clove garlic, chopped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped parsley
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Teaspoon black pepper
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Teaspoon cayenne pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ Teaspoon crushed marjoram leaf
- $\frac{1}{8}$ Teaspoon ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{8}$ Teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 Tablespoons flour
- 2 beef bouillon cubes
- 1 cup hot water
- 2 pie crusts (see [Pie Crust](#) recipe)
- 1 egg

Hardware

- Dutch oven
- Pie dish

Instructions

1. Saute 2 pounds ground pork, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped onion, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped celery, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped green bell pepper, and 1 clove garlic until pork is browned and vegetables are soft, about 10 minutes in a dutch oven.
2. Stir in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup parsley, 1 teaspoon salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cayenne pepper, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon marjoram, $\frac{1}{8}$ Teaspoon ground cloves, and $\frac{1}{8}$ Teaspoon ground cinnamon.
3. Cover and simmer on low heat for about 30 minutes.
4. Drain excess fat from the dutch oven.
5. Stir flour into the meat mixture.
6. Dissolve 2 beef bouillon cubes into 1 cup hot water.
7. Add beef bouillon into the meat mixture.
8. Bring to medium-high heat, and allow mixture to begin to boil.
9. Allow mixture to boil for 1 minute while stirring constantly.
10. Remove from heat and set aside to cool completely.
11. If you have already made pie crusts, place one in the bottom of a pie pan.
12. Mound cooled meat mixture into the pie pan, and cover with second crust.
13. Seal edges by fluting the crusts together. No need to cut slits into the crust.
14. Brush top crust with egg.
15. Bake at 400F for about 45 minutes, until the crust is golden-brown.

Notes

- Based on Mrs. Hazel Gourgues' recipe, from Hahnville (St. Charles Parish), as seen in Acadiana Profile's Cajun Cooking: From the Kitchens of South Louisiana, Part 1, 1990.
 - Main differences are less celery, addition of green bell peppers, removal of mace, addition of cayenne pepper, use of homemade crusts (that's a given).
- While the traiditonal Tourtière is a Quebecois Christmas staple, this version is closer to the Acadian Tourtière. The spices are still very aromatic, however they have a cajun flair.
- Also works well with wild game, duck, chicken, or seafood.

Cigánypecsenye

Time: 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours (10 minutes prep, 45 minutes making fries, 30+ minutes making bacon, 5 minute cooking pork chops) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 4 thin pork chops, bone in or out (about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ pounds)
- 6 cloves garlic, diced
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups oil (vegetable works)
- 4 teaspoons Hungarian spicy paprika
- 2 teaspoon marjoram
- 4 teaspoon ground mustard seed
- 2 teaspoon coarse salt
- 1 teaspoon fresh cracked pepper
- 4 servings of French Fries (Recipe to be added someday)
- 4 slices of Szalonna (Hungarian style bacon), very thick cut, with rind
- Additional Hungarian spicy paprika to taste

Hardware

- Skillet
- Medium mixing bowl

Instructions

1. Put the 6 gloves of garlic, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups oil, 4 teaspoons of paprika, 2 teaspoons marjoram, 4 teaspoons ground mustard seed, 2 teaspoons salt, and 1 teaspoon of pepper into the mixing bowl.
2. Mix thoroughly.
3. Place the pork chops into the bowl, and make sure that there is oil and spices on all sides, and covering the pork chops.
4. Allow the pork chops to soak in the spice-oil while preparing bacon, occasionally spooning spices from the bottom back on top.
5. Take the 4 slices of thick cut szallonna, ensure that they have slits down the non-rind side, about every 1 inch.
6. Place the slices in the skillet at low heat.
7. Carefully raise the heat a small amount (between $\frac{1}{2}$ and 1 notch) every three minute, while flipping the szallonna.
8. Once the bacon is somewhat crispy, remove and set aside.
9. Cook the pork chops (probably about 2 at a time) for about 2 minute at a side in the fat.
10. Place all pork chops in a dish in the oven, covered, at low heat.
11. Fry the french fries in the fat.
12. Plate the fries, then place a pork chop on each pile.
13. Sprinkle additional paprika to taste over the pork chop.
14. Place a szallonna slice on each pork chop.

Notes

- Based partly on a trip to Budapest, partly on this recipe: <http://www.nosalty.hu/recept/egyszeru-ciganypecsenye>, with the following differences:
 - Less oil is used.
 - More paprika is added after cooking.
 - Hard for me to say, as my Hungarian is basically nill.
- FOR NEXT TIME: Try instead of ground mustard seed, cooking the chops without paprika, then spreading mustard and paprika on after cooking. This may be more authentic...
- "Cigánypecsenye" translates to "Gypsy Steak"
- "Szallona" is just Hungarian for "bacon", however when I

use that word in this recipe I am referring to a particular style of bacon I cannot hardly find in the states. It is still made from the pork belly, but is basically entirely just fat and rind, with none of the bits of meat strips typical in American bacon. I recommend googling "ciganypecsenye bacon" for examples. Regular American bacon can be used instead, made similar to the ?? recipe, but make it less crispy, so it cooks with the pork chop easier.

- The Szallona is cut along an edge to allow it to curl while cooking, and get more crispy edges, please see pictures online for examples.
- Be very careful cooking the mostly-fat bacon, as it can burn very quickly.

- If you manage to use the mostly-fat style szallona, I don't recommend eating the rind, instead eat each little slice off the rind.
- Concerning paprika: Hungarian paprika is (I'm quite convinced now) the best paprika in the world. While you can find it online, it's no substitute for the real thing. If you do not know where to get good paprika, please befriend a Hungarian (all of whom I've met are extraordinarily nice people) and ask them.
- I recommend "spicy" paprika, which is not terribly spicy really, it just means don't use "sweet" paprika, which is also not terribly sweet, they just taste different.

Cornish Pasty

Time: 1 hour 20 minutes (30 minutes prep, 50 minutes baking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 3 pie crust recipes (see [Pie Crust](#))
- 16 ounces potatoes, diced
- 8 ounces rutabaga, diced
- 4 ounces onion, diced
- 16 ounces skirt steak, sliced into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch wide strips, 3 inches long.
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 egg
- 3 teaspoons water
- 4 Tablespoons all purpose flour
- 2 ounces butter or clotted cream

Hardware

- Mixing bowl
- Small bowl
- Pastry brush (or your fingers)
- Fork for crimping
- Baking sheet

Instructions

1. Ensure that the triple pie crust recipe is ready, but split it into four equal parts and allow to rest in the fridge.
2. Pre-heat oven to 425F.
3. combine 16 ounces diced potatoes, 8 ounces diced rutabaga, 4 ounces diced onion, 16 ounces skirt steak strips, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper in a mixing bowl.
4. Combine 1 egg and 1 teaspoon water in a small bowl.
5. Roll out each piece of the pastry crust to a thin round, approximately 7 inches across.
6. Spread about $\frac{1}{4}$ of the filling, or as much as will fit on just less than half the crust on each piece of pastry crust.
7. Sprinkle 1 Tablespoon of flour over each pasty filling.
8. Cut 2 ounces of butter into many small pieces, spread several pieces into each pasty until it is all used.
9. Brush the entire circumference of the crust with the egg wash.
10. Fold over the pastry crust, and crimp along the edge.
11. Poke a small hole (less than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch across) in the top of the crust.
12. Use the rest of the egg wash to wash each pasty.
13. Place pasties on a baking sheet and bake at 425F.
14. About 10 minutes into the baking time, use a small spoon to drop in about $\frac{1}{4}$ - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of water into each pasty.
15. Bake for about 45-50 minutes total, until the pasties are golden brown on top, and the meat is cooked through.
16. Serve hot or cold.

Notes

- This is my own Cornish Pasty recipe, though it's pretty standard.
- Pasties are common in parts of Michigan, however they have deviated slightly from this. Often using carrots in addition to or instead of rutabagas.
- My main Michigan friend (Ben Loula) insists that up in those parts, a pasty is consumed with either a good brown gravy, or ketchup. Any given person eats the pasty with either one or the other, and anyone who eats with the other condiment is insane.
- Ketchup for life.

- Technically in order for a pasty to be "Cornish" it must be made in the Cornish area, with ingredients from local cows, and the meat must be at least 12.5% of the total weight.

Given that, all of mine are technically just pasties, not Cornish Pasties, but my style and ingredients are fairly authentic (though my pastry is better, I'd wager.)

Csirkepaprikás

Time: 2 hours (30 minutes prep, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 2 medium sweet onions, minced
- 2 Tablespoons lard
- 1 3-4 pound whole chicken, disjointed, washed, and dried
- 1 large, ripe tomato, peeled and chopped
- 2 heaping tablespoons sweet paprika
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 green bell pepper, sliced thin
- 1 tablespoon flour
- 1 teaspoon cold water
- 2 Tablespoons sour cream
- 2 Tablespoons heavy cream
- 1 recipe of [Galuska \(Nokedli\)](#)
- Additional sour cream for topping

Hardware

- 5 Quart stock pot with a good lid
- Small mixing bowl

Instructions

1. Cook 2 diced onions in 2 Tablespoons lard until soft, about 5 minutes, over low heat in stock pot.
2. Add disjointed chicken and 1 chopped tomato.
3. Stir in 2 heaping Tablespoons sweet paprika, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water, and 1 teaspoon salt.
4. Cook, covered, over low heat for 20 minutes.
5. Remove the lid and allow to cook for an additional 10 minute uncovered. This will allow the water and tomato juice to reduce some.
6. Remove chicken from the stock pot.
7. Remove the stock pot from the heat.
8. Mix 1 Tablespoon flour and 1 teaspoon cold water in small mixing bowl.
9. Add 2 Tablespoons sour cream to the flour/water mixture, stir until smooth.
10. Take about a half-ladle of liquid from the pot and stir into the sour cream mixture until smooth and liquidy. If it is not yet liquidy enough to pour, stir in another half-ladle.
11. Pour sour cream mixture into stock pot.
12. Return stock pot to low heat and add 1 sliced green bell pepper.
13. Allow juice and vegetables to cook over low heat for 5 minutes, this will allow the peppers to soften a little.
14. Replace chicken parts and cook until finished, covered, over low heat, about 20 minutes.
15. Keep warm until ready to serve, then whip in 2 Tablespoons heavy cream.
16. Serve over a helping of galuska, and top with additional sour cream.

Notes

- The recipe is from Gearge Lang's "The Cuisine Of Hungary", 1971 edition. Page 278.
 - Main differences are I have added water amounts to the recipe, doubled the paprika, added some steps dealing with mixing sauce with sour cream before mixing, added steps to make bell peppers softer, and clarified some steps.

- This is often called "Paprika Chicken" or "Chicken Paprikash" in English. In Hungarian it's also called "Csirke Paprikás", or, when served on *nokedli* (another name for *galuska*) it can be called "Csirkepaprikás *nokedlivel*".
- I highly recommend using the best sweet paprika you can find. Ideally you've either been to Hungary recently and have the good stuff, or have friends from there that can occasionally get you some. Store-bought paprika works alright, but is less flavorful.
- Note that the use of heavy cream in addition to sour cream is less common in modern Hungarian cuisine, however this used to be more common, makes for a creamier sauce, and is quite delicious. If you leave out the heavy cream, I recommend adding a little more sour cream instead.
- I tend to make the *galuska* as I'm doing some of the cooking of the sauce, as that part is fairly inactive.
- You add some warm sauce to the sour cream to get it warmer before it gets hot. This should help prevent curdling, as curdled sour cream would be too strong and not mix in well with the sauce.
- This would also be delicious with a side of boiled potatoes.

Egg Noodles

Time: 2 hours (1 $\frac{3}{4}$ hours prepping, 2 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces of all purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 3 eggs
- 3 quarts water
- 1 teaspoon salt

Hardware

- Counter top
- Fork
- Rolling pin
- Sharp knife

Instructions

1. Sift the flour and salt together with a fork.
2. Make a deep and wide well in the middle of the flour on a counter top.
3. Place all three eggs in the well in the flour.
4. Slowly mix the flour into the eggs to form a sticky dough. You may not use all the flour.
5. Stop mixing once you have a somewhat sticky dough, and begin to knead it on a flour-covered counter top.
6. Knead the dough until it is fairly smooth, but don't over work it or you won't be able to roll it flat enough.
7. Allow the dough to rest under a moist towel at room temperature for at least 30 minutes.
8. Cut the dough into 4 equal parts, leaving the other three under the towel.
9. Roll out the dough into a rough rectangle, until it is very flat (slightly thinner than a normal noodle, as they will puff a tad while cooking).
10. Cut the dough into strips (or whatever shape you want) about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch wide, and 10 inches long.
11. Place the sliced noodles under the towel as you work with each piece of dough.
12. Repeat with the other three pieces of dough.
13. Cook the noodles in about 2-3 quarts boiling water with 1 teaspoon salt mixed in, for about 1-2 minutes, until al dente.
14. Remove the pasta from the boiling water.
15. Eat with a sauce of your choice.

Notes

- This is a standard egg noodle recipe. While I have it in ounces, a common ratio is 100 grams of flour to each egg (ends up being about 10.5 ounces of flour for 3 eggs).
- While many people recommend a pasta roller and maybe cutter, I don't have one, so I've not really tried any.
- Pasta can be dried for storage and later use. I've not done that yet.
- Make sure that your surface and rolling pin stay lightly floured, in order to prevent sticking.

Étouffée

Time: 1 hour 20 minutes (15 minutes prep, 1 hour 5 minutes cooking) Serves:
4

Ingredients

- 1 recipe of [roux](#) (dark brown)
- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup sliced celery
- 1 cup chopped green bell pepper
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 3 green onions, diced
- Salt, pepper, and red pepper to taste (for meat)
- 1 pound of meat (shrimp, chopped chicken, or crawfish tails(see notes for crawfish))
- Stock to cover meat (about 2 cups, this can be chicken, vegetable, or my preferred, seafood stock)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon apple cider vinegar
- 1 splash of hot sauce (such as Tobasco)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper
- Dash of red pepper
- 1 recipe of [White Rice](#)

Hardware

- Dutch oven with lid
- Large spoon

Instructions

1. Make a dark brown [roux](#).
2. Throw in 1 cup onion, 1 cup celery, and 1 cup green bell pepper.
3. Allow vegetables to cook until just barely soft (about 5 minutes). This will absorb most of the roux.
4. Add in 4 cloves of garlic and 3 diced green onions.
5. Season raw meat with salt, black pepper, and red pepper.
6. Add raw meat to dutch oven.
7. Cover food in stock, about 2 cups.
8. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon apple cider vinegar, 1 splash of hot sauce, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon black pepper, and a dash of red pepper.
9. Stir to combine.
10. Cover étouffée with lid and allow to cook for about 20 minutes.
11. Remove lid and allow meat to finish cooking, while the liquid reduces to the desired level.
12. Taste and season food to desired level.

13. Server over white rice.

Notes

- This is my own recipe.
- "Étouffée" means "smothered", which is typically how the meat is cooked in the dish.
- For crawfish, assuming you are starting with cooked tails (such as leftovers from a boil) then add them in toward the last 5 minutes of cook-time, to prevent overcooking.
- Shrimp can be added in the last 10 minutes of cooking, as it will cook much quicker than chicken breast, and gets tough if overcooked.
- I prepare a nice roux base and use stock, which is not always seen in cajun recipes, however I refuse to use tomatoes.
- You can use a red wine for acidity rather than apple cider vinegar, however I've avoided this so far as I'm not much good at judging wine.
- You can use a lighter roux if you like, however I prefer a really dark roux.

Fried Chicken

Time: 11 hours (30 minutes prep, 9 hours brining, 1 hour 30 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 whole fryer chicken, about 4-6 pounds, disjointed (8 pieces)
- 1 recipe of [Chicken Brine](#)
- 3 cups buttermilk
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons kosher salt
- 3 cups of all purpose flour
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons paprika
- 2 Tablespoons cayenne pepper
- 1 Tablespoon black pepper, freshly ground
- 6-8 cups of vegetable oil, enough to make 1-2 inch deep pool in dutch oven.

Hardware

- 9x13 Baking dish with lid (or plastic wrap)
- wire rack
- 2 Mixing bowls
- 5-7 Quart dutch oven
- Frying thermometer
- Meat thermometer

Instructions

1. Disjoint chicken.
2. Remove skin from breasts.
3. Cut breasts into 3-4 large strips.
4. Place all chicken pieces in 9x13 baking dish.
5. Pour [Chicken Brine](#) over the chicken.
6. Cover with lid or plastic.
7. Leave in refrigerator for about 4-5 hours.
8. Turn all chicken over and leave in the fridge for an additional 4 hours.
9. Remove chicken to wire rack to drip dry a little, and ensure no peppercorns or bay leaves are stuck to the chicken pieces.
10. Combine 3 cups buttermilk and 1 Tablespoon salt in one mixing bowl.
11. Combine 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons kosher salt, 3 cups of all purpose flour, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons paprika, 2 Tablespoons cayenne pepper, and 1 Tablespoon black pepper in another mixing bowl.
12. Pour 6-8 cups oil in dutch oven to make a pool about 2 inches deep.
13. Heat oil to 350F, about medium-high on most stoves.
14. Drop chicken pieces in the flour, about 3-4 at a time. Use one hand to coat the chicken in flour.
15. Drop the coated chicken in the buttermilk mixture.
16. Use your other hand to coat the chicken in buttermilk.
17. Drop the wet chicken back in the flour to coat a second time.
18. Drop battered chicken in hot oil (oil should stay between 300F and 350F).
19. Fry the chicken for about 5 minutes on the first side.
20. Flip each piece of chicken.
21. Large dark meat should fry for an additional 15 minutes. White meat (wings and strips) should cook for about an additional 10 minutes.
22. All meat should reach an internal temperature of 165F.

Notes

- This is based on an Epicurious recipe, as seen here: <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/brined-fried-chicken-352449>

- Main differences are amount of cayenne, measurements are given in a more sane manner, thermometer is used to ensure safe meat temperatures, and breasts are deboned and split into strips.
- While this is a VERY different chicken than I had growing up, it's superior in most every way. Toto always made dry battered chicken, but brines and thick breading just makes birds better.

Grilled Cheese Sandwich

Time: 30 minutes (5 minutes prep, 25 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 8 slices of good bread
- 8 $\frac{1}{3}$ inch slices of good cheese
(about $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ ounces per slice)
- 4 Tablespoons of butter

Hardware

- Skillet
- Spatula

Instructions

1. Set the butter out to get near room temperature.
2. Spread butter on each slice of bread.
3. Heat a skillet to medium heat.
4. Place $\frac{1}{4}$ Tablespoon of butter in the skillet and allow it to melt.
5. Place a piece of bread, butter-side down, in the skillet, then cover with cheese, then top with another piece of bread, butter-side up.
6. Allow to grill at medium heat for about 5-7 minutes, until cheese is gooey and bread is browned.
7. Flip the sandwich and allow to cook for another 5 minutes until the top bread is browned.
8. Remove from the skillet, and repeat the above steps for each sandwich.

Notes

- I highly recommend using a really good bread, such as [White Bread](#), a good sourdough, or a nice Italian loaf. Good bread and cheese make all the difference in this.
- For cheeses, I typically use colby jack or provolone.
- As a variation on this, try the following:
 - Use good sourdough, mozzarella sliced thin, tomato sliced thin, turkey sliced thin, and a recipe of [Pesto](#).
 - Begin grilling the buttered sandwich per the norm, but with cheese and turkey.
 - After both sides are somewhat browned, open the sandwich and add tomato slices and spread pesto across one slice of toast.
 - Finish grilling the sandwich.

Pierogi

Time: 1 hour (10 minutes prep, 30 minutes resting, 20 minute cooking)

Serves: 4 (about 16 pierogi)

Ingredients

- 4 ounces (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) water
- 4 ounces butter
- 11 ounces all purpose flour (10 ounces for optional sweet dough)
- pinch of kosher salt
- 1 egg
- Choice of fillings from [Pierogi Fillings](#)
- 2 quarts water for boiling
- Sour cream (for topping)
- Optionally, for sweet dough, reduce flour as stated above, then add 1 Tablespoon confectioner's sugar. Keep 2 Tablespoons confectioner's sugar for topping.
- Optionally, for sweet pierogi, serve with a lightly whipped cream, or [Whipped Cream](#)
- Rolling pin
- Thin lipped glass, about 3-4 inches across
- Large stock pot
- Skillet
- Slotted spoon

Hardware

- Small sauce pan
- Mixing bowl
- Plastic wrap or damp towel

Instructions

1. Bring 4 ounces (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) water to a boil in a small sauce pan.
2. Place 1 ounce butter in the water to melt.
3. Combine 11 ounces flour and a pinch of kosher salt in a mixing bowl. (10 ounces for a sweet dough, then add 1 Tablespoon confectioner's sugar).
4. Slowly drizzle in water and butter into dry mix while stirring and combining with a spoon.
5. Place egg into dough mixture.
6. Knead by hands until smooth, about 5 minutes.
7. Allow dough to rest for 30 minutes before using.
8. Bring about 2 quarts of water to a boil in a stock pot.
9. Roll dough out until it's very thin, about a tenth of an inch thick (3 mm).
10. Use a thin lipped glass to cut out circles from the dough, you should get 16 or so dough circles.
11. Stretch out a circle a little, and add a heaping teaspoon of filling into the middle.
12. Fold over into a half circle and crimp the edges.
13. Repeat until all dumplings are put together.
14. Place dumplings into stock pot of boiling water.
15. Allow dumplings to cook until they float to the top, then cook for an additional 2 minutes.
16. While dumplings are cooking, bring 3 ounces butter to medium high heat in a skillet.
17. As the dumplings finish, drain briefly, then place in hot butter to fry, about 1-2 minutes per side. (No need to fry optional sweet pierogi, just drain, add confectioner's sugar, then serve with cream.)
18. Serve with sour cream (for savory pierogi).

Notes

- This is based on the pierogi recipe as seen here: <https://www.kwestiasmaku.com/przepis/ciasto-na-pierogi>.
 - Main difference is I converted grams to ounces, and increased the recipe size slightly.
- The best pierogi I've had were at Pierogi Plus, outside of

Pittsburgh, PA. If you are ever even close, please do yourself a favor and order a dozen (be warned, they are rather large).

- If you make ?? as a side, you can dip pierogi in leftover dill sauce instead of sour cream. It's delicious.
- You will end up with a bunch of extra dough with the holes in it. You can try and rest it, re-roll, and then make about 2 more really large pierogi. I've done this, but the dough is really thick and tough. Not too bad, but not great. Worth not wasting dough, I reckon.

Pierogi Fillings

Time: Varies Serves: 1 pierogi recipe

Ingredients

- Potato and Cheese
 - 1 potato (about 12 ounces), peeled and chopped
 - 3 ounces cheese, shredded
 - Salt and pepper to taste
- Sauerkraut (TO TRY)
 - 3 cups ??
 - 2 Tablespoons sour cream
 - 2 ounces onion, chopped
 - 4 Tablespoons fat for cooking (bacon fat, lard, or butter)
 - salt and pepper to taste
- Blueberries (TO TRY)
 - 16 ounces blueberries

Hardware

- Varies, do what you feel works.

Instructions

1. Potato and Cheese

- Boil potato pieces in water until tender.
- Drain potatoes.
- Add cheese, salt, and pepper.
- Stir until well combined.
- Use in savory [Pierogi](#)

2. Sauerkraut (TO TRY)

- Rinse the sauerkraut in warm water and squeeze dry.
- Chop sauerkraut finely.
- Cook the onion in the fat of your choice until slightly transparent.
- Add the sour cream and sauerkraut to the onion.
- Salt and pepper to taste.
- Cook all ingredients for about 10-15 minutes, until tender and the flavors are blended.

- Allow to cool in the fridge before use in a savory [Pierogi](#)

3. Blueberries (TO TRY)

- Place a tiny handful of blueberries into each dumpling.
- for use in sweet [Pierogi](#)

Notes

- Potato and cheese filling is my own, but it's really rather standard and common.
- Sauerkraut is taken from Genius Kitchen, as seen here: <https://www.geniuskitchen.com/recipe/homemade-sauerkraut-pierogies-perogies-old-fashioned>
- Blueberry recipe is pretty standard for sweet pierogi.

Quiche

Time: 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours (20 minutes prep, 1+ hours baking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 8 eggs
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. bacon
- 12 ounces frozen broccoli
- 1 cup fresh baby spinach
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tbsp olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Pie crust (see [Pie Crust](#) recipe)

Hardware

- Mixer or mixing bowl and whisk
- Pie dish
- Butter knife
- Sharp knife and spatula to cut and serve

Instructions

1. Make the pie crust per the standard recipe. As the dough rests in the fridge, do the following steps.
2. Fry $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. bacon in pan using normal method.
3. Remove bacon from heat and grease.
4. Crumble bacon.
5. Place 1 cup fresh spinach in skillet with olive oil, low-medium heat.
6. Add salt to taste, cook spinach till it's soft.
7. Chop cooked spinach.
8. Place 8 eggs and whisk till they have some air in them.
9. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk to eggs, mix in.
10. Add all frozen broccoli, spinach, and bacon crumbs to egg mixture.
11. Finish pie crust and place in pie dish.
12. Place filling in pie crust.
13. Bake at 375 for 50-60 minutes, until eggs are set (shake pan to check setness).
14. When done, poke the pie pan with a butter knife to check final setness.
15. Let cool for 5 minutes, serve.

Notes

- Adding other vegetables can be done, such as grilled bell peppers or onion, however more veggies is more moisture, which can make it take longer to set, which browns the crust more. Be wary of adding too many veggies.
 - Might can offset this by thawing the broccoli more, need to test.

Rakott Kelkáposzta

Time: 2 hours (1 hour prep, 1 hour cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 head of savoy cabbage, about 2 pounds
- 3 quarts water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 medium sweet onions, diced
- salt to taste
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil
- 2 cloved garlic, minced
- 1 heaping tablespoon sweet paprika
- 1 pound ground pork
- 100ml water (just a little shy of $\frac{1}{2}$ cup)
- 1 teaspoon vegetable oil
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup white rice
- salt to taste.
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups water
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sour cream (higher fat content the better)
- Additional sour cream on the side

Hardware

- 6 quart stock pot
- Tongs
- Colander
- Skillet with lid (or foil to cover)
- Small pan
- 9x9 Baking dish

Instructions

1. Peel all the leaves off the head of cabbage that you can, trying to keep them whole if possible.
2. Clean all of the leaves.
3. Cut out the bulk of the stem from each leaf by cutting a thin "V" shape down it.
4. Boil about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the cabbage at a time in 3 quarts of water and 1 teaspoon salt.
5. Allow the first batch of cabbage to boil until soft, about 15 minutes.
6. Remove the cabbage from the boiling water with tongs, place in colander to drain.
7. Continue cooking cabbage in this manner until it's all cooked, but also move on to other steps while doing that.
8. Meanwhile, saute 1 diced onion with some salt to taste in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil for about 9 minutes, until soft, over medium heat.
9. Add 2 cloves minced garlic and cook for an additional minute.
10. If the dish is looking really oily, drain some out, as the pork will make just a bit more, even being fairly lean.
11. Add ground pork, 1 heaping Tablespoon sweet paprika, and salt and pepper to taste.
12. Make sure the meat is cut into tiny pieces, not large chunks, as it will need to be spread later.
13. Cook the meat mixture for about 5 minutes, stirring frequently.
14. Add 100 ml water to the meat and stir to combine briefly.
15. Cover the meat and allow to cook for about 15 minutes.
16. Heat 1 teaspoon vegetable oil in a small pan over medium heat.
17. Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup rice (salt to taste) and cook in the oil for about 2 minutes, stirring constantly.
18. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups water to the rice, cover, and reduce heat to low.
19. Preheat oven to 350F.
20. Allow the rice to cook until all the water is absorbed, about 12-15 minutes.
21. Turn heat off, but leave rice on warm stove once the water is absorbed.
22. Grease the 9x9 baking pan.
23. Make a layer of cabbage across the bottom, about 3 leaves thick.

24. Spread half the rice over the cabbage.
 25. Spread half the delicious-smelling paprika meat over the rice.
 26. Make a layer of cabbage on top of that about 1-2 leaves thick.
 27. Spread the remaining rice over the cabbage.
 28. Spread the remaining meat over the rice.
 29. Make another layer of cabbage, about 2 leaves thick (or more if you have it and some room).
 30. Spread 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sour cream over the top (or whatever fits).
 31. Bake in the oven at 350F for about 30 minutes. Ideally some edges will have browned by then.
 32. Turn the oven to broil for 3-5 minutes, watching the sour cream carefully. You want bits of it to brown and become crispy, without burning the whole thing.
 33. Can be served with additional sour cream on the side.
- Main differences are I have added water and oil amounts to the recipe, added more paprika, reduced the cabbage (as that's all that will fit in my baking pan), and added steps with broiling, as just baking did not brown my sour cream well (may be the type of sour cream that is available here).
 - This recipe was sent to me by my good friend, Csaba. He continues to help me cook proper Hungarian food (or near as can be made in the States, anyhow).
 - The name "Rakott Kelkáposzta" means something like "Layered cabbage" near as I can tell, though the website calls it "Hungarian Layered Savoy Cabbage Cassarole".
 - If you can find savoy, I highly recommend it. It tastes a little more earthy than regular green cabbage, and is prettier. Green cabbage works fine as well. I don't recommend any other kind of cabbage, as the red tastes too different, and the others have too much stem-to-leaf ratio.

Notes

- The recipe is from Culinary Hungary, as seen here: <http://budapestcookingclass.com/hungarian-layered-savoy-cabbage-best-sweet-paprika-recipe-rakott-kelkaposzta/>
- I highly recommend using the best sweet paprika you can

find. Ideally you've either been to Hungary recently and have the good stuff, or have friends from there that can occasion-

ally get you some. Store-bought paprika works alright, but is less flavorful.

Tordai Kelpástétom

Time: 3 hours (1 hour prep, 2 hours cooking) Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 2 pounds of savoy cabbage (about 1 medium head)
- 3 quarts water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 dinner roll (see)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk
- 1 cup water
- Pinch of salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup uncooked white rice
- 1 pound ground pork
- 1 medium sweet onion, minced
- 2 Tablespoons lard
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried marjoram
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper
- 1 teaspoon paprika (sweet or spicy)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 4 Tablespoons bacon drippings
- $\frac{1}{4}$ pound double-smoked bacon (about 3 thick-cut strips)
- 8-10 Tablespoons chicken broth
- 1 Tablespoon paprika (sweet or spicy)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chicken broth
- 1 Tablespoon flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream

Hardware

- Stock pot
- Small pot with lid
- skillet
- 5+ Quart dutch oven

Instructions

1. Cut out core of cabbage and wash.
2. Cook the cabbage in enough lightly boiling water to float in (about 3 quarts) and about 1 teaspoon salt until about half soft, maybe 10 minutes.
3. Separate the cabbage into leaves.
4. Cut out thick stems from cabbage leaves.
5. Leave the dinner roll in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk, rotating it periodically to soak milk into all parts.
6. Bring 1 cup water to boil with a pinch of salt in a small pot.
7. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup rice to the boiling water in the small pot.
8. Reduce heat to low and cover with a lid.
9. Cook the rice until the water is absorbed, about 12 minutes.
10. Turn off the heat, but leave the rice on the warm element.
11. Shred the soaked dinner roll.
12. Mix cooked rice, 1 pound ground pork and shredded roll.
13. Sauté 1 minced onion in 2 Tablespoons lard in a skillet for about 4 minutes over medium heat.
14. Add 1 clove minced garlic to the onions and sauté for 1 more minute.
15. Mix onions and garlic into the pork mixture.
16. Add 2 eggs to the pork mixture.
17. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon dried marjoram, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper, 1 teaspoon paprika, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt to the pork mixture.
18. Mix to fully combine all parts of the pork mixture.
19. Coat the inside of the dutch oven with about 4 Tablespoons of bacon drippings.
20. Make a layer on the bottom of the dutch oven with about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the cabbage leaves.
21. Spread half of the pork mixture, completely covering the cabbage. Press the pork mixture down well to make a solid layer.
22. Make another layer with another $\frac{1}{3}$ of the cabbage leaves.
23. Spread the remaining pork mixture over this layer of cabbage, again pressing it down all over to make a very compact meatloaf-like structure.
24. Spread the remaining cabbage over the top in a flat layer.

- Press it all down as well as you can.
25. Place the bacon strips over the top of the whole cabbage casserole.
 26. Bake in a 350F oven, and baste with a couple tablespoons of chicken broth about 2-3 times while baking.
 27. Leave the casserole in the oven and switch it to high broil for about 3 minutes to help crisp the bacon.
 28. Turn the "pâté" from the dutch oven.
 29. If you like, you can make a sauce as follows (though I find the dish is often moist enough this is not strictly necessary.)
 30. Put the dutch oven on the stove top at medium heat with the leftover juice and drippings from the "pâté".
 31. Scrape up the drippings in the juice, add 1 Tablespoon flour and stir for a few minutes over medium heat to form a sort of blond roux.
 32. Add 1 Tablespoon paprika and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chicken broth.
 33. Bring to a boil while stirring, and allow to boil for about 4 minutes.
 34. Remove from heat.
 35. Add a few tablespoons of the warm sauce to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sour cream to bring the sour cream up to heat.
 36. If the sour cream is a liquid that can be easily poured, add it to the sauce. Otherwise continue to add a few tablespoons of sauce and mix it in each time.
 37. Combine the sour cream mixture with the sauce.
 38. Serve cross-wise slices of the "pâté" (so there are three thin pieces of bacon on each slice) with some sauce poured over it.

Notes

- The recipe is from George Lang's "The Cuisine Of Hungary", 1971 edition. Page 311.
 - Main differences are I have added water amounts to the recipe, clarified instructions, I use raw pork versus cooked pork, and changed sauce base from water to chicken broth.
- The name "Tordai Kelpástétom" means something like "Today-style Cabbage pâté" though it is not technically a pâté, this is what the Hungarian apparently

call it in the Southeast region from where it originates.

- While called a *pâté*, I consider more of a meatloaf made with pork, and layered between cabbage leaves, as the process of adding bits of bread to meat and spices is very similar to American meatloaf.
- If you can find savoy, I highly recommend it. It tastes a little more earthy than regular green cabbage, and is prettier. Green cabbage works fine as

well. I don't recommend any other kind of cabbage, as the red tastes too different, and the others have too much stem-to-leaf ratio.

- I highly recommend using the best paprika you can find. Ideally you've either been to Hungary recently and have the good stuff, or have friends from there that can occasionally get you some. Store-bought paprika works alright, but is less flavorful.

Slow Cooker Pork Carnitas

Time: 6 hours (15 minutes prep, 5 hours inactive cooking, 45 minutes cooking) Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 1 medium onion, chopped into chunks
- 2 cinnamon sticks
- 1 tablespoon oregano
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon cumin
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- 3-4 pound boneless pork butt, cut into 3 inch chunks
- 6 cloves of garlic, cut in halves
- 2 jalapeños, stemmed, quartered, and deseeded
- 1 large orange, cut in half (not peeled)
- 1 cup of lard, split into thirds

Hardware

- 6 quart slow cooker or similarly sized dutch oven
- Small bowl for mixing spices
- 2 forks (for shredding meat)
- Skillet

Instructions

1. Put the onion chunks and cinnamon sticks into the bottom of the slow cooker.
2. In a small bowl, combine 1 tablespoon oregano, $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon cumin, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1 teaspoon pepper.
3. Shake all pork chunks in spice mixture.
4. Place the meat and the remaining spices into the slow cooker, on top of the rough onion chunks.
5. Place the 6 garlic cloves and jalapeno chunks on top of the meat chunks.
6. Squeeze the oranges to get most of the juice into the slow cooker.
7. Place the orange halves on top of the whole kit and caboodle.
8. Cook covered on low for 6-7 hours, until tender (to the point where it could be shredded with forks.)
9. Remove pork from juice and vegetables.
10. Strain the vegetables from the juice, saving the juice for frying.
11. Shred the meat with two forks.
12. Place $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of lard into a skillet and heat to medium-high.
13. When the lard is hot, place about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the shredded meat spaced out in the skillet, along with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the juice from the slow cooker.
14. Allow the meat to become crispy on one side.
15. Serve the first $\frac{1}{3}$ of the meat while cooking the next batch. Continue this way until all meat is cooked.

Notes

- Traditionally served with tortillas, cilantro, and raw onion pieces as a small taco.
- Works well in any taco, nacho, quesadilla, or burrito.
- These are not a traditional carnitas recipe, as the pork is not braised in lard initially, however the flavors, spices, and final result are very close and very good.
- For a more traditional recipe, see Traditional Pork Carnitas. This recipe is designed to be very simple to cook.
- If you do not wish to serve the entirety of the carnitas at once, bag portions of it with the juice from the slow cooking process. Freeze bags of this, then to

cook, allow to thaw, then fry the meat and juice that was frozen with some lard.

- You can use vegetable oil

rather than lard, if you must.

- I tend to by a 7-8 pound roast, cut it in half, and make both this and a ??.

Slow Cooker Pot Roast

Time: 9 hours (30 minutes prep, 8 hours inactive cooking, 30 minutes active)

Serves: 4-6

Ingredients

- 2 pounds carrot sticks (or carrots, cut into small pieces)
- 4 pound chuck roast (the fattier the better)
- Salt, pepper, and garlic powder to taste
- About 1 cup of flour (for covering the roast)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oil for pan frying (bacon grease, vegetable oil... it's all good)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped dill
- $\frac{1}{8}$ cup chopped oregano
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter (whole stick)
- 6-8 peperoncini plus some juice (maybe $\frac{1}{4}$ cup), destemmed

Hardware

- Skillet
- Slow cooker
- Cutting board
- Two forks (for shredding)

Instructions

1. Place 2 pounds of carrot sticks in slow cooker (this should include just a bit of water, if not, add some water, maybe $\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
2. Salt, pepper, and garlic powder carrot sticks to taste.
3. Take your roast, add salt, pepper, garlic powder, and flour to every side.
4. Heat up $\frac{1}{2}$ cup oil in a skillet
5. Sear all sides of the roast in the hot oil for 1-2 minutes each, just to brown the meat.
6. Place seared roast on top of carrots.
7. Place $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter (1 stick) on top of roast
8. Add salt, pepper, garlic powder, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dill, $\frac{1}{8}$ cup oregano on top of butter.
9. Chop stems off of pepperoncini.
10. Place pepperoncini around the butter stick, on top of the roast.
11. Add a splash of the pepperoncini juice onto the roast
12. Close slow cooker and cook on low for 7-8 hours. Flip at the halfway-way point (the butter will be melted, don't worry about the pepperoncini falling in the mix, it's all good.)
13. Remove meat from juice when tender, shred with forks.
14. Remove carrots and pepperoncini from juice.
15. Place all juice into a skillet at medium-high heat, cook down a little to remove some of the water from the roast.
16. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$ cup flour and stir into the grease to create a light beef gravy.
17. Chop pepperoncini into bits.
18. Recombine carrots, pepperoncini, shredded roast, and gravy.

Notes

- Some people do not like pepperoncini. If so, use a splash of some other acid, such as distilled white vinegar.
- Searing the roast is not strictly necessary, however I do recommend it. Some people tell you to sear a roast to “lock in moisture”, that is nonsense. I sear it for 2 reasons. 1, I like the taste of browned meat, and it's easier to brown it in a skillet than cooking in it's own juice. 2, I like the flour on the outside to just start cooking with the hot oil, it's helps turn all the future-juice into a more gravy-like substance.

- While the addition of fat and pepperoncinis is similar to a “Mississippi Roast”, I refuse to

use packaged dressing mixes. I do like the additional fat, acid, and herb flavors though.

Chapter 3

Sides

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This chapter has to do with side dishes.

Arroz a la Mexicana

Time: 35 minutes (5 minutes prep, 30 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 3 Tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 cup long grain white rice
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cumin powder
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 ounces (about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a) yellow onion, diced
- scant $\frac{1}{2}$ cup tomato purée
- 2 cups chicken broth
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt

Hardware

- Sauce pan with lid

Instructions

1. Heat 3 Tablespoons vegetable oil in a sauce pan over medium heat.
2. Add 1 cup long grain rice, stir and move constantly until rice is lightly toasted, about 7-9 minutes.
3. Add 1 diced clove of garlic, 2 ounces of diced yellow onion, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon cumin powder. Stir to combine.
4. Cook for about 1 minute.
5. Add scant $\frac{1}{2}$ cup tomato purée and 2 cups chicken broth, stir to combine.
6. Bring the rice to a boil.
7. Cover the pan, lower heat to low, and let cook for 19 minutes.
8. Remove from heat, lightly stir and fluff with a fork, and serve warm.

Notes

- This is my own recipe, but is fairly standard.
- If you find this is too wet, reduce water a little, as the onion may add too much water to the dish.
- This is a standard side to many mexican and tex-mex dishes. Try ??.

Champignons Sautés Au Beurre

Time: 1 hour (10 minutes prep, 50 minutes baking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 2 Tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound fresh mushrooms,
washed, quartered, and dried

Hardware

- Skillet

Instructions

1. Ensure the mushroom quarters are well dried to ensure proper cooking without steaming.
2. Place the skillet over high heat.
3. Add 2 Tablespoons butter and 1 tablespoon olive oil.
4. Allow fats to heat. Make sure the butter gets past the foamy stage, but not quite smoking.
5. Add mushroom quarters, not crowded (likely need 2 or 3 batches).
6. Keep the pan shaking, the mushrooms should absorb the fats.
7. Keep the mushrooms moving for 4 or 5 minutes, until they start to release the fats back into the skillet.
8. remove the mushrooms when they are lightly browned. You want them to retain some good texture.

Notes

- This is based on the recipe of Julia Child, Simone Beck, and Louisette Bertholle, as seen in *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, Volume 1, page 513.
 - The book details other methods to prepare these, I highly recommend reading it.
- While I normally place these on top of [Boeuf Bourguignon](#), they can also be eaten as a side or combined with other vegetables.

Collard Greens

Time: 3 hours (30 minutes prep, 2 and $\frac{1}{2}$ hours cooking) Serves: 6

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound of bacon, about 4 thick cut slices
- $\frac{1}{2}$ sweet onion, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound tasso ham (see ??tassoHam)), diced
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 quart chicken broth
- 1 pound collard greens, stems trimmed out
- 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper

Hardware

- Skillet
- 4 Quart stock pot

Instructions

1. Cook bacon in skillet, at medium heat until somewhat crispy.
2. Set bacon aside, move bacon fat to stock pot.
3. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ chopped onion at medium heat and saute for 5-10 minutes, until slightly cooked.
4. Add diced $\frac{1}{2}$ pound tasso ham and 4 minced cloves garlic. Cook for 2 minutes.
5. Add 1 quart broth, 1 pound of collard greens, 2 tablespoons apple cider vinegar, $\frac{1}{2}$ table-spoon sugar, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon black pepper.
6. Stir all ingredients together and lower heat to low.
7. Cook at low heat for about 2 hours, until leaves are tender.

Notes

- the tasso ham tends to make this pretty spicy, use regular smoked ham instead if you don't want the spice, or want a more traditional flavor.

Dirty Rice

Time: 2 hours (45 minutes prep, 1 hour 15 minutes cooking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{4}$ pound chicken gizzards, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water
- 1 medium onion, chopped
- 2 ribs of celery, chopped
- 2 green bell peppers, deseeded and chopped
- 3 tablespoons of vegetable oil
- $\frac{1}{4}$ pound of chicken livers, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ pound ground beef
- 2 tablespoons parsley, chopped
- 1 beef bouillon cube, dissolved in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup hot water
- 1 tablespoon worcestershire sauce
- Salt, red pepper, and black pepper to taste
- 3 cups steamed [White Rice](#)

Hardware

- Dutch oven

Instructions

1. Simmer $\frac{1}{4}$ pound chicken gizzards in $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water for 20 minutes.
2. Remove gizzards and water from dutch oven.
3. Saute chopped onion, celery, and bell peppers in oil until soft, at least 10 minutes.
4. Add liver, gizzards, ground beef, and parsley.
5. Brown meat thoroughly at medium heat.
6. Add beef bouillon liquid and spices. Cover and simmer at low heat for 30 minutes.
7. Remove from heat, add to rice, mix well.

Notes

- Based on Mrs. Landen Alexander's recipe, from Brusly (West Baton Rouge Parish), as seen in Acadiana Profile's Cajun Cooking: From the Kitchens of South Louisiana, Part 1, 1990.
 - Main difference is the addition of simmering the gizzards first, in order to soften them up. Additionally, I changed the odd ratio of Holy Trinity from the original recipe.
- Haven't actually tried the gizzard simmering yet, need to cook this again.

Frijoles Refritos

Time: 10 minutes (10 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 3 Tablespoons lard
- 2 ounces (about $\frac{1}{4}$ of a) sweet onion, diced
- 2 cups cooked beans (such as [Pinto Beans](#))
- About $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the bean broth (fill measuring cup with beans, then with broth to 1 cup line)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- (optionally) queso cotija and tortillas for serving

Hardware

- Skillet
- Stiff plastic spatula (or a potato masher, if you have one)

Instructions

1. Heat the lard in the skillet over medium heat.
2. Cook the onion until slightly transparent, about 1 minute.
3. Add 2 cups of beans and the bean broth, as well as $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt.
4. Crush the beans with your spatula until you get the consistency desired.
5. Fry them for about 5 minutes, they will get thicker and lose liquid as this goes on.

Notes

- This is based on the "Mexican Authentic Recipes", as seen here: http://www.mexican-authentic-recipes.com/antojitos-frijoles_refritos.html
 - Main difference is slight portion differences, and I don't eat these with totopos.
- These are a great side for Mexican and Tex-Mex food.
- These are also an integral part of ??, both as a component and a side.

Galuska (Nokedli)

Time: 25 minutes (5 minutes prep, 10 minutes resting, 10 minutes cooking)

Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 egg
- 1 tablespoons lard
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $1 \frac{1}{2}$ cups flour
- 3 quarts water
- 1 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons lard

Hardware

- Medium mixing bowl
- 4 Quart stock pot
- Small spoon
- Slotted spoon
- skillet

Instructions

1. Mix 1 egg, 1 tablespoon lard, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water, and 1 teaspoon of salt.
2. Lightly mix in 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour (maybe 3 minutes of mixing). Do not overwork.
3. Let the dough rest for 10 minutes.
4. Bring 3 quarts of water and 1 Tablespoon of salt to boil.
5. Dip small spoon into boiling water to prevent sticking.
6. Use spoon to tear pieces of dough off, the size you want your galuskas to be.
7. Drop each piece into the water, do this quickly, so they all come out as close as possible.
8. When all galuskas have floated to the top remove them with a slotted spoon.
9. Drain all water from galuskas.
10. Heat 2 tablespoons lard in a skillet at medium heat.

11. Lightly toss the galuskas in heated lard.
12. You can salt them further if you like, however I commonly eat them with a salty stew or sauce, so I don't usually salt more.

Notes

- The recipe is from Gearge Lang's "The Cuisine Of Hungary", 1971 edition. Page 297. I have only broken up the amounts of ingredients and clarified and added cook times and temperatures to more steps.
- These are also called "nokedli" in Hungarian cuisine, and they are also pretty much "Spätzle" that is seen commonly in German cuisine.
- The size is up to you, though I tend to make them about a half teaspoon in size (each varies a little).
- These are commonly eaten with [Csirkepaprikás](#) or ??.

Green Bean Casserole

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes (30 minutes prep, 1 hour cooking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 3 quarts of water
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ ounces (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) all purpose flour
- 2 Tablespoons panko bread crumbs
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 2 medium yellow onions, sliced thinly into rings
- Non-stick cooking spray
- 1 recipe of [Cream of Mushroom Soup](#)
- 24 ounces green beans (frozen or fresh, but not canned)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoon salt

Hardware

- Stockpot
- Medium mixing bowl
- Cookie sheet
- 9x13 Baking dish

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 400F.
2. Bring 3 quarts of water and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoon salt to a boil in a stock pot.
3. Combine 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ ounces all purpose flour, 2 Tablespoons panko bread crumbs, and 1 teaspoon salt in a medium mixing bowl and whisk thoroughly.
4. Toss the sliced onion rings in the flour mixture.
5. Allow onions to rest for about 5 minutes.
6. Spray a cookie sheet with non-stick spray.
7. Evenly spread onion across cookie sheet.
8. Bake onion for about 30 minutes, turning and moving them every 5 minutes, until well browned.
9. Remove onions and allow to cool.
10. If you have not yet, make a recipe of [Cream of Mushroom Soup](#).
11. While the onions are cooking, blanch 24 ounces of green beans in 3 quarts of boiling water.
12. Drain the greenbeans, and rinse with cold water to prevent over-cooking.
13. Coat 9x13 baking dish with non-stick spray.
14. In the baking dish, combine greenbeans with cream of mushroom soup.
15. Top with onions.
16. Bake at 375F for about 15-20 minutes, until bubbly.

Notes

- This is mostly Alton Brown's recipe.
 - The main difference is I use my standard cream of mushroom soup, rather than his.
- This is immensely better than using canned soup and store-bought fried onions.
- I tend to serve this at Thanksgiving.

Mac and Cheese (Bechamel)

Time: 1 hour (15 minutes prep, 45 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 pound elbow macaroni (or shells... love me some shells)
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon table salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon black pepper
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups cheese, shredded (chedder, colby... as long as it melts)
- 4 slices bacon (optional)
- 16 ounces broccoli (optional)

Hardware

- Large pan
- Medium sauce pan
- Skillet (optional, for bacon)

Instructions

1. If you want to add bacon, cook it per the ?? recipe.
2. Combine about 4 quarts of water, 1 tablespoon olive oil, and 1 teaspoon salt.
3. Bring water to a good boil over High heat.
4. While cooking bacon, cook the 1 pound of macaroni to just before al dente (usually about 5-6 minutes) in the boiling water.
5. As the macaroni is cooking, melt the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter at medium-low heat.
6. Sprinkle in all of the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup flour, and stir to combine.
7. Keep cooking the flour and butter for 4-5 minutes to create a light roux. Do not stop stirring the roux for the entire 5 minutes.
8. Stir $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt and $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon black pepper into the roux.
9. Stir in the about $\frac{1}{5}$ of the milk.
10. Ensure the milk is well mixed with the roux, and that no clumps remain.
11. Continue to add in and fully combine milk $\frac{1}{5}$ at a time until it is all combined.
12. Add in cheese, about $\frac{1}{5}$ at a time, ensuring it is fully melted before adding in the next $\frac{1}{5}$ of cheese.
13. Drain the macaroni of water.
14. Add cheese sauce to the macaroni.
15. (optional steps): Steam the broccoli and stir in with the cheese.
16. (optional step) Chop the bacon into small pieces and stir in with the cheese.

Notes

- Based on the Genius Kitchen recipe: <http://www.geniuskitchen.com/recipe/easy-stove-top-macaroni-cheese-60350>
 - Main differences are more detail in making the roux.
 - Addition of bacon and broccoli.
- I usually either use cheddar or colby jack, both are delicious.
- For noodles I actually prefer shells to traditional elbows. I find the cheese gets stuck inside the shells, and you get little cheesy pockets.
- I don't always add bacon or broccoli, but sometimes it's nice.
- You can add 1 pound of browned ground beef with broccoli to get something akin to an entree, if you prefer.

Mac and Cheese (emulsified)

Time: 30 minutes (20 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooking) Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 1 quart water
- 1 pound elbow macaroni (or shells... love me some shells)
- 500 grams of milk
- 14 grams sodium citrate
- 575 grams cheese, freshly grated
- Salt and pepper to taste

Hardware

- Small stock pot
- Stainless steel sauce pan
- Wire whisk
- Skillet (optional, for bacon)

Instructions

1. If you want to add bacon, cook it per the ?? recipe.
2. Bring 1 quart water to a good boil over High heat.
3. While cooking bacon, cook the 1 pound of macaroni to just before al dente (usually about 5 minutes) in the boiling water.
4. As the macaroni is cooking, bring the 500 grams of water to a simmer in the stainless steel sauce pan.
5. Dissolve 14 grams of sodium citrate in the simmering water.
6. Add 570 grams of shredded cheese, a small handful at a time.
7. Whisk the freshly-added cheese heavily and allow it to fully incorporate into the liquid before adding more.
8. Continue the above 2 steps until all of the cheese is incorporated in the sauce.
9. Drain the macaroni of water, but do not rinse.
10. Add cheese sauce to the macaroni.
11. Season with salt and pepper.
12. (optional steps): Steam the broccoli and stir in with the cheese.
13. (optional step) Chop the bacon into small pieces and stir in with the cheese.

Notes

- Based on the Modernist Cuisine Silky Mac and Cheese recipe: <http://modernistcuisine.com/recipes/silky-smooth-macaroni-and-cheese/>
 - Main differences are it's scaled up to a pound of macaroni.
 - Slightly higher ratio of cheese to milk, to get a thicker sauce.
- Please note that this recipe does not scale, particularly the sodium citrate. Modernist Cuisine states that the water should scale up 93%, sodium citrate up 4%, cheese 100%, and pasta 84%, however this recipe is a little off from those numbers, so I recommend experimenting with larger batches.
- Cheese is an emulsion of the dairy and the oily fats. Normally when heat is applied (cheese is melted) this emulsion breaks down. This results in oily cheese which is less than ideal. This recipe is based on the idea of adding an emulsifier to help hold that emulsion even

under higher heat. This allows us to create a liquid cheese (like velveeta), but it tastes like good quality cheese.

- While cheddar is traditional, this works well with most melty cheeses (nothing too soft or too hard), think colby jack, cheddar, or even pepper jack. Avoid soft cheeses like brie, and hard cheeses like cotija.
- The tastier the cheese, the tastier the end sauce.
- Sodium citrate is one of many emulsifiers, however it's easy to find on Amazon. Sodium Phosphate should work in theory, and is used in things like Land o' Lakes American Extra Melt, however it's not as readily available. Sodium citrate can also be found in the kosher section of the grocery store sometimes, however it is named "sour salt". Check the ingredients to make sure it is pure sodium citrate, and not citric acid, which will not work.

Mashed Potatos

Time: 45 minutes (15 minutes prep, 30 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 3 pounds potatos, peeled and chopped into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch pieces
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons black pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ table-spoon sized pieces
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour cream

Hardware

- Large Pot (at least 4 quarts)
- Fork

Instructions

1. Start about 3 quarts of water boiling in a large pot.
2. Place potato chunks into water and allow to boil until soft, about 15 minutes.
3. Drain water from potatoes, then return potatoes to pot.
4. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter into potatoes.
5. Add 2 teaspoons salt and $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons black pepper (more or less to taste).
6. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sour cream to potatoes.
7. Mash potatoes with a fork, stirring and mixing in all ingredients at the same time.

Notes

- Recipe is based on Cyndy Watt's, who taught me a lot of things about cooking growing up.
- If you refuse to use a fork, a stand mixer, hand mixer, or that silly wavy wire thingy for mashing all work just fine.
- You can leave different amounts of chunks in the final potatoes, per your preference, however for dishes such as [American Cottage Pie](#) I prefer very smooth potatoes.
- These are especially delicious with [Country Gravy](#) or ?? if you'd rather.

Oignons Glacés À Brun

Time: 1 hour (10 minutes prep, 50 minutes baking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 2 cups water
- 20-25 small white onions
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons butter
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons olive oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup red wine or beef stock
- 4 parsley sprigs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ bay leaf
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon thyme

Hardware

- Sauce pan
- Skillet
- Small baking dish (big enough to hold all onions in one layer)
- Cheesecloth
- Butcher twine

Instructions

1. Get water to boiling in sauce pan.
2. Place onions in boiling water for 20 seconds.
3. Remove onions from heat.
4. Snip the very tip off of each side of each onion.
5. Remove the outer skin from each onion.
6. Cut out the tiny hard rooty side of the onion.
7. Get $1 \frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons butter and $1 \frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons olive oil to bubbling in the skillet.
8. Sauté the onions over medium heat, keep them constantly moving to brown them as evenly as possible.
9. Place the onions and the fats into the small baking dish.
10. Pour the liquid over the onions.
11. Place 4 parsley sprigs, $\frac{1}{2}$ bay leaf, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon thyme into the cheesecloth and tie closed with butcher twine.
12. Place herb bouquet in liquid.
13. Set dish uncovered in in 350F oven (325F works too if you are making these with [Boeuf Bourguignon](#)).
14. Bake for about 25 minutes.
15. Turn the onions over once.
16. Bake for another 25 minutes.
17. The onions should be tender but retain their shape.

Notes

- This is based on the recipe of Julia Child, Simone Beck, and Louisette Bertholle, as seen in *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, Volume 1, page 483.
 - The book details other methods to prepare these, I highly recommend reading it.
- Translates to "Brown-Braised Onions".
- While I normally place these on top of [Boeuf Bourguignon](#), they can also be rolled in 1 Tablespoon butter with a Tablespoon minced parsley. This is called "Petits Oignons Persillés", or "parslied Onions".

Pento Beans

Time: 3 hours 30 minutes (10 minutes prep, 3 hours 20 minutes cooking)

Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 32 ounces pento beans
- 16 cups water (8 cups for a quick boil, 6 for cooking)
- 5 ounces (about $\frac{1}{2}$ of a) sweet onion, large chunks
- 2 cloves garlic, whole
- 2 Tablespoon salt

Hardware

- Large stock pot with lid

Instructions

1. Place 32 ounces pinto beans and 8 cups water in a large stock pot.
2. bring to a rapid boil, and cook for 2 minutes.
3. Remove from heat and allow to sit, covered, for one hour.
4. Rinse beans out.
5. Add 6 cups water to the beans.
6. Add 5 ounces onion, 2 cloves garlic, and 2 tablespoons salt.
7. Allow to simmer, covered, for about 2 hours (until tender).
8. Remove onion and garlic before serving.

Notes

- This is my own recipe, but is fairly standard.
- These are not super flavorful on their own. I tend to turn them into ?? or [Frijoles Refritos](#) (both are great sides for Mexican and Tex-Mex food).
- This is a really standard way to cook beans, and will work with most beans.
- You can soak the beans over night rather than doing the initial boil. Both ways make for good final beans.

Queso Botanas

Time: 30 minutes (10 minutes prep, 20 minutes cooking) Serves: Queso for 2 botanas

Ingredients

- 15 ounces milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces sodium citrate
- 30 ounces american cheese, shredded
- Optionally, for queso as a dip, grilled onions and peppers.

Hardware

- Sauce pan
- Whisk

Instructions

1. Bring 30 ounces milk to a simmer in a sauce pan.
 2. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces sodium citrate and whisk to combine.
 3. Add shredded american cheese, , a small handful at a time.
 4. Whisk the freshly-added cheese heavily and allow it to fully incorporate into the liquid before adding more.
 5. Continue the above 2 steps until all of the cheese is incorporated in the sauce.
 6. When hot this cheese is liquid, if it cools it becomes almost the consistency of Velveeta. You want something in between for botanas. Liquid is perfect for queso.
 7. If you want to use this queso as a dip, which is delicious, and my goto queso dip, then I recommend grilling some pieces of onion and bell peppers, then combining with the liquid cheese.
- The main difference is that this cheese is MUCH thicker than that, and I only use American cheese for botanas.
 - As the name implies, this is a queso I primarily use as a component of my ??.
 - If you want queso for dip, and not for botanas, then using a cheese other than American makes sense. Maybe something like queso oaxaca (though American also works for this). I often make this recipe, then use half on botanas, and half as dip.
 - In the Rio Grande Valley, where botanas originate and are plentiful, nearly every single restaurant uses "Land O' Lakes' American Extra Melt". This is the go-to cheese for good quesos and botanas. The issue is that Land O' Lakes does not sell this to individuals. They only sell it in crates with 6 boxes of 5 pound blocks each. I've never had the opportunity to need 30 pounds of cheese at once, so I set out to re-create it from scratch. This is about as close as you can get.
 - American Extra Melt is basically high quality American cheese, with added emulsifiers

Notes

- This technique is the same as the [Mac and Cheese \(emulsified\)](#), as I learned from Modernist Cuisine.

to help it stay emulsified as it heats up.

- Growing up I always thought "The cheese on this botana feels like the consistency of velveeta, but tastes really good." It wasn't until I called Taco Ole and Treviño's that I learned that most places are us-

ing this one brand and type of cheese, which is hard to find.

- Much like the Mac and Cheese, the quality of cheese put in determines the quality coming out. Please buy a good American cheese from your local cheese shop or deli. It will help immensely.

Sweet Potato Casserole

Time: 55 minutes (10 minutes prep, 45 minutes cooking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 48 ounces sweet potatoes, peeled and chopped
- 4 quarts water
- 2 Tb butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon grains of paradise (ground)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon table salt
- 1 Tb butter for pan
- 4 Tb butter, softened for streusel
- 2 ounces (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cups) brown sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) all purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon grains of paradise (ground)
- 2 ounces (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup) chopped pecans
- 2 ounces (about 3 cups) mini marshmallows, divided

Hardware

- Stock pot
- Medium mixing bowl
- 9x13 baking dish

Instructions

1. Place 48 ounces peeled and chopped sweet potatoes in a stock pot, and cover with water (about 4 quarts).
2. Bring to a boil and cook until tender, about 6 minutes.
3. Drain the water.
4. Add 2 Tablespoons butter, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup milk, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon grains of paradise, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon table salt.
5. Mash the potatoes.
6. Preheat oven to 375F.
7. Spread 1 Tablespoon of butter to coat inside of 9x13 baking dish.
8. Spread the mashed potatoes in the baking dish.
9. Prepare the streusel by combining 4 Tablespoons softened butter, 2 ounces brown sugar, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces all purpose flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon grains of paradise, and 2 ounces chopped pecans in a mixing bowl.
10. Stir until combined.
11. Sprinkle the top of the potatoes with streusel and marshmallows evenly.
12. Bake until heated through, about 10 minutes.

Notes

- This is my own recipe.
- If you bake near the top heating element, the marshmallows will get slightly browned and delicious.
- I tend to serve these at Thanksgiving.
- The Grains of Paradise can be omitted if you can't find them, but I think they add a delicious spiced flavor to the dish. I highly recommend finding some of you can.

White Rice

Time: 35 minutes (5 minutes prep, 30 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 cup uncooked rice
- 2 cups water
- 1 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 teaspoon salt

Hardware

- Sauce pan with lid

Instructions

1. Mix 1 cup uncooked rice, 2 cups water, 1 tablespoon oil, and 1 teaspoon salt in the sauce pan.
2. Bring water to a boil over high heat.
3. As soon as the water is boiling, reduce heat to medium.
4. As soon as the water is at the same level as the rice, reduce the heat to low and cover with lid.
5. Allow the rice to cook covered for another 20 minutes.
6. Remove from heat and allow the rice to sit for 5-10 minutes.

Notes

- This is the rice recipe as seen in Acadiana Profile's Cajun Cooking: From the Kitchens of South Louisiana, Part 1, 1990.
 - My only difference is I pretty much always use oil over butter.
- If you need more rice at a time, just ensure that there is enough water to cover the rice by about one joint of your index finger. Increase oil and salt, but not proportionate to this recipe. Experiment for larger batches of rice.

Chapter 4

Soups and Stews

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This chapter will detail soups, stews, bisques, chowders... all that jazz.

Broccoli Cheddar Soup

Time: 40 minutes (10 minutes prep, 30 minutes cooking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- Double recipe of a white [roux](#)
- 32 ounces (4 cups) heavy cream
- 2 quarts chicken broth
- 4 bay leaves
- Salt and black pepper to taste (maybe $\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 teaspoon of each)
- 3 heads of broccoli, cut into small florets
- 12 grams sodium citrate (optional)
- 20 ounces medium sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

Hardware

- Stock pot
- Ladle

Instructions

1. Make the double recipe of white roux in the stock pot.
2. As soon as the white roux has cooked for it's 5 minutes and has just begun to change color, add in 32 ounces (4 cups) heavy cream.
3. Stir to combine for about 3 minutes, this will likely bubble and fizzle for a second.
4. Add 4 bay leaves and salt and pepper to taste.
5. Add 3 heads of broccoli florets.
6. Allow soup to come to a slow simmer over medium-low heat.
7. Stir soup occasionally for the next 20-25 minutes, until broccoli is nearly as soft as you want it.
8. Add in 12 grams sodium citrate and stir to combine.
9. Add 20 ounces shredded medium cheddar and stir to combine.
10. At this point the soup should be delicious.

Notes

- This is my own recipe, but everything except the sodium citrate is pretty standard.
- This recipe can be cut in half, except the sodium citrate should probably only be recuded to about 10 grams.
- The sodium citrate acts as an emulsifer with the cheese, which helps the soup not seperate on re-heating. Makes the leftovers nicer.
- You could add well-boiled potatoes or bits of carrots, they are delicious in this.
- Some people prefer flecks of broccoli, or even use blender to turn it all into tiny green specks. I don't care for that as much. Do what you want.
- Some people use velveeta for this, I find a good cheddar melts just fine, and tastes better.

Chicken And Dumplings

Time: 40 minutes (15 minutes prep, 25 minutes cooking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 1 recipe of [Chicken Broth](#),
about 2 quarts.
- a double recipe of [Pie Crust](#)
- 2 cups milk
- heaping Tablespoon of corn
starch
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- 1 chicken, deboned and cooked
(from broth recipe, usually),
about 4 pounds

Hardware

- Stock pot
- Small mixing bowl

Instructions

1. Heat broth to a simmer (or leave it at a simmer if you've just made the broth)
2. Roll out the double pie crust to about 25-50% thicker than normal.
3. Cut the pie crust into dumplings, about 2x1 inches.
4. Place dumplings into the simmering broth until you have as many as you want in the soup.
5. Allow dumplings to cook at a simmer for 10 minutes.
6. Combine 2 cups milk with 1 heaping Tablespoon corn starch in a small mixing bowl.
7. Stir milk and corn starch until perfectly smooth.
8. Add milk to soup, stir until thickened slightly, about 10 minutes.
9. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
10. Add chicken into each bowl and pour soup over it.
11. Once soup has cooled a bit, you can add the rest of the chicken to the pot to store leftovers.

Notes

- This is my mom's recipe, Cynthia Watt.
 - The only difference is I make my broth and pie crust per the referenced recipes, rather than just boiling chicken in water. My mom's pie crust is just flour, salt, water, and shortening. No lard or butter.
 - Additionally, growing up my mom would only use about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the chicken meat in the soup. $\frac{2}{3}$ would go into any other meal, and the bones would be boiled with any remaining attached meat scraps to make more broth, which she would use to cook chicken and rice in the oven (with just the scraps on the bones). This would net us three meals for our large family with just one chicken... ate a lot of chicken growing up.
- I like my chicken and dumplings moderately thick, with a lot of pepper. Just like mama makes.

Chicken Broth

Time: 3 hours 5 minutes (5 minutes prep, 3 hours cooking) Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 1 whole chicken, about 5 pounds
- 1 onion, in quarters
- 2 ribs of celery, cut into quarters (no white ends)
- 2 carrots, cut into quarters
- 2 sprigs thyme
- 2 bay leaves
- 10 peppercorns
- optional, other herbs you like. I tend to add a couple sprigs of sage or rosemary.
- Enough cold water to cover the ingredients, about 2 quarts

Hardware

- Stock pot with lid
- Cheesecloth
- Strainer or colander

Instructions

1. Place all ingredients into the pot, and cover with cold water.
2. Place on a burner and bring to a slow boil.
3. Simmer for about 2-3 hours, skimming the foam and fat off the top occasionally.
4. Strain the broth through cheesecloth in a strainer.
5. Remove chicken from bones for use in other meals.
6. Allow broth to cool, then store in the fridge or freezer.

Notes

- This is my own recipe, but everything is pretty standard.
- I use this as a base for many other sauces and soups.
- You can remove the meat, and throw the carcass back

in the broth to cook for up to 10 hours or so. This will be more flavorful, but I don't feel it's worth the added time/electricity. When I do this, I usually throw the whole things in a slow cooker over night (after removing the meat, that is).

- This is one recipe where the French and American technique are about identical. I learned broth from my mom, so I use the English name. In French this would be called "bouillon de poulet", I believe.
- Interesting to note that "bouillon" is French for broth, though in America a "bouillon cube" means strictly a dehydrated cube of meat or vegetable stock, and we don't tend to use "bouillon" as a word beyond that. Not sure why we didn't just call them "Broth Cubes" or "Stock Cubes" like most of the world.

Chili Con Carne

Time: 10 hours (30 minutes prep, 1 hour cooking, 8 hour inactive cooking)

Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 2 teaspoons oil
 - 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt
 - 3 pounds stew beef
 - 3 cups (24 ounces) chicken stock
 - 3 Tablespoons masa harina
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water
 - 1 medium tomato, chopped
 - 1 small red onion, chopped
 - 1 green bell pepper, chopped
 - 1 Tablespoon tomato paste
 - 1 Tablespoon [Chili Powder](#)
 - 1 teaspoon ground cumin
 - Toppings (optional), such as shredded cheese, sour cream, chives, slices fresh peppers, onions, crackers, and always [Cornbread](#)
- Small mixing bowl
 - Slowcooker (or enameled dutch oven)

Hardware

- Medium mixing bowl
- Large skillet
- Another Medium mixing bowl

Instructions

1. Combine 2 teaspoons cooking oil and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt in a large mixing bowl.
2. Add 3 pounds stew beef and mix all around to coat lightly with oil and salt.
3. Heat a large skillet (or dutch oven if using one) over high heat.
4. Brown meat about 1-2 minutes per side in 3 or 4 batches (don't crowd the meat or the steam will prevent proper browning).
5. Place each batch in another mixing bowl while working on each new batch.
6. When all meat is browned, add 3 cups chicken stock to the skillet and scrape the bottom to deglaze the skillet.
7. Pour the chicken stock into the slow cooker (or leave in dutch oven if cooking that way).
8. Combine 3 Tablespoons masa harina with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup water to make a heavy slurry.
9. Add in the browned meat, 1 chopped tomato, 1 chopped bell pepper, 1 chopped red onion, masa slurry, 1 Tablespoon tomato paste, 1 Tablespoon chili powder, and 1 teaspoon ground cumin.
10. Stir to combine all ingredients.
11. Allow to cook over low heat, covered, for about 7 hours.
12. Remove lid and stir 2-3 times during cooking.
13. Allow to cook on High for the last hour.
14. If using a dutch oven, cook in the oven at 250F for about 6 hours covered, removing to stir 2-3 times during cooking.
15. If it has not reduced enough, consider adding more masa slurry, or cooking over slightly higher heat (masa will thicken, heat will evaporate water).
16. Serve with warm [Cornbread](#), sour cream, cheese, whatever you want.

Notes

- This is mostly my own recipe after quite a few experiments and efforts to make chili.
- While I find beans in chili to be delicious, I plan to add a separate recipe for chili with beans, as that is not really traditional, nor is it proper Texan.
- I try to keep very little tomato in this, as I've made batches that were MUCH too acidic in the past. If it becomes too acidic, try adding some a large

pinch of baking soda and stirring to combine.

- Masa is used as a traditional thickener in southern Texas

cooking, but you could replace it with corn starch or something. I really like the flavor of masa, so I try to get and use that when I make chili.

Cream of Mushroom Soup

Time: 30 minutes (10 minutes prep, 20 minutes cooking) Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 1 recipe of light [roux](#)
- 8 ounces mushrooms, sliced
- 16 ounces (2 cups) heavy cream
- salt and black pepper to taste
(maybe $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon of each)

Hardware

- Stock pot
- Ladle

Instructions

1. Make the light roux per the standard recipe.
2. Add 8 ounces sliced mushrooms to the pan.
3. Add 16 ounces (2 cups) heavy cream.
4. Stir to combine, until thick-
5. Salt and pepper to taste.

ened.

Notes

- This is my own recipe.
- I tend to use this in other recipes, such as [American Cottage Pie](#) and [Green Bean Casserole](#).

roux

Time: 45 minutes (Cooking between 5 and 45 minutes) Serves: 1 roux

Ingredients

- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil (or butter)
- 6 tablespoons flour (or enough so it looks right)

Hardware

- Skillet
- Whisk

Instructions

1. Place 4 tablespoons of oil in the skillet at medium-high heat.
2. Allow oil to come to heat (but not smoking).
3. Place about 6 tablespoons of flour into the hot fat.
4. Whisk the roux in the skillet constantly for a couple minutes until it is just off-white.
5. Lower heat to medium-low and stir until the roux is at the level you need (between 5 and 45 minutes).

Notes

- This is a basic roux, used as the base for many cajun dishes, as well as some other sauces.
- Roux can vary in color, from white, blond, brown, to dark brown. A white roux is

just barely cooked flour, takes about 5 minutes total. Blond roux takes about 10-15 minutes to cook. Brown roux is 20-30 minutes, and dark brown is 35-45 minutes of cooking.

- White roux is still a bit flour-y, good base for milky sauces and chowders.
- Blond roux has a lighter flavor than brown rouxs, good base for lighter seafood.
- I never really use brown roux, but it's between blond and dark brown. Some people find dark brown too strong or too annoying to make.
- Dark brown is my favorite. It has a rich, dark color, has a slight nutty taste, and adds a great depth of flavor to any dish. This is my most commonly-used roux, especially for cajun cooking.

Tomato Soup

Time: 35 minutes (5 minutes prep, 30 minutes cooking) Serves: 6

Ingredients

- A recipe of a white [roux](#)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ sweet onion, chopped
- 28 ounces crushed tomatoes
(san marzano, ideally)
- 16 ounces ($\frac{1}{2}$ quart) chicken
broth
- salt and black pepper to taste
(maybe $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon of each)

Hardware

- Stock pot
- Ladle
- Blender

Instructions

1. Make the white roux in the stock pot.
2. As soon as the white roux has cooked for it's 5 minutes and has just begun to change color, add in $\frac{1}{2}$ sweet onion, chopped.
3. Keep the onions in the roux moving while they cook over medium-low heat for about 5 minute, until the onions are slightly softened.
4. Add 28 ounces crushed tomatoes to the soup.
5. Add 16 ounces chicken broth to the soup.
6. Stir to combine all parts.
7. Add salt and pepper to taste.
8. Allow soup to come to a simmer, covered, over medium heat.
9. Allow soup to simmer for 25 minutes, stirring occasionally, over low heat, covered.
10. Once the soup is simmered and all the flavors have blended, remove part of it to the blender.
11. Ensure the blender is no more than $\frac{3}{4}$ full.
12. Blend until the onion chunks are entirely blended.
13. Continue to do this with the soup until it is all blended.

Notes

- This is my own recipe, but everything is pretty standard.
- Highly recommend dipping a [Grilled Cheese Sandwich](#) in this.
- If the soup tastes too acidic, you can counter this with a teaspoon of baking soda. Mix it in, taste, and add $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon at a time after that until it tastes right. Sugar and butter can also be added.
- San Marzano tomatoes are preferred as they are sweeter and less acidic than other tomatoes, but really any good sauce tomato will work.

Chapter 5

Sauces and Stuffings

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This chapter has to do with sauces and stuffings.

Alfredo Sauce

Time: 20 minutes (5 minute prep, 15 minutes cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 pound Peeled shrimp or chicken breast
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Garlic powder
- Butter or olive oil to saute
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter
- 2 cup heavy whipping cream (higher fat content is better)
- 3 cloves garlic, crushed or minced
- 3 cups fresh-grated parmigiano reggiano
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup fresh chopped oregano, parsley, or marjoram

Hardware

- Skillet

Instructions

1. Add salt, pepper, and garlic powder to 1 pound shrimp or chicken
2. Saute shrimp in butter. Use olive oil for chicken.
3. Set aside protein.
4. In a skillet or saucepan, melt $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter at medium-low heat.
5. Add 2 cups heavy cream, and simmer for 5 minutes while stirring.
6. Add 3 cloves minced garlic to sauce, stir briefly.
7. Add 3 cups grated cheese, stir cheese into sauce until the mixture is smooth.
8. Mix in $\frac{1}{4}$ cup oregano (or other green).
9. Serve over protein source, usually on pasta (fettucini)

Notes

- I tend to use really good heavy cream and actual parmigiano reggiano, as opposed to the faux American Parmasean Cheese. The taste of the sauce really benefits from good ingredients.

Classic Barbecue Sauce

Time: 20 minutes (5 minutes prep, 15 minutes cooking) Serves: 8 (about 3 cups of sauce)

Ingredients

- 2 cups ketchup (see ??)
- 1 cup water
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup white vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup white vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup brown sugar
- 2 Tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 Tablespoon chile powder
- 1 Tablespoon cumin
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon black pepper
- hot sauce to taste

Hardware

- Sauce pan

Instructions

1. Mix all ingredients in sauce pan.
2. Set over medium-low heat for 10-15 minutes, until warm and incorporated.

Notes

- Based on Aaron Franklin's recipe, as seen in Franklin Barbecue: A Meat-Smoking Mani-

festo.

- main differences are addition of hot sauce, and change of most ingredient ratios. The flavor is similar, though this is significantly easier to measure/make, due to the new ratios.

- Store in the fridge for upwards of a month.

Cocktail Sauce

Time: 2 minutes Serves: 2 people

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ketchup
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon horseradish

Hardware

- Storage container

Instructions

1. Add ketchup to a bowl
2. Add horseradish
3. Stir to combine

Notes

- I got my original version of this recipe from Damon Small.
- Taste and vary the horseradish. Sometimes I also add hot sauce to make it spicier. Adjust to tastes.

Country Gravy

Time: 20 minutes cooking Serves: 4

Ingredients

- Some sort of meat, usually ground sausage.
- 3 tablespoons meat drippings (ou'll get this from the meat)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup all purpose flour
- 2 cups milk
- salt and pepper to taste

Hardware

- Skillet
- Spoon or whisk

Instructions

1. Cook a meat of some sort in a skillet.
2. Set aside the meat.
3. Throw out all but 3 tablespoons of the drippings.
4. Add in the $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of flour, and cook it like a roux. You want the flour cooked into the fat just a little, but not as dark as a cajun roux.
5. Once the flour and fats are cooked together, slowly add in the milk, about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup at a time. Make sure the milk is fully incorporated, hot, and begins to thicken before adding in another $\frac{1}{4}$ cup. This usually takes 3-5 minutes each.
6. Once all of the milk is incorporated and has thickened a little,

remove from heat.

7. Continue to stir while gravy cools. It will thicken a little more while cooling down.

Notes

- Amounts of flour and fats are rough counts, based on cooking with my mom growing up. She never really measured, just eye balled it. You get a feel for the right amounts after enough gravies.
- You can easily stir sausage back into the final gravy to get a sausage gravy.
- This can be made with most any meat drippings. I made it with brisket drippings once and it tasted like liquid brisket. Highly recommend trying it.

Marinara Sauce

Time: 1 hour 30 minutes (30 minute prep, 1 hour cooking) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 4 Tablespoons olive oil
- 56 ounces San Marzano (or other low-acid sauce tomatos), canned or freshly-peeled
- $\frac{1}{2}$ medium yellow onion, diced
- 8 cloves garlic, minced
- 2 bay leaves
- 2 sprigs basil
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped basil leaves
- Salt to taste
- Pinch of baking soda (depending on the tomatoes in use)

Hardware

- Stock pot

Instructions

1. If you are using fresh tomatoes, you will need to boil them for 1 minute, then dunk them in iced water, then peel the skins off.
2. Heat 4 Tablespoons olive oil in a stock pot over medium-low heat.
3. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ diced yellow onion.
4. Allow the onions to cook, stirring occasionally, until soft, about 10 minutes.
5. Add 8 cloves minced garlic and allow to cook for about 30 seconds.
6. Crush the tomatoes into the pot with your hand.
7. Add 2 bay leaves and 2 sprigs of basil.
8. Bring the sauce to a simmer of medium-low heat.
9. Cover loosely with a lid and allow to cook until thickened, stirring occasionally, for about an hour.
10. Salt to taste when the sauce is at your desired thickness.
11. If the sauce is too acidic, it can be neutralized with a small pinch of baking soda.
12. Remove the bay leaves and basil sprigs.
13. Add a drizzle of olive oil and the $\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped basil on top of the sauce.
14. Serve over pasta, such as [Egg Noodles](#).

Notes

- This is based on Ciao Florentina's recipe, as seen here: <https://ciaoflorentina.com/best-marinara-sauce-recipe/>
 - Main difference is notes on fresh tomatoes, double bay leaves, and half basil sprigs, and the addition of baking soda if required.

Pesto

Time: 10 minutes Serves: 2 cups (about 4 people)

Ingredients

- 2 ounces pine nuts
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces parmigiano reggiano, grated
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces pecorino romano, grated
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon coarse salt
- 2 cloves garlic, chopped
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounce butter, in 2-3 pieces
- 6 ounces basil
- Generous $\frac{1}{2}$ cup olive oil

Hardware

- Baking sheet
- Food processor (or mortar/pestle)

Instructions

1. Pre-heat oven to 350F.
2. Spread pine nuts across baking sheet.
3. Bake pine nuts in oven for about 2 minutes one side, then 1 minute on the other.
4. Pine nuts should be just starting to brown a tiny amount.
5. Pour pine nuts into bowl of food processor.
6. Allow pine nuts to cool before using.
7. Add 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces grated parmigiano reggiano and 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces grated pecorino romano to processor.
8. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon coarse salt.
9. Add 2 cloves roughly chopped garlic.
10. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces butter.
11. Pulse food processor until ingredients are just combined.
12. Add leaves from 6 ounces of basil
13. If all basil doesn't fit, add most of it, pulse for a few second, then finish adding the rest.
14. Once all basil is in the bowl, pulse for a couple of seconds at a time to combine all ingredients.
15. Add about half the oil and pulse to combine.
16. Add in the rest of the oil in a drizzle as the machine processes.
17. Add oil until the pesto is at the desired consistency (slightly thicker than when used in pasta, normally).

Notes

- This is my own pesto recipe, but it is a very standard recipe.
- While I don't see pecorino used as often in American pesto's, I consider it all but required. It's saltier than parmigiano reggiano.
- Adding this to most any sandwich or pasta is delicious. See ?? for the standard technique for adding pesto sauce to pasta.

Salsa Roja Asada

Time: 25 minutes Serves: 3 cups

Ingredients

- 2 Tablespoon vegetable oil
- 20 ounces (about 4) whole, ripe, red tomatoes
- 4 (about $2 \frac{1}{2}$ ounces) whole chiles serranos
- 1 clove garlic (about 1 ounce), still in it's skin
- 5 ounces (about $\frac{1}{2}$) onion
- $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce parsley
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt

Hardware

- Cast iron skillet (or comal, if you have one)
- Knife and cutting board
- Blender (or molcajete, if you have one)

Instructions

1. Heat cast iron skillet over medium-low heat.
2. Add 2 Tablespoon vegetable oil, 20 ounces whole tomatoes, 4 serranos, and 1 garlic clove (in it's skin) to the skillet.
3. Cook over medium-low heat while constantly moving for 5 minutes.
4. Add 5 ounces onion (about a half an onion) in 1 or 2 large chunks.
5. Keep everything moving for another minute or two, then allow peppers to sit on one side at a time for about a minute each.
6. The peppers should form heat spots. After about another 3 or so minute, remove everything from the skillet.
7. Peel tomatoes.
8. Allow everything to cool for about 10 minutes.
9. Peel garlic.
10. Roughly chop all vegetables (into quarters), and remove stems from the serranos.
11. Place all vegetables into the bowl of a blender or molcajete.
12. Blend on low or medium until it is all incorporated.
13. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ ounce parsley and 1 teaspoon kosher salt, blend to combine.
14. Chill then serve.

Notes

- This is my own salsa roja recipe, but it's fairly standard. Nothing too fancy going on.
- Salsas can come in three varieties: asada (roasted), cocida (cooked, usually boiled), and cruda (raw). I really like all three.
- 10 minutes is enough cook time to get just a little char on the chiles, and cook the tomatoes a little, but not all the way through.
- Any salsa roja should use "jitomate" (red tomatoes) as the base, with added garlic, chiles, onion, and salt. Sometimes pepper. Feel free to add pepper if you like.
- While I grew up in South Texas where the bulk of the salsa was boiled then chilled, I really also like roasted salsa. Even still, I chill all my salsa. Hot salsa is just inferior (I'm looking at you, Houston.)

Chapter 6

Breads

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This chapter has to do with breads.

Cornbread

Time: 35 minutes (15 minutes prep, 20 minutes baking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons oil
- 1 cup yellow cornmeal
- 1 cup all purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 tablespoons sugar
- 2 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ buttermilk
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup vegetable oil
- butter for serving

Hardware

- Cast iron skillet
- Large mixing bowl
- Small mixing bowl

Instructions

1. Place 2 tablespoons vegetable oil into cast iron skillet.
2. Place skillet in oven and pre-heat to 400F.
3. Combine 1 cup cornmeal, 1 cup flour, 1 teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon baking soda, 2 teaspoons baking powder, and 1 tablespoon sugar in large mixing bowl.
4. Beat 2 eggs in small mixing bowl.
5. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk, $\frac{1}{2}$ buttermilk, and $\frac{1}{3}$ cup vegetable oil to beaten eggs.
6. Mix to combine wet ingredients.
7. Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients.
8. Stir just to combine wet and dry.
9. Remove skillet when oven has reached 400F.
10. Shake skillet around to coat the whole thing in hot oil.
11. Pour batter into hot skillet.
12. Bake for about 30 minutes, until golden-brown on top and cooked through (can be tested

with a toothpick or knife at the thickest point).

13. Slice and serve with butter.

Notes

- This is Cyndy Watt's recipe, straight up. I have not changed it from my days growing up, as my mom already makes my favorite cornbread.
- White cornmeal could be used, but it's less corny, and leads to a slightly softer, less tasty bread.
- All cornbreads sit on a spectrum ranging from sweet and cakey to drier and less-sweet. I tend to say these range from a nearly cake-like texture to actual bread. My mom's is not quite as dry as some, but is definitely not really sweet or cakey.
- You can add corn kernels or jalapeño if you like, but I don't normally. It's a nice special treat. Corn will make this more moist, so you may need to reduce the amount of milk.
- While you can use a full cup of milk instead of milk and buttermilk, it's really just not the same.

Croissant

Time: 9 hours (30 minutes prep, 7+ hours inactive rising and resting, 18 minutes baking) Serves: 12 pastries, 6-12 people, depending on generosity

Ingredients

- 1 recipe of [Viennoiserie \(Yeast Dough\)](#)
- Flour to roll out dough
- Butter for cooking sheet
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon water

Hardware

- Large surface for rolling
- Knife with which to cut pastry
- Baking sheet

Instructions

1. Make the [Viennoiserie \(Yeast Dough\)](#) dough if you have not yet, this will take roughly 8 hours.
2. Take the recently chilled and turned dough from the fridge.
3. Lightly flour your surface.
4. Lightly butter your baking sheet.
5. Roll out the dough into a rectangle, about 24x6 inches.
6. Cut the rectangle in half, so you have two 12x6 inch rectangles.
7. Cover and chill one rectangle while working with the other.
8. Roll the remaining rectangle into a longer rectangle, about 15x7 inches.
9. Cut the rectangle into three rectangles, each about 5x7 inches.
10. Take one rectangle, roll it into a square, about 6x6 inches.
11. Cut the rectangle along the diagonal.
12. Take one of these right triangles and flare out the two shorter corners to match.
13. Take the two shorter corners and roll the pastry up towards the long point.
14. Tuck the end of the long point under the now-rolled pastry and bend the ends to shape into a crescent.
15. Place the pastry on a baking sheet, do not crowd the pastries.
16. Repeat with each triangle and rectangle to get 12 croissants.
17. Make an egg wash by mixing 1 egg and 1 teaspoon water in a small bowl.
18. Once all croissants are on baking sheet, cover lightly in egg wash.
19. Pre-heat oven to 455F.
20. Allow croissants to rise (double in size) on the baking sheet.
21. Place baking sheet in oven, and allow to bake until golden brown, about 18-20 minutes.
22. Allow croissants to cool 10-15 minutes before consuming.

Notes

- This is based on the Croissant recipe of Julia Child and Simone Beck, as seen in *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, Volume 2, page 96 and on "The French Chef", episode 1.

- Main difference is in my [Viennoiserie \(Yeast Dough\)](#) dough, I have different pastry flour, and use of weights over volumetric measurements.
- While the book gives a lot of detail, watching someone shape the dough is the best way to learn. I recommend watching the episode, which can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZmrvEfhfsg>.
- This recipe, while French in origin, is based on American ingredients and ovens.
- While croissants are best served fresh, they can be frozen after cooling completely. Seal in an air-tight container in the freezer.
- To reheat, place on a lightly buttered baking sheet into a 400F pre-heated oven for about 10 minutes.
- I often make by dough then make half [Pain Au Chocolat](#) and half croissant.
- A huge thanks to Nicolas Bidron and Nicolas Guigo for inspiring my French baking.

Pain Au Chocolat

Time: 9 hours (30 minutes prep, 7+ hours inactive rising and resting, 18 minutes baking) Serves: 6 pastries, 6 people, depending on generosity

Ingredients

- 1 recipe of [Viennoiserie \(Yeast Dough\)](#)
- Flour to roll out dough
- Butter for cooking sheet
- 12 ounces dark baking chocolate, cut into bars about 3 inches long by $\frac{1}{4}$ in wide.
- 1 egg
- 1 teaspoon water

Hardware

- Large surface for rolling
- Knife with which to cut pastry
- Baking sheet

Instructions

1. Make the [Viennoiserie \(Yeast Dough\)](#) dough if you have not yet, this will take roughly 8 hours.
2. Take the recently chilled and turned dough from the fridge.
3. Lightly flour your surface.
4. Lightly butter your baking sheet.
5. Roll out the dough into a rectangle, about 24x6 inches.
6. Cut the rectangle in half, so you have two 12x6 inch rectangles.
7. Cover and chill one rectangle while working with the other.
8. Roll the remaining rectangle into a longer rectangle, about 16x9 inches.
9. Place three chocolate bars end-to-end in a line across the very top of the pastry.
10. Place additional chocolate bars in a parallel line about 7-8 inches below that.
11. Cut the rectangle directly below the second line of chocolate, so that you have a rectangle about 8x9 inches, with a chocolate line across the very top and bottom.
12. Cut the rectangle between each chocolate bar so you have three rectangles each with a chocolate bar along the top and bottom.
13. Role the pastry with the chocolate bar from the top to the middle.
14. Role the pastry from the bottom to the middle, so you have two wrapped chocolate bars meeting in the middle of a mounded pastry.
15. Place the pastry on a baking sheet, do not crowd the pastries.
16. Repeat with each rectangle to get 6 pastries.
17. Make an egg wash by mixing 1 egg and 1 teaspoon water in a small bowl.
18. Once all pastries are on baking sheet, cover lightly in egg wash.
19. Pre-heat oven to 455F.
20. Allow pastries to rise (double in size) on the baking sheet.
21. Place baking sheet in oven, and allow to bake until golden brown, about 18-20 minutes.
22. Allow pastries to cool 10-15 minutes before consuming.

Notes

- This is based on the Croissant recipe of Julia Child and Simone Beck, as seen in Mastering the Art of French Cooking, Volume 2, page 96 and on "The French Chef", episode 1.
 - Main difference is in my [Viennoiserie \(Yeast Dough\)](#) dough, I have different pastry flour, and use of weights over volumetric measurements.
 - Also, of course, I have added chocolate to make pain au chocolat, rather than croissant.
- This recipe, while French in origin, is based on American ingredients and ovens.
- While pain au chocolat are best served fresh, they can be frozen after cooling completely. Seal in an air-tight container in the freezer.
- To reheat, place on a lightly buttered baking sheet into a 400F pre-heated oven for about 10 minutes.
- in the Southern part of France, these are called "chocolatine", and people can get a bit passionate about which name you use.
- I often make by dough then make half [Croissant](#) and half Pain Au Chocolat.
- A huge thanks to Nicolas Bidron and Nicolas Guigo for inspiring my French baking.

Tortillas

Time: 35 minutes (10 minutes prep, 25 minutes baking) Serves: 12 tortillas

Ingredients

- 8 ounces masa de harina
- scant $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 11 ounces (generous $1\frac{1}{4}$ cup)
water (add more as needed)

Hardware

- Mixing bowl
- Plastic wrap
- Heavy flat bottomed pot,
rolling pin, or tortilla press
- Cast iron skillet

Instructions

1. Place cast iron skillet over medium heat
2. Combine 8 ounces masa de harina, scant $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt, and 11 ounces water in a mixing bowl.
3. Mix to combine, and work the dough for about 3-5 minutes.
4. If dough is not coming together, add 1 Tablespoon of water and work further. Repeat until dough comes together.
5. Split dough into 12 equal parts, each part being about a golf ball in size.
6. Cover with a damp towel.
7. Place a sheet of plastic wrap, about 9 inches by 9 inches on a flat surface.
8. Place a dough ball in the middle of the plastic.
9. Cover with the second sheet of plastic.
10. Place a heavy, flat-bottomed pot on top of the dough ball and press down hard with your weight.
11. Optionally, use a rolling pin or tortilla press instead.
12. Place the flattened tortilla into the skillet.
13. Cook for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 minutes per side, until the side has just a touch of brown.
14. Store in a thick kitchen towel while cooking to stay warm.

Notes

- This is a pretty standard recipe, except that I cook by weight and use a heavy pot to flatten tortillas.
- Using a rolling pin or press is the most common at-home method, but I find rolling pins make it hard to press evenly without a lot of practice, and I don't own a press.
- It's pretty easy to cook these in 3 or so skillets at once, so that they come out much sooner.

Viennoiserie (Yeast Dough)

Time: 9 hours (30 minutes prep, 7+ hours inactive rising and resting) Serves:
1 dough packet, makes about 10-12 pastries

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup warm water (about 105F)
- $\frac{1}{4}$ ounces dry active yeast (1 package)
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sugar
- 8 ounces (about 2 cups) flour that is 1 part unbleached AP flour to 2 parts whole wheat pastry flour
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk
- 2 Tablespoons tasteless oil (conola works)
- extra flour for kneading and rolling out dough
- 4 ounces chilled butter (1 whole stick)
- Heavy rolling pin
- Plastic with which to cover rising dough

Hardware

- Small mixing bowl
- Large mixing bowl
- Sauce pan
- Large surface for rolling

Instructions

1. Combine $\frac{1}{2}$ cup hot water (105F), $\frac{1}{4}$ ounces dry active yeast, $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon salt, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon sugar in small mixing bowl.
2. Warm $\frac{1}{2}$ cup milk in sauce pan
3. Combine 8 ounces of flour, 1 Tablespoon of sugar, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt.
4. Mix warmed milk, dry mix, and 2 Tablespoon oil, and foaming water yeast water in mixing bowl.
5. This will be a rather sticky dough.
6. Knead the sticky dough to start the gluten-forming process, on a large, lightly floured surface.
7. Once the dough is fairly smooth and not too sticky (about 7 minutes of kneading), place in a clean mixing bowl and cover with plastic.
8. Leave dough until it rises (doubles in size), about 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours at 75F.
9. Punch down risen dough in bowl, place in fridge covered to chill at least 30 minutes.
10. Take 4 ounces chilled butter (1 whole stick) and beat down with your rolling pin to make it about $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick, and about as malleable as dough. This should be a flattish square of butter, about 4 inches across.
11. Pull out the chilled dough and roll into a circle, about 10 inches across.
12. Place flattened butter onto dough circle.
13. Fold dough edges over butter to form a butter-dough pocket, pinch edges together to keep the pocket from leaking any butter later.
14. Lightly flour surface again.
15. Roll dough pocket into a 14x6 inch rectangle, but don't roll quite to the very edge of the dough each time, the edges will remain slightly larger.
16. Fold the dough into 3 parts, overlapping like a letter.
17. Turn the folded dough 90 degrees. This is the end of the first "turn".
18. Roll out the dough pocket into a 14x6 inch rectangle again.
19. Fold the dough into three folds again, overlapping. This is the end of the second turn.
20. Chill the folded dough in the fridge, covered, about 2 hours.

This allows the gluten to rest so the dough never gets too tough.

21. Take out the chilled dough, and roll out into another 14x6 inch rectangle.
22. Make three folds again and turn 90 degrees. This completes the third turn.
23. Roll the dough out again into a 14x6 inch rectangle, make the three folds. This completes the fourth and final turn.
24. Chill the dough, covered, again in the fridge for about 2 hours, to allow the gluten to rest and the butter to not melt.
25. The dough can now be rolled out and used for other things, such as [Croissant](#) or [Pain Au Chocolat](#).

Notes

- This is based on the Croissant recipe of Julia Child and Simone Beck, as seen in Mastering the Art of French Cooking, Volume 2, page 96 and on "The French Chef", episode 1.
 - Main difference is different pastry flour, and use of weights over volumetric measurements.
- While the book gives a lot of detail, watching someone make laminated dough is the best way to learn. I recommend watching the episode, which can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uZmrvEfhfsg>.
- This recipe, while French in origin, is based on American ingredients.

White Bread

Time: 3 hours (30 minutes prep, 1+ hours inactive rising, 25 minutes baking)

Serves: 3 loaves (about 12 people)

Ingredients

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 2 teaspoons salt
- About 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups bread flour (2 for starter, 3 for dough, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ for kneading)
- 2 cups warm water (115F)
- 2 tablespoons yeast
- Extra oil for greasing bread pans

Hardware

- Small bowl
- Large mixing bowl
- Silicon spatula
- Tea towel
- 3 bread pans

Instructions

1. Mix 2 tablespoons olive oil, 2 tablespoons honey, and 2 teaspoons salt in a small bowl.
2. Heat water to just above 115F (about 120F or so), then mix with 2 cups of bread flour in a large mixing bowl.
3. Add in olive oil/honey mixture, stir briefly.
4. Add in yeast, stir to combine.
5. Let this mixture sit until bubbly, about 10 minutes.
6. Add in 3 cups of flour and mix until it becomes slightly hard to stir.
7. Turn dough onto a floured surface, sprinkle some flour on top of the dough.
8. Knead the dough, adding in flour fairly often as you do.
9. Knead for about 8 minutes, until the texture is similar to that of an ear lobe.
10. Clean out large mixing bowl, return dough to bowl, cover with a moist tea towel.
11. Let dough sit at room temperature about 45 minutes, until doubled in size.
12. Punch down dough in bowl, then turn out into lightly floured surface.
13. Separate dough into 3 equal sized pieces.
14. Lightly oil each pan, then place a piece of dough into each one.
15. Cover the pans and let rise, about 20-30 minutes, until the pan is mostly full.
16. Place each pan in the oven and bake for about 25 minutes, until golden brown on top.

Notes

- Based on this recipe: <http://www.instructables.com/id/How-To-Make-Bread-without-a-bread-machine/>
 - Main difference is olive oil instead of vegetable oil and honey rather than sugar.
- The first time I made this I used cooking spray rather than oil on the pans, it worked fine.
- I only have one bread pan, so I put $\frac{1}{3}$ of the dough into that, and the other $\frac{2}{3}$ as a larger piece into a shallow pie pan, made for a large roundish loaf.

Chapter 7

Desserts

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This chapter covers desserts.

Apple Pie

Time: 1 hour 20 minutes (30 minutes prep, 50 minutes baking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 2 recipes of [Pie Crust](#).
- 4-5 pounds of apples (mix of grannysmith, honeycrisp, and envy), peeled and sliced fairly thin.
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces (about $\frac{1}{2}$ cups) granulated sugar
- 2 ounces (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) dark brown sugar
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces (about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup) all purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon grains of paradise (ground)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces (1 Tablespoon) butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon granulated sugar

Hardware

- Pie pan
- Mixing bowl

Instructions

1. Make a double recipe of pie crust, following the standard recipe. Once you get to the 30 minutes resting in the fridge, begin making the apple filling for the pie.
2. Preheat oven to 400F.
3. COmbine 4-5 pounds of sliced apples, 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces sugar, 2 ounces dark brown sugar, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces all purpose flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon cinnamon, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg, and $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon grains of paradise in a mixing bowl.
4. Spread one of the pie crusts in a pie pan.
5. Roll out a second crust and cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ inch strips.
6. Spread the filling into the pie crust.
7. Create a lattice with the crust strips over the apples.
8. Trim the edges of the crust to be smooth and crimp down with your fingers.
9. Brush $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces melted butter over the crust.
10. Sprinkle 1 teaspoon sugar over the crust.
11. Bake for 15 minutes at 400F.
12. Turn the heat down to 350F and allow to finish baking, about 35 minutes.

Notes

- This is my own apple pie recipe, however I got the idea for grains of paradise from Alton Brown.
- I don't bother with the rest of Alton Brown's recipe (<https://altonbrown.com/apple-pie-recipe/>). It looks good, but is tons of trouble, and I don't own a pie bird (though I'd love a pie llama).

Banana Pudding (refrigerated)

Time: 2 hours (30 minutes prep, 1 hour 30 minutes making the parts) Serves:
8

Ingredients

- Double recipe of [Crème Pâtissière](#), but remove from heat a little early to keep it slightly less set than normal.
- 3 Large barely green bananas, sliced into quarter inch rounds
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- 1 recipe of [Vanilla Wafers](#)
- 1 recipe of [Whipped Cream](#)

Hardware

- Large Mixing bowl
- Silicone spatula

Instructions

1. Place a very small layer of the crème pâtissière at the bottom of the mixing bowl.
2. Make a layer of vanilla wafers.
3. Make a layer of banana slices on top of that.
4. Put about ($\frac{1}{3}$ of the crème pâtissière on top of this.
5. Repeat the above 3 steps twice to get a bowl full of pudding.
6. Spread the whipped cream over the top.
7. Place 8-10 vanilla wafers vertically in the top of the whipped cream.
8. Enjoy within 3 days.

Notes

- Based on the Alton Brown's recipe, as seen here: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/refrigerated-banana-pudding-recipe>
- Main differences are lack of banana liqueur (no need, it's moist enough), and I use an actual crème pâtissière instead of Alton Brown's pudding base. While his pudding base was essentially a custard (and nearly a crème pâtissière), I prefer the heavier, egg-rich crème pâtissière.
- Banana pudding works amazingly well as a dessert after barbecue.
- Banana pudding is a quintessential southern dessert, to the point where when I first mentioned it in an office in Seattle no one knew what it was except my manager from Mississippi.
- I prefer refrigerated banana pudding, though there is also a baked version that is quite delicious.

Buttermilk Pie

Time: 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours (30 minutes prep, 1 hours baking) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 3 eggs
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, softened (for creaming)
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 pie crust (see [Pie Crust](#) recipe)

Hardware

- Pie pan
- Mixing bowl
- Whisk/Paddle
- Silicone spatula
- Small bowl

Instructions

1. Make a pie crust, following the standard recipe. Once you get to the 30 minutes resting in the fridge, begin making the custard filling for the buttermilk pie.
2. Preheat oven to 325F.
3. Beat 3 eggs until frothy.
4. Add 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups sugar, 3 tablespoons flour, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup softened butter.
5. Mix immediately upon adding butter until smooth.
6. Add 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.
7. Combine 1 cup buttermilk, 1 tablespoon lemon juice, and $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon nutmeg in a small bowl.
8. Add buttermilk mixture to egg mixture and stir to combine.
9. Pour mixture into pie crust.
10. Bake for 45-70 minutes, until center is fairly firm.

Notes

- This is Cyndy Watt's recipe, just like she made it when I was growing up.
- You can make 2 pies with this same amount in more shallow pie-pans. This reduces the cook time.
- You may need to cover the edge of the pie crust during baking, especially if it takes more than 50 minutes or so to set. I use pieces of aluminum foil to cover the crust.
- I'm still experimenting with heat and time levels for the standard depth of pie. I was making 2 shallow pies for years due to my pie pans.

Chocolate Chip Cookies

Time: 1 day (15 minutes prep, overnight resting, 10 minutes baking) Serves:
About 30 cookies

Ingredients

- 8 ounces non-salted butter, at room temperature
- 2 eggs
- 5 ounces granulated white sugar
- 5.75 ounces dark brown sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 11 ounces all purpose flour
- 1 scant teaspoon table salt
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 12 ounces semisweet chocolate chips
- 4 ounces nuts (optional, recommend walnuts or pecans)

Hardware

- Large mixing bowl
- parchment paper
- cookie sheet
- flexible spatular
- wire cooling rack

Instructions

1. Combine and mix 8 ounces butter, 2 eggs, 5 ounces white sugar, and 5.75 ounces dark brown sugar until smooth.
2. Mix in 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.
3. Add 11 ounces flour, 1 scant teaspoon salt, 1 teaspoon baking soda.
4. Mix until well combined, but mix as little as possible.
5. Add 12 ounces chocolate chips and 4 ounces nuts if desired. Cut into the dough with as little work as possible to prevent additional gluten formation.
6. Cover with parchment paper and leave in the fridge overnight to cool down, rest, and allowing the fats to re-solidify.
7. Preheat oven to 375F.
8. Remove dough when about ready to bake.
9. Grab chunks of dough, about 1 Tablespoon in size.
10. Roll into a ball, then flatten slightly.
11. Place disk on ungreased cookie sheet.
12. Repeat as above, keeping cookies with about 1-2 inches between them (as they will spread).
13. Once your cookie sheet is full, place in the 375F oven to bake.
14. Bake for 9-10 minutes, until cookies are just barely crispy on the edge, but still a little raw looking in the middle.
15. Remove cookie sheet from the oven and allow to sit for 2 minutes undisturbed. Cookies will bake slightly more at this time.
16. Carefully remove cookies to a wire cooling rack and let cook for another 2-5 minutes.
17. Consume with milk.

Notes

- Based on the original (well, the original modern version) Nestle Toll House Chocolate Chip Cookie recipe: <https://cooking.nytimes.com/recipes/1019232-toll-house-chocolate-chip-cookies>.
 - This recipe was licensed by Nestle from Ruth Wakefield.
 - There is rumor that Ruth Wakefield's recipe used 14 ounces of chocolate, rather than 12. I can't comment on that, as I

don't have any records of her recipe.

- Main differences are slightly different ingredient amounts (less flour, more brown sugar, less white sugar), change brown sugar to dark brown sugar, resting overnight, more instructions on how to form and bake the cookies, and the change from volumetric measurements to weighted measurements. While I know doing baking by weight is more European than American, and these are as American in origin as you can get, baking by volume allows for a more consistent baking experience.
- There is what seems to be about a 15 second window that is the perfect time to pull these out before they are overcooked, but while they will still have a gooey middle after cooking on the sheet for 2 more minutes. Knowing exactly when to pull cookies comes with experience. Just try to keep a consistent size and cookie placement, and get to know your oven really well. Practice makes perfect, and even slightly overbaked or undercooked cookies are delicious.
- A note on chocolate. Nestle chocolate chips, while the "original", are frankly not that great. I recommend using the absolute best chocolate you can reasonably find and afford for these, as that takes the cookies to the next level. Ghirardelli are the most commonly found decent chocolate chips, and what my mom recommends. I've heard good things about Trader Joe's chips, though I've not tried them yet. Otherwise I've seen REALLY fancy chocolate, but did not want to spend that much on cookies.
- I changed ingredient amounts slightly from the original recipe to get a slightly chewier final cookie. the dark brown sugar's added molasses makes it chewier, as does using more brown than white sugar. The resting overnight allows the fats to solidify, so that cookies spread a little less while baking, which makes them less crispy overall.
- There is a Good Eats episode with a different cookie recipe, Alton Brown gets a little more into the ratios and chemistry for chewy versus non-chewy cookies. Recommend watching it if you can find it. I believe it was "Three Chips for SIster Marsha", season 3, episode 6.

- If you want a crispier cookie (you heretic), add white sugar, reduce brown sugar, and bake from room temperature.
- I grew up eating these cookies

made by my mom. Until 2018 I thought they were some dark secret family recipe. Turns out she just used the Nestle Toll house recipe our whole life... I felt a little betrayed by that.

Crème Pâtissière

Time: 30 minutes (10 minutes prep, 20 minutes cooking) Serves: about 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups

Ingredients

- 2 cups whole milk
- 5 egg yolks
- 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces granulated sugar
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces all purpose flour
- 1 vanilla bean (substitute with 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoons vanilla extract)
- $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces unsalted butter

Hardware

- Small pot
- Stand mixer
- Stock pot
- Whisk
- Plastic wrap

Instructions

1. Put two cups of milk into small pot.
2. Allow milk to begin to warm, you want it to reach a very slight boil while doing the next few steps.
3. Place 5 egg yolks in a stand mixer, turn it on medium.
4. Gradually add in $6 \frac{1}{2}$ ounces sugar, ensuring first part is mixed in before adding more.
5. Continue to beat this until it is pale yellow and forms ribbons on top if you drip some mixture on top of the rest of the mixture (about 2-3 minutes)
6. Continue beating mixture while adding in $2 \frac{1}{2}$ ounces flour.
7. Remove milk from heat.
8. Split a vanilla bean down the middle, long ways.
9. Scrape the inside of the bean into the egg mixture, then throw in the empty shell.
10. Gradually dribble milk into the egg mixture while mixing.
11. The goal is to bring the eggs up to temperature slowly until all milk is mixed in.
12. Remove the bean shell.
13. Pour the mixture into the stock pot over medium-low heat.
14. At this point, you must constantly mix and scrape all sides and bottom of the dish while it comes to temperature.
15. After 15 or more minutes of constant low heat the mixture will begin to thicken.
16. Remove when it is at the desired thickness (it will thicken a little more as it cools, but adding the butter thins it a tad.)
17. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces unsalted butter and stir to combine.
18. If you use vanilla extract instead of a bean, add it at this point, otherwise too much may evaporate while cooking.
19. Cover with plastic wrap, ensuring that the custard is completely covered and the plastic wrap is pressed lightly onto the surface.
20. Allow to cool to room temperature before storing in the fridge.

Notes

- This is based on the recipe of Julia Child, Simone Beck, and Louisette Bertholle, as seen in *Mastering the Art of French Cooking*, Volume 1, page 590.

- Main differences are that I use a vanilla bean over vanilla extract (when I can find them at a reasonable price), and I don't usually substitute vanilla for other flavors (such as cognac or kirshwasser).
- I converted units from volume to weight to get a more consistent cooking experience.
- "Crème Pâtissière" translates to "Pastry Cream", and is a custard used in many French pastry recipes (mille-fuielles, tart au fraises, etc).
- If you are using this custard a pudding-type dessert, such as for [Banana Pudding \(refrigerated\)](#), then make sure to take it off the heat before it is too thick.
- If you need to stiffen it a little more for something like mille-fuielles, then you can add in a half tablespoon of plain gelatin.

Meringues

Time: 1 hour 15 minutes (15 minutes prep, 1 hour baking) Serves: 12

Ingredients

- 3 egg whites
- Pinch of salt
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces [Vanilla Sugar](#) (98g)
- 3 ounces raw cane sugar (90g)

Hardware

- Fast stand mixer
- small mixing bowl
- Two spoons
- 1 large cookie sheet
- Parchment paper to cover cookie sheet

Instructions

1. Place 3 eggs in bowl of stand mixer.
2. Add a pinch of salt.
3. Whipe the egg whites until they are very stiff.
4. Combine 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces vanilla sugar and 3 ounces raw cane sugar in a small bowl.
5. As the mixer is mixing the egg whites, add in about $\frac{1}{3}$ of the sugar mixture.
6. Allow the sugar to fully incorporate before adding the next $\frac{1}{3}$ of it.
7. Do this again for the final part of the sugar.
8. Make sure to cover your cookie sheet with parchment paper.
9. Pre-heat the oven to 240F.
10. Once all the sugar is fully incorporated, take two spoons and scoop about one heaping tablespoon on one.
11. Use the second spoon to scoop the meringue onto the parchment paper.
12. While the meringue can be placed pretty close together, they will expand slightly, and should not touch.
13. Place the meringues in the middle of the pre-heated oven and allow to bake for 55 minutes without opening the oven.
14. Check the meringue after 55 minutes, if they have just barely gotten a kiss of brown on top, they are probably done.
15. Allow the meringues to cool for 10-15 minutes before eating. They should be slightly crispy throughout, but collapse when eaten. They should not remain gooey.

Notes

- I got this recipe from my friend, Nicolas Bidron, who adapted from his mother's recipe.
 - The main difference is the conversion to ounces (which matches the rest of the cookbook), as well as using 98g of vanilla sugar, whereas Nicolas uses equal parts granulated and raw sugar, and then uses a single 8-gram envelope of "sucre vanillé", or vanilla sugar. These envelopes also have a little extra starch sometimes, but I find it's not necessary.
- You can make larger meringues, but they will re-

quire additional cooking time and will brown further.

- The easiest way to learn the exact cooking times is to just make a consistent size and practice with your oven.
- While they will not last long (as they absorb moisture from

the air and begin to fall apart after a couple days), they can be stored in an air-tight container for a week or so.

- Similar technique (whipping air into egg whites) can be used to make ?? or a meringue pie, though the cooking technique varies significantly.

Pan de Polvo

Time: 2 days (1 hour prep, 1 hour baking (in batches), 2 days resting)

Serves: About 80 cookies (they are small)

Ingredients

- 2 cups water
- 6 cinnamon sticks
- 4 Tablespoons anise seeds
- 1 pound lard
- 2 pounds flour
- 3 cups sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ground cinnamon

Hardware

- Sauce pan
- Cheese cloth and butcher's twine, or, alternatively, a large tea strainer
- Large mixing bowl
- Three cookie sheets
- Cooling rack
- Sharp Knife

Instructions

1. Bring 2 cups water to a light boil in the sauce pan.
2. Combine 6 cinnamon sticks and 4 tablespoons anise seeds in cheese cloth.
3. Tie packet with butcher's twine to keep the seeds from falling out.
4. Place anise packet into boiling water for about 15 minute to create anise tea.
5. Cut 1 pound lard into 2 pounds of flour.
6. Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of anise tea into the dough.
7. Knead the dough until it all comes together and becomes less sticky, as well as very smooth.
8. Preheat oven to 375F.
9. Take a handful of the dough, and create a little log with a 1 inch diameter.
10. Take your knife and cut the log every $\frac{1}{4}$ inch to create small disks.
11. Place disks on cookie sheet until it is full, but not too crowded.
12. Allow the first sheet to start baking for 20 minutes.
13. Cookies should bake until they are just slightly browned, but baked through.
14. While one sheet is baking, finish filling out the other two sheets.
15. Combine 3 cups of sugar and $\frac{1}{4}$ cup ground cinnamon in a large bowl.
16. Place the next sheet of cookies in the oven to bake for 20 minutes while doing the next steps.
17. Take hot cookies from the oven and place each cookie into the cinnamon sugar.
18. Toss cinnamon sugar over each cookie to coat, then place on cooling rack.
19. Continue the above steps until all cookies are baked and coated in cinnamon sugar.
20. Allow cookies to sit out uncovered overnight, then let them sit for at least 48 hours total (covered after the first night) before consuming.

Notes

- Based on Genius Kitchen recipe: <http://www.geniuskitchen.com/recipe/pan-de-polvo-mexican-shortbread-27623>.
 - Main differences are that I use lard, rather than

shortening, and I force the cookies to sit for 2 days.

- This recipe is huge, it should be possible to scale it down, but I've not tried.
- These cookies really should rest for at least a day or two. If consumed fresh from the oven, the lard has not cooled properly and they don't crumble and melt properly in the mouth.
- I use lard rather than shortening. I don't find the taste of lard to impede the recipe, and it is more traditional than

shortening.

- These are a shortbread recipe, essentially. The unique flavor comes from the anise tea used to help flavor the dough.
- This is a lard-heavy recipe. Pan de Polvo ranges from lots of lard, and they melt in your mouth, to lighter lard, which are a bit more crumbly. This on the the melty side of the scale. Feel free to reduce the lard to try to get crumblier cookies (I don't have a ratio yet).

Pie Crust

Time: 1 hour (30 minutes prep, 30 minutes inactive) Serves: 1 pie crust

Ingredients

- 2.5 ounces butter
- 1.5 ounces lard (or shortening, if you must)
- 6 ounces all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon table salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup ice water
- Additional flour for rolling dough

Hardware

- Medium mixing bowl
- Small bowl
- Rolling pin
- Quart-sized ziploc bag

Instructions

1. Cut lard into small pieces, about the size of 2-3 peas put together.
2. Place lard on small plate in the freezer while working on butter.
3. Chop butter into small pieces (maybe $\frac{1}{6}$ tablespoon squares, about as big as 2-3 peas combined).
4. Leave in freezer for at least 10 minutes while doing the next steps.
5. Sift flour and salt into mixing bowl.
6. Run hands under cold water to drop temperature while working on the fats.
7. Drop butter parts into dry-mix (placing lard back into freezer immediately). Using fingers (or forks or pastry wire thingies, if you insist) start crushing butter into the dry mix.
8. Eventually you'll have the butter in tiny parts and flakes throughout the dry mix.
9. Add lard pieces to the mixture, and crush it into the flour mix in the same way as the butter.
10. Take small bowl of ice-cold water, use your hand to scoop a small amount, sprinkle it around the dry-mix.
11. Use your fingers to mix the dry-mix around and soak in the small amount of water. Continue doing this until the pie dough holds together, but is not super sticky.
12. Once the dough holds together, roll it all into a ball, then flatten the ball slightly with your palm.
13. Add a small amount of flour on both sides of the dough, then store in ziploc bag.
14. Place bag in fridge for 30 minutes to rest and cool down.
15. Remove dough from fridge, add small amount of flour on both sides.
16. Add flour to flat surface or tea towel for rolling out. Flour rolling pin.
17. Set dough down, and flatten it out. The crust should end up less than $\frac{1}{2}$ inch thick, and approximately round in shape. It needs to be big enough to cover the entire bottom and sides of a pie pan.
18. Move pie crust from flat surface to pie pan for baking the pie.

Notes

- Based on Alton Brown's recipe:
<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/pie-crust-recipe-1915025>
 - Main differences are that I mix it all by hand (no need for a food processor) and I do not blind-bake the crust (though you could, should be fine.)
 - Additionally I currently use a different ratio of butter to lard (this changes occasionally, as I try new ratios.)
- You can make larger recipes for cobblers, top crusts, even dumplings. For Chicken and Dumplings, roll the crust to about $\frac{1}{4}$ inch thick, then cut into rectangles and place in soup.
- The amount of ice water that gets added varies depending on moisture in the air and temperature.
- Working in a cooler kitchen is ideal, as you don't want the fats to melt before baking.
- You don't have to use butter and lard. The amount of butter or lard can also vary. This is my favorite ratio so far.
- Pie crust gets its flaky texture from the fat flakes within the crust melting away during the baking process. While most fats can do another fat's job, in the case of pie crust, you want fats that are solid when the crust is rolled out. Butter, lard, and shortening all work well. Any sort of oil would not really work. No olive oil for your health or whatever. If you want health food, don't eat pie.
- You can pre-bake the crust a bit in the oven, in order to keep it from getting too soggy. This may be required for some pie mixtures, but I usually don't use this recipe.

Rice Krispy Treats

Time: 45 minutes (5 minutes cooking, 40 minutes cooling) Serves: 8

Ingredients

- 2 ounces unsalted butter
- 10 ounces marshmallows
- 6 ounces rice krispies
- OPTIONAL: 5 ounces peanut butter, and use just shy of 2 ounces butter instead
- butter or cooking spray for greasing

Hardware

- Large non-stick stock pot
- Silicone spatula
- 9x9 Baking dish

Instructions

1. Bring 2 ounces butter to a slight bubble over medium-low heat in a stock pot (or about 1.4 ounces if adding peanut butter).
2. While the butter is heating, lightly grease a 9x9 baking dish with butter or cooking spray.
3. Add 10 ounces marshmallows and stir until the marshmallows are completely melted and smooth, about 4 minutes.
4. OPTIONAL, if adding peanut butter, Add 5 ounces peanut butter to the marshmallow mixture and stir to combine.
5. Add 6 ounces Rice Krispies and fold into the marshmallow mixture.
6. Once all Rice Krispies are evenly coated, dump the mixture into a 9x9 baking dish and press down with a spatula or

wax paper to make sure all contents are pressed together.

7. Chill for at least 30 minutes in the fridge prior to serving.

Notes

- Based on the Kellog's recipe, as seen here: https://www.ricekrispies.com/en_US/recipes/the-original-treats-recipe.html.
 - Main differences are increased butter, optional peanut butter, and changed all ingredients to weight instead of volume.
- This can be modified pretty easily, add M&M's, put melted chocolate on top before cooling, replace cereal with Fruity Pebble's, etc.
- This can be spread into a 9x13 baking dish for thinner treats that also cool faster, but I like them thick.

Vanilla Wafers

Time: 45 minutes (15 minutes prep, 10 minutes cooling, 20 minutes baking)

Serves: 35-40 cookies

Ingredients

- 7 ounces all-purpose flour
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons aluminum-free baking soda
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons kosher salt
- 4 ounces unsalted butter, room temperature
- 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces [Vanilla Sugar](#)
- 1 large egg
- 4 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1 Tablespoon whole milk

Hardware

- Electric Mixer
- Small mixing bowl
- Large mixing bowl
- Parchment Paper
- 2 Cookie sheets
- Cookie cooling rack

Instructions

1. Position oven rack in the top $\frac{1}{3}$ of the oven and the other in the bottom $\frac{1}{3}$.
2. Preheat oven to 350F.
3. Sift 7 ounces flour, $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoons baking soda, and $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons salt, set aside.
4. Cream 4 ounces butter and $3\frac{1}{2}$ ounces vanilla sugar for 2 minutes on medium, stopping to scrape down the sides if necessary.
5. Add 1 egg and mix for 30 seconds.
6. Scrape down the dough mixture.
7. Add 4 teaspoons vanilla extract and 1 tablespoon milk, mix on low for 15 seconds.
8. Add dry mixture and mix on low just to incorporate.
9. Chill the batter for at least 10 minutes to let it rest and be slightly less sticky.
10. Scoop the batter into teaspoon-sized balls, arranged on 2 sheets of parchment paper-lined baking sheets.
11. Slightly flatten the balls with your hand.
12. Bake both pans, rotating halfway through, until golden brown, for 15 - 20 minutes.
13. Remove pans and allow to cool completely before removing the cookies.

Notes

- This is Alton Brown's recipe, as seen here: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/vanilla-wafers-recipe-1920909>.

Whipped Cream

Time: 17 minutes (15 minutes prep, 2 minutes whipping) Serves: about 3 cups whipped cream

Ingredients

- 8 ounces (1 cup) cold heavy whipping cream
- 2 Tablespoons granulated sugar
- (optional) 1 Tablespoon vanilla extract

Hardware

- Electric mixer (or large bowl and wire whip)

Instructions

1. Put your mixing bowl and wire whip into the freezer to get cold for about 15 minutes.
2. Combine 8 ounces cold heavy whipping cream and 2 Tablespoons granulated sugar in the bowl of a mixer with a wire whip (optionally add 1 Tablespoon vanilla extract).
3. Whip at high speed until stiff

peaks form, about 2 minutes.

Notes

- This is Alton Brown's recipe, as seen here: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/whipped-cream-recipe-1957526>.
- This goes really well with many pies, banana pudding, or with fruit dipped in it.

Chapter 8

Barbecue and Other Meats

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Smoked and grilled meats deserved their own special chapter apart from Entrées, partly due to their very different preparations, and partly because these are the epitome of good food. Barbecue is my favorite food, pretty much period.

”Barbecue is meat, prepared in a very special way...” -Rhett & Link

Barbecue is not a grill, smoker, nor is it a cookout. While often used as a verb, it is also not a verb. Barbecue is meat, made deliciously. While traditionally barbecue is meat that is smoked or grilled, and originates in either Northern Mexico or The South, I like to take the above, broad definition. Meat, prepared in a very special way...

This means that, to me, technically fajitas, barbacoa, jerk chicken... all barbecue (including of course, more traditional barbecue, such as smoked brisket and pulled pork.)

The next thing that should be noted is that I’m from Texas. This means I prefer beef, slow smoked over oak or hickory, and covered in a dry rub. Sauce is not really necessary. Usually if I’m having people over to partake in my delicious meat, I will also prepare a sauce, but it’s only to please other people. I don’t really use it much myself (at least on brisket and beef ribs, pulled pork is another story entirely.) This is because in The South the only thing that MIGHT trump meat is good ol’ hospitality.

One final note. Entire books can and have been written on barbecue. If you really want to produce top tier barbecue, you need more than can be placed in a two page recipe. You need to have some understanding of your heat source, wood source, smoke, evaporative cooling, bark formation, smoke absorption, spices, cuts of meat... it's really quite a list. While other books can definitely help you get started (and I highly recommend reading a full book on Barbecue, such as "Franklin Barbecue: A Meat-Smoking Manifesto" or "Smoke and Spice"), there is no substitute for getting out there on a smoker, and making delicious, smokey meat. Try to get at least a basic understanding, then just start making meat. Worse comes to worse, you have a semi-delicious not-yet-rendered piece of meat. That still sounds edible.

Get outside, chop some wood, tend a fire, and enjoy the flesh of that animal. It's life was taken for you, you should make sure it adds the maximum amount of enjoyment to yours.

I dedicate this chapter to Edgar Black Jr. of Black's barbecue, Francisco Saucedo and Brendan Lamb of La Barbecue, Ronnie Killen of Killen's barbecue, Tim McGuffin who made a brisket and shared it with me once, Aaron Franklin of Franklin Barbecue, and maybe most importantly, Leroy "Spooney" Kenter, Jr., formerly of Spoonery's Bar B Que. All of whom I've eaten their barbecue, some of who I've shared laughs with, all of whom I look up to, and a couple of whom I'll miss, whether or not we met in person.

-Caleb

Hamburgers

Time: 45 minutes (30 minutes prep, 15 minutes cooking) Serves: 6

Ingredients

- 2 pounds hamburger
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup vegetable oil
- Salt and black pepper to taste
- buns
- any other toppings you'd like (lettuce, tomato, bacon, cheese, etc.)

Hardware

- Cookie sheet
- Grill

Instructions

1. Take your beef and split it into 6 equal parts (each about $\frac{1}{3}$ pound in size.)
2. Allow patties to rest in the fridge for about 15 minutes to firm up a tad.
3. Ensure you have a very hot fire under the grill.
4. Form each portion into a very wide patty (it should be wider than the buns, as it will shrink a lot).
5. Coat each patty in a very light coat of oil.
6. Sprinkle salt and pepper on each patty, on all sides.
7. Place each patty down on a hot part of the grill.
8. Close the grill door and allow the patties to cook about 3-4 minutes.
9. Open the grill and flip each patty.
10. Close the grill and allow to cook for another 3-4 minutes.
11. If you want to toast buns (which I recommend) lightly butter your buns and place them on the grill for about 1-2 minutes per side.
12. While the buns are grilling, place cheese on each patty and cover the patties in a pan with foil to allow the cheese to melt.
13. Build your burgers and enjoy.

Notes

- There is nothing fancy in this recipe. Salt, pepper, and oil to allow the seasoning to stick to the patty, and keep the patty from sticking to the grill.
- Do not put cheese on the patty in the grill, it will drip off and land all over your wood, which can be hard to clean.
- For toppings, I like to have iceberg lettuce, tomato, crispy bacon, avacado, grilled mushrooms, grilled onions, mayo, and mustard. Do what you like. This is America.

Smoked Beef Plate Ribs

Time: 10+ hours (1 hour prep, 8+ hours smoking, 1 hour resting) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 set of beef plate ribs (usually 4 ribs, ribs number 6 through 10)
- 1 recipe of [Beef Rub](#)
- Tobasco Sauce
- spritz, 1 part apple cider vinegar to 3 parts water.

Hardware

- Sharp boning knife
- Latex gloves
- Offset smoker
- Water pan
- Enough wood (maybe... 25 medium logs? To be safe.)
- spritz bottle (for spritz)
- Butcher paper
- Thermometer with meat probe (optional, but ideal.)

Instructions

1. Trim the ribs if desired. The silverskin on the bottom will never render, but I just leave it on and eat around it. The meat will pull off of it no problem, if smoked correctly. You can trim pointy bits of fat off, if they are present. There is not too thick of a fat cap, like on a [Smoked Brisket](#).
2. Slather the ribs in tobasco sauce, using a brush or latex gloves.
3. Cover all sides of the ribs in beef rub. I usually use anywhere from half to three quarters of the rub on a rack of ribs. You don't want to cake the stuff on too thickly, but maybe a little thicker than on a brisket.
4. Let the ribs sit for about an hour to warm up a bit while you start the fire.
5. ensure the water pan is full and placed on the grill.
6. Start the fire up. Use coals, paper, kindling, whatever you need to start the wood burning.
7. You want to maintain a temperature around 285F.
8. Place the ribs, bone-side down, on the grill.
9. Let the ribs sit for at least 3 hours, undisturbed.
10. Spritz the ribs every 30-45 minutes for the last 4-5 hours of cook time.
11. You can probe the ribs in a meaty part to check for doneness. The meat should be super tender. They should be done around 203F.
12. Wrap the ribs and let them rest for 30 minutes to an hour.

Notes

- Based on Aaron Franklin's recipe, as seen in Franklin Barbecue: A Meat-Smoking Manifesto.
- If you have trouble regulating temperature (this happens for a lot of reasons, poor fire control, bad wood, leaky smoker, etc) the cook times can go way up. Don't worry. Just spend time, learn your smoker and wood, and keep practicing. Even a bad rack of ribs can be pretty good.
- While some people insist on sauce for brisket, I don't know many that ask for beef ribs.
- I've used primarily white oak, as I've done the most smoking since moving to Washington. Most any oak, hickory, and pecan work really well.

- This is specifically for beef plate ribs.

Smoked Brisket

Time: 12+ hours (1 hour prep, 10+ hours smoking, 1 hour resting) Serves: 8+

Ingredients

- 1 whole, untrimmed brisket (both muscles, flat and point)
- 1 recipe of [Beef Rub](#)
- spritz, 1 part apple cider vinegar to 3 parts water.

Hardware

- Sharp boning knife
- Latex gloves
- Offset smoker
- Water pan
- Enough wood (maybe... 30 medium logs? To be safe.)
- Spritz bottle (for spritz)
- Butcher paper
- Thermometer with meat probe (optional, but ideal.)

Instructions

1. Trim the brisket, This means getting the fat cap down to about $\frac{1}{4}$ in thick, removing any dangling parts, gutting off some bits... it's really easier to just watch it done once or twice. I recommend Aaron Franklin's book or Youtube videos. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmTzdMHu5KU>
2. Cover all sides of the brisket in beef rub. I usually use anywhere from half to three quarters of the rub on a brisket. You don't want to cake the stuff on.
3. Let the brisket sit for about an hour to warm up a bit while you start the fire.
4. ensure the water pan is full and placed on the grill.
5. Start the fire up. Use coals, paper, kindling, whatever you need to start the wood burning.
6. You want to maintain a temperature around 275F to 285F.
7. Place the brisket, fat-cap up, with the point (fattier side) facing the fire box.
8. Leave the brisket sitting, undisturbed and unobserved for about 3 hours.
9. Check the brisket. It should start to develop a bit of bark and darker color.
10. Check the brisket every 30-45 minutes, spritzing if it looks dry.
11. As your brisket has reached the stall, somewhere between 4 and 6 hours, usually, you may consider wrapping the brisket in butcher paper. This will keep it moist, but prevent further bark formation.
12. After about 10 hour on the smoker, the brisket should ideally start to feel really good. It should be pliable. If you have a thermometer, you are looking for the brisket to hit about 195F to 205F internal temperature, measured at the thickest part of the flat muscle (lean side). The most important thing is that the brisket is tender.
13. Remove the brisket from the smoker, wrap it (if it wasn't wrapped before), and allow to rest, for at least one hour.

Notes

- Based on Aaron Franklin's recipe, as seen in Franklin Barbecue: A Meat-Smoking Manifesto.

- You can also view Aaron Franklin’s three-part YouTube series on making a brisket, which is roughly the same information (though heavily condensed). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VmTzdMHu5KU&list=PLJXFUkVvL7g4-ic-vMvLOVYovxzHQBEOu>
- I don’t use a slather on brisket, though if I was going to, I do have a spritz bottle filled with Tabasco sauce.
- If you have trouble regulating temperature (this happens for a lot of reasons, poor fire control, bad wood, leaky smoker, etc) the cook times can go way up. Don’t worry. Just spend time, learn your smoker and wood, and keep practicing. Even a bad brisket can be pretty great.
- If I were to make a sauce for this, I’d make a [Classic Barbecue Sauce](#).
- I’ve used primarily white oak, as I’ve done the most smoking since moving to Washington. Most any oak, hickory, and pecan work really well.

Smoked Pork Ribs

Time: 7 hours 30 minutes (1 hour prep, 6+ hours smoking, 30 minutes resting) Serves: 4

Ingredients

- 1 rack of pork ribs (I prefer St. Louis Style)
- 1 recipe of [Meat Rub](#)
- spritz, 1 part apple cider vinegar to 3 parts water
- $\frac{1}{3}$ cup [Classic Barbecue Sauce](#)

Hardware

- Sharp boning knife
- Latex gloves
- Offset smoker
- Water pan
- Enough wood (maybe... 25 medium logs? To be safe.)
- spritz bottle (for spritz)
- Butcher paper
- Thermometer with meat probe (optional, but ideal.)

Instructions

1. If you are using a rack of spare ribs, you'll need to trim the skirt, breastbone, and excess fat. St. Louis Style are already trimmed just fine.
2. Cover all sides of the ribs in meat rub. I usually use anywhere from half to three quarters of the rub on a rack of ribs. You don't want to cake the stuff on too thickly, but maybe a little thicker than on a brisket.
3. Let the ribs sit for about an hour to warm up a bit while you start the fire.
4. ensure the water pan is full and placed on the grill.
5. Start the fire up. Use coals, paper, kindling, whatever you need to start the wood burning.
6. You want to maintain a temperature around 270F.
7. Place the ribs, bone-side down, on the grill.
8. Let the ribs sit for at least 2 hours, undisturbed.
9. Spritz the ribs and check the color.
10. If the ribs have a good dark, red color, slather on some barbecue sauce.
11. Spritz a large sheet of foil and slather with a little sauce.
12. Place the rack of ribs in the foil and completely rap with foil.
13. Continue to smoke until the ribs are properly pliable, about 3 hours.
14. Let the ribs rest for 30 minutes before serving.

Notes

- Based on Aaron Franklin's recipe, as seen in Franklin Barbecue: A Meat-Smoking Manifesto.
- If you have trouble regulating temperature (this happens for a lot of reasons, poor fire control, bad wood, leaky smoker, etc) the cook times can go way up. Don't worry. Just spend time, learn your smoker and wood, and keep practicing. Even a bad rack of ribs can be pretty good.
- Except for the sauce used while smoking, the ribs are good without any.
- I've used primarily white oak, as I've done the most smoking since moving to Washington. Most any oak, hickory, and pecan work really well.
- While you can use other cuts of pork ribs, I prefer St. Louis

Style, since they usually come trimmed and ready to smoke.

Chapter 9

Fermented, Pickled, and Canned

This chapter deals with fermented things, from sourdough starter to kombucha.

Yogurt

Time: 9 hours (1 hour prep, 8 hours inactive culturing) Serves: 3

Ingredients

- 1 Tablespoon active yogurt
- 32 Ounces milk
- pureed fruit (optional)

Hardware

- Pan
- 32 ounce jar
- Thermometer
- Cheesecloth

Instructions

1. Heat 32 ounces of milk to 180F.
2. Stir milk in jar until it reaches about 150F.
3. Place jar of warm milk in ice bath, and continue stirring until it reaches about 120F.
4. Remove jar from ice bath. Try to keep milk between 110F and 115F.
5. Mix 1 Tablespoon active yogurt into warm milk.
6. Let milk sit at 110F to 115F for 6 to 8 hours.
7. Strain out resulting whey.
8. store yogurt in the fridge with a lid.
9. Sometimes I add pureed fruit with just my bowl of yogurt, leaving the base plain to start a new batch later.

Notes

- Keep 1 Tablespoon of your plain yogurt to start your next

batch in a week or so.

- To start off, you can use store-bought yogurt that has bacteria in it (check ingredients) or buy a Yogurt starter.
- I had a really hard time getting a place that was consistently warm enough for the cultures to multiply (above 110F) but cold enough they did not die (below 115F). I finally found that my slow cooker set to warm, with the lid slightly open, with a water bath in it and the milk in the jar in the water bath keeps the perfect temperature.
- Experiment with heat sources on water prior to making this, as once the bacteria is in the milk, you will not want to go above 115F.
- You can strain out more or less whey to change the consistency of the yogurt.
- Whey can have other uses, and is rich in protein.

Chapter 10

Miscellaneous

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This chapter has to do with anything else that didn't fit in another category, such as spice mixtures.

Beef Rub

Time: 1 minute Serves: 1 recipe of beef rub

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cracked black pepper, 16 mesh
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup kosher salt

Hardware

- 1 Large shaker

Instructions

1. Combine both ingredients in the shaker.

Notes

- This is Aaron Franklin's beef rub, as seen in Franklin Barbecue: A Meat-Smoking Manifesto.

Chicken Brine

Time: 5 minutes (5 minutes prep) Serves: About 6 cups, enough for 1 disjointed chicken.

Ingredients

- 5 cups water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup salt
- 2 bay leaves, torn into large pieces
- $\frac{1}{2}$ Tablespoon black pepper
corns

Hardware

- Mixing bowl

Instructions

1. Place all ingredients in a mixing bowl.
2. Mix to combine.
3. Use on a disjointed chicken or refrigerate immediately.

Notes

- This is based on an Epicurious recipe, as seen here: <https://www.epicurious.com/recipes/food/views/brined-fried-chicken-352449>
 - Main differences are measurements for the water, more bay leaves, more

pepper corns, no coriander.

- I highly recommend brining a chicken before making [Fried Chicken](#). It keeps the bird super moist and flavorful.
- A brine works by moving the salty solution from areas of high salt concentration (a pan) into areas of low salt concentration (the bird). This allows the bird to retain moisture, as well as get additional flavor before cooking.
- I brine a whole disjointed chicken for about 8-9 hours before frying.

Chili Powder

Time: 30 minutes (5 minutes prep, 3 minutes cooking, 20 minutes cooling, 2 minutes blending) Serves: About 2 ounces of chili powder (2-4 pots of chili)

Ingredients

- 3 ancho chiles, stemmed, seeded, and chopped
- 3 cascabel chiles, stemmed, seeded, and chopped
- 3 dried arbol chiles, stemmed, seeded, and chopped
- 1 Tablespoon ground cumin
- 2 Tablespoons garlic powder
- 1 Tablespoon dried oregano
- 1 teaspoon paprika

Hardware

- Skillet
- Blender

Instructions

1. Place all 9 chiles in skillet with 1 Tablespoon ground cumin.
2. Cooker over medium-high heat for about 3-4 minutes just until the cumin gets toasty. Especially with ground cumin (as opposed to whole seeds) this must keep moving to keep from burning.
3. Set aside chiles and cumin to cool completely, about 20 minutes.
4. Place chiles and cumin into blender, along with 2 Tablespoons garlic powder, 1 Tablespoon dried oregano, and 1 teaspoon paprika.
5. Blend all ingredients until it is a fine powder consistency.
6. Allow powder to settle in blender for at least a minute

before opening.

Notes

- This is based on Alton Brown's recipe, as seen here: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/abs-chili-powder-recipe-1943055>
 - Main differences are the use of ground cumin (as I didn't have seeds on hand), and Hungarian paprika rather than smoked paprika (again, I used what I had on hand).
- This is more expensive than buying chili powder, but it's WAY more flavorful and delicious. Highly recommend trying it.
- This should keep for about 6 months in an air-tight container.

Crab Boil Spice Mixture

Time: 5 minutes Serves: 1 pot of boiling seafood (crab, shrimp, or crawfish)

Ingredients

- 3 tablespoons ground mustard seeds
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons ground coriander seeds
- 2 tablespoons whole allspice
- 2 tablespoons dill seeds
- 1 teaspoon whole cloves
- 1 tablespoon cayenne pepper
- 8 bay leaves

Hardware

- 1 cup bowl to store spices

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in a bowl.
2. Store in an airtight container in the pantry for short term, or in the freezer for long-term.

Notes

- While this was very good, it tasted basically exactly like Zatarain's Crab Boil. Main differences are that right now, this

recipe costs about \$10 to make, whereas Zatarain's is on Amazon, and it costs \$10 for 6 pots worth.

- Zatarain's also already comes in boil bags, which is super nice.

- If you bought spices at bulk, it might be cheaper, but given the trouble of straining or getting tea cloth to boil in, I will likely just buy Zatarain's in the future.

Meat Rub

Time: 1 minute Serves: 1 recipe of meat rub

Ingredients

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cracked black pepper, 16 mesh
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup kosher salt
- 2 Tablespoon [Chili Powder](#)
- 2 Tablespoons sweet Paprika

Hardware

- 1 Large shaker

Instructions

1. Combine all ingredients in the shaker.

Notes

- This is basically Aaron Franklin's pork rib and turkey

rub, as seen in Franklin Barbecue: A Meat-Smoking Manifesto, page 137.

- I add chili powder and paprika, specifically Hungarian paprika.

Vanilla Sugar

Time: 1 week Serves: 14 ounces (about 2 cups)

Ingredients

- 1 vanilla bean
- 14 ounces (2 cup) granulated sugar

Hardware

- 1 airtight mixing bowl

Instructions

1. Place 14 ounces granulated sugar in an airtight mixing bowl.
2. Slice vanilla bean down long ways.
3. Scrape the seeds into the sugar bowl.
4. Shove the bean into the sugar and cover it.
5. Let sit in the sugar for at least

1 week before using.

Notes

- This is Alton Brown's recipe, as seen here: <https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/vanilla-sugar-recipe-1914687>
- If this sits long enough, the sugar tends to set and get hard. I break it up and throw chunks in a blender briefly to get it back in a granulated form.