

THE WORLD'S MOST
BORING
COOKING

Unambitious recipes
for the uninspired palate

Chef Boring Mike



Contents

Pancakes.....	1
Baked Ziti	2
Tomatoes Caprese.....	3
Cinnamon Toast	4
Baked Potato	5
Grilled Cheese Sandwich	6
Baked Macaroni & Cheese.....	7
Potato Salad.....	8
Bran Muffins	9
Black Beans & Rice	10
Hard Boiled Eggs	11
Corn on the Cob	12
Belgian Waffles	13
Spaghetti	14
Apple Pie	15
Chicken Noodle Soup.....	16
Rice Krispie Treats	17



Pancakes



The earliest attested references to pancakes are in the works of the 5th-century BC poets Cratinus and Magnes. Pancakes were made with wheat flour, olive oil, honey, and curdled milk, and were served for breakfast.

The Middle English word “pancake” appears in English in the 15th century.

Ingredients

- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup white sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup milk, at room temperature
- 1 egg, at room temperature
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 2 teaspoons oil, or as needed

Instructions

1. Combine flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in a bowl; make a ‘well’ in the center of the flour mixture.
2. Pour milk, eggs, and 1 tablespoon oil into the well. Mix until well moistened.
3. Place a griddle over medium-high heat; sprinkle a few drops of water onto the griddle. If the droplets bounce, the griddle is ready; add 2 teaspoons oil.
4. Spoon batter onto the griddle; cook until bubbles form and the edges are dry, 3 to 5 minutes. Flip and cook until browned on the other side, 3 to 5 more minutes.
5. Repeat with remaining batter.

Ingredients

- 1 pound dry ziti pasta
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 2 (26 ounce) jars spaghetti sauce
- 6 ounces provolone cheese, sliced
- 1 1/2 cups sour cream
- 6 ounces mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 2 tablespoons grated Parmesan cheese

Baked Ziti



Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add ziti pasta, and cook until al dente, about 8 minutes; drain.
2. In a large skillet, brown onion and ground beef over medium heat. Add spaghetti sauce, and simmer 15 minutes.
3. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Butter a 9x13 inch baking dish. Layer as follows: 1/2 of the ziti, Provolone cheese, sour cream, 1/2 sauce mixture, remaining ziti, mozzarella cheese and remaining sauce mixture. Top with grated Parmesan cheese.
4. Bake for 30 minutes in the preheated oven, or until cheeses are melted.

The first pasta recipe with tomatoes was not documented until 1839.

Therefore, baked ziti is a relatively recent dish in the history of Italian and Italian-inspired foods.

In many recipes, the ziti are first cooked separately while a tomato and cheese sauce is prepared, which may include meat, sausage, mushrooms, peppers, onions, and more.

Tomatoes Caprese



The Caprese Salad, or Insalata Caprese as you'll find it on the menus in Italy, originated in the 1950s in the Isle of Capri, the Campania region of Italy.

Traditionally, Insalata Caprese is made up of cow's milk mozzarella, tomatoes, and olive oil garnished with oregano and arugula.

Ingredients

- 4 large ripe tomatoes, sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 1 pound fresh mozzarella cheese, sliced 1/4 inch thick
- 1/3 cup fresh basil leaves
- 3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil
- fine sea salt to taste
- freshly ground black pepper to taste

Instructions

1. Slice the tomatoes.
2. On a large platter, alternate and overlap the tomato slices, mozzarella cheese slices, and basil leaves.
3. Drizzle with olive oil.
4. Season with sea salt and pepper.

Ingredients

- 2 slices white bread
- 2 teaspoons butter or margarine
- 2 tablespoons white sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

Cinnamon Toast



Instructions

1. Use a toaster to toast the bread to desired darkness.
2. Spread butter or margarine onto one side of each slice.
3. In a cup or small bowl, stir together the sugar and cinnamon; sprinkle generously over hot buttered toast.

Toasting bread in ancient times was a means of preserving it. The Romans spread the idea of toast throughout Europe, even into Britain, and the colonists brought toast to the Americas.

*The word 'toast,' in fact, comes from the Latin word *tostum*, meaning scorch or burn.*

Baked Potato



In 1536 Spanish Conquistadors conquered Peru, discovered the flavors of the potato, and carried them to Europe.

Before the end of the sixteenth century, families of Basque sailors began to cultivate potatoes along the Biscay coast of northern Spain.

Ingredients

- 1 medium baking potato
- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons butter
- 1 pinch ground black pepper
- 1/4 cup shredded Cheddar cheese

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 300 degrees F (150 degrees C).
2. Scrub the potato, and pierce the skin several times with a knife or fork. Rub the skin with olive oil, then with salt.
3. Place the potato in the preheated oven, and bake for 90 minutes, or until slightly soft and golden brown.
4. Slice the potato down the center, and serve with butter and black pepper. Sprinkle shredded Cheddar cheese over the top, if desired.

Ingredients

- 4 slices white bread
- 3 tablespoons butter, divided
- 2 slices Cheddar cheese

Grilled Cheese Sandwich



Instructions

1. Preheat skillet over medium heat. Generously butter one side of a slice of bread.
2. Place bread butter-side-down onto skillet bottom and add 1 slice of cheese. Butter a second slice of bread on one side and place butter-side-up on top of sandwich.
3. Grill until lightly browned and flip over; continue grilling until cheese is melted.
4. Repeat with remaining 2 slices of bread, butter and slice of cheese.

Cooked bread and cheese is an ancient food according to food historians, popular across the world in many cultures.

Evidence indicates that, in the U.S., the modern version of the grilled cheese sandwich originated in the 1920s when inexpensive sliced bread and American cheese became readily available.

Baked Macaroni & Cheese



Thomas Jefferson encountered macaroni both in Paris and in northern Italy. He drew a sketch of the pasta and wrote detailed notes on the extrusion process. In 1802, Jefferson served "a pie called macaroni" at a state dinner.

Since that time, baked macaroni and cheese has remained popular in the United States.

Ingredients

- 1 (16 ounce) package macaroni
- 1 pound sharp Cheddar cheese, sliced
- 1 tablespoon butter
- salt
- pepper
- 1 (12 fluid ounce) can evaporated milk

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C).
2. Bring a large pot of lightly salted water to a boil. Add pasta and cook for 8 to 10 minutes or until al dente; drain.
3. Grease a 2 quart casserole dish. Place a quarter of the macaroni in the bottom, followed by an even layer of one-quarter of the cheese slices. Dot with butter and season with salt and pepper.
4. Repeat layering three times. Pour evaporated milk evenly over the top of all.
5. Bake, uncovered, for one hour, or until top is golden brown.

Ingredients

- 5 pounds red potatoes
- 6 eggs
- 2 cups mayonnaise
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 green onions, thinly sliced
- 1 small green bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 3 stalks celery, thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon ground black pepper

Potato Salad



Instructions

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil.
2. Add potatoes, and cook for 15 to 20 minutes, or until tender but still firm. Drain, cool and cut into cubes.
3. Place eggs in a saucepan and cover with cold water. Bring water to a boil and immediately remove from heat. Cover and let eggs stand in hot water for 10 to 12 minutes. Remove from hot water, cool, peel and chop.
4. In a large bowl, combine chopped potatoes and eggs. Mix together mayonnaise, chopped onion, green onion, green pepper, and celery.
5. Season with salt and pepper, then mix well. Cover, and refrigerate for several hours or overnight.

Potato salad is widely believed to have originated in Germany. American potato salad most likely originated from recipes brought to the U.S. by way of German and European settlers during the nineteenth century. American-style potato salad is served cold or at room temperature.

Bran Muffins



*Bran muffins will make you rich.
Bran muffins will give you the
strength to lift a washing machine
over your head and hurl it through
your neighbor's window. Bran
muffins will give you the ability to
swim with the grace of a dolphin
and run faster than a horse on
amphetamines. Bran muffins will
give you the courage of ten thousand
drunk lions. Bran muffins will make
your enemies flee before you, or fall
to their knees. I insist that you eat
bran muffins at every opportunity.*

Ingredients

- 1 1/2 cups wheat bran
- 1 cup buttermilk
- 1/3 cup vegetable oil
- 1 egg
- 2/3 cup brown sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Grease muffin cups or line with paper muffin liners.
2. Mix together wheat bran and buttermilk; let stand for 10 minutes.
3. Beat together oil, egg, sugar and vanilla and add to buttermilk/bran mixture.
4. Sift together flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt. Stir flour mixture into buttermilk mixture, until just blended. Fold in raisins and spoon batter into prepared muffin tins.
5. Bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean. Cool and enjoy!

Ingredients

- 1 teaspoon olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 3/4 cup uncooked white rice
- 1 1/2 cups low sodium, low fat vegetable broth
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 1/4 teaspoon cayenne pepper
- 3 1/2 cups canned black beans, drained

Black Beans & Rice



Instructions

1. In a stockpot over medium-high heat, heat the oil. Add the onion and garlic and saute for 4 minutes. Add the rice and saute for 2 minutes.
2. Add the vegetable broth, bring to a boil, cover and lower the heat and cook for 20 minutes. Add the spices and black beans.

While beans are native to the Americas, common rice is not. Wild rice is native to North America. Rice was introduced to the Caribbean and South America by European colonizers at an early date with Spanish colonizers introducing Asian rice to Mexico in the 1520s.

Hard Boiled Eggs



Hard-boiled eggs are commonly sliced, particularly for use in sandwiches. For this purpose specialized egg slicers exist, to ease slicing and yield even slices.

They should be used within two hours if kept at room temperature or can be used for a week if kept refrigerated and in the shell.

Ingredients

- 6 eggs
- water

Instructions

1. Place eggs into a saucepan and pour in cold water to cover; place over high heat.
2. When the water just starts to simmer, turn off heat, cover pan with a lid, and let stand for 17 minutes.
3. Pour out the hot water and pour cold water over eggs. Drain and refill with cold water; let stand until eggs are cool, about 20 minutes.
4. Peel eggs under running water.

Ingredients

- 1 ear corn on the cob, unhusked
- 1 teaspoon butter, or to taste
- salt to taste

Corn on the Cob



Instructions

1. Place ear of corn in a microwave oven and cook on high for 2 minutes; flip corn over and cook on high until kernels are hot and steaming, another 2 minutes.
2. Place corn ear on a cutting board, using a pot holder or folded kitchen towel, and cut off the bottom of the ear, exposing 1/4 to 1/2 inch of kernels.
3. Hold the ear from the top and squeeze ear of corn out of the husk from top to bottom. Husks and silk will be left behind.
4. Spread ear with butter and season with salt.

Corn was eaten by Native American tribes before European settlers arrived in the Americas. The Maya ate corn as a staple food crop and ate it off the cob, either roasting or boiling it. Aboriginal Canadians in southern parts of Canada also eat corn.

Belgian Waffles



Originally showcased in 1958, at Expo 58, in Brussels, Belgian waffles were introduced to North America by a Belgian named Walter Cleyman, and served with whipped cream and strawberries. The waffles were further popularized in the United States during the 1964 New York World's Fair at Flushing Meadows Park. The waffle was introduced by Maurice Vermersch of Brussels, Belgium, and was named the Bel-Gem Waffle.

Ingredients

- 1 (.25 ounce) package active dry yeast
- 3 cups warm milk
- 3 egg yolks
- 3 egg whites
- 3/4 cup butter, melted and cooled to lukewarm
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons salt
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 4 cups all-purpose flour

Instructions

1. In a small bowl, dissolve yeast in 1/4 cup warm milk. Let stand until creamy, about 10 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together the egg yolks, 1/4 cup of the warm milk and the melted butter. Stir in the yeast mixture, sugar, salt and vanilla. Stir in the remaining 2 1/2 cups milk alternately with the flour, ending with the flour. Beat the egg whites until they form soft peaks; fold into the batter. Cover the bowl tightly with plastic wrap. Let rise in a warm place until doubled in volume, about 1 hour.
3. Preheat the waffle iron. Brush with oil and spoon about 1/2 cup (or as recommended by manufacturer) onto center of iron. Close the lid and bake until it stops steaming and the waffle is golden brown. Serve immediately or keep warm in 200 degree oven.

Ingredients

- 12 ounces spaghetti
- 1 pound lean ground beef
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon white sugar
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
- 1/8 teaspoon garlic powder
- 2 tablespoons dried minced onion
- 2 1/2 cups chopped tomatoes
- 1 1/3 (6 ounce) cans tomato paste
- 1 (4.5 ounce) can sliced mushrooms

Spaghetti



Instructions

1. Brown beef over medium heat. Drain off fat.
2. In a large pot, combine beef, salt, sugar, oregano, pepper, garlic powder, onion flakes, diced tomatoes, tomato paste, and mushrooms. Simmer at a low heat setting for 2 hours, stirring occasionally.
3. Cook pasta according to package directions. Drain. Serve sauce over spaghetti.

Popular history says that spaghetti was invented in China, and that Marco Polo brought the knowledge of this food to Venice. The spaghetti Polo encountered, and presumably tasted, in the Far East was made from either rice flour or hard wheat flour. Long noodles made from both grains exist in eastern cookery.

Apple Pie



The first recorded recipe for apple pie was written in 1381 in England, and called for figs, raisins, pears, and saffron in addition to apples. Early apple pie recipes were quite different from what we know today. They rarely called for sugar, an expensive and hard-to-get item at the time.

Ingredients

- 1 recipe pastry for a 9 inch double crust pie
- 1/2 cup unsalted butter
- 3 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1/4 cup water
- 1/2 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup packed brown sugar
- 8 Granny Smith apples - peeled, cored and sliced

Instructions

1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F (220 degrees C). Melt the butter in a saucepan. Stir in flour to form a paste. Add water, white sugar and brown sugar, and bring to a boil. Reduce temperature and let simmer.
2. Place the bottom crust in your pan. Fill with apples, mounded slightly. Cover with a lattice work crust. Gently pour the sugar and butter liquid over the crust. Pour slowly so that it does not run off.
3. Bake 15 minutes in the preheated oven. Reduce the temperature to 350 degrees F (175 degrees C). Continue baking for 35 to 45 minutes, until apples are soft.

Ingredients

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 2 stalks celery, sliced
- 2 carrots, sliced
- 4 (10.5 ounce) cans chicken broth
- 4 baking potatoes, peeled and diced
- 1/4 pinch dried thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon poultry seasoning
- 2 cups shredded cooked chicken
- 2 cups egg noodles
- 1 cup evaporated milk

Chicken Noodle Soup



Instructions

1. Heat the vegetable oil in a stock pot over medium heat. Cook and stir the onion, celery, and carrots in the hot oil until tender, 8 to 10 minutes.
2. Add the chicken broth, baking potatoes, thyme, and poultry seasoning to the vegetable mixture; bring to a simmer and continue cooking until the potatoes are cooked through, about 15 minutes.
3. Stir the cooked chicken, egg noodles, and evaporated milk into the soup.
4. Cook until the noodles are cooked through, another 7 to 10 minutes.

The term “Chicken Noodle Soup” may have been coined in a commercial for the Campbell Soup Company in the 1930s. The original 21 varieties of Campbell’s condensed soup featured a “chicken soup with noodles”, but when it was advertised on the a radio show in the 1930s, by a slip of the tongue, the soup was referred to as “chicken noodle soup”.

Rice Krispie Treats



In 1939, a Kellogg's employee, named Mildred Day, concocted and published a recipe for a Camp Fire Girls bake sale. This consisted of Rice Krispies, melted marshmallows, and margarine. It has remained a very popular snack dubbed "Rice Krispies Treats."

Ingredients

- 1/4 cup butter
- 4 cups miniature marshmallows
- 5 cups crisp rice cereal

Instructions

1. Melt butter in large sauce pan over low heat. Add marshmallows and stir until melted and well-blended. Cook 2 minutes longer, stirring constantly. Remove from heat.
2. Add cereal. Stir until well coated.
3. Using buttered spatula or waxed paper, press mixture evenly and firmly in buttered 13 x 9 inch pan. Cut into 2 x 2 inch squares when cool.

"Discretion is the better part of valor."

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- Are you frightened by new experiences?
- Do you worry about things?

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BORING MIKE

Chef Boring Mike holds a doctorate in Fine Oafery from the Institute of Studious Curmudgeonry. In his spare time, he enjoys fly-fishing, bird-watching and slowly converting oxygen into carbon dioxide from a supine position.

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