

Patrick's Cookbook

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2025 Edition - December

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Contents

1 DESSERTS AND SNACKS	5
Canned Cherries with Light Syrup	6
Gluten-Free Lemon Bars	7
Holiday Spice Cake	11
Kettle Corn	12
Leta's Fruit Crunch •	13
Peanut Butter Cookies •	15
Pumpkin Pie	17
Rice Krispies Treats •	18
Sweet and Saltines •	19
2 ENTREES	21
12-Bean Soup with Braised Pork Ribs	22
Baked Beans, Better	26
Beef Pot Roast	27
Boeuf Bourguignon	28
Breakfast Burritos	32
Breakfast Burritos (Easy Mode)	33
Cheesy Bacon Hash Brown Casserole	34
Chicken Broccoli Rice Casserole •	35
Classic Braised Chicken Drumsticks with Pan Sauce	37
Coq au Riesling	41
Dutch Oven Braised Pork Ribs	42
French Braised Beef Chuck	44
Hatch Green Chile Chicken Enchiladas	48
Jerk Chicken Rasta Pasta	50
King Ranch Casserole •	54
Korean BBQ Drumsticks •	57
Tex-Mex Pulled Chicken	58
3 SAUCES AND SEASONINGS	63
Italian Sausage & San Marzano Tomato Sauce •	64
Jamaican Jerk Seasoning	67
Mexican Spice Blend •	68
Thai Peanut Sauce (Easy)	69
Thai Peanut Sauce (Nam Jim Thua)	70
4 SIDES	73

Cheesy Sausage Balls •	74
Dad's Brussels Sprouts •	75
Deviled Eggs •	77
Fried Rice •	78
Green Bean Casserole	80
Holiday Stuffing •	81
Lime and Cilantro Rice	83
Mac and Cheese •	84
Mexican Rice •	85
Mexican Street Corn (Elote-Style) •	86
Perfect Oven-Baked Crumbly Bacon	88
Quick Pickled Cucumbers (Oi Muchim)	90
Roasted Asparagus with Lemon-Garlic Butter Sauce	92
Roasted Cauliflower	93
Spam Musubi •	96
Spinach and Artichoke Dip	97
Steamed Cabbage (Sweet and Sour) •	99
5 SOUPS	103
Caldo de Carnitas y Frijoles Negros •	104
Hungarian Mushroom Soup •	106
Italian Sausage Soup •	107
Tuscan Zuppa Soup •	108

Chapter I

DESSERTS AND SNACKS

Canned Cherries with Light Syrup

Ingredients

Cherries	10#	Vinegar	½ cup
Bottled lemon juice	2½ cups	Canning jars/lids/bands (quart)	7
Sugar	5 cups		
Water	25 cups		

Instructions

- 1. Prepare the equipment:** Sterilize 7 quart jars and an equal number of lids and bands in boiling water. Check the pressure canner for proper operation, including the seal and vent.
- 2. Prepare the cherries:** Wash and pit 10# of cherries. Prepare a solution with 2½ cups of bottled lemon juice and 10+ cups of water. Soak the cherries for 10 minutes to help preserve their color and flavor.
- 3. Prepare the syrup:** Combine 5 cups of sugar with 10 cups of water in a large saucepan. Heat at medium-high until the sugar is completely dissolved, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking.
- 4. Pack the jars:** Evenly distribute the prepared cherries into the sterilized jars. Pour the hot syrup over the cherries, ensuring each jar is filled while leaving approximately one inch of headspace. Use a non-metallic spatula to gently stir inside the jars to remove any trapped air bubbles.
- 5. Place lids:** Wet a clean lint-free with vinegar to clean and dry the jar rims. Apply lids and rings, then tighten lightly with fingertips. (Always use new lids!)
- 6. Process in canner:** Place the filled jars on the rack inside the pressure canner. Add water as per the canner's instructions, usually around 2-3 inches. Secure the lid and heat until steam flows freely from the vent. Continue to vent for 10 minutes, then close the vent and attach the pressure regulator weight. Process the jars at 10-15 pounds of pressure (adjusted for altitude) for 10 minutes.
- 7. Cool down and store:** Turn off the heat and let the pressure canner cool naturally until the pressure gauge reads zero. Carefully remove the jars using a jar lifter and place them on a towel or cooling rack, avoiding drafty areas. After 12-24 hours, check that each jar is sealed by pressing the center of the lid; it should not flex up or down. Label the jars with the canning date and store in a cool, dark place.

Gluten-Free Lemon Bars

Ingredients

BRM 1:1 Baking Flour	1¼ cups	Egg yolk	1
Almond flour, finely ground	3 Tbsp.	Granulated sugar	2/3 cup
Cornstarch	3 Tbsp.	Lemon juice, bottled	½ cup
Powdered sugar	½ cup	TrueLemon powder	1-2 tsp.
Kerrygold butter	16 Tbsp.	Salt	½ tsp.
Lemon zest	from 3 lemons	Powdered sugar	for dusting
Mexican vanilla	½ tsp.	Flaky salt	for sprinkling
Eggs	3		

Shortbread Crust

Preheat oven to 350°F — Line 8x8 inch pan with parchment paper, leaving overhang — Zest 1 lemon — Bring 10 Tbsp. butter to room temperature

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together **gluten free flour**, **almond flour**, 2 Tbsp. **cornstarch**, **powdered sugar**, and $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. **salt**. Add 10 Tbsp. softened **butter**, **lemon zest**, and **vanilla extract**. Mix with a fork or your hands until mixture forms clumps and holds together when pressed.
2. Press dough evenly into prepared pan, creating a uniform $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch thick layer. Use the bottom of a measuring cup to compact and smooth the surface. Dock the crust all over with a fork.
3. Bake at 350°F for 18-22 minutes until edges are golden brown and center is set. Remove from oven and reduce temperature to 325°F .

Lemon Curd

Zest 2 lemons — Cut 6 Tbsp. **butter** into tablespoon pieces

1. While crust bakes, whisk together **granulated sugar** and 1 tsp. **cornstarch** in a medium saucepan. Add **eggs** and **egg yolk**, whisking until smooth.
2. Add **lemon juice**, **lemon zest**, **TrueLemon powder**, and ¼ tsp. **salt**. Whisk to combine.
3. Cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly with a silicone spatula or wooden spoon, scraping the bottom and sides of the pan. Cook until mixture thickens noticeably and reaches 170°F , about *8-10 minutes*. The curd should coat the back of a spoon and leave a clear trail when you draw your finger through it.
4. Remove from heat and immediately stir in 6 Tbsp. **butter**, one piece at a time, until fully incorporated and smooth.
5. Strain the hot curd through a fine-mesh sieve into a bowl or measuring cup to remove **zest** bits and any cooked egg pieces.
6. Pour strained curd onto the hot pre-baked crust, spreading gently to edges if needed.
7. Bake at 325°F for *15-18 minutes* until filling is set but still jiggles slightly in the center when gently shaken.

Finishing

1. Cool completely in the pan on a wire rack for *1 hour*, then refrigerate for at least *3 hours* or overnight.
2. Use parchment overhang to lift bars from pan. Cut into 16 squares using a sharp knife, wiping blade clean between cuts.
3. Just before serving, dust moderately with **powdered sugar** and sprinkle lightly with **flaky sea salt**.

Equipment Required

- 8x8 inch baking pan
- Parchment paper
- Medium mixing bowl (for crust)
- Medium saucepan (2-quart capacity)
- Fine-mesh sieve or strainer
- Silicone spatula or wooden spoon
- Whisk
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Microplane or fine grater (for zest)
- Fork (for docking crust)
- Instant-read thermometer (optional but helpful)
- Sharp knife for cutting
- Wire cooling rack

Mise en Place

- Bring **butter** to room temperature for crust (*1 hour*)
- Zest **lemons** before juicing (if using fresh)
- Cut 6 Tbsp. **butter** into pieces for filling
- Line pan with parchment before starting
- Have all ingredients measured and ready
- Set up double layer of fine-mesh sieve over a bowl for straining

Ingredient Tips

- Bob's Red Mill 1:1 G.F. flour works best; other blends may need adjustment
- **Almond flour** should be finely ground (blanched almond flour, not almond meal)
- European-style **butter** (Kerrygold, Plugrá) has higher fat content and richer flavor
- Any shelf-stable **lemon juice** works; ReaLemon is consistent and reliable
- **TrueLemon powder** significantly amplifies lemon brightness without added liquid
- Fresh **lemon zest** is essential for aromatic oils and complexity
- Use the finest grater for **zest** to avoid bitter white pith

Preparation Tips

- Press crust very firmly and evenly; uneven thickness causes uneven baking
- Dock crust thoroughly to prevent bubbling during baking
- Don't underbake the crust; edges should be golden for structural integrity
- Stir curd constantly to prevent curdling; use silicone spatula to scrape sides
- Watch for 170°F on thermometer or coat-the-spoon consistency
- Strain while curd is hot for easiest flow through sieve
- Pour curd onto hot crust immediately after straining
- The filling will continue to set as it cools; slight jiggle is correct
- Clean knife between cuts for neat edges
- Add **powdered sugar** and **salt** just before serving to prevent dissolving

Make Ahead & Storage

- Bars must cool completely and chill at least *3 hours* before cutting
- Best made a day ahead; flavors meld and texture improves overnight
- Store covered in refrigerator for up to *5 days*
- Can be frozen unfrosted for up to *2 months*; thaw in refrigerator overnight
- Apply **powdered sugar** and **flaky salt** just before serving
- For meal prep, cut and store individually wrapped in refrigerator
- Bring to cool room temperature before serving for best texture (*15-20 minutes*)

Serving Suggestions

- Serve as elegant finger food dessert at room temperature
 - Pair with hot tea, coffee, or sparkling wine
 - Garnish individual servings with fresh mint or candied lemon peel
 - Serve alongside fresh berries or whipped cream for plated dessert
 - The **flaky salt** provides crucial sweet-savory contrast
 - Store any leftovers covered in refrigerator; remove *15 minutes* before serving
-

Holiday Spice Cake

Ingredients

All-purpose flour	1½ cups	Salt	½ tsp.
Sugar	1 cup	Vegetable oil	2/3 cup
Light brown sugar	¼ cup	Applesauce	1/3 cup
Baking powder	1 tsp.	Eggs	2
Cocoa powder	1 Tbsp.	Mexican Vanilla	1 tsp.
Ground cinnamon	1 Tbsp.	Powdered sugar	for dusting
Ground ginger	2 tsp.		
Ground nutmeg	½ tsp.		
Ground allspice	¼ tsp.		

Directions

Preheat oven to $350^{\circ}F$

1. In a medium bowl, whisk together **sugar**, **brown sugar**, **flour**, **baking powder**, **salt**, **cocoa powder**, **cinnamon**, **ginger**, **nutmeg**, and **allspice**.
2. In a large bowl, beat **vegetable oil**, **applesauce**, **eggs**, and **vanilla extract** until well combined.
3. Add dry ingredients to wet ingredients and stir until just blended.
4. Pour batter into a buttered and floured 9×5-inch loaf pan, smoothing the top with a spatula.
5. Bake until golden and a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about *40-45 minutes*.
6. Cool in pan for *10 minutes*, then unmold onto a wire rack to cool completely.
7. Dust with **powdered sugar** before serving.

Kettle Corn

This recipe is for a 3 quart stir-type popcorn maker.

Ingredients

Popcorn	1/3 cup.	Mexican Vanilla	1/4 tsp.
Coconut Oil	2 Tbsp.	Butter	1/2 Tbsp.
Turbinado Sugar	3 Tbsp.	Salt	1/4-1/2 tsp.

Directions

1. Add **oil** and **vanilla** to popcorn maker plate.
 2. Sprinkle in **popcorn** and **sugar**.
 3. Thinly slice butter and place on dripping shelf.
 4. Turn on popcorn maker.
 5. Two or three times during popping, gently shake the popcorn maker side to side to dislodge stuck kernels. **TAKE CARE!**
 6. When the pops slow to every 3 seconds, quickly turn off power and transfer popcorn to a large bowl.
 7. Salt to taste.
-

Leta's Fruit Crunch •

Ingredients

Frozen mixed berries	4 cups	Salt	1 tsp.
Brown sugar	1/4 cup	Cinnamon	1 tsp.
All-purpose flour (130g)	1 cup	Eggs	2 large
Sugar	1 cup	Butter	4 Tbsp.

Directions

Preheat oven to 375°F — Lightly beat **eggs** — Melt **butter** — Grease 8x8 inch glass baking dish

1. Mix **frozen berries** with **brown sugar** and spread in a baking dish.
2. In a bowl, combine **flour**, **sugar**, **salt**, and **cinnamon**.
3. Using a whisk, gradually add beaten **egg** to the flour mixture, a small amount at a time with a spoon.

IMPORTANT: Use a chopping motion with the whisk (not stirring) to incorporate each addition of egg until the mixture reaches a clumpy wet sand consistency. Be patient and methodical, and do not use all of the egg.

4. Sprinkle the crumble mixture evenly over the **fruit**.
5. Pour melted **butter** over the top.
6. Bake for 60-75 minutes until golden brown and bubbly.

Equipment Required

- 8x8 inch glass baking dish
- Large mixing bowl
- Small bowl for beaten egg
- Whisk
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Small saucepan or microwave-safe bowl for melting butter
- Rubber spatula

Mise en Place

- Keep **fruit** frozen until ready to use
- Beat **eggs** before starting
- Measure all ingredients before beginning
- Have whisk ready for proper mixing technique

Ingredient Tips

- Use frozen mixed berries straight from freezer
- If **fruit** has excess ice crystals, do not thaw, simply break up any large clumps
- Large **eggs** should be at room temperature for better incorporation
- Standard salted or unsalted butter works well

Preparation Tips

- The chopping motion with the whisk is crucial - do not stir
- Add **egg** very gradually, small amounts at a time
- The mixture should resemble wet sand before topping the fruit
- Spread topping evenly but do not pack it down
- Pour **butter** evenly over the entire surface

Make Ahead & Storage

- Best served warm from the oven
- Can be assembled and refrigerated for up to *24 hours* before baking
- Leftovers keep well covered at room temperature for *2 days* or refrigerated for *7 days*
- Reheat individual portions in microwave for *30 seconds*

Serving Suggestions

- Serve warm with vanilla ice cream
- Allow to cool for *10 minutes* before serving

Peanut Butter Cookies •

Ingredients

Peanut butter (creamy)	1¼ cups	Baking soda	1 tsp.
Eggs, large	2	Mexican vanilla	1 tsp.
Sugar	1 cup	Salt	1 tsp.
Granulated sugar (for rolling)	¼ cup		

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F — Bring **peanut butter** and **eggs** to room temperature — Line baking sheets with parchment paper — Place **rolling sugar** in shallow dish

1. In a large bowl, combine room temperature **peanut butter**, **eggs**, **sugar**, **baking soda**, **Mexican vanilla**, and **salt** until well mixed and smooth.
2. Cover bowl and chill dough for *15 minutes* to make it easier to handle.
3. Using a $1\frac{3}{4}$ " cookie scoop or rounded tablespoon, portion dough into balls.
4. Roll each ball in **granulated sugar** until completely coated.
5. Place sugared balls on prepared baking sheets, spacing 2 inches apart.
6. Press each cookie with a fork twice, creating a crisscross pattern on top. If fork sticks to dough, dip it in the **rolling sugar** between cookies.
7. Bake for *12-13 minutes* until edges are lightly golden but centers still appear soft. If baking two sheets at once, rotate their positions halfway through baking.
8. Let cookies cool on baking sheet for *5 minutes* before transferring to a wire rack to cool completely.

Equipment Required

- Large mixing bowl
- $1\frac{3}{4}$ " cookie scoop or tablespoon measure
- Baking sheets
- Parchment paper
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Fork for creating pattern
- Shallow dish for rolling sugar
- Wire cooling rack
- Rubber spatula

Mise en Place

- Remove **peanut butter** and **eggs** from refrigerator *1 hour* before starting
- Line baking sheets with parchment
- Measure all ingredients before beginning
- Set up sugar rolling station

Ingredient Tips

- Use commercial creamy peanut butter (like JIF or Skippy) rather than natural style
- Room temperature **peanut butter** creates a smoother dough
- For extra crunch, use coarse sugar for rolling
- Mexican vanilla adds depth, but pure vanilla extract can substitute

Preparation Tips

- Don't skip the *15 minute* chill time - it makes the dough easier to handle
- Keep cookie size consistent for even baking
- Press fork just deep enough to create pattern without flattening cookies too much
- Cookies will appear slightly underbaked when done but will set as they cool

Make Ahead & Storage

- Dough can be chilled up to *24 hours*
- Baked cookies keep in airtight container for *5 days*
- Freeze baked cookies up to *3 months*
- Freeze portioned dough balls up to *3 months* - roll in sugar after thawing

Serving Suggestions

- Best served at room temperature
- Excellent with cold milk or hot coffee
- Crumble over vanilla ice cream
- Pack in lunch boxes or cookie tins
- Use as base for ice cream sandwiches

Pumpkin Pie

Ingredients

Frozen Pie Crusts	2	Milk	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Cream Cheese	8 oz.	Butter (melted)	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup
Canned Pumpkin	2 cups	Vanilla Extract	1 tsp.
Sugar	1 cup	Cinnamon, ground	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.
Salt	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp.	Ginger, ground	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.
1 egg, plus 2 yolks	3 eggs	Whipped Cream	1 cup
Heavy Cream	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup		

Directions

Preheat Oven to 350°F — Thaw pie crusts about 15 minutes at room temperature — Lightly beat eggs

Pie Crusts

1. Fit a piece of aluminum foil to cover the inside of the shell completely. Fill the shell to the edges with dried beans.
2. Bake the pie crusts at 350°F for 10 minutes, then remove the beans and foil and bake for another 5-10 minutes until dried and beginning to color. Keep warm.

Filling

1. In a large mixing bowl beat the cream cheese with a hand mixer.
2. Add the pumpkin, then beat until combined.
3. Add the sugar and salt, then beat until combined.
4. Add the eggs and yolks, milk, cream, and butter, then beat until combined.
5. Add the vanilla, cinnamon, and ginger, then beat until combined.
6. Pour the filling into the pie crusts and loosely wrap the edges with aluminum foil to prevent burning.
7. Bake for 40 minutes at 350°F
8. Remove foil from edges and bake for 10 minutes, or until the center is set.
9. Cool on a wire rack until room temperature. Slice and serve topped with whipped cream.

Rice Krispies Treats •

Ingredients

Salted butter (Kerrygold) 6 Tbsp
Small marshmallows 16 oz bag
Mexican vanilla extract 1 tsp
Rice Krispies cereal 6 cups

Directions

Use a **large pot** — Line a **9" x 9"** **baking dish** with parchment paper

1. In the pot, melt **butter** over *medium-low* heat.
2. Add all but 1 cup of **marshmallows** to the melted butter.
3. Reduce heat to *low* and stir continuously until **marshmallows** are completely melted.
4. Remove from heat, add **vanilla extract** and stir to combine.
5. Add **Rice Krispies cereal** and remaining 1 cup **marshmallows**, stirring until well combined.
6. Pour the mixture into the prepared **baking dish**, spreading it evenly.
7. Allow to cool for 1 *hour* before cutting into squares.
8. Store at room temperature away from light and heat.

Note: These treats taste best after 2 days.

Sweet and Saltines •

Ingredients

Saltine crackers	2-3 sleeves	Lindt milk chocolate bars	8 oz
Kerrygold butter	2 sticks (1 cup)	Crushed nuts or pretzels	1/4 cup
Light brown sugar	1 cup	Cooking spray	as needed

Directions

Preheat oven to 425°F — Line a large cookie sheet with foil and **cooking spray** — Prepare a second large cookie sheet with crushed ice — Crush **nuts** and/or **pretzels** — Break apart candy bars into 1" pieces — Have a candy thermometer ready

1. Arrange **saltine crackers** in a single layer, salt side down, on the prepared sheet.
2. In a medium saucepan, combine **butter** and **brown sugar**.
3. Heat the mixture over medium heat, stirring constantly until the butter is completely melted and the sugar is dissolved.
4. Once the mixture starts to bubble, stop stirring and let it cook undisturbed. Cook until it reaches 285°F (soft-crack stage) on a candy thermometer, about 3-5 minutes. Watch for visual cues: the caramel should be a deep golden brown color and have a smooth, glossy appearance. You may see wisps of smoke starting to form.
5. Immediately remove from heat and pour evenly over the arranged **crackers**. Work quickly as the caramel will start to set.
6. Bake for 3-5 minutes until the caramel is bubbly all over. Watch carefully.
7. Remove from oven and quickly arrange **chocolate** over the top.
8. Wait about 1 minute, then spread the melted chocolate evenly.
9. Sprinkle crushed **nuts** and/or **pretzels** over the melted chocolate.
10. To cool quickly, place the hot cookie sheet with the crackers on top of the ice-filled sheet. For faster setting, place in the freezer if possible.
11. Once cold but not frozen, break into pieces.
12. Store in an airtight container.

Chapter 2

ENTREES

13-Bean Soup with Braised Pork Ribs

Ingredients

13-bean mix, dried	1 lb.	Garlic cloves	6
Braised pork ribs, picked	2 lbs.	Tomato paste	3 Tbsp.
Pork rib bones	reserved	San Marzano tomatoes, whole ..	28 oz. can
Braising liquid, strained	3 cups	Dry red wine	½ cup
Chicken stock or water	6-8 cups	Bay leaves	2
Bacon fat	3 Tbsp.	Fresh thyme sprigs	4-5
Onion, medium	1	White pepper	1 tsp.
Carrots, medium	2	Kosher salt	1-2 tsp.
Celery stalks	3	Black pepper	to taste
Leeks, medium	2	Fresh spinach	6 oz.
Parsnips, medium	2	Dried parsley	2 Tbsp.

Directions

Soak beans overnight in cold water — Strain braising liquid, reserve bones — Pick 2 lbs. pork from ribs — Dice onion, carrots, celery, and parsnips to ½-inch — Clean and slice leeks into ½-inch rounds — Mince garlic — Hand-crush San Marzano tomatoes in bowl

1. The night before, rinse beans thoroughly and place in large bowl. Cover with cold water by 3 inches. Soak for 8-12 hours. Drain before using.
2. Strain braising liquid, removing spent aromatics and peppercorns. Reserve rib bones with any remaining meat attached. Pick 2 lbs. of meat from ribs, keeping pieces rustic and chunky. Set aside meat and bones separately.
3. In large Dutch oven or heavy pot (8+ quart), heat bacon fat over medium heat. Add diced onion, carrots, celery, leeks, and parsnips. Sauté for 10-12 minutes until vegetables are softened and beginning to caramelized.
4. Add minced garlic and cook for 1-2 minutes until fragrant. Add tomato paste and cook, stirring constantly, for 2-3 minutes until paste darkens and becomes fragrant.
5. Deglaze with red wine, scraping up any browned bits from bottom of pot. Simmer until wine reduces by half, about 3-4 minutes.
6. Add drained beans, hand-crushed tomatoes with juices, braising liquid, reserved rib bones, bay leaves, thyme sprigs, and white pepper. Add 6 cups chicken stock or water.
7. Bring to boil, then reduce to gentle simmer. Cover and cook for 2-2½ hours, stirring occasionally, until beans are completely tender. Add additional stock or water as needed to maintain thick soup consistency.

8. Remove **rib bones** (they should be clean or nearly so). Add picked **pork** and **dried parsley**. Simmer for *10 minutes* to heat through.
9. Taste and adjust seasoning with **kosher salt** and **black pepper**. The **braising liquid** is already well-seasoned, so add **salt** conservatively.
10. Stir in **fresh spinach** and cook until just wilted, about *2-3 minutes*.
11. Remove **bay leaves** and **thyme sprigs**. Let soup rest for *10-15 minutes* before serving—it will thicken as it sits.

Equipment Required

- Dutch oven or heavy pot (8+ quart capacity)
- Large bowl (for soaking beans)
- Fine mesh strainer or colander
- Medium bowl (for crushing tomatoes)
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Wooden spoon or sturdy spatula
- Ladle
- Storage containers (for leftovers)

Mise en Place

- Soak **beans** the night before—this is essential for even cooking and proper texture
- Strain **braising liquid** ahead of time, removing all aromatics and **peppercorns**
- Pick all **pork** from **bones** before starting; reserve **bones** separately
- Prepare all vegetables before heating pot—this ensures smooth workflow
- Have **stock** or water measured and ready; you'll add it gradually
- Hand-crush **tomatoes** in bowl before starting to cook

Ingredient Tips

- **Beans:** Overnight soaking is crucial for tender, evenly cooked beans; quick-soak methods don't work as well for this recipe
- **Braising liquid:** Already contains significant **salt**, soy sauce, and Worcestershire-taste before adding more **salt**
- **San Marzano tomatoes:** Use certified DOP if possible; hand-crushing gives better texture than pre-crushed varieties
- **Bacon fat:** Rendered bacon fat adds tremendous flavor; substitute with olive oil or butter if needed
- **Leeks:** Clean thoroughly—slice lengthwise and rinse between layers to remove sand

• **Stock:** Homemade or low-sodium **chicken stock** preferred; water works well given the rich **braising liquid**

• **Wine:** Use a dry red you'd drink; avoid "cooking wine" which contains added **salt**

Preparation Tips

- Take time with vegetable sauté—caramelization builds foundational sweetness and depth
- Bloom **tomato paste** until it darkens and smells sweet; this removes raw taste and concentrates flavor
- Don't rush the **wine** reduction—you want to cook off harsh alcohol while preserving acidity
- Keep **rib bones** in during bean cooking—they continue releasing gelatin for body
- Stir occasionally during long simmer to prevent sticking, but don't over-stir or **beans** will break down
- Add liquid gradually—different bean mixes and **braising liquid** concentrations affect absorption
- Test **beans** for doneness by tasting several; they should be completely tender with no chalky center
- Add **pork** near end to prevent it from becoming tough through extended simmering
- **White pepper** blooms throughout cooking for integrated heat; **black pepper** at end for fresh bite
- Add **spinach** last—it wilts quickly and loses color if overcooked
- Let soup rest before serving—flavors meld and consistency thickens naturally

Make Ahead & Storage

- This soup improves significantly overnight as flavors marry; make *1-2 days* ahead if possible
- Store in refrigerator for up to *4 days*; soup will thicken considerably when cold
- To freeze: cool completely, portion into containers, freeze up to *3 months*
- Don't add **spinach** if freezing—add fresh when reheating
- Reheat gently on stovetop, adding water or **stock** to achieve desired consistency
- Soup thickens as it sits; thin with water or **stock** when reheating
- Taste and re-season after reheating—flavors can mellow

Serving Suggestions

- Serve with crusty artisan bread, cornbread, or buttermilk biscuits for sopping
 - Offer hot sauce or red pepper flakes at table for those who want heat
 - Drizzle with high-quality extra virgin olive oil just before serving
 - Top with grated Parmesan, Pecorino Romano, or aged cheddar
 - Garnish with fresh parsley, thyme leaves, or chopped **green onions**
 - Pairs beautifully with the same dry red **wine** used in cooking
 - Serve with simple green salad dressed with vinaigrette to cut richness
 - Makes excellent next-day lunch—flavors continue developing
-

Baked Beans, Better

Ingredients

Bacon strips	4-5	Yellow mustard	2 tsp.
Butter	1 Tbsp.	Worcestershire sauce	2 tsp.
Garlic, jarred minced	1-2 Tbsp.	Smoked paprika	½ tsp.
Bush's baked beans	1 (28 oz.) can	Black pepper	¼ tsp.
Brown sugar	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

Preheat oven to 375°F — Line a microwave-safe plate with paper towels

1. Place **bacon strips** on the prepared plate and cover with another paper towel. Microwave for *4-6 minutes* until crispy (check at *4 minutes*). Let cool, then crumble.
2. In a stovetop-safe 1.5 to 2-quart baking dish over medium heat, melt **butter**. Add **jarred garlic** and sauté for *30-60 seconds* until fragrant.
3. Remove from heat. Add **baked beans**, **brown sugar**, **yellow mustard**, **Worcestershire sauce**, **smoked paprika**, and **black pepper**. Stir to combine thoroughly.
4. Fold in most of the crumbled **bacon**, reserving some for topping. Sprinkle reserved **bacon** on top.
5. Bake uncovered for *30-35 minutes* until edges are bubbling and top is slightly caramelized. The sauce should be thickened, not soupy.
6. Let stand for *5 minutes* before serving.

Beef Pot Roast

Beef Pot Roast is a classic comfort food, perfect for a hearty family meal. This recipe combines tender beef with flavorful vegetables and a rich broth, slow-cooked to perfection.

Ingredients

Beef chuck roast	3-4 lbs	Red wine	½ cup
Onion, large	1	Worcestershire sauce	2 Tbsp.
Garlic cloves	6	Tomato paste	3 Tbsp.
Carrots	4	Dried thyme	1 Tbsp.
Potatoes, Yukon Gold	4	Dried rosemary	1 Tbsp.
Celery stalks	2	Bay leaves	2
Mushrooms	½ lb	Onion powder	1 tsp
Beef broth	1 cup	Garlic powder	1 tsp
		Salt	2 tsp
		Black Pepper, ground	1 tsp

Directions

Season the **beef roast** generously with **salt**, **pepper**, **onion powder**, and **garlic powder** — Slice the **onions** — Mince the **garlic** — Peel and cut the **carrots** into chunks — Cut the **potatoes** into chunks — Chop the **celery** — Slice the **mushrooms**

1. Heat a large skillet over medium-high heat and sear the **beef** on all sides until browned.
2. Place the sliced **onions**, minced **garlic**, **carrots**, **potatoes**, **celery**, and **mushrooms** in the crock pot.
3. In a separate bowl, whisk together the **beef broth**, **red wine**, **Worcestershire sauce**, **tomato paste**, **dried thyme**, **dried rosemary**, then add **bay leaves**.
4. Pour the mixture over the vegetables in the crock pot.
5. Place the seared **beef roast** on top of the vegetables.
6. Cover the crock pot and cook on **low heat** for **8-10 hours** or on **high heat** for **4-6 hours**, until the beef is tender and easily shreds with a fork.
7. Once cooked, remove the **beef** from the crock pot and let it rest for a few minutes before slicing or shredding.
8. Serve the beef pot roast with the vegetables and drizzle with broth.

Boeuf Bourguignon

Ingredients

Chuck roast	4 lbs.	Tomato paste	2 Tbsp.
Thick-cut bacon	8 oz.	Unsalted butter	6 Tbsp.
Cremini mushrooms	16 oz.	All-purpose flour	1/3 cup
Pearl onions, frozen	16 oz.	Fresh thyme	8 sprigs
Yellow onions	2 large	Fresh parsley	1 bunch
Carrots	4 large	Bay leaves	2
Celery stalks	3	Black peppercorns	1 Tbsp.
Shallots	2 medium	MSG	1/4 tsp.
Garlic cloves	8	Kosher salt	2 Tbsp.
Burgundy wine	750 ml	Black pepper, ground	1 Tbsp.
Cognac	1/4 cup		
Beef Better Than Bouillon	2 Tbsp.		
Water	2 cups		

Directions

Salt **beef** 24 hours ahead — Bring **beef** to room temperature 2 hours before cooking — Preheat oven to 300°F — Cut **beef** into $2\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces — Dice **bacon** into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch lardons — Prepare mirepoix: dice **onions**, **carrots**, **celery** — Mince **shallots** — Crush **garlic** cloves lightly — Quarter **mushrooms** if large — Make bouquet garni with **thyme**, **parsley** stems, **bay leaves**, **peppercorns** — Dissolve **Better Than Bouillon** in **hot water**

1. Start with cold Dutch oven. Add **bacon**, turn to medium-low heat, render until crisp ($12-15$ minutes). Remove with slotted spoon.
2. Increase heat to medium-high. Working in batches, brown **beef** until deeply caramelized ($4-5$ minutes per side). Transfer to bowl.
3. Lower heat to medium. Add half the **wine**, scrape fond. Strain liquid into separate pot, reserve.
4. Return Dutch oven to medium heat. Add 2 Tbsp **butter**, **onions**, **carrots**, **celery**, **shallots**, and **MSG**. Cook until onions are translucent ($8-10$ minutes).
5. Add **garlic**, cook 1 minute. Add **tomato paste**, cook until darkened ($2-3$ minutes).
6. Add **cognac**, reduce until nearly dry. Add **flour**, cook (2 minutes).
7. Return **beef**, **bacon**, reserved wine liquid, remaining **wine**, and **bouillon mixture**. Add bouquet garni. Bring to simmer.
8. Cover, transfer to oven. Braise until meat reaches 195°F , about $2\frac{1}{2}-3$ hours. Check liquid level hourly.

9. Meanwhile, blanch **pearl onions** in boiling water (*1 minute*). Shock in ice bath, peel.
10. In large skillet, sauté **mushrooms** in 2 Tbsp **butter** until golden (*8-10 minutes*). Set aside.
11. Brown **pearl onions** in same skillet with remaining **butter** until caramelized (*5-6 minutes*).
12. When meat is tender, remove from oven. Transfer **beef** pieces to bowl. Strain sauce into clean pot, pressing solids.
13. Reduce sauce until slightly thickened. Meanwhile, make beurre manié: knead 2 Tbsp each softened **butter** and **flour**.
14. Whisk beurre manié into simmering sauce in small pieces until desired consistency. Return **beef**, add **mushrooms** and **pearl onions**.
15. Simmer gently *5 minutes*. Adjust seasoning with **salt** and **pepper**. Rest *20 minutes*.
16. Garnish with chopped **parsley**. Serve with crusty bread or buttered egg noodles.

Equipment Required

- 7-8 quart enameled cast iron Dutch oven
- 12-inch heavy-bottom skillet
- Fine-mesh strainer
- 2-quart saucepan (for reducing wine)
- Digital instant-read thermometer
- Kitchen twine and cheesecloth (for bouquet garni)
- Large mixing bowls (3-4)
- Heavy cutting board
- Sharp chef's knife
- Kitchen spider or slotted spoon
- Wooden spoons and whisks
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Large plate lined with paper towels

Mise en Place

- Season **beef** 24 hours ahead, store uncovered in refrigerator
- Remove **beef** 2 hours before cooking
- Open **wine** to breathe 1 hour before cooking
- Prepare bouquet garni in cheesecloth, tie securely
- Cut all vegetables before beginning
- Have additional hot **stock** ready
- Soften butter for beurre manié ahead of time

Ingredient Tips

- Choose well-marbled **chuck roast**, preferably center-cut
- Use young red Burgundy (Pinot Noir) or Côtes du Rhône
- Select slab **bacon** for even lardons
- **Better Than Bouillon** must be "Roasted Beef Base"
- European-style **butter** (82% butterfat) preferred
- Fresh **herbs** only - dried will muddy the sauce
- Choose small **cremini mushrooms** for even cooking

Preparation Tips

- Cut **beef** against grain in equal sizes for even cooking
- Pat **beef** thoroughly dry before browning
- Cold start for **bacon** ensures proper rendering

- Never crowd pan when browning - pieces should not touch
- Dark fond is crucial - but watch carefully to prevent burning
- Skim surface fat during braising every 30 minutes
- Test several pieces of **meat** for doneness
- Sauce should coat the back of a spoon when finished

Make Ahead & Storage

- Improves if made 1-2 days ahead
- Cool completely before refrigerating
- Remove solidified fat cap before reheating
- Reheat gently at 300°F for 30-45 minutes
- Add hot stock if needed during reheating
- Can freeze up to 3 months in airtight container
- Thaw completely in refrigerator before reheating

Troubleshooting

- If sauce is too thin: make additional beurre manié
- If sauce breaks: whisk in cold **butter** piece by piece
- If meat is tough: continue cooking, check every 15 minutes
- If fond is too dark: deglaze immediately with **wine**
- If sauce is too acidic: add a pinch of sugar
- If seasoning is flat: add **MSG** in small increments

Serving Suggestions

- Rest 20-30 minutes before serving
- Traditional: egg noodles or pommes mousseline
- Crusty baguette for sauce
- Serve same **wine** used in cooking
- Garnish with fresh **parsley** and extra **pearl onions**
- Simple green salad with vinaigrette to balance

Breakfast Burritos

Ingredients

Breakfast sausage	16-24 oz.	Salt	1 tsp.
Bell pepper	1	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Onion	1	Ground mustard	¼ tsp.
Green chilis	1 (6oz.) can	MSG	¼ tsp.
Eggs	12	Cooking oil (or spray)	1 tsp.
Milk	1 ½ cups	Frozen tater tots	30 oz.
Sour cream	¾ cup	Tortillas, burrito size	12-16
		Shredded cheese	3-4 cups

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F — Dice **bell peppers** and **onions** — Drain **chilis**

1. Cook the **breakfast sausage**, **bell peppers**, **onions**, and **chilis**, over medium heat, crumbling the sausage until cooked through. Drain grease.
2. Whisk together the **eggs**, **milk**, **sour cream**, **salt**, **black pepper**, **ground mustard**, **MSG** and until smooth.
3. Lightly grease a 9" × 13" baking pan with **oil or cooking spray**. Place the **tater tots** in the bottom of the pan.
4. Sprinkle the cooked **sausage** mixture over the **tater tots** in the prepared pan. Pour the **egg** mixture evenly over the top.
5. Bake at 350°F for 30 minutes covered, then 30-45 minutes uncovered until set.
6. If freezing, let the casserole cool to room temperature. Scoop about ½ cup of the casserole onto each **tortilla**, sprinkle with **cheese**, fold the sides, and roll up into a burrito.
7. To freeze, wrap burritos in parchment paper or plastic wrap, and place in a freezer bag. Reheat in the microwave or oven as desired.

Breakfast Burritos (Easy Mode)

These Easy Breakfast Burritos are perfect for busy mornings, combining classic breakfast flavors in a convenient handheld meal. They can be prepped quickly and are freezable for grab-and-go breakfasts, requiring just two minutes in the microwave to reheat.

Ingredients

Vegetable oil	3 tbsp	Pepper	½ tsp
Hash brown potatoes	4 cups	Salt	½ tsp
Breakfast sausage,	1 lb.	Cheddar and/or Jack Cheese	2 cups
Eggs	8	Flour tortillas	12
Chopped Green Chiles	1 can		

Directions

1. Heat 2 tablespoons **oil** in a nonstick skillet. Add **hash browns**, press down lightly, and cook without moving for 7 minutes. Drizzle with remaining **oil**, turn, and cook until browned and hot.
2. Beat **eggs**, **green chiles**, **salt**, and **pepper** in a bowl. Cook **sausage** in the skillet until browned, then stir in **egg** mixture and cook until scrambled.
3. To assemble burritos, spoon a line of **hash browns** down the center of each **tortilla**. Top with **cheese** and **egg** mixture.
4. Roll up each **tortilla** tightly to secure the filling. Serve immediately, or follow freezing instructions.
5. To freeze, wrap each burrito in foil and store in a freezer bag for up to 1 month. To reheat, wrap in a damp paper towel and microwave until heated through.

Cheesy Bacon Hash Brown Casserole

Ingredients

Frozen hash browns, thawed	30 oz.	Sliced mushrooms	8 oz. can
Cream of chicken soup	10.5 oz. can	Sun-dried tomatoes	½ cup
Sour cream	1 ¾ cups	Garlic powder	1 tsp.
Butter, melted	½ cup	Onion powder	1 tsp.
Onion, diced	¾ cup	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Sharp cheddar cheese	2 cups	Cayenne pepper (<i>optional</i>)	¼ tsp.
Gruyère cheese	1 cup	Potato chips, crushed	2 cups
Bacon, cooked & crumbled	1 lb.		

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F— Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish — Thaw and pat dry **hash browns** — Dice **onion** — Shred **cheddar** and **Gruyère** cheese — Cook and crumble **bacon** — Drain and chop **mushrooms** — Crush **potato chips**

1. Rehydrate **sun-dried tomatoes** in hot water for *10 minutes*, then drain and chop.
 2. In a large bowl, mix **hash browns**, **cream of chicken soup**, **sour cream**, melted **butter**, diced **onion**, 1½ cups **cheddar cheese**, **Gruyère cheese**, ¾ of the crumbled **bacon**, chopped **mushrooms**, chopped **sun-dried tomatoes**, **garlic powder**, **onion powder**, **black pepper**, and **cayenne pepper** (if using).
 3. Spread the mixture evenly in the prepared baking dish.
 4. Top with remaining ½ cup **cheddar cheese** and crushed **potato chips**.
 5. Bake for *50-55 minutes* until golden brown and bubbly.
 6. Remove from oven and sprinkle remaining **bacon** on top.
 7. Let cool for *5-10 minutes* before serving.
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Chicken Broccoli Rice Casserole •

Ingredients

Chicken, cooked	1½ lb.	Sweet corn, canned	8 oz.
Rice, long-grain white	2 cups	Bay leaf	1
Neutral oil	2 tsp.	Rosemary, dried	1 tsp.
Chicken broth	4 cups	Sweet paprika	1 tsp.
Broccoli	1 head	MSG	¼ tsp.
Cream cheese	8 oz.	Garlic powder	½ tsp.
Onion, medium	1	Onion powder	½ tsp.
Garlic cloves	6-8	Nutmeg powder	pinch
Butter	6½ Tbsp.	Salt	1 tsp.
Flour	3 Tbsp.	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Milk	2 cups	Red pepper, crushed	¼ tsp.
Mushroom slices, canned	8 oz.	Crispy fried onions	¼ cup

Directions

Soften **cream cheese** at room temp and cube — Preheat oven to 375°F — Dice **chicken** — Dice **onion** — Mince **garlic** — Chop **broccoli** — Drain **corn** and **mushrooms** — Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish with $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp. **butter**

1. Cook **rice** al-dente using 2 cups **chicken broth** and a **bay leaf**. Stop your rice cooker 5 minutes early.
2. While rice cooks, bring a pot of salted water to boil. Blanch **broccoli** for *2 minutes*, then immediately strain in a metal colander rinsing with cold water. Drain well and transfer to a large bowl.
3. In a large skillet, melt 4 Tbsp. **butter** on medium heat. Add **oil** and **corn** and increase heat to medium-high to brown and caramelize the corn, about *5 minutes*. Add diced **onion** and cook until translucent, *5-10 minutes*. Add minced **garlic** and **mushrooms**, cooking for another *5 minutes*. Remove from heat.
4. In a large saucepan, melt 2 Tbsp. **butter**. Add **rosemary**, **paprika**, **MSG**, **garlic powder**, **onion powder**, **nutmeg**, **salt**, **black pepper**, and **red pepper**. Heat on medium, stirring constantly for *30 seconds*. Sprinkle **flour** over the butter/spice mixture using a whisk to combine. Cook, stirring constantly for *2 minutes*.
5. Gradually whisk in *2 cups* of **chicken broth**, then the **milk**. Heat and whisk constantly until bubbling and thickened. Add cubes of **cream cheese** and cut/whisk until melted and smooth. Remove from heat.
6. In a large bowl, combine and mix blanched **broccoli**, cooked **rice**, cooked **vegetables**, diced **chicken**, and **sauce**.

7. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish and bake at 375°F for *20 minutes*. Remove from oven to sprinkle liberally with **crispy fried onions**, and bake another *10 minutes*. Rest **5-10 minutes** before serving.
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Classic Braised Chicken Drumsticks with Pan Sauce

Ingredients

Chicken drumsticks	12 (3-4 lbs.)	Canned mushroom slices	12 oz.
Vegetable oil	2 Tbsp.	Dried thyme	2 tsp.
Butter	6 Tbsp.	Dried rosemary	1½ tsp.
Onions, large	2	Dried sage	1 tsp.
Carrots, large	3-4	Bay leaves	3
Celery stalks	3-4	Dijon mustard	2 Tbsp.
Garlic cloves	10-12 (1 head)	MSG	½ tsp.
Tomato paste	2 Tbsp.	Lemon, zested	1
White wine (optional)	½ cup	All-purpose flour	3 Tbsp.
Chicken stock	5-6 cups	Kosher salt	2 tsp.
		Black pepper	1 tsp.

Directions

Preheat oven to 275°F — Peel **garlic cloves** — Cut **onions** into 8 wedges each — Cut **carrots** into 2-inch pieces — Cut **celery** into 2-inch pieces — Drain **mushrooms** — Zest **lemon** — Pat dry **drumsticks** — Season **drumsticks** generously with **salt** and **pepper**

1. Heat **vegetable oil** in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Working in batches, sear **drumsticks** until golden brown on all sides, about *3-4 minutes* per side. Transfer to a plate and set aside.
2. Reduce heat to medium. Add 4 Tbsp. **butter** to the Dutch oven. Once melted, add **onion** wedges, **carrot** pieces, and **celery** pieces. Sauté until vegetables begin to soften and develop color, about *8-10 minutes*. Add **garlic cloves** and cook for *2 minutes* more.
3. Add **tomato paste** and cook, stirring constantly, until it darkens and becomes fragrant, about *2-3 minutes*.
4. If using **white wine**, add it now and scrape up any browned bits from the bottom of the pot. Cook until wine is nearly evaporated, about *3-4 minutes*. If not using wine, proceed to next step.
5. Add **chicken stock**, drained **mushrooms**, **dried thyme**, **dried rosemary**, **dried sage**, **bay leaves**, **Dijon mustard**, and **MSG**. Stir to combine and bring to a simmer.
6. Return **drumsticks** to the pot, nestling them into the liquid (liquid should come halfway up the drumsticks). Cover with lid and transfer to oven. Braise for *1½-2 hours*, until **chicken** is very tender and nearly falling off the bone.

7. Remove pot from oven. Using tongs, carefully transfer **drumsticks** to a plate. Stir **lemon zest** into the braising liquid and taste for seasoning, adjusting **salt** and **pepper** as needed.
8. To thicken sauce, knead together remaining 2 Tbsp. **butter** and 3 Tbsp. **flour** to form a smooth paste (beurre manié). Return pot to stovetop over medium heat. Whisk in beurre manié, a little at a time, until sauce reaches desired consistency. Simmer for 3-5 minutes to cook out flour taste.
9. For crispy skin: Pat **drumsticks** dry and air fry at 400 °F for 5-7 minutes until skin is crispy and caramelized. For freezing: skip this step and proceed directly to storage.
10. Return **drumsticks** to sauce, or transfer to containers for freezing. Serve hot over rice or with crusty bread.

Equipment Required

- Large Dutch oven (6-7 quart capacity)
- Large plate or rimmed baking sheet
- Tongs
- Wooden spoon or spatula
- Whisk
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Microplane or zester
- Small bowl (for beurre manié)
- Ladle
- Air fryer (optional, for finishing)
- Freezer-safe containers (if freezing)

Mise en Place

- Remove **drumsticks** from refrigerator *30 minutes* before cooking for even searing
- Prep all vegetables before starting - large uniform pieces ensure even cooking
- Have **stock** measured and nearby for quick addition
- Separate 2 Tbsp. **butter** for beurre manié from the 4 Tbsp. used for sautéing
- Zest **lemon** before cooking; reserve zest in small bowl

Ingredient Tips

- Choose **drumsticks** of similar size for even cooking
- Whole **garlic cloves** become sweet and tender when braised - they're delicious eaten whole
- Quality **chicken stock** makes a significant difference; low-sodium preferred for seasoning control
- If omitting **wine**, add 1-2 Tbsp. additional **lemon juice** at the end for brightness

- Canned **mushrooms** work well here; if using fresh, add them later to prevent overcooking
- **MSG** amplifies savory notes; omit if preferred without other adjustments

Preparation Tips

- Don't crowd **drumsticks** when searing - work in batches for proper browning
- Fond development is crucial - those browned bits add deep flavor
- Blooming **tomato paste** until it darkens intensifies umami
- Large vegetable pieces stay intact during long braise and provide textural contrast
- Check liquid level during braising - add more **stock** if needed
- Beurre manié should be added gradually while whisking to prevent lumps
- For stovetop braising: use lowest heat setting, check frequently to maintain bare simmer
- Pat **drumsticks** very dry before air frying for maximum crispness

Make Ahead & Storage

- Can be made up to *2 days* ahead and refrigerated
- Flavors improve overnight as they meld
- To freeze: cool completely, portion into freezer-safe containers with sauce, freeze up to *3 months*
- Freeze flat in zip-top bags for space efficiency
- Thaw overnight in refrigerator before reheating
- Reheat gently on stovetop or in *325°F* oven until warmed through, about *25-30 minutes*
- If reheating from frozen, add *15-20 minutes* to heating time
- Air fry for crispy skin after reheating if desired
- Sauce may separate when frozen; whisk while reheating to re-emulsify

Serving Suggestions

- Serve over jasmine rice cooked in **chicken stock** with dried soup vegetables and **bay leaf**
 - Excellent with mashed potatoes, egg noodles, or crusty bread for sopping up sauce
 - Garnish with fresh parsley, thyme, or chives if available
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- Vegetables from the braise are delicious served alongside
 - Pairs well with simple green salad or roasted green beans
 - For a complete meal: add roasted root vegetables or sautéed greens
 - Leftovers make excellent chicken and rice soup - add extra **stock** and shred **chicken**
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Coq au Riesling

Ingredients

Chicken thighs, bone-in	2½-3 lbs	Fresh parsley	2 sprigs
Thick-cut bacon	6 oz	Bay leaves	2
Riesling wine	2 cups	Better than Bouillon, chicken	1½ tsp
Leeks	4 medium	Water	1½ cups
Cremini mushrooms	8 oz	Heavy cream	½ cup
Butter	½ cup	Egg yolk	1
Garlic head	1 whole	All-purpose flour	1 Tbsp
Fresh thyme	2 sprigs	Salt and black pepper	to taste

Directions

Cut **garlic** head in half horizontally — Clean **leeks** thoroughly and slice into $\frac{1}{2}$ " rounds — Quarter **mushrooms** — Dice **thick-cut bacon** into $\frac{1}{4}$ " pieces — Chop **parsley** for garnish — Mix **Better than Bouillon** with **hot water** until dissolved.

1. In a large bowl, combine **chicken thighs**, halved **garlic head**, 1 sprig **thyme**, 1 sprig **parsley**, 1 **bay leaf**, and 1 tsp **salt**. Pour in **Riesling**. Cover and refrigerate for up to 12 hours.
2. When ready to cook, remove **chicken** from marinade and pat dry. Reserve the **wine marinade**.
3. Melt $\frac{1}{4}$ of the **butter** in a large Dutch oven over medium-high heat. Cook diced **bacon** until golden. Remove with a slotted spoon.
4. Add another $\frac{1}{4}$ of **butter**, then cook **leeks** with a pinch of **salt** until soft, about 5 minutes. Remove to bacon bowl.
5. Add another $\frac{1}{4}$ of **butter** and cook **mushrooms** until golden. Remove to same bowl.
6. Melt remaining **butter**. Season **chicken** with **salt** and **pepper**, then brown on all sides until deep golden, about 8-10 minutes.
7. Remove **chicken**. Lower heat and stir **flour** into pan drippings. Cook for 2 minutes, then add reserved **wine marinade** and **bouillon mixture**, scraping bottom of pan.
8. Return **chicken** to pot. Simmer covered for 90 minutes, until meat is very tender.
9. Remove **chicken**. Whisk **cream** and **egg yolk** in a small bowl. Off heat, whisk into sauce. Return to low heat and cook until thickened.
10. Add back **bacon**, **leeks**, **mushrooms**, and **chicken**. Warm through gently. Garnish with chopped **parsley**.

Dutch Oven Braised Pork Ribs

Ingredients

Pork rib rack	4 lbs.	Dried thyme	1 tsp.
Pork or chicken stock	3 cups	Dried oregano	½ tsp.
Apple cider	8-12oz	Kosher salt	2 tsp.
Soy sauce	¼ cup	Black pepper	1 tsp.
Worcestershire sauce	2 Tbsp.	Garlic powder	1 tsp.
Brown sugar	2 Tbsp.	Onion powder	1 tsp.
Tomato paste	4 Tbsp.	Smoked paprika	½ tsp.
Onion, medium	1	Chipotle powder	¼ tsp.
Garlic cloves	1 bulb	Hot paprika	¼ tsp.
Bay leaves	2	MSG	½ tsp.
Black peppercorns	1 tsp.		

Directions

Preheat oven to 275°F — Pat dry **pork ribs** — Quarter **onion** — Smash **garlic cloves**

1. Cut **pork rib rack** into quarters for easier handling.
2. In a small bowl, combine 2 tsp. **kosher salt**, 1 tsp. **black pepper**, 1 tsp. **garlic powder**, 1 tsp. **onion powder**, ½ tsp. **smoked paprika**, ¼ tsp. **hot paprika**, ¼ tsp. **chipotle powder**, and ½ tsp. **MSG**. Rub mixture evenly over all surfaces of **rib quarters**.
3. Arrange seasoned **ribs** in Dutch oven (they can overlap slightly), tucking quartered **onion**, smashed **garlic**, **bay leaves**, **peppercorns**, **dried thyme**, and **dried oregano** around and under **ribs**.
4. In a medium bowl, whisk together **stock**, **apple cider**, **soy sauce**, **Worcestershire sauce**, **brown sugar**, and **tomato paste** until well combined. Pour over **ribs**.
5. Cover Dutch oven tightly with lid and place in oven. Braise for $4\text{-}4\frac{1}{2}$ hours until **ribs** are fork-tender and meat pulls easily from bone.
6. Remove from oven. Carefully transfer **ribs** from braising liquid as needed for intended use (BBQ finishing or soup preparation). Reserve braising liquid with rendered fat for soup base.

Equipment Required

- Dutch oven (6-7 quart capacity minimum)
- Small bowl (for dry rub)
- Medium bowl (for braising liquid)
- Whisk
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Tongs or slotted spoon
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Large plate or platter (for finished ribs)

Mise en Place

- Pat **ribs** completely dry with paper towels before seasoning
- Have all liquid ingredients measured and ready to whisk together
- Prepare aromatics (quarter **onion**, smash **garlic**) before starting
- Ensure Dutch oven lid fits tightly to prevent moisture loss

Ingredient Tips

- Use homemade or low-sodium **stock** for better control of final seasoning
- **Apple cider** should be unfiltered for more flavor; apple juice works as substitute
- **MSG** is optional but adds significant umami depth without altering flavor profile
- **Tomato paste** should be whisked thoroughly into liquid to prevent clumping
- Baby back ribs can substitute for spare ribs; reduce cooking time by *30 minutes*

Preparation Tips

- Cut **rack** into quarters through bone for easier handling and better liquid exposure
- Apply dry rub generously but don't let it sit more than *15 minutes* before braising (salt will draw moisture)

- **Ribs** can overlap in Dutch oven but ensure liquid reaches all pieces
- Don't lift lid during first *2½ hours* of cooking to maintain consistent temperature
- Test doneness by inserting fork between bones - meat should offer minimal resistance
- For BBQ finishing: remove **ribs** gently to preserve meat integrity for air frying
- For soup: pull meat directly from bones while warm, return to braising liquid

Make Ahead & Storage

- Entire braise can be completed up to *2 days* ahead and refrigerated in Dutch oven
- Fat will solidify on surface when cold; leave intact to protect meat, or remove if desired before reheating
- Reheat covered at *300°F* for *30-40 minutes* until warmed through
- Braising liquid without **ribs** can be frozen for up to *3 months*
- If freezing liquid, cool completely and skim excess fat before freezing

Usage Notes

- This recipe yields **ribs** suitable for both BBQ finishing and soup preparation
- For BBQ: transfer **ribs** to plate, pat dry, brush with sauce, finish in air fryer at *400°F* for *3-5 minutes*
- For soup: leave **ribs** in liquid, pull meat from bones, proceed with bean soup recipe
- Braising liquid contains rendered fat and collagen - ideal soup base requiring no additional stock
- Taste braising liquid before seasoning soup; it's already well-salted from the braise
- **Bay leaves** and **peppercorns** can be strained out before using liquid for soup

French Braised Beef Chuck

Ingredients

Beef chuck shoulder	4–5 lbs	Black peppercorns	1 tsp.
Burgundy wine	2 cups	French dip seasoning mix	2 Tbsp.
Beef stock	2 cups	Kosher salt	1½ tsp.
Onions, large	2	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Celery stalks	3	Vegetable oil	2 Tbsp.
Garlic cloves	4	Pearl onions, peeled	2 cups
Tomato paste	3 Tbsp.	Creamini mushrooms	2 cups
Fresh thyme	4–5 sprigs	Fresh parsley, chopped	2 Tbsp.
Dried bay leaves	2		

Searing and Aromatics

Pat dry **beef chuck** with paper towels — Rough chop **onions** and **celery** into large chunks — Mince **garlic** — Prepare **bouquet garni**: bundle **fresh thyme**, **bay leaves**, and **peppercorns** in a disposable teabag — Preheat oven to 275°F

1. Season **beef chuck** generously on all sides with **kosher salt** and **black pepper**.
2. In a Dutch oven, heat **vegetable oil** over medium-high heat until shimmering. Working carefully to avoid splatter, sear the **beef** on all sides until deeply browned, approximately $3\text{--}4$ minutes per side. The goal is a rich mahogany crust. Remove **beef** and set aside.
3. In the same pot, reduce heat to medium. Add rough-chopped **onions** and **celery**, stirring occasionally until they begin to soften and caramelize slightly, about $5\text{--}7$ minutes. Add minced **garlic** and cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
4. Add **tomato paste** and stir constantly for $1\text{--}2$ minutes, allowing it to caramelize slightly and deepen in color. This develops savory complexity.
5. Deglaze the pot with **Burgundy wine**, scraping up all browned fond from the bottom with a wooden spoon. Simmer for $2\text{--}3$ minutes to allow alcohol to burn off slightly.
6. Return seared **beef** to the pot. Add **beef stock** and **French dip seasoning mix**. The liquid should come approximately one-third up the sides of the meat. Add **bouquet garni**.

The Braise

1. Bring braising liquid to a bare simmer on the stovetop, approximately $2\text{--}3$ minutes.
2. Cover with the lid and transfer to the preheated 275°F oven. Braise for 3 hours, then check the meat for tenderness with a fork. It should yield easily but still hold its shape.

3. After *3 hours*, add peeled **pearl onions** and **cremini mushrooms** directly to the braising liquid, nestling them among the aromatics and meat. Return to oven, covered, for an additional *1.5–2 hours* until **beef** is completely fork-tender and vegetables are yielding but not dissolved.
4. Remove from oven. Using tongs or a slotted spoon, carefully transfer the **beef** to a warm platter, cradling it gently to prevent breaking apart. Distribute **pearl onions** and **mushrooms** around the meat.

Sauce and Service

1. Place the Dutch oven on the stovetop over medium heat. Allow the braising liquid to come to a gentle simmer. Using a skimming ladle, carefully skim the surface fat and impurities, working methodically until the surface is relatively clear. This typically requires *3–5 minutes* of gentle skimming.
2. The sauce should have reduced naturally to approximately one-third of its original volume, yielding a silky, glossy consistency that coats the back of a spoon. If it appears too thin, continue simmering gently until it reaches desired body, approximately *2–3 minutes* more. Taste and adjust seasoning with additional **salt** and **pepper** as needed.
3. Remove and discard **bouquet garni**.
4. Pour sauce over **beef**, **pearl onions**, and **mushrooms**. Garnish generously with fresh **parsley**. Serve immediately with mashed potatoes and supplemental beef stock gravy on the side.

Equipment Required

- 5–6 quart enameled Dutch oven with self-basting lid
- Large skillet or sauté pan for searing (optional; can use Dutch oven)
- Wooden spoon for stirring and scraping fond
- Tongs or slotted spoon for handling meat
- Skimming ladle with perforations
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Paper towels for patting dry
- Disposable cotton teabags (or cheesecloth bundle)
- Warm platter for resting meat
- Instant-read thermometer (optional but helpful)

Mise en Place

- Ensure **beef chuck** is at room temperature before searing—remove from refrigerator *30–45 minutes* prior
- Peel **pearl onions** and clean **mushrooms** well in advance; store in separate containers
- Rough chop **onions** and **celery** into large, uniform chunks
- Mince **garlic** fresh just before use
- Measure all liquids and seasonings
- Assemble **bouquet garni** in teabag
- Measure **French dip seasoning mix**

Ingredient Tips

- Select a quality Burgundy wine—Pinot Noir or a rustic Côtes du Bourgogne works well. Avoid heavily oaked wines; the braise will concentrate and intensify the flavors
- Chuck shoulder with good marbling ensures richness and tenderness; ask your butcher for a single large roast rather than portioned pieces

- Beef stock should be homemade or high-quality store-bought; weak stock will result in thin, unsatisfying sauce
- French dip seasoning mix varies by brand; look for onion-forward blends without excessive salt
- Pearl onions vary in size; uniformity helps with even cooking
- Cremini mushrooms maintain better texture than button mushrooms; avoid portobello, which can become mushy
- Fresh thyme is essential for the bouquet garni; dried thyme becomes powdery and unpleasant

Preparation Tips

- Pat the **beef** thoroughly dry before searing; moisture prevents proper browning
- Develop a deep mahogany crust during searing—this Maillard reaction creates the foundation of flavor
- Do not skip the fond-scraping step; those browned bits contain concentrated savory compounds
- Allow **tomato paste** to caramelize briefly before deglazing; this concentrates and deepens its umami impact
- The braising liquid should come only one-third up the meat, not submerge it; this creates a humid oven environment without excessive stewing
- Do not stir the braise during cooking; resist the urge to check frequently. The self-basting lid does the work
- Add **pearl onions** and **mushrooms** late to preserve their distinct texture and flavor
- Skim fat methodically and gently; aggressive skimming can cloud the sauce
- Taste the sauce before service; the braising aromatics may have rendered differently than expected, requiring seasoning adjustment

Make Ahead & Storage

- The **beef** can be seared and the braise begun up to *4 hours* ahead; add **pearl onions** and **mushrooms** only when you plan to finish
- Prepare all vegetables and seasonings the morning of service
- Leftover braise keeps refrigerated for up to *4 days*; the flavors actually deepen overnight
- To reheat: gently warm in a *325°F* oven, covered, for *20–30 minutes* until heated through. Add a splash of beef stock if sauce has reduced too much during storage
- The braise does not freeze well due to the delicate texture of the meat and the nature of the sauce emulsion

Serving Suggestions

- Serve over creamy mashed potatoes, allowing them to absorb the silky sauce
 - Accompany with supplemental beef stock gravy on the side for guests who prefer additional sauce
 - A simple green salad with vinaigrette provides brightness and cuts through the richness
 - Crusty bread for soaking up every drop of sauce is essential
 - The same Burgundy wine used in the braise pairs beautifully for drinking; continue with it at table
 - Garnish generously with fresh **parsley** just before service for color and herbaceous freshness
 - Allow guests to rest the platter for *5 minutes* before serving, preserving the meat's internal juices
-

Hatch Green Chile Chicken Enchiladas

Ingredients

Chicken breasts	2 lbs	Heavy cream	1 cup
Hatch green chiles	2 cups	Chicken broth	1 cup
Onion, diced	1 medium	All-purpose flour	¼ cup
Garlic cloves, minced	3	Butter	¼ cup
Cilantro, chopped	¼ cup	Vegetable oil	2 Tbsp
Lime juice	2 Tbsp	Ground cumin	2 tsp
Corn tortillas	12 (6-inch)	Dried oregano	1 tsp
Monterey Jack cheese	1 pound	Salt	1 tsp
Sour cream	1 cup	Black pepper	½ tsp

Roasted Hatch Green Chiles

Preheat air fryer to $400^{\circ}F$

1. Wash and dry the **Hatch green chiles**.
2. Place **chiles** in the air fryer basket in a single layer, leaving space between each chile.
3. Air fry at $400^{\circ}F$ for $5-7$ minutes, then flip and cook for another $5-7$ minutes until the skin is blistered and charred.
4. Remove from the air fryer and place in a bowl covered with plastic wrap to steam for $10-15$ minutes.
5. Once cooled, peel off the skin, remove seeds, and chop the **chiles**.

(Continue with enchilada recipe...)

Hatch Green Chile Chicken Enchiladas

Preheat oven to 350°F — Grease a 9×13 inch baking dish — Shred **Monterey Jack cheese** — Dice **onion** — Mince **garlic** — Chop **cilantro** — Juice **lime**

1. In a large skillet, heat **vegetable oil** over medium-high heat. Season **chicken breasts** with **salt** and **pepper**, then cook until golden brown and cooked through, about *6-8 minutes* per side. Remove from heat, let cool, then shred the **chicken**.
 2. In the same skillet, sauté **onions** until translucent, about *5 minutes*. Add **garlic** and cook for another *minute*. Add 1 cup of chopped **roasted Hatch green chiles**, **cumin**, and **oregano**. Cook for *2-3 minutes* until fragrant.
 3. Add shredded **chicken** to the skillet and mix well. Season with **salt** and **pepper** to taste. Set aside.
 4. In a saucepan, melt **butter** over medium heat. Whisk in **flour** and cook for *1-2 minutes*. Gradually whisk in **chicken broth**, **heavy cream**, and **sour cream**. Bring to a simmer and cook until thickened, about *5 minutes*. Stir in remaining 1 cup of **roasted Hatch green chiles**, **lime juice**, and **cilantro**. Season with **salt** and **pepper** to taste.
 5. Warm **corn tortillas** in the microwave or on a griddle until pliable. Dip each **tortilla** in the sauce, then fill with the **chicken** mixture and some **Monterey Jack cheese**. Roll up and place seam-side down in the prepared baking dish.
 6. Pour the remaining sauce over the **enchiladas** and sprinkle with remaining **Monterey Jack cheese**.
 7. Bake for *25-30 minutes*, until the **cheese** is melted and bubbly.
 8. Garnish with additional **cilantro**, if desired. Serve hot with your favorite sides like **Mexican rice**, **refried beans**, or a fresh salad.
-

Jerk Chicken Rasta Pasta

Ingredients

Boneless chicken thighs	2 lbs.	Green bell pepper	1
Jerk seasoning	5 Tbsp.	Green onions	1 bunch
Better Than Bouillon chicken . . .	1 Tbsp.	Vegetable oil	2 Tbsp.
Water	1 cup	Heavy cream	½ cup
Onion, small	1	Parmesan cheese	½ cup
Garlic cloves	7	Cilantro	¼ cup
Fresh thyme sprigs	2	Salt	to taste
Penne pasta	16 oz.	Black pepper	to taste
Red bell pepper	1		
Yellow bell pepper	1		

Directions

Preheat Instant Pot — Quarter **onion** — Smash $\frac{1}{4}$ **garlic cloves** — Mince remaining $\frac{3}{4}$ **garlic cloves** — Slice **bell peppers** into strips — Slice **green onions** — Grate **Parmesan cheese** — Chop **cilantro** roughly

1. Coat **chicken thighs** thoroughly with 3 Tbsp. **jerk seasoning**, rubbing it in well.
2. Add **water** and **Better Than Bouillon** to Instant Pot and stir to combine.
3. Place seasoned **chicken** in the broth and add quartered **onion**, $\frac{1}{4}$ smashed **garlic cloves**, and **thyme sprigs**.
4. Seal the Instant Pot and cook on High Pressure for *15 minutes*, followed by a *10-minute* natural release.
5. Remove **chicken** to a bowl and shred using two forks. Reserve $\frac{1}{4}$ cup of the cooking broth and stir 2-3 Tbsp. back into the shredded **chicken** to keep it moist.
6. Cook **pasta** in salted water according to package directions until al dente. Drain and set aside.
7. In a large, heavy-bottomed pot, heat **vegetable oil** over medium-high heat. Add **bell peppers** and half the **green onions**, sautéing for *3-4 minutes* until peppers begin to soften but remain crisp.
8. Add minced **garlic** and cook for *30 seconds* until fragrant.
9. Sprinkle in remaining 2 Tbsp. **jerk seasoning** and stir to coat vegetables.
10. Pour in the reserved **chicken broth** and **heavy cream**. Bring to a simmer.
11. Reduce heat to medium-low and let sauce simmer for *3-4 minutes* until it begins to thicken.

12. Stir in the **Parmesan cheese** until melted and sauce is smooth.
13. Add shredded **jerk chicken** and cooked **pasta**, tossing to coat evenly with the sauce. Season with **salt** and **black pepper** to taste.
14. Serve immediately, garnished with remaining **green onions** and chopped **cilantro**.

Equipment Required

- Instant Pot or pressure cooker
- Large pasta pot (6-8 quart)
- Colander
- Large, heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven
- Wooden spoon or silicone spatula
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Sharp chef's knife
- Cutting board
- Box grater or microplane for cheese
- Two forks for shredding chicken
- Medium bowl for shredded chicken
- Small bowl for reserved broth

Mise en Place

- Measure all seasonings and spices before beginning
- Allow heavy cream to come to room temperature
- Prepare all vegetables before starting to cook
- Grate cheese while chicken cooks in Instant Pot
- Have all ingredients within arm's reach before beginning sauce
- Keep pasta water heating while preparing the chicken

Ingredient Tips

- Boneless chicken thighs provide more flavor and moisture than breast meat
- Store-bought jerk seasoning works well, but use a high-quality brand for authentic flavor
- For homemade jerk seasoning, combine allspice, thyme, cayenne, garlic powder, onion powder, cinnamon, nutmeg, brown sugar, and salt
- Freshly grated Parmesan is crucial - pre-shredded cheese often contains anti-caking agents

- For extra heat, add 1-2 teaspoons of minced scotch bonnet or habanero pepper
- Bell peppers can be substituted with poblano for a slightly spicier version

Preparation Tips

- Allow a full natural release if time permits - it keeps the chicken more tender
- Reserve more cooking broth than called for in case the sauce needs thinning
- Don't overcook the pasta - it will continue to absorb liquid in the sauce
- For bell peppers, aim for softened but still slightly crisp for best texture
- If sauce becomes too thick, add a splash of reserved cooking broth
- If sauce is too thin, simmer a few extra minutes before adding pasta
- Keep pasta very al dente as it will continue cooking in the hot sauce

Make Ahead & Storage

- Chicken can be prepared up to 2 days ahead and refrigerated
- Complete dish keeps well refrigerated for up to 3 days
- When reheating, add a splash of chicken broth or cream to revive the sauce
- Reheat gently on stovetop over medium-low heat
- Microwave reheating works but may cause pasta to become slightly rubbery
- Freeze portions without pasta, then prepare fresh pasta when reheating
- Garnish with fresh cilantro only just before serving

Serving Suggestions

- Serve with fried plantains for an authentic Caribbean pairing
- A simple green salad with lime vinaigrette balances the rich pasta
- Garlic bread made with Caribbean-style butter is an excellent side
- For a complete meal, add a tropical fruit salad as a refreshing dessert
- Offer extra jerk seasoning at the table for those who prefer more heat
- Jamaican Red Stripe beer or a fruity rum punch complement the flavors
- For a colorful presentation, serve in a large white bowl to highlight the vibrant peppers

King Ranch Casserole •

Ingredients

Chicken, boneless	2 lbs	White pepper	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp.
Water	2 cups	Ground nutmeg	$\frac{1}{8}$ tsp.
Mexican spice mix	3 Tbsp.	MSG	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.
Caldo de tomate bouillon	1 Tbsp.	Lard	2 Tbsp. + 1 tsp.
Better Than Bouillon - Chicken ...	1 Tbsp.	Onion	1 large
Butter	4 Tbsp.	Bell pepper	1
Flour	$\frac{1}{4}$ cup	Ro-Tel	10-14 oz. can
Heavy cream	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups	Corn tortillas, medium	14
Chicken broth	1 cup	Sharp cheddar cheese	16 oz.
Fresh mushrooms	8 oz.		
Garlic cloves	4-6		
Onion powder	1 tsp.		

Directions

Preheat oven to 375°F — Quarter corn tortillas — Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish with 1 tsp lard — Dice onion, bell pepper, and mushrooms — Mince garlic — Shred cheese — Butterfly cut chicken breasts or thighs — Heat 2 cups of water

1. Mix hot water, bouillon, caldo de tomate, and Mexican spice mix.
2. Add the broth and chicken to a pressure cooker (e.g. Instant Pot).
3. Cook on high pressure for 6 minutes, then allow for natural release for 5 minutes.
4. Remove the chicken and shred it in a large bowl. Reserve 1 cup of the cooking broth.
5. In a large saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add mushrooms and cook until they release their moisture, about 5 minutes. Add garlic and cook for 1 minute.
6. Sprinkle flour over the mushroom mixture and cook, stirring constantly, for 2 minutes.
7. Gradually whisk in heavy cream and 1 cup chicken broth. Add onion powder, white pepper, ground nutmeg, and MSG. Simmer, stirring frequently, until thickened, about 5 minutes. Set sauce aside.
8. In a large skillet, melt 2 Tbsp lard over medium heat. Sauté onion and bell pepper for 5 minutes.
9. Raise heat to high and lightly scorch the onion and bell pepper for 1-2 minutes.
10. Reduce heat to medium. Add cream sauce, Ro-Tel, and reserved cooking broth. Stir to combine.

11. Bring to a simmer, reduce heat to *medium-low*, and stir occasionally for *5 minutes*.
12. Add the **shredded chicken** to the sauce and stir to coat evenly. Remove from heat.
13. Layer ingredients in the prepared baking dish:
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ of the **tortilla quarters**
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ of the **chicken mixture**
 - $\frac{1}{3}$ of the **shredded cheese**

Repeat layers, then top with remaining **tortillas** and **cheese**.

14. Bake uncovered for *30-35 minutes* until bubbly and cheese is melted.
15. Let stand for *10 minutes* before serving.

Equipment Required

- Pressure cooker or Instant Pot
- 9x13 inch baking dish
- Large skillet (12-inch preferred)
- Large saucepan for cream sauce
- Large mixing bowl for chicken
- Medium bowl for cheese
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Whisk
- Wooden spoon or spatula
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Box grater for cheese
- Colander (optional, for draining Ro-Tel)

Mise en Place

- Bring **cream** to room temperature
- Cut and prep all vegetables before starting
- Have all measured ingredients ready before beginning the sauce
- Shred cheese while chicken cooks
- Quarter tortillas before starting assembly

Ingredient Tips

- Use cup4cup or King Arthur Measure for Measure gluten-free flour for best roux results
- Fresh cremini mushrooms provide better flavor than white button
- Extra-sharp cheddar adds more depth of flavor
- If **Mexican spice mix** unavailable, combine equal parts ground cumin, chili powder, and paprika
- Authentic **lard** makes a difference - avoid hydrogenated versions

Preparation Tips

- Cook roux until it smells nutty but watch carefully as gluten-free flour can burn quickly
- Don't skip scorching the vegetables - it adds essential flavor
- Press excess moisture from mushrooms while cooking for better sauce texture
- Keep sauce warm until assembly to maintain proper consistency
- Warm tortillas slightly before cutting to prevent cracking

Make Ahead & Storage

- Chicken can be cooked and shredded up to *2 days* ahead
- Complete sauce up to *24 hours* in advance
- Assembled casserole can be refrigerated up to *24 hours* before baking
- If made ahead, add *10 minutes* to baking time
- Leftovers keep for *3 days*; reheat covered at *350°F*

Serving Suggestions

- Serve with Mexican rice and refried beans
- Garnish with diced avocado and fresh cilantro
- Offer sour cream and hot sauce on the side
- Can be frozen in individual portions for *2 months*

Korean BBQ Drumsticks •

Ingredients

Gochujang	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup	Black pepper	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.
Soy sauce	6 Tbsp.	Chicken drumsticks	12-14
Honey	4 Tbsp.	Sesame seeds	2 Tbsp.
Brown sugar	6 Tbsp.	Green onions, sliced	4
Garlic, minced	8 cloves		
Fresh ginger, grated	2 Tbsp.		
Sesame oil	2 Tbsp.		
Rice vinegar	2 Tbsp.		
Mirin	4 Tbsp.		

Directions

Mince **garlic** — Grate **ginger** — Slice **green onions** — Pat dry **drumsticks**

1. Combine all sauce ingredients (**gochujang** through **black pepper**) in a medium bowl. Mix thoroughly and divide: $\frac{2}{3}$ for marinade, $\frac{1}{3}$ for basting (store separately).
2. Place **drumsticks** in a large container, pour marinade portion over chicken. Cover and refrigerate for *2-4 hours*.
3. Transfer **drumsticks** to slow cooker, discarding used marinade. Cook on *LOW* for *6-8 hours* or *HIGH* for *3-4 hours* until internal temperature reaches *165°F*.
4. Preheat air fryer to *400°F*. Working in batches of 4-6, brush **drumsticks** with reserved sauce and air fry *3-5 minutes* until crispy, brushing again halfway through. Keep finished batches warm at *200°F*.
5. Garnish with **sesame seeds** and **green onions**. Serve immediately while crispy.

Tex-Mex Pulled Chicken

Ingredients

Chicken thighs,	3-5 lbs	Caldo de tomate	2 Tbsp
Yellow onion, large	1	Bay leaves	2
Garlic cloves	4-6	Limes	2
Mexican spice blend	5 Tbsp	Fresh cilantro, chopped	½ cup
Herdez salsa ranchera	7 oz. can	Kosher salt	2 tsp.
Chicken stock	2½ cups		

Directions

Preheat oven to 275°F — Pat **chicken thighs** completely dry — Large dice **onion** — Mince **garlic** — Chop **cilantro** — Juice **limes** ($\frac{1}{4}$ cup)

1. Pat **chicken thighs** completely dry with paper towels. Season skin side lightly with **kosher salt**. Heat dutch oven over medium-high heat with no added fat. Place **thighs** skin-side down and do not move them. Sear for *8-10 minutes* until deeply golden-brown and skin releases easily from the pan. Flip briefly for *1-2 minutes*, then remove **chicken** to a plate. Pour rendered fat into a bowl, reserving 2 Tbsp in the pot along with all the fond.
2. Reduce heat to medium. Add diced **onion** to the fond, stirring to coat in fat. Cook *5-7 minutes*, stirring occasionally, until edges start browning—not just translucent, we want some color and caramelization.
3. Add 4-5 Tbsp **Mexican spice blend** to the **onions**. Cook *45-60 seconds*, stirring constantly, until a toasted fragrance develops. You will smell the distinct shift from raw spice to bloomed aromatic. Add **salsa** to stop the bloom. Scrape all the fond from the bottom of the pot.
4. Add minced **garlic** to the tomato mixture and cook for *30 seconds*. Add 2½ cups **chicken stock**, 2 Tbsp **caldo de tomate**, and 2 **bay leaves**. Stir well and bring to a simmer. Taste the braising liquid—it should be intensely flavored and slightly too salty. If not sufficiently seasoned, add another $\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp **caldo de tomate**.
5. Return **chicken thighs** to the pot skin-side up. Liquid should come halfway up the **chicken**; add more **stock** if needed. Bring to a bare simmer on the stovetop, then cover with a tight-fitting lid. Transfer to the preheated 275°F oven and braise for *2½-3 hours*.
6. Check at *2½ hours*: the meat should pull from the bone with zero resistance. If still slightly firm, continue braising for another *30 minutes*.
7. Remove **chicken** from the pot and let cool for *10 minutes* to make handling easier. Remove skin and bones, etc.

8. In a large bowl, shred the **chicken** into bite-size pieces, maintaining some texture. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the **braising liquid**, 2 Tbsp. **reserved chicken fat**, juice of 2 *limes*, and $\frac{1}{2}$ cup **cilantro**. Fold gently to combine. Add more **braising liquid** as needed until moist but not soupy.
9. Serve immediately in tacos, or hold warm. This **chicken** benefits from resting *15-30 minutes* to allow flavors to marry fully.

Equipment Required

- Dutch oven (5-7 quart capacity, oven-safe to 300°F)
- Tight-fitting lid for dutch oven
- Large plate for holding seared chicken
- Fine mesh strainer
- Medium saucepan (for reduction)
- Small bowl (for reserved fat)
- Cutting board and chef's knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Wooden spoon or silicone spatula
- Paper towels
- Tongs or fork (for handling chicken)
- Ladle or large spoon (for skimming fat)
- Two forks (for shredding chicken)
- Citrus juicer (optional but helpful)

Mise en Place

- Remove **chicken thighs** from refrigerator *30 minutes* before cooking to take chill off
- Pat **chicken** completely dry—moisture prevents proper searing
- Prepare all vegetables before starting: dice **onion**, mince **garlic**, chop **cilantro**
- Measure **spice blend** and set near stove for quick addition
- Have all liquids measured and ready—braising moves quickly after sear
- Open **salsa** can and have ready to add immediately after spices
- Juice **limes** after **chicken** goes in oven (keeps juice fresh)

Ingredient Tips

- Bone-in, skin-on thighs are essential—boneless will not achieve the same tenderness or gelatin-rich sauce
- Choose thighs of similar size for even cooking

- **Herdez salsa ranchera** is preferred for its roasted pepper depth; substitute with quality jarred salsa if needed
- If your **Mexican spice blend** is older than *6 months*, increase quantity by 1 Tbsp as potency fades
- Use fresh **garlic** only—powdered garlic is already in the spice blend
- **Chicken stock** quality matters; homemade or low-sodium store-bought preferred
- Reserve rendered **chicken fat**—it's gold for finishing and adds authentic richness
- Fresh **Mexican limes** (Key limes) are more authentic but regular Persian limes work well

Preparation Tips

- The sear is critical: don't rush it. Deeply golden skin = maximum fond = concentrated flavor
- Resist moving the **chicken** during searing—let it release naturally when ready
- The fond (brown bits) contains concentrated Maillard compounds; scrape thoroughly
- Brown the **onion** edges—this adds another layer of caramelization
- Bloom spices until fragrant shift occurs, usually *45-60 seconds*—under-blooming leaves raw taste, over-blooming creates bitterness
- Add **salsa** immediately after blooming to halt cooking and prevent burning
- Taste braising liquid before adding **chicken**—should be intensely flavored
- During braise, liquid should barely simmer; vigorous bubbling means oven is too hot
- Skim fat before reduction—too much fat makes sauce greasy rather than rich
- Reduce sauce properly—half volume concentrates flavor exponentially
- Add **lime juice** and **cilantro** only at the end to preserve brightness
- Shred **chicken** to bite-size pieces, not fine threads—texture matters

Make Ahead & Storage

- Can be made up to *3 days* ahead through step 10; refrigerate in sauce
- Flavor actually improves after *24 hours* as spices continue integrating
- If made ahead, add fresh **lime juice** and **cilantro** when reheating
- Reheat gently in covered pot over low heat, stirring occasionally
- Add splash of **stock** if sauce has tightened during refrigeration
- Can be frozen for up to *3 months*; thaw overnight in refrigerator
- After thawing, refresh with additional **lime juice** and **cilantro**
- Leftover rendered **chicken fat** can be refrigerated for *1 week* and used for sautéing vegetables or making rice

Serving Suggestions

- Serve in warm corn or flour tortillas with diced **onion**, **cilantro**, and **lime** wedges
- Excellent with pickled jalapeños, sliced radishes, or quick-pickled red onions
- Top with crumbled queso fresco, cotija, or shredded Monterey Jack
- Pair with Mexican rice, refried beans, or charred street corn
- Makes exceptional enchiladas—use as filling with verde or roja sauce

- Works beautifully in tortas, quesadillas, or burrito bowls
- For tostadas: crisp tortillas, spread refried beans, top with **chicken**, shredded lettuce, Mexican crema
- Leftover **chicken** makes outstanding chilaquiles for breakfast
- Consider crispy skin garnish: remove skin before braising, roast separately until crispy, crumble over tacos
- Traditional accompaniments: salsa verde, salsa roja, pickled carrots and jalapeños, lime wedges, fresh tortilla chips

Flavor Profile Notes

- This recipe achieves depth through layering: seared proteins, bloomed spices, reduced sauce, bright finish
- The **Mexican spice blend** with cinnamon and cloves provides northern Mexican/mole-adjacent complexity
- Gelatin from bones creates luxurious mouthfeel and helps sauce cling to meat
- Reserved **chicken fat** adds authentic richness without greasiness when used judiciously
- The acid-fat-salt-umami balance is critical: **lime** cuts richness, **salt** amplifies everything, bouillon/caldo provide savory depth
- Finishing with fresh **cilantro** and **lime** preserves brightness that would be lost during long braise

Chapter 3

SAUCES AND SEASONINGS

Italian Sausage & San Marzano Tomato Sauce •

Ingredients

Italian sausage	1 lb.	San Marzano tomatoes, whole ..	24 oz. can
Yellow onion, large	1	Tomato paste	3 Tbsp.
Carrots, medium	2	Italian seasoning	2-3 Tbsp.
Garlic cloves	8	Brown sugar	¼ cup
Zucchini, medium	1	Chicken stock	as needed
Mushrooms, sliced	8 oz. can	Lemon juice	3 Tbsp.
Red wine	8 oz.		
Prego chunky garden style sauce .	24 oz. jar		

Directions

Dice **onion** — Dice **carrots** fine — Mince **garlic** — Quarter **zucchini** lengthwise and slice into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces — Drain **mushrooms** — Crush **San Marzano tomatoes** by hand — Open **red wine** to breathe

1. In a large, heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven, brown **Italian sausage** over medium-high heat, breaking into bite-sized pieces. Cook until well-browned and cooked through, about *8-10 minutes*. Remove **sausage** with slotted spoon and set aside, leaving rendered fat in pot.
2. Reduce heat to medium and add diced **onion** to the rendered fat. Cook until translucent and softened, about *5 minutes*.
3. Add diced **carrots** and cook for additional *5 minutes*, stirring occasionally.
4. Add minced **garlic**, sliced **zucchini**, and drained **mushrooms**. Cook for *2-3 minutes* until **garlic** is fragrant.
5. Pour in **red wine** to deglaze, scraping up any browned bits from bottom of pot. Cook until wine reduces by half, about *3-4 minutes*.
6. Stir in **tomato paste** and cook for *1-2 minutes* until it darkens slightly and becomes fragrant.
7. Add **Prego sauce**, hand-crushed **San Marzano tomatoes** with their juices, **Italian seasoning**, and **brown sugar**. Return browned **sausage** to pot and stir to combine.
8. Bring to a gentle simmer, then reduce heat to low. Simmer uncovered for *2 hours*, stirring occasionally and scraping bottom to prevent sticking. Sauce should reduce and concentrate significantly.
9. During final *30 minutes*, add **lemon juice**, and **chicken stock** as needed if sauce becomes too thick. Taste and adjust with additional **brown sugar** or **Italian seasoning** as needed.
10. Serve immediately over pasta or cool completely before storing.

Equipment Required

- Large heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven (6-8 quart capacity)
- Sharp chef's knife and cutting board
- Large wooden spoon or spatula
- Slotted spoon for removing sausage
- Can opener
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Large bowl for crushed tomatoes
- Ladle for serving
- Timer for monitoring cook time

Mise en Place

- Complete all vegetable prep before starting
- Open and crush **San Marzano tomatoes** by hand in bowl
- Have **wine** open and measured
- Pre-measure **Italian seasoning** and **brown sugar**
- Keep **chicken stock** nearby for final adjustments
- Reserve **lemon juice** for finishing

Ingredient Tips

- Use high-quality bulk **Italian sausage** from butcher for best flavor
- San Marzano DOP tomatoes provide superior sweetness and acidity
- Crushing tomatoes by hand creates better texture than machine processing
- Use dry red wine you'd drink - **Merlot**, **Chianti**, or **Côtes du Rhône** work well
- **Italian seasoning** should be basil and thyme heavy with oregano and touch of rosemary
- Fresh **lemon juice** is essential for proper acid balance

Preparation Tips

- Don't skip browning the **sausage** - the fond creates essential flavor base
- Maintain gentle simmer throughout long cook to prevent scorching
- Stir occasionally and scrape bottom to prevent sticking
- Sauce should reduce by about one-third during *2 hour* cook
- Taste and adjust seasoning progressively, not just at end
- Final consistency should coat pasta without being too thick
- Add **lemon juice** off heat to preserve brightness

Make Ahead & Storage

- Sauce improves with overnight rest - flavors meld beautifully
- Refrigerate up to *5 days* or freeze up to *3 months*
- Reheat gently, adding **chicken stock** if needed to restore consistency
- Can double recipe easily for batch cooking
- Freeze in portion-sized containers for quick weeknight meals
- Add fresh **lemon juice** when reheating for brightness

Serving Suggestions

- Serve over **spaghetti**, **rigatoni**, or **penne** pasta
- Reserve pasta water to adjust sauce consistency if needed
- Garnish with fresh **basil**, **Parmesan**, and cracked pepper
- Pairs excellently with garlic bread and Caesar salad
- Makes enough sauce for *1½ pounds* of pasta
- Also excellent as base for lasagna or baked ziti
- Serve with robust red wine like **Chianti** or **Sangiovese**

Jamaican Jerk Seasoning

Ingredients

Ground allspice	3 Tbsp.	Black pepper, ground	2 tsp.
Dark brown sugar	2 Tbsp.	Cinnamon, ground	1 tsp.
Scotch bonnet powder	1½ Tbsp.	Nutmeg, ground	1 tsp.
Onion powder	2 Tbsp.	Cloves, ground	½ tsp.
Garlic powder	2 Tbsp.	Coriander, ground	1 tsp.
Thyme, dried	2 Tbsp.	TruLime powder	2 tsp.
Ginger, ground	1 Tbsp.	Kosher salt	1 Tbsp.
Green onion, dried	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

Gather all spices and powders — Have measuring spoons ready — Prepare airtight container for storage

1. Measure all ingredients accurately and add to a large mixing bowl: **ground allspice, brown sugar, scotch bonnet powder, onion powder, garlic powder, dried thyme, ground ginger, dried green onion, ground black pepper, ground cinnamon, ground nutmeg, ground cloves, ground coriander, TruLime powder, and kosher salt.**
2. Whisk thoroughly until all ingredients are well incorporated and the mixture appears uniform in color with no visible clumps.
3. Transfer to an airtight container or glass jar with a tight-fitting lid.
4. Allow flavors to marry for at least *24 hours* before using for best results.
5. Store in a cool, dark place for up to *6 months*.

Mexican Spice Blend •

This Mexican Spice Blend is inspired by Tex-Mex and northern Mexican cuisine. It combines smoky, spicy, and earthy notes to create a versatile seasoning mix. Makes 1 cup.

Ingredients

Black pepper, ground	1 tsp
Cayenne pepper	¼ tsp
Chili powder	4 tsp
Chipotle powder	1 tsp
Cinnamon, ground	1 tsp
Cloves, ground	½ tsp
Coriander, ground	2 Tbsp
Cumin, ground	4 Tbsp
Garlic powder	2 tsp
Mexican oregano	2 tsp
Onion powder	2 tsp
Paprika, smoked	2 Tbsp

Thai Peanut Sauce (Easy)

Ingredients

Garlic cloves	2	Turbinado sugar	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Lime	1	Tamarind paste	2 Tbsp.
Creamy peanut butter	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup	Water	$\frac{1}{2}$ cup
Thai red curry paste	2-4 Tbsp.	Salt	to taste
Coconut milk	13.5 oz. can		

Directions

Mince garlic — Juice lime

1. In a medium saucepan, whisk together **coconut milk**, **peanut butter**, **curry paste**, **turbinado sugar**, **tamarind paste**, **water**, minced **garlic**, and **lime juice**.
2. Heat over medium-low heat, whisking constantly until smooth and well combined, about *5 minutes*.
3. Taste and adjust seasoning with **salt**, additional **curry paste** for heat, or **turbinado sugar** for sweetness.
4. Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to *1 week*. Reheat gently before serving, adding water if needed to thin.

Makes approximately *2½ cups*

Note: Adjust **curry paste** amount based on desired spice level.

Serve as a dipping sauce for spring rolls, satay, or toss with noodles and vegetables.

Thai Peanut Sauce (Nam Jim Thua)

Ingredients

Coconut cream	1 cup	Garlic cloves, minced	3
Thai red curry paste	2 Tbsp.	Fresh lime juice	2 Tbsp.
Natural peanut butter	1 cup	Roasted peanuts, crushed	¼ cup
Palm sugar (or brown sugar)	½ cup	Salt	½ tsp.
Fish sauce	2 Tbsp.	Water	¼-½ cup
Tamarind paste	1 Tbsp.		
Fresh ginger, minced	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

Mince **ginger** and **garlic** — Crush **roasted peanuts** — Juice **lime** — Chop **palm sugar** if using block form

1. In a heavy-bottomed saucepan over medium heat, cook **coconut cream** until it begins to separate and the oil rises to the surface, about *3-4 minutes*.
2. Add **Thai red curry paste** to the separated coconut cream and fry until fragrant and the oil turns slightly red, about *2 minutes*.
3. Reduce heat to medium-low. Add **peanut butter** and stir constantly until well combined and smooth, about *2 minutes*.
4. Add **palm sugar**, **fish sauce**, and **tamarind paste**. Stir until sugar dissolves completely, about *2 minutes*.
5. Add minced **ginger** and **garlic**. Cook for *1 minute* until fragrant.
6. Add *¼ cup water* and simmer for *3-4 minutes*, stirring occasionally. Add more **water** if needed to reach desired consistency.
7. Remove from heat and stir in **lime juice**, **crushed peanuts**, and **salt**. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed.
8. Let cool for *10 minutes* before serving. Sauce will thicken as it cools.

Equipment Required

- Heavy-bottomed saucepan (2-quart)
- Wooden spoon or silicone spatula
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Microplane or fine grater (for ginger)
- Garlic press (optional)
- Mortar and pestle (or food processor for peanuts)
- Fine-mesh strainer (optional)
- Glass storage container with lid
- Citrus juicer
- Sharp knife and cutting board

Mise en Place

- Have all ingredients measured and ready before starting
- Bring **peanut butter** to room temperature
- Mince aromatics just before cooking
- Crush **peanuts** ahead of time
- If using block **palm sugar**, chop finely

Ingredient Tips

- Use natural, unsweetened **peanut butter** for best results
- Coconut cream, not milk, provides proper thickness
- Mae Ploy or Maesri **curry paste** recommended
- Palm sugar preferred, but brown sugar works well
- Fresh **lime juice** only - never bottled
- Use Thai fish sauce (Nam Pla) for authentic flavor

Preparation Tips

- Watch coconut cream carefully - it should separate but not burn
- Stir constantly when adding **peanut butter** to prevent sticking
- Sauce will thicken significantly as it cools
- For extra smooth sauce, strain through fine-mesh strainer
- Add **water** gradually to control consistency
- Reserve some **crushed peanuts** for garnish

Make Ahead & Storage

- Keeps refrigerated for up to *1 week*
- Bring to room temperature before serving
- Reheat gently over low heat, stirring frequently
- Add warm water to thin if needed after refrigeration
- Freeze for up to *3 months*

Serving Suggestions

- Perfect for chicken satay or grilled meats
- Serve with fresh spring rolls
- Use as a dip for raw vegetables
- Thin with coconut milk for salad dressing
- Drizzle over grilled chicken or shrimp
- Garnish with extra **crushed peanuts** and cilantro

Chapter 4

SIDES

Cheesy Sausage Balls •

Ingredients

Ground sausage	16 oz.	Garlic salt	1 tsp.
Cheddar cheese, shredded	16 oz.	Onion flakes	1 tsp.
Italian cheese blend	4 oz.	Parsley flakes	1 tsp.
Bisquick	3 cups		

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F – Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper

1. Using hands, mix all ingredients together thoroughly until well combined.
 2. Roll mixture into $1\frac{1}{2}$ -inch balls and place 1 inch apart on baking sheet.
 3. Bake for 15 minutes, then turn and continue baking for $8-12$ minutes until cooked through.
 4. Let stand for 5 minutes before eating.
 5. Store refrigerated in a sealed container.
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Dad's Brussels Sprouts •

Ingredients

Brussels sprouts	1-2 lb.	Dried rosemary	¼ tsp.
Safflower oil	2 Tbsp.	Black pepper	¼ tsp.
Lawry's garlic salt	1 tsp.	Parmesan cheese, grated	2 tsp.
Butter	4 Tbsp.	Lemon powder	¼ tsp.
Garlic powder	¼ tsp.	— (or Lemon juice	1 Tbsp.)

Directions

Trim and quarter **Brussels sprouts**

1. Clean **Brussels sprouts** by trimming the stem ends and removing any discolored outer leaves. Cut larger sprouts into quarters and smaller ones in half.
2. In a large bowl, toss the prepared **Brussels sprouts** with **oil** and **garlic salt** until evenly coated.
3. Spread the **Brussels sprouts** in the air fryer basket.
4. Air fry at 400°F for 15 minutes, shaking the basket halfway through cooking time, until the sprouts are crispy and slightly blackened.
5. While the sprouts are cooking, prepare the butter sauce: In a small saucepan over medium-low heat, melt **butter**. Add **garlic powder**, **dried rosemary**, and **black pepper**. Cook for 1 minute until fragrant.
6. Remove butter sauce from heat and whisk in **lemon powder**.
7. Transfer the cooked **Brussels sprouts** to a serving bowl, pour the butter sauce over them, and toss to coat evenly.
8. Sprinkle with grated **Parmesan cheese** and serve immediately.

Equipment Required

- Air fryer (3-6 quart capacity)
- Large mixing bowl (for tossing sprouts)
- Small saucepan (for butter sauce)
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Wooden spoon or spatula
- Whisk
- Serving bowl
- Timer

Mise en Place

- Trim and quarter **Brussels sprouts** before preheating the air fryer
- Measure all spices and have them ready by the stovetop
- Have butter at room temperature for faster melting
- If using **lemon juice**, squeeze fresh just before adding to the sauce

Ingredient Tips

- Choose firm, bright green **Brussels sprouts** with tightly packed leaves
- Smaller sprouts tend to be sweeter and cook more evenly
- Use a high smoke-point neutral oil like avocado, canola, or grapeseed
- European-style butter (higher fat content) creates a richer sauce
- Freshly grated **Parmesan** provides better flavor than pre-grated
- Fresh rosemary (1 tsp. finely chopped) can be substituted for dried
- If you don't have **TruLemon**, fresh lemon zest can be used in addition to juice

Preparation Tips

- Size consistency matters - cut larger sprouts into quarters and smaller ones in half for even cooking
- Don't overcrowd the air fryer basket - cook in batches if needed for maximum crispiness
- For extra caramelization, place sprouts cut-side down in the basket
- If sprouts aren't crispy enough after the initial cooking time, air fry for an additional *2-3 minutes*
- Keep the butter sauce warm until ready to toss with the sprouts
- Add the **Parmesan** just before serving for the best texture

Make Ahead & Storage

- **Brussels sprouts** can be trimmed and quartered up to *24 hours* in advance and stored in an airtight container in the refrigerator
- Butter sauce can be prepared *1 hour* ahead and kept warm on the lowest heat setting
- Leftover sprouts can be refrigerated for up to *3 days* and reheated in the air fryer at *350°F* for *3-4 minutes*
- Not recommended for freezing as texture will deteriorate

Serving Suggestions

- Serve as a side dish with roasted chicken, steak, or pork chops
- Add crispy bacon bits or toasted pine nuts as a deluxe garnish
- For a vegetarian main course, serve over creamy polenta or risotto
- Pairs well with rich, full-bodied red wines like Cabernet Sauvignon
- For a holiday meal, add dried cranberries for a pop of color and sweetness

Deviled Eggs •

Ingredients

Eggs	10	Salt	1/4 tsp.
Mayonnaise	1/3 cup	Sugar	1/4 tsp.
Dijon mustard	1 1/2 tsp.	Garlic powder	1/2 tsp.
White wine vinegar	1 1/4 tsp.	Smoked paprika	1/2 tsp.
Dried dill weed	3/4 tsp.		

Directions

Bring **eggs** to room temperature — Prepare ice bath

1. Cook **eggs** in Instant Pot on high pressure for *5 minutes*. Natural release for *4 minutes*, then transfer to ice bath. Peel eggs.
2. Slice **eggs** lengthwise and remove yolks to a mixing bowl.
3. Combine **egg yolks, mayonnaise, dijon mustard, white wine vinegar, dried dill weed, salt, sugar, and garlic powder**. Mix until smooth.
4. Transfer filling to a gallon zip bag and snip a small corner off. Pipe filling into **egg whites**.
5. Garnish with **smoked paprika** and serve.

Fried Rice •

Ingredients

Canola oil	3 Tbsp.	Soy sauce	3 Tbsp.
Sesame oil	2 Tbsp.	Fish sauce	2 tsp.
Cooked parboiled rice, cold	6 cups	Hoisin sauce (<i>optional</i>)	1 tsp.
Onion, finely diced	1/3 cup	Sesame seeds	1 Tbsp.
Carrot, finely grated	1/3 cup	Scallions, diced	1/3 cup
Garlic, minced	3 cloves		
Ginger, finely grated	1 tsp.		
Eggs	2		
Frozen peas	3/4 cup		

Directions

1-2 days ahead: Prepare Uncle Ben's parboiled rice, rinse and cook according to rice maker instructions — Finely dice **onion** — Grate **carrot** and **ginger** — Mince **garlic** — Dice **scallions** — Scramble **eggs**

1. Combine **soy sauce**, **fish sauce**, **hoisin sauce**, and **sesame seeds** in a small bowl
2. Heat large high-walled frying pan or wok on *High*.
3. Add **canola oil** and heat for *30 seconds*.
4. Add **rice** to pan and stir thoroughly. Pan should be hot enough that rice makes popping sounds.
5. Stir **rice** every *30 seconds* for about *5 minutes* until moisture is reduced and rice begins to change color.
6. Create an empty circle in center of pan and add **onion**, **carrot**, **garlic**, and **ginger**.
7. Add 1 Tbsp. **sesame oil** to vegetables in pan.
8. Cook and stir vegetables carefully for *1 minute*, avoiding combining with rice.
9. Stir contents of pan thoroughly.
10. Create an empty circle in center of pan and add scrambled **eggs**.
11. Add remaining 1 Tbsp. **sesame oil** to eggs.
12. Cook, stir, and chop eggs carefully for about *1 minute* until set, avoiding combining with rice.
13. Stir contents of pan thoroughly.
14. Add **peas** and stir thoroughly.

15. Add prepared sauce mixture and stir thoroughly.
 16. Cook for about *1 minute*, stirring frequently.
 17. Add **scallions** and stir thoroughly.
 18. Remove from heat and serve hot.
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Green Bean Casserole

Ingredients

Green beans, fresh	1½ lbs	Cheddar cheese, shredded	1 cup
Butter	½ cup	Salt	1 tsp
Mushrooms, fresh	½ lb	Black pepper	1 tsp
Onion, small	1	French-fried onions	2 cups
All-purpose flour	¼ cup		
Whole milk	1½ cups		
Sour cream	1 cup		

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F — Trim **green beans** — Slice **mushrooms** — Chop **onion** — Shred **cheddar cheese** — Grease a $2\frac{1}{2}$ -quart baking dish

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add **green beans** and blanch for *5 minutes*. Drain and immediately plunge into ice water. Drain again.
 2. In a large skillet, melt **butter** over medium heat. Add **mushrooms** and **onion**; cook for *5 minutes*, until tender.
 3. Stir in **flour** and cook for *2 minutes*, stirring constantly.
 4. Gradually stir in **milk** and cook for *2-3 minutes*, until mixture thickens.
 5. Stir in **sour cream**, **cheese**, **salt**, **pepper**, and blanched **green beans**.
 6. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish. Bake for *25 minutes*.
 7. Sprinkle evenly with **French-fried onions**. Bake for *15 minutes* longer, until hot and bubbly.
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Holiday Stuffing •

Ingredients

Bread, cubed	1 lb. (8-10 cups)	Dried rosemary	1 tsp.
Sage breakfast sausage	1 lb.	Dried thyme	2 tsp.
Butter	8 Tbsp.	Dried parsley	1 Tbsp.
Onions, medium	2	Ground nutmeg	1/8 tsp.
Celery stalks	4	Chicken broth	2-3 cups
Garlic cloves	3	Eggs	2 large
Dried sage	2 tsp.	Kosher salt	1½ tsp.
		Black pepper	1 tsp.

Directions

Preheat oven to 250°F for bread, then 350°F for baking — Cut **bread** into ½-inch cubes — Dice **onions** and **celery** — Mince **garlic** — Beat **eggs** — Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish — Melt 4 Tbsp. **butter** for bread cubes, remaining for vegetables

1. Toss **bread cubes** with 4 Tbsp. melted **butter**, then spread on a baking sheet and toast at 250°F for 45-60 minutes, stirring every 15 minutes, until golden and dry. Let cool.
2. Brown **sausage** over medium heat until cooked through, breaking into small crumbles. Remove with slotted spoon and set aside.
3. In the same pan, melt remaining 4 Tbsp. **butter**. Add **onions** and **celery**, cooking until softened, about 8-10 minutes. Add **garlic** and cook for 1 minute more.
4. In a large bowl, combine toasted **bread**, cooked **sausage**, sautéed vegetables, **dried sage**, **dried rosemary**, **dried thyme**, **dried parsley**, and **ground nutmeg**.
5. Gradually add **chicken broth**, stirring gently until bread is evenly moist but not soggy. Mix in beaten **eggs**, 1½ tsp. **kosher salt**, and 1 tsp. **black pepper**. Taste and adjust seasoning if needed - the mixture should taste slightly saltier than you'd expect, as the flavors will mellow during baking.
6. Transfer to prepared baking dish. Cover with foil and bake at 350°F for 30 minutes.
7. Uncover and bake for additional 15-20 minutes until top is golden brown and crispy.
8. Let rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Equipment Required

- 9x13 inch baking dish
- Large rimmed baking sheet for toasting bread
- Large skillet or sauté pan
- Large mixing bowl (at least 6-quart capacity)
- Medium bowl for beaten eggs
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Wooden spoon or spatula
- Aluminum foil
- Slotted spoon
- Timer

Mise en Place

- Measure and prepare all ingredients before starting
- Bring refrigerated ingredients to room temperature
- Dice vegetables and measure herbs

Ingredient and Preparation Tips

- Choose hearty bread varieties for best texture
- Use high-quality bulk **sage sausage**, or Jimmy Dean

- Fresh herbs can be substituted at triple the quantity
- Cut bread into uniform $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch cubes for even toasting
- Add **broth** gradually - absorption varies by bread type
- Test seasoning before adding **eggs**, then fold gently to maintain texture
- European-style butter provides richer flavor

Make Ahead & Storage

- Toast bread up to *3 days* ahead; store in air-tight container
- Assemble up to *24 hours* before baking
- Bring refrigerated stuffing to room temperature for *30 minutes*
- Add extra **broth** if needed after refrigeration
- Leftovers keep *3 days*; reheat covered at *350°F* for *20 minutes*

Serving Suggestions

- Serve alongside turkey or chicken
- Can be baked inside poultry or separately
- Garnish with fresh sage and extra gravy
- Transform leftovers into breakfast waffles
- Optional: top with toasted gluten-free breadcrumbs for extra crunch

Lime and Cilantro Rice

Ingredients

Long-grain white rice	2 cups	Lime zest	1 lime
Chicken broth	3 cups	Cilantro, fresh	½ cup
Olive oil	2 Tbsp.	Butter	2 Tbsp.
Onion, small	1	Jalapeño (optional)	1 Tbsp.
Garlic cloves	3		
Salt	1 tsp.		
Lime juice, fresh	¼ cup		

Directions

Rinse **rice** until water runs clear — Finely dice **onion** — Mince **garlic** — Zest and juice **limes** — Finely chop **cilantro** — If using, finely dice **jalapeño**

1. Heat **olive oil** in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Sauté **onion** for 2-3 minutes until translucent.
 2. Add **garlic** (and optional **jalapeño**) and cook for 30 seconds until fragrant.
 3. Add rinsed **rice** to the pan and stir to coat with oil. Toast for about 2 minutes, stirring frequently.
 4. Transfer rice mixture to rice cooker. Add **chicken broth** to appropriate fill line. Stir gently to combine.
 5. Close lid and cook on standard white rice setting until cycle is complete.
 6. Once done, let rice sit for an additional 5-10 minutes with the lid closed.
 7. Open lid and fluff rice with a fork. Add **lime juice**, **lime zest**, chopped **cilantro**, and **butter**. Fold gently until well combined and butter is melted.
 8. Taste and adjust seasoning, if needed, with salt, lime juice, or cilantro to preference.
-

Ingredients

Mac and Cheese •

Elbow macaroni	1 lb	Salt	¼ tsp
Butter	½ cup (1 stick)	Black pepper	¼ tsp
All-purpose flour	½ cup	Sodium citrate (optional)	½ tsp
Whole milk, warmed	4 cups	Sharp cheddar	1 lb
Heavy cream	½ cup	Gruyere cheese	½ lb
Smoked paprika	1 tsp	Smoked gouda cheese	¼ lb
Hungarian hot paprika	1 tsp	Cooked ham, diced	1 cup (6 oz.)
Garlic powder	½ tsp	Parmesan cheese	½ cup
Dry mustard powder	1 tsp	Panko breadcrumbs	½ cup
		Parsley	1 Tbsp

Directions

Preheat oven to 375°F — Lightly grease a 9x13" baking dish — Shred cheeses — Chop ham — Warm milk — Combine sodium citrate and 2 Tbsp. water

1. **Cook the Macaroni:** Bring a large pot of salted water to a rolling boil. Add the **elbow macaroni** and cook according to package directions until al dente. Drain well and set aside. Do not rinse.
2. **Make the Roux:** In a large, heavy-bottomed pot or Dutch oven, melt the **unsalted butter** over medium heat. Whisk in the **flour**. Cook, stirring constantly, for 2-3 minutes until a pale golden roux forms.
3. **Build the Cheese Sauce Base:** Gradually whisk in the **warmed whole milk**, a little at a time, until smooth. Continue whisking until the sauce thickens about *5-7 minutes*. Stir in the **heavy cream**, **smoked paprika**, **Hungarian hot paprika**, **garlic powder**, and **dry mustard powder**. Season with **salt** and **black pepper** to taste. Stir in **sodium citrate** thoroughly.
4. **Melt the Cheeses:** Reduce the heat to low. Add the shredded **sharp cheddar**, **Gruyere**, and **smoked gouda cheeses** to the sauce, a handful at a time, stirring constantly until melted and smooth.
5. **Combine Macaroni & Cheese:** Add the cooked macaroni to the cheese sauce and stir gently until fully coated. Fold in the diced **ham**.
6. **Assemble & Top:** Transfer the mac and cheese mixture to the prepared baking dish, spreading it evenly. In a small bowl, combine the **grated Parmesan cheese** and **panko breadcrumbs**. Sprinkle this mixture generously over the top.
7. **Bake:** Bake for *20-25 minutes*, or until the mac and cheese is bubbly around the edges and the topping is golden brown and crispy.
8. **Serve:** Let the mac and cheese stand for *5-10 minutes* before serving. Garnish with fresh **parsley**.

Mexican Rice •

Ingredients

Long grain rice	2 cups	Mexican spice mix	1 Tbsp.
Lard	1 Tbsp.	Hot water	2 cups
Better Than Bouillon, chicken	1 Tbsp.	Ro-Tel tomatoes and chilis	10 oz. can
Caldo de tomate	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

Prepare rice cooker

1. Brown **rice** in a pan with **lard** until lightly toasted.
 2. In a separate bowl, combine **hot water**, **Better Than Bouillon**, **caldo de tomate**, and **Mexican spice mix** to create broth.
 3. Add browned **rice**, **Ro-Tel tomatoes**, and prepared **broth** to rice cooker to appropriate fill line.
 4. Cook on standard rice setting. When done, fluff rice with fork before serving.
-

Mexican Street Corn (Elote-Style) •

Ingredients

Sweet corn	2 (15 oz.) cans	Fresh cilantro, chopped	¼ cup
Vegetable oil	2 Tbsp.	Queso fresco, crumbled	3 Tbsp.
Mexican spice mix	1 Tbsp.		
Mayonnaise	2 Tbsp.		
Fresh lime	½		

Directions

Drain corn — Chop **cilantro** — Crumble **queso fresco** — Juice **lime**

1. Heat **vegetable oil** in a large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering.
2. Add drained **corn** in a single layer. Cook undisturbed for *3-4 minutes* until kernels develop golden-brown caramelization.
3. Stir **corn** and continue cooking *2-3 minutes*, allowing additional browning and caramelization.
4. Sprinkle **Mexican spice mix** over **corn** and stir constantly for *30 seconds* until fragrant and evenly distributed.
5. Remove skillet from heat. Squeeze **lime juice** over **corn**, then add **mayonnaise**, stirring until kernels are evenly coated.
6. Fold in chopped **cilantro** and crumbled **queso fresco**, gently mixing until **cilantro** wilts and **cheese** begins to soften and melt into the mixture.
7. Transfer to serving bowl and serve immediately while warm.

Serves 4-6 as a side dish

Equipment Required

- Large skillet or sauté pan (12-inch recommended)
- Serving bowl (medium size)
- Measuring spoons and cups
- Sharp knife for chopping cilantro
- Cutting board
- Can opener
- Colander for draining corn
- Wooden spoon or spatula for stirring

Mise en Place

- Drain **corn** thoroughly in colander
- Chop **cilantro** into small pieces
- Crumble **queso fresco** by hand or with fork
- Cut **lime** in half and juice one half
- Measure all ingredients before heating pan

Ingredient Tips

- Fire-roasted **corn** varieties add extra smoky depth
- **Mexican spice mix** should contain chili powder, cumin, and paprika at minimum
- Fresh **lime** juice is essential - bottled juice lacks brightness
- **Queso fresco** can be substituted with cotija or mild feta
- Full-fat **mayonnaise** provides best texture and richness

Preparation Tips

- Don't move **corn** too early - caramelization requires direct contact
- **Spice mix** should sizzle when added - this blooms the aromatics
- Remove from heat before adding **lime** and **mayo** to prevent breaking
- Fold **cilantro** and **cheese** gently to maintain texture
- Serve immediately for best flavor and temperature contrast

Make Ahead & Storage

- Best served fresh and hot from the pan
- Can be reheated gently in skillet over low heat
- Leftovers keep 2 days refrigerated
- Add fresh **cilantro** and **lime** when reheating
- May need additional **mayonnaise** if mixture seems dry

Serving Suggestions

- Excellent alongside grilled meats or fish
- Perfect for taco nights and Mexican-themed meals
- Serve with additional **lime** wedges and hot sauce
- Can be served as appetizer with tortilla chips
- Pairs well with cold Mexican beer or agua fresca
- Garnish with extra **queso fresco** if desired

Perfect Oven-Baked Crumbly Bacon

This technique produces exceptionally crisp, crumbly bacon with a honeycomb-like texture. The two-phase cooking method ensures thorough fat rendering while maintaining structural integrity, resulting in bacon that shatters pleasingly when bitten rather than bending.

Ingredients

Thick-cut, dry-cured bacon	1 lb.	Brown sugar	1 Tbsp. (optional)
Ground black pepper	$\frac{1}{4}$ tsp. (optional)		

Directions

Unwrap **bacon** and refrigerate uncovered for *2-4 hours* — Preheat oven to 350°F — Line half-sheet pan with aluminum foil (optional) — Place wire rack on baking sheet

1. Remove **bacon** from refrigerator and allow to reach approximately 60°F (slightly below room temperature), about *15-20 minutes*.
2. Pat **bacon** dry with paper towels to remove excess moisture. If using, lightly sprinkle with **black pepper** or **brown sugar**.
3. Arrange **bacon** strips perpendicular to the wire grid of the cooling rack, maintaining $\frac{1}{4}$ " to $\frac{1}{2}$ " spacing between strips to promote proper air circulation.
4. Place baking sheet with **bacon** on the middle rack of a fully preheated oven. Cook at 350°F for *15 minutes* to initiate fat rendering.
5. Reduce oven temperature to 325°F and continue cooking for *10-15 minutes*, until **bacon** develops a mahogany color with small bubbles throughout the meat portions.
6. Remove **bacon** from oven when it appears slightly less done than desired. It should bend slightly but not immediately break when lifted at one end.
7. Transfer **bacon** to a fresh wire rack (not paper towels) and allow to rest for *3-5 minutes* in a low-humidity environment.
8. Once cooled slightly, break or cut **bacon** into desired lengths and serve immediately.

Equipment Required

- Half-sheet (18" × 13") heavy-gauge aluminum baking sheet
- 304 stainless steel wire cooling rack with grid pattern
- Aluminum foil (optional, for easier cleanup)
- Paper towels
- Oven thermometer
- Kitchen tongs
- Timer
- Cutting board and knife (optional, for portioning)

Mise en Place

- Refrigerate bacon unwrapped for 2-4 hours before cooking to create a pellicle
- Verify oven temperature with thermometer before cooking
- Allow 10 minutes of oven stabilization after reaching temperature
- Have all equipment ready before removing bacon from refrigerator
- Prepare a fresh wire rack for the cooling phase

Ingredient Tips

- Select center-cut bacon with 60-70% visual fat distribution for optimal results
- Thickness should be approximately 1/8" to 3/16" thick
- Artisanal or butcher-shop bacon often provides superior results compared to mass-market alternatives
- For a subtle flavor variation, try apple-wood or hickory-smoked varieties
- If adding brown sugar, apply very lightly to avoid burning

Preparation Tips

- Position bacon strips perpendicular to wire grid for optimal support
- The transition from perfect to overdone occurs rapidly in the final 2-3 minutes
- Visual cues for completion: mahogany color, translucent fat, small bubbles in meat
- If bacon bends slightly but doesn't immediately break when lifted, it's ready
- For maximum crispness, avoid all contact between strips when arranging on rack

Make Ahead & Storage

- Best served immediately after the 3-5 minute resting period
- Can be stored in refrigerator for up to 4 days in airtight container
- To reheat, place on wire rack in 325°F oven for 3-5 minutes
- Avoid microwave reheating, which will compromise the crisp texture
- For meal prep, partially cook bacon for 15 minutes, cool, refrigerate, and finish cooking later

Serving Suggestions

- Ideal as a standalone breakfast side
- Crumble into salads for textural contrast
- Use as a topping for baked potatoes or creamy soups
- Incorporate into sandwiches or burgers
- Pair with maple syrup or honey for a sweet-savory combination

Quick Pickled Cucumbers (Oi Muchim)

A refreshing Korean cucumber side dish that perfectly balances crisp texture with spicy, garlicky, and sesame flavors. This quick pickle provides the perfect counterpoint to rich Korean dishes.

Ingredients

English cucumber	1 large	Toasted sesame oil	2 tsp.
or Regular cucumbers	2 medium	Sugar	½ tsp.
Kosher salt	1½ tsp.	Toasted sesame seeds	1 Tbsp.
Garlic cloves	4	Black pepper	¼ tsp.
Green onions	2		
Gochugaru	1½ tsp.		
Rice vinegar	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

If using regular cucumbers, peel and halve lengthwise — Mince **garlic** — Slice **green onions** thinly — Prepare ice water bath

1. For regular cucumbers: Remove seeds with a spoon, then slice into 1/8-inch half-moons.
For English cucumber: Slice into 1/8-inch rounds.
2. Place cucumber slices in a colander, sprinkle with **kosher salt**, and toss gently. Let drain for *30 minutes* (regular) or *20 minutes* (English).
3. Rinse cucumbers briefly under cold water. Plunge into ice water bath for *1 minute*. Drain well and pat thoroughly dry with paper towels.
4. In a large bowl, combine minced **garlic**, **gochugaru**, **rice vinegar**, **toasted sesame oil**, **sugar**, and **black pepper**.
5. Add dried cucumber slices and sliced **green onions** to the bowl. Toss gently but thoroughly to coat.
6. Sprinkle with **toasted sesame seeds**, toss once more, and let rest for *10 minutes* before serving.

Equipment Required

- Large colander
- Large mixing bowl
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Paper towels
- Measuring spoons
- Large bowl for ice bath
- Vegetable peeler (if using regular cucumbers)

Mise en Place

- Prepare ice water bath before starting
- Measure all seasonings before beginning
- Have paper towels ready for drying cucumbers
- Toast **sesame seeds** if needed

Ingredient Tips

- English cucumbers are ideal, but regular cucumbers work well when properly prepared
- Fresh **garlic** is essential - do not substitute pre-minced
- **Gochugaru** can be found at Asian markets - no good substitute exists
- Use unseasoned **rice vinegar** for better control of flavors
- Regular table salt can be used, but reduce quantity by half

Preparation Tips

- Slice cucumbers as uniformly as possible for even texture
- Don't skip the ice bath - it ensures maximum crispness
- Pat cucumbers very dry before adding seasonings
- Adjust **gochugaru** amount based on desired heat level
- Test seasoning before final rest period

Make Ahead & Storage

- Best served fresh, within *2 hours* of preparation
- Can be made up to *4 hours* ahead, but texture will soften
- Store leftovers in airtight container for up to *24 hours*
- Do not freeze
- Drain any accumulated liquid before serving leftover portions

Serving Suggestions

- Perfect accompaniment to Korean BBQ or grilled meats
- Serve cold or at room temperature
- Excellent as part of a banchan (Korean side dish) spread
- Can be used as a sandwich or burger topping
- Pairs well with rice dishes and noodles

Roasted Asparagus with Lemon-Garlic Butter Sauce

Ingredients

Asparagus, fresh	8 oz.	Garlic cloves	2
Olive oil	1½ Tbsp.	Dried parsley	1 tsp.
Lemon	1	Dried minced onion	½ tsp.
Lemon zest	1½ tsp.	Chicken broth	3 Tbsp.
Lemon juice	2 Tbsp.	Cornstarch	1 Tbsp.
Dried thyme	½ tsp.	Water	2 Tbsp.
Salt	½ tsp.		
Black pepper	¼ tsp.		
Butter	2½ Tbsp.		

Roasted Asparagus

Preheat oven to 400°F — Trim woody ends from **asparagus** — Mince **garlic** — Zest and juice **lemon** to yield 1½ tsp. zest and 2 Tbsp. juice — Mix 1 Tbsp. **cornstarch** with 2 Tbsp. cold **water** to make slurry

1. Place trimmed **asparagus** on a baking sheet. Drizzle with 1½ Tbsp. **olive oil** and sprinkle with ½ tsp. **dried thyme**, 1½ tsp. **lemon zest**, ½ tsp. **salt**, and ¼ tsp. **black pepper**. Toss to coat evenly.
2. Arrange **asparagus** in a single layer and roast for *30-40 minutes* until tender-crisp and lightly browned.

Lemon-Garlic Butter Sauce

1. While **asparagus** roasts, melt 2½ Tbsp. **butter** in a small saucepan over medium-low heat.
2. Add minced **garlic**, 1 tsp. **dried parsley**, and ½ tsp. **dried minced onion**.
3. Cook for *1-2 minutes* until garlic is fragrant.
4. Add 3 Tbsp. **chicken broth** and 2 Tbsp. **lemon juice**. Bring to a gentle simmer.
5. While whisking constantly, slowly pour the cornstarch slurry into the simmering sauce.
6. Continue whisking and simmer for *2-3 minutes* until sauce is thickened and no longer cloudy.
7. Season with additional **salt** to taste. Remove from heat.
8. Pour warm sauce over roasted **asparagus** and serve immediately.

Roasted Cauliflower

Ingredients

Cauliflower, whole head	1 large (2-3 lbs.)	Lemon juice	2 Tbsp.
Olive oil	¼ cup	Salt	1 tsp.
Garlic cloves, minced	4	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Fresh thyme leaves	2 Tbsp.	Parmesan cheese, grated	½ cup
Fresh rosemary, chopped	1 Tbsp.	Pork rinds, crushed	1 cup
Garlic powder	½ tsp.	Gluten-free flour blend	2 Tbsp.
Onion powder	½ tsp.	Butter, melted	2 Tbsp.
Smoked paprika	¼ tsp.		
Lemon zest	1 Tbsp.		

Directions

Preheat oven to 425°F — Line a baking sheet with parchment paper — Bring a large pot of salted water to boil — Prepare an ice bath — Crush **pork rinds** in food processor or by hand — Mince **garlic** and chop herbs — Zest and juice **lemon**

1. Remove the outer leaves from the **cauliflower** and trim the stem, keeping the head intact. Carefully cut out the core with a small knife, ensuring the head remains whole.
2. Blanch the **cauliflower** by carefully lowering the head into the boiling water, stem-side up. Boil for $3-4$ minutes, then transfer to the ice bath for 1 minute to stop the cooking process. Drain thoroughly and pat dry with paper towels.
3. In a small bowl, mix **olive oil**, minced **garlic**, **thyme**, **rosemary**, **garlic powder**, **onion powder**, **smoked paprika**, **lemon zest**, 1 Tbsp. **lemon juice**, **salt**, and **pepper**.
4. Place the **cauliflower** stem-side down on the prepared baking sheet. Brush the entire surface generously with the herb oil mixture, ensuring it gets between the florets.
5. Roast in the preheated oven for 40 minutes, brushing with more herb oil mixture halfway through cooking.
6. While roasting, prepare the crust mixture: In a medium bowl, combine crushed **pork rinds**, grated **Parmesan**, **gluten-free flour**, remaining **lemon juice**, and melted **butter**. Mix until it forms a coarse, slightly moist mixture.
7. After 40 minutes of roasting, remove the **cauliflower** and carefully press the crust mixture onto the top and sides of the cauliflower. Return to the oven and roast for an additional $15-20$ minutes until the crust is golden brown and the cauliflower is tender when pierced with a knife.
8. Let rest for 5 minutes before transferring to a serving platter. Slice into wedges and serve hot.

Equipment Required

- Large pot (6-8 quart) for blanching
- Large bowl for ice bath
- Rimmed baking sheet
- Parchment paper
- Small mixing bowl for herb oil
- Medium mixing bowl for crust mixture
- Pastry brush or spoon for coating
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Food processor or zip-top bag and rolling pin (for crushing pork rinds)
- Microplane or zester
- Citrus juicer
- Kitchen towel or paper towels
- Serving platter

Mise en Place

- Prepare the **cauliflower** by removing leaves and trimming stem before preheating the oven
- Crush **pork rinds** and store in airtight container until needed
- Prepare herb oil mixture before blanching the cauliflower
- Set up ice bath before bringing water to boil
- Have all ingredients measured and ready before beginning cooking process

Ingredient Tips

- Choose a firm, compact **cauliflower** with tight florets and no brown spots
- For maximum flavor, use freshly grated **Parmesan** rather than pre-grated
- Plain, unflavored **pork rinds** work best as a neutral crispy base
- Verify your **gluten-free flour blend** contains xanthan gum; if not, add $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp.

- Use high-quality cold-pressed **olive oil** for best flavor
- Fresh herbs provide superior flavor, but dried can be substituted (1 tsp. dried thyme, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. dried rosemary)
- For extra richness, substitute some of the olive oil with duck fat or schmaltz
- Check that your **Parmesan** is truly gluten-free (some brands use anti-caking agents)

Preparation Tips

- The blanching step is crucial for ensuring the cauliflower cooks evenly
- Thoroughly dry the cauliflower after blanching to ensure proper browning
- Apply herb oil generously between florets for maximum flavor penetration
- If crust browns too quickly, cover loosely with foil
- Test for doneness by inserting a knife into the thickest part - it should enter easily
- For extra browning on the crust, broil for the final *1-2 minutes* (watch carefully)
- Adjust roasting time based on cauliflower size - larger heads may need an additional *10-15 minutes*
- Let the cauliflower rest before cutting to allow juices to redistribute

Make Ahead & Storage

- Herb oil can be prepared up to *24 hours* in advance and refrigerated
- **Pork rind** mixture can be prepared *4 hours* ahead and stored at room temperature
- The entire dish can be blanched and prepared up to the roasting step *4 hours* in advance
- Leftover cauliflower can be refrigerated for up to *3 days*
- Reheat leftovers in a 350°F oven for *10-15 minutes* until warmed through

Serving Suggestions

- Present whole on a serving platter and carve at the table for dramatic effect
 - Serve alongside **Dad's Brussels Sprouts** for a vegetable-forward meal
 - Pairs beautifully with roasted meats, particularly lamb or beef
 - Drizzle with extra herb oil just before serving for added freshness
 - Garnish with additional fresh herbs and lemon wedges
 - For a complete meal, serve with a gluten-free grain like quinoa or millet
 - Accompany with a crisp white wine such as Pinot Grigio or Sauvignon Blanc
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Spam Musubi •

Ingredients

Spam, low salt	1 (12 oz.) can	Nori sheets	4
Soy sauce, low salt	¼ cup	Kewpie mayonnaise	½ cup
Mirin	⅓ cup	Sriracha sauce	1½ Tbsp.
Brown sugar	2 Tbsp.	Toasted sesame oil	1 tsp.
Sake	2 Tbsp.	Neutral oil	2 Tbsp.
Sushi rice, cooked	3 cups	Toasted sesame seeds	1 Tbsp.

Directions

Using a musubi mold and spam slicer will be helpful — Cook rice — Slice Spam into 10-12 even pieces — Cut nori sheets into thirds

1. For the sriracha mayo:
 - (a) Combine and mix **Kewpie mayonnaise**, **Sriracha**, and **sesame oil**, in a small bowl
 - (b) Refrigerate until needed
2. Heat **oil** in a pan over medium heat. Working in batches if needed, fry **Spam** slices for *2-3 minutes* per side until browned and crispy.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together **soy sauce**, **mirin**, **brown sugar**, and **sake**.
4. Add sauce mixture to pan with **Spam** and swirl to coat evenly. Simmer for *5 minutes* until liquid is nearly absorbed.
5. Using a musubi mold, layer ingredients as follows:
 - Place a strip of **nori** on work surface
 - Press **rice** (*¼ cup*) into mold on center of **nori**
 - Add 1 piece of glazed **Spam**
 - Top with *1 teaspoon* sriracha mayo and prinkle with furikake (or toasted sesame seeds)
6. Slide mold off musubi and fold **nori** ends up and over to seal, using a drop of water to secure.
7. Serve immediately or wrap individually in plastic wrap. Store in refrigerator for up to *5 days*.

Spinach and Artichoke Dip

Ingredients

Frozen chopped spinach	10 oz.	Parmesan, grated	2 oz.
Artichoke hearts	1 (14 oz.) can	Mozzarella, shredded	¼ cup
Butter	2 Tbsp.	Salt	¼ tsp.
Garlic cloves	2	Black pepper	¼ tsp.
Cream cheese, softened	4 oz.	Red pepper flakes	pinch
Mayonnaise	½ cup		

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°F — Thaw **spinach** and squeeze dry aggressively — Drain and rough chop **artichoke hearts** — Mince **garlic** — Soften **cream cheese** at room temperature

1. Melt **butter** in a large skillet over medium-high heat. Add squeezed **spinach**, breaking up clumps. Cook for $5\text{-}7$ minutes, stirring occasionally, until **spinach** begins to brown and any remaining moisture evaporates.
2. Add minced **garlic** and cook for 1 minute until fragrant. Add chopped **artichoke hearts** and cook for $2\text{-}3$ minutes more. Remove from heat and let cool slightly.
3. In a large bowl, combine softened **cream cheese**, **mayonnaise**, **Parmesan**, **salt**, **black pepper**, and **red pepper flakes** until smooth.
4. Fold in the cooled **spinach** and **artichoke** mixture until evenly distributed.
5. Transfer to a 1-quart baking dish and top with shredded **mozzarella**.
6. Bake for $25\text{-}30$ minutes until bubbly and golden brown on top.
7. Let rest for $5\text{-}10$ minutes before serving.

Equipment Required

- 1-quart baking dish (ceramic or glass)
- Large skillet or sauté pan
- Large mixing bowl
- Cutting board and sharp knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Rubber spatula or wooden spoon
- Kitchen towel or cheesecloth (for squeezing spinach)
- Colander (for draining artichokes)

Mise en Place

- Thaw **frozen spinach** overnight in refrigerator or use microwave defrost
- Remove **cream cheese** from refrigerator at least *1 hour* before starting
- Squeeze **spinach** as dry as possible - this is critical for texture
- Drain **artichoke hearts** thoroughly and chop before cooking
- Have all ingredients measured and ready before starting

Ingredient Tips

- Use artichoke hearts packed in water rather than marinated varieties
- Frozen chopped spinach works better than whole leaf for this recipe
- The key to success is aggressively squeezing the **spinach** - wrap in kitchen towel and twist hard
- Full-fat dairy products yield the best texture and flavor
- Freshly grated **Parmesan** provides better flavor than pre-grated

Preparation Tips

- Don't skip the browning step - caramelized **spinach** adds deep, nutty flavor
- Watch for golden bits forming on the **spinach** - that's where the flavor develops
- Let vegetables cool slightly before mixing with dairy to prevent separation
- Rough chop **artichokes** for better texture - avoid fine chopping
- If top browns too quickly during baking, cover loosely with foil

Make Ahead & Storage

- Can be assembled up to *24 hours* in advance and refrigerated
- If made ahead, bring to room temperature for *30 minutes* before baking
- This recipe reheats exceptionally well without separation
- Leftovers can be refrigerated for up to *4 days*
- Reheat in *325°F* oven until warm, about *15-20 minutes*, or microwave and stir

Serving Suggestions

- Serve with toasted baguette slices, pita chips, or crackers
- Fresh vegetables like bell peppers, carrots, and celery make excellent dippers
- For best texture, allow to cool slightly before serving
- Garnish with additional **Parmesan** or fresh cracked pepper if desired
- Pairs well with a crisp white wine, light beer, or sparkling water

Steamed Cabbage (Sweet and Sour) •

Ingredients

Round cabbage	1 head	Ginger powder	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.
Rice vinegar	$3\frac{1}{2}$ Tbsp.	Sesame oil	$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp.
Sake	2 Tbsp.	Fresh lime juice	1 tsp.
Mirin	2 Tbsp.	White pepper	pinch
Light soy sauce	1 tsp.	Candied ginger, minced	2 pieces
Grapeseed oil	1 Tbsp.	Salt	if needed

Directions

Remove outer leaves from **cabbage** and cut into 1-inch strips — Discard core — Mince **candied ginger** fine — Set up steamer

1. Steam **cabbage** strips for *6-8 minutes* until tender but with slight bite.
2. While **cabbage** steams, heat **grapeseed oil** in wok or skillet over medium heat. Add **ginger powder** and bloom for *30 seconds* until fragrant.
3. Add **sake**, **rice vinegar**, and **mirin**. Bring to simmer and reduce by about one-third to concentrate flavors and mellow acidity, about *3-4 minutes*.
4. Stir in **light soy sauce**, **white pepper**, and minced **candied ginger**. Cook for another *1-2 minutes* to integrate the **candied ginger** flavors.
5. Remove from heat and stir in **sesame oil** and **fresh lime juice**.
6. Add steamed **cabbage** to the pan with the sauce. Toss gently for *1 minute* to coat evenly.
7. Serve warm or at room temperature.

Equipment Required

- Steamer setup (bamboo steamer, electric steamer, or large pot with steaming rack)
- Wok or large skillet for sauce
- Sharp knife and cutting board
- Measuring spoons and cups
- Wooden spoon or spatula
- Serving platter
- Small bowl for mincing candied ginger
- Fine-mesh strainer (optional, for lime juice)

Mise en Place

- Set up steamer and bring water to boil before starting
- Have all sauce ingredients measured and ready
- Mince **candied ginger** finely before cooking begins
- Cut **cabbage** just before steaming to prevent oxidation
- Juice **lime** fresh and strain if desired

Ingredient Tips

- Choose firm, heavy **cabbage** heads with tight, crisp leaves
- **Grapeseed oil** can be substituted with vegetable or canola oil
- Quality **sake** makes a difference - avoid cooking sake if possible
- **Candied ginger** should be soft and pliable, not dried out
- **White pepper** provides clean heat without competing with other flavors
- Use fresh **lime juice** only - bottled lacks the volatile oils needed for palate cleansing

Preparation Tips

- Cut **cabbage** strips uniformly for even cooking
- Watch steaming time carefully - smaller pieces cook faster than wedges
- Don't over-reduce the sauce - it should remain light and bright
- Bloom **ginger powder** carefully to avoid burning
- Add **sesame oil** and **lime juice** off heat to preserve delicate aromatics
- Taste sauce before final seasoning - **candied ginger** adds natural sweetness
- Toss gently to avoid breaking the tender **cabbage** strips

Make Ahead & Storage

- **Cabbage** can be cut up to *2 hours* ahead and stored covered
- Sauce can be made up to *1 day* ahead and gently rewarmed
- Add **lime juice** only when ready to serve for maximum brightness
- Best served fresh, but leftovers keep *2 days* refrigerated
- Reheat gently or serve at room temperature as a cold salad
- Do not freeze - texture will be compromised

Serving Suggestions

- Perfect as palate cleanser alongside spam musubi or other rich dishes
- Serve between every *2-3* pieces of musubi for optimal effect
- Excellent with grilled meats or fried foods
- Can be served warm or at room temperature
- Provide small chopsticks or forks for easy pickup
- Pairs well with steamed rice and other Asian-inspired sides

Chapter 5

SOUUPS

Caldo de Carnitas y Frijoles Negros •

Ingredients

Carnitas consommé	2 cups	Ground cumin	1 tsp.
Water	3 cups	Mexican oregano	1 tsp.
Shredded carnitas meat	1½ cups	Bay leaves	2
Black beans	2 (15 oz.) cans	Kosher salt	1 tsp.
Rotel diced tomatoes	1 (10 oz.) can	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Yellow onion, medium	1	Fresh cilantro	½ cup
Garlic cloves	4	Lime juice	3 Tbsp.
Celery stalks	2	Lime wedges	for serving
Carrots, medium	2		
Vegetable oil	2 Tbsp.		

Directions

Dice **onion**, **celery**, and **carrots** into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces — Mince **garlic** — Drain and rinse **black beans** — Chop **cilantro** — Juice **limes** — Warm **carnitas meat** if refrigerated

1. Heat **vegetable oil** in a large Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot over medium heat. Add diced **onion**, **celery**, and **carrots**. Cook, stirring occasionally, until vegetables begin to soften, about *8-10 minutes*.
2. Add minced **garlic**, **cumin**, and **Mexican oregano**. Cook, stirring constantly, until fragrant, about *1 minute*.
3. Add **Rotel tomatoes** with their juice and cook for *3-4 minutes*, allowing some liquid to evaporate and flavors to concentrate.
4. Pour in **carnitas consommé** and **water**. Add **bay leaves**, **salt**, and **black pepper**. Bring to a boil, then reduce heat and simmer for *15 minutes*.
5. Add **black beans** and **carnitas meat**. Simmer for additional *10-15 minutes* until vegetables are tender and flavors are well integrated.
6. Remove **bay leaves**. Taste and adjust seasoning with additional **salt** and **pepper** as needed.
7. Remove from heat and stir in **lime juice** and half of the chopped **cilantro**.
8. Serve hot, garnished with remaining **cilantro** and **lime wedges** on the side.

Equipment Required

- Large Dutch oven or heavy-bottomed pot (6-quart capacity)
- Sharp chef's knife
- Large cutting board
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Wooden spoon or silicone spatula
- Can opener
- Colander for draining beans
- Ladle for serving
- Timer

Mise en Place

- Bring **carnitas consommé** to room temperature if refrigerated
- Warm **carnitas meat** slightly if cold from refrigeration
- Dice all vegetables to uniform $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch pieces for even cooking
- Have all spices measured and ready before starting
- Open and drain **black bean** cans just before use

Ingredient Tips

- Use **Mexican oregano** rather than Mediterranean for authentic flavor profile
- **Rotel** provides perfect heat balance - avoid substituting with plain diced tomatoes
- Rinse **black beans** thoroughly to remove excess sodium and starch
- If **carnitas consommé** is very gelatinous, it will thin perfectly when heated
- Fresh **lime juice** is essential - bottled juice lacks the brightness needed

Preparation Tips

- Don't rush the vegetable sautéing - proper softening builds flavor foundation
- Bloom spices in oil for maximum potency before adding liquid
- Add **lime juice** and **cilantro** off heat to preserve bright flavors
- Taste soup before final seasoning - **consommé** saltiness varies
- If soup seems too thick, add water; if too thin, simmer uncovered longer

Make Ahead & Storage

- Soup improves in flavor after *24 hours* in refrigerator
- Store up to *4 days* refrigerated or *3 months* frozen
- Add **lime juice** and fresh **cilantro** only when reheating to serve
- May need additional water when reheating as beans absorb liquid
- Freeze in individual portions for easy weeknight meals

Serving Suggestions

- Garnish with diced white onion, crumbled **queso fresco**, or **Mexican crema**
- Serve with warm corn tortillas or crusty bread
- Add diced **avocado** just before serving for richness
- Accompany with pickled jalapeños for those wanting extra heat
- Makes excellent leftover lunch - flavors continue to develop
- Consider serving with Mexican rice as a more substantial meal

Hungarian Mushroom Soup •

Ingredients

Unsalted butter	8 Tbsp.	All-purpose flour	6 Tbsp.
Onions, medium	2	Sour cream	1 cup
Mushrooms	2 lbs.	Fresh parsley	½ cup
Chicken broth	6 cups	Lemon juice	4 tsp.
Soy sauce	2 Tbsp.	MSG	¼ tsp.
Hungarian hot paprika	1 tsp.	Salt	1 tsp.
Hungarian sweet paprika	4 tsp.	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Dried dill weed	4 tsp.		
Milk	2 cups		

Directions

Chop onions (4 cups) — Slice mushrooms — Chop parsley

1. Melt **butter** in a large pot (5+ Qt.) over medium heat.
 2. Add **onions** and cook, stirring until softened, about 5 minutes.
 3. Add **mushrooms** and sauté for 5 more minutes.
 4. Stir in **chicken broth**, **soy sauce**, **hot paprika**, **sweet paprika**, and **dried dill weed**.
 5. Reduce heat to low, cover, and simmer for 15 minutes.
 6. Whisk **milk** and **flour** together in a separate bowl; stir into soup until blended.
 7. Cover and simmer for 15 more minutes, stirring occasionally.
 8. Add **sour cream**, **parsley**, **lemon juice**, **salt**, **MSG**, and **black pepper**.
 9. Stir over low heat until warmed through, about 3 to 5 minutes.
 10. Serve immediately.
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Italian Sausage Soup •

Ingredients

Sweet Italian sausage	1 lb	Tomato sauce, unsalted	12 oz. can
Hot Italian sausage	1 lb	Diced tomatoes w/basil & garlic	24 oz. can
Onion, large	1	Chicken broth	12-14 cups
Garlic bulbs, minced	2	Italian herb mix	1 tsp
Carrots, chopped	3	Basil	1 tsp
Celery stalks, chopped	3	Parsley	3 Tbsp
Russet potatoes, chopped	3	Bay leaves	3
Zucchini, chopped	1	Oregano	½ tsp
Frozen vegetables (stir fry mix)	1 lb	Sugar	1 Tbsp
Mushrooms, sliced	12 oz. can	Onion salt	1 tsp
		MSG (<i>optional</i>)	1 tsp

Directions

Chop onion, carrots, celery, potatoes, and zucchini — Mince garlic — Drain mushrooms

1. Brown meat into small chunks.
2. Combine all ingredients in a large stock pot.
3. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and simmer covered for *30 minutes*.
4. Stir occasionally and vigorously to thicken broth.
5. For canning: process at *15 pounds* for *90 minutes*.

Add 1-2 cups of water per quart when reheating.

Tuscan Zuppa Soup •

Ingredients

Italian sausage	1 lb.	Cannellini beans	1 (15 oz.) can
Onion, medium	1	Heavy cream	1 cup
Garlic	4-6 cloves	Salt	½ tsp.
White wine (<i>optional</i>)	¼ cup	Pepper	¼ tsp.
Kale	1 bunch	Red pepper flakes	¼ tsp.
Potatoes, large	3-4	MSG (<i>optional</i>)	¼ tsp.
Chicken broth	8 cups		

Directions

Dice **onion** — Mince **garlic** — Dice **potatoes** into $\frac{1}{4}$ in. pieces — Remove stems from **kale** and tear leaves into bite sized pieces

1. Brown the **Italian sausage** over medium heat until fully cooked. Remove and set aside, retaining drippings in the pot.
2. Sauté **onions** in the same pot until translucent, then add **garlic** and cook for an additional minute.
3. Deglaze the pan with **white wine**.
4. Return **sausage** to the pot along with **chicken broth** and **potatoes**. Bring to a boil, then simmer until potatoes are tender, stirring occasionally, about **10-15 minutes**.
5. Stir in **kale** and **cannellini beans** (do not drain). Simmer until kale is wilted, about **5 minutes**.
6. Stir in **heavy cream**. Season with **salt**, **pepper**, **red pepper flakes**, and **MSG** to taste.