

Patrick's Cookbook

Patrick Morgan

2025 Edition - September

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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.

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°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	¼ 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 $350^{\circ}F$ — 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
- 1¾" 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	½ cup
Cream Cheese	8 oz.	Butter (melted)	¼ cup
Canned Pumpkin	2 cups	Vanilla Extract	1 tsp.
Sugar	1 cup	Cinnamon, ground	½ tsp.
Salt	¼ tsp.	Ginger, ground	½ tsp.
1 egg, plus 2 yolks	3 eggs	Whipped Cream	1 cup
Heavy Cream	½ 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"×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	¼ cup
Light brown sugar	1 cup	Cooking spray	as needed

Directions

Preheat oven to $425^{\circ}F$ — 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 $285^{\circ}F$ (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



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	¼ tsp.
Garlic cloves	8	Kosher salt	2 Tbsp.
Burgundy wine	750 ml	Black pepper, ground	1 Tbsp.
Cognac	¼ 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 2½-inch pieces — Dice **bacon** into ½-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 *2½-3 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	1¾ 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.

Chicken Broccoli Rice Casserole

Ingredients

Rotisserie chicken meat	1½ lb.	Sweet Corn, canned	8 oz.
Long-grain white rice	2 cups	Dried rosemary	1 tsp.
Chicken broth	4 cups	Paprika	1 tsp.
Broccoli	1 head	MSG	¼ tsp.
Cream cheese, softened	6 oz.	Garlic powder	½ tsp.
Onion, medium	1	Onion powder	½ tsp.
Garlic cloves	6-8	Ground nutmeg	pinch
Butter	4½ Tbsp.	Salt	1 tsp.
Flour	¼ cup	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Milk	2 cups	Red pepper, crushed	½ tsp.
Mushrooms, canned	8 oz.	Crispy fried onions	¼ cup

Directions

Soften **cream cheese** at room temperature — Preheat oven to 375°F — Debone bird by hand and dice meat — Dice **onion** — Mince **garlic** — Cut **broccoli** into florets — Drain **mushrooms** Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish with ½ Tbsp. butter —

1. Cook **rice** al-dente using 2 cups **chicken broth** instead of water. Stop your rice cooker 5 minutes early.
2. While rice cooks, bring a pot of salted water to boil. Blanch **broccoli florets** for *2 minutes*, then immediately strain in a metal colander rinsing with cold water. Drain well.
3. In a large saucepan, melt remaining **butter** over medium heat. Add diced **onion** and cook until translucent, about *5 minutes*. Add minced **garlic** and **mushrooms**, cooking for another *5 minutes*.
4. Sprinkle **flour** over the butter mixture and cook, stirring constantly, for *2 minutes*.
5. Gradually whisk in **milk** and 2 cups **chicken broth**. Add **cream cheese** and stir until melted.
6. Add **rosemary**, **paprika**, **MSG**, **garlic powder**, **onion powder**, **nutmeg**, **salt**, **black pepper**, and **red pepper**. Simmer *5-10 minutes* stirring frequently until sauce thickens .
7. In a large bowl, combine cooked **rice**, blanched **broccoli**, diced **chicken**, **corn**, and sauce. Mix well.
8. Transfer mixture to prepared baking dish. Top with **crispy fried onions**.
9. Bake for *30 minutes*.
10. Let stand for *5-10 minutes* before serving.

Equipment Required

- Large saucepan for sauce
- Large mixing bowl (6+ quart)
- Box grater
- Colander
- Whisk

Mise en Place

- Soften **cream cheese** for *1 hour* before starting
- Debone chicken while cold for easier handling
- Have all measured ingredients grouped by cooking stage

Ingredient Tips

- Pre-shredded cheese won't melt as smoothly as freshly grated
- Full-fat dairy prevents sauce from breaking
- Choose plain canned **mushrooms**, not seasoned varieties

Preparation Tips

- Cook **rice** slightly al dente - it will continue cooking in casserole
- Whisk continuously when adding liquids to prevent lumps
- If sauce seems too thick, thin with warm **broth**

Make Ahead & Storage

- Can assemble *24 hours* ahead
- Add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup extra **broth** if refrigerated before baking
- Freezes well for up to *3 months*
- Thaw frozen casserole overnight in refrigerator
- Reheat covered at *350°F* until hot throughout, about *20 minutes*

Serving Suggestions

- Try crushed crackers on top for crunch

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 ½" rounds — Quarter **mushrooms** — Dice **thick-cut bacon** into ¼" 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 ¼ 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 ¼ of **butter**, then cook **leeks** with a pinch of **salt** until soft, about *5 minutes*. Remove to bacon bowl.
5. Add another ¼ 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**.

Extreme Mac and Cheese

Ingredients

Salt	..... 1 Tbsp.	Ham, diced	..... 8 oz.
Small elbow macaroni	..... 1 lb.	Black pepper, ground	..... ½ tsp.
Sharp cheddar cheese	..... 8 oz.	Mustard, ground	..... ½ tsp.
Pepper jack cheese	..... 8 oz.		
Butter	..... ¼ cup		
Cheddar cheese soup	..... 3 (10¾ oz.) cans		
Milk	..... 2 cups		

Directions

Preheat oven to 375°F — Grate **sharp cheddar** and **pepper jack** cheese

1. Bring a large pot of water to boil, add **salt**.
2. Cook **macaroni** in boiling water until al-dente.
3. Reserve 1 cup of pasta water and drain.
4. Return **macaroni** to pot, add **butter** and stir until coated.
5. Mix in **cheddar cheese soup**, pasta water, **milk**, **black pepper**, **ground mustard**, **ham**, and ½ of the grated **cheese mixture**.
6. Transfer mixture to a 9×13 dish, spread evenly.
7. Top with remaining shredded **cheese**.
8. Bake for *20-25 minutes* or until cheese is golden.

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°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°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 9x13 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 4 **garlic cloves** — Mince remaining 3 **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**, 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 ¼ 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	¼ tsp.
Water	2 cups	Ground nutmeg	1/8 tsp.
Mexican spice mix	3 Tbsp.	MSG	½ 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	¼ cup	Ro-Tel	10-14 oz. can
Heavy cream	1½ 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 $375^{\circ}F$ — 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:
 - 1/3 of the **tortilla quarters**
 - 1/2 of the **chicken mixture**
 - 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 (Slow Cooker)

Ingredients

Gochujang	..... ½ cup	Black pepper	..... ½ 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: 2/3 for marinade, 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.

Chapter 3

SAUCES AND SEASONINGS



Italian Sausage and 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 ¼-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	½ cup
Lime	1	Tamarind paste	2 Tbsp.
Creamy peanut butter	¾ cup	Water	½ 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)	⅓ 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 $350^{\circ}F$ – Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper

1. Using hands, mix all ingredients together thoroughly until well combined.
2. Roll mixture into 1½-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.

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 blackend.
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	¼ tsp.
Mayonnaise	1/3 cup	Sugar	¼ tsp.
Dijon mustard	1½ tsp.	Garlic powder	½ tsp.
White wine vinegar	1¼ tsp.	Smoked paprika	½ tsp.
Dried dill weed	¾ 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	¾ 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.

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 2½-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.

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 ½-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 airtight 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.

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 ¼ 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 ¼" to ½" 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 applewood 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 $400^{\circ}F$ — 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 ¼ 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, ½ 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
-

Spam Musubi

Ingredients

Spam, low salt	1 (12 oz.) can	Nori sheets	4
Soy sauce, low salt	¼ cup	Kewpie mayonnaise	½ cup
Mirin	1/3 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 sprinkle 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

Artichoke hearts	2 (14 oz.) cans	Mozzarella, shredded	8 oz.
Spinach (fresh)	10 oz.	Salt	½ tsp.
Cream cheese, softened	8 oz.	Black pepper	½ tsp.
Mayonnaise	½ cup	Red pepper flakes	½ tsp.
Sour cream	½ cup	MSG	¼ tsp.
Garlic cloves	3		
Parmesan, grated	4 oz.		

Directions

Preheat oven to $375^{\circ}F$ — Drain and chop **artichoke hearts** — Rough chop **fresh spinach** — Mince **garlic**

1. In a large bowl, combine softened **cream cheese**, **mayonnaise**, and **sour cream** until smooth.
2. Mix in minced **garlic**, **salt**, **black pepper**, **red pepper flakes**, and **MSG**.
3. Fold in chopped **artichoke hearts**, chopped **spinach**, **Parmesan**, and half of **mozzarella**.
4. Transfer mixture to a 2-quart baking dish and top with remaining **mozzarella**.
5. Bake for *30-35 minutes* until bubbly and golden brown on top.
6. Let rest for *5-10 minutes* before serving.

Equipment Required

- 2-quart baking dish (ceramic or glass)
- Large mixing bowl (for combining ingredients)
- Medium bowl (for cheese)
- Cutting board and sharp knife
- Measuring cups and spoons
- Rubber spatula or wooden spoon
- Garlic press (optional)
- Colander (for draining artichokes)

Preparation Tips

- Rough chop spinach and artichokes for better texture - avoid fine chopping
- Don't overmix after adding **spinach** and **artichokes** to maintain texture
- Press **garlic** just before mixing to maximize flavor
- For best browning, add final layer of **mozzarella** just before baking
- If top browns too quickly, cover loosely with foil

Mise en Place

- Remove **cream cheese** from refrigerator at least *1 hour* before starting
- Drain **artichoke hearts** thoroughly before chopping
- Grate cheeses while **cream cheese** is softening
- Have all ingredients measured and ready before assembly

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
- Leftovers can be refrigerated for up to *3 days*
- Reheat in *350°F* oven until warm, about *15-20 minutes*

Ingredient Tips

- Use artichoke hearts packed in water rather than marinated varieties
- Fresh spinach provides better texture than frozen, but if using frozen, thaw and squeeze out all excess moisture
- Full-fat dairy products yield the best texture and flavor
- For extra flavor, add a pinch of cayenne or increase **red pepper flakes**

Serving Suggestions

- Serve with toasted baguette slices, crackers, or fresh vegetables
- For best texture, allow to cool slightly before serving
- Garnish with fresh cracked pepper or chopped parsley if desired
- Pairs well with a crisp white wine or light beer

Steamed Cabbage (Sweet and Sour)

Ingredients

Round cabbage	..... 1 head	Ginger powder	..... ½ tsp.
Rice vinegar	..... 3½ Tbsp.	Sesame oil	..... ½ 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

SOUPS



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 ¼-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 ¼-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.

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 ¼in. 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.