



SEASON FOUR RECIPES



EPISODE 401

Roast Beef Dinner

Roast Beef
Whipped Potatoes



EPISODE 402

Icebox Desserts

Lemon Icebox Cheesecake
French Silk Chocolate Pie



EPISODE 403

Fancy Chicken

Chicken Cordon Bleu
Cider-Braised Chicken



EPISODE 404

Tropical Barbecue

Huli Huli Chicken
Chinese BBQ Spareribs



EPISODE 405

Southern Classics

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Lane Cake



EPISODE 406

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Chiffon Cake



EPISODE 407

Family Favorites

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Baked Potato Fans



EPISODE 408

Not Just for Kids

Chicken Nuggets
Tomato Mac and Cheese



EPISODE 409

Fried Chicken and Biscuits

Nashville Hot Chicken
Cat Head Biscuits



EPISODE 410

Road Food at Home

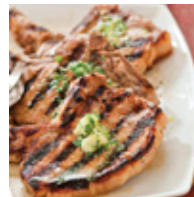
Slow-Cooker BBQ Brisket
Beer-Battered Onion Rings



EPISODE 411

Autumn Desserts

Apple Dumplings
Old-Fashioned Pecan Pie



EPISODE 412

Grilling

Grilled Thin-Cut Pork Chops
Grilled Potato Hobo Packs
Grilled Lemon Chicken



EPISODE 413

St. Louis Cooking

St. Louis Pizza
St. Louis BBQ Pork Steak



FROM EPISODE 401: ROAST BEEF DINNER

Roast Beef

SERVES 6 TO 8

For even deeper seasoning, refrigerate the roast overnight after filling it with the herb mixture in step 2.

- 1/3 cup finely chopped fresh parsley**
- 2 tablespoons minced fresh thyme**
- 1 shallot, minced**
- 1 tablespoon Dijon mustard**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 (4-pound) top sirloin roast, fat trimmed to 1/4 inch thick**
- 1 tablespoon salt**
- 1 tablespoon pepper**

1. PREP HERBS: Combine parsley, thyme, and shallot in bowl. Transfer 2 tablespoons herb mixture to another bowl and stir in mustard and 1 tablespoon oil until combined. Add butter to remaining herb mixture and mash with fork until combined.

2. PREP BEEF: Following photos 1 and 2 below, butterfly roast and rub inside and out with salt and pepper. Spread herb-mustard mixture over interior of meat and tie securely with kitchen twine at 1-inch intervals. Refrigerate at least 1 hour or up to 24 hours.

3. BROWN AND ROAST: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 275 degrees. Pat roast dry with paper



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towels. Heat remaining oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Brown roast all over, 8 to 12 minutes, then arrange on V-rack set inside roasting pan. Transfer to oven and roast until meat registers 125 degrees (for medium-rare), 1½ to 2 hours.

4. BUTTER AND REST: Transfer roast to carving board, spread with herb-butter mixture, tent with foil, and let rest 20 minutes. Remove kitchen twine. Slice roast crosswise against grain into 1/4-inch-thick slices. Serve.

STEP BY STEP Herbs Galore

Fresh parsley and thyme flavor both the interior and exterior of our roast.



1. Butterfly roast by slicing horizontally through middle of meat. Leave about 1/2 inch of meat intact, then open it like a book.



2. After seasoning meat, spread herb-mustard mixture over interior of meat.



3. Fold meat back to its original position, then tie securely at 1-inch intervals with kitchen twine.



4. For second hit of herb flavor after roast is cooked, spread it with herb butter.



FROM EPISODE 401: ROAST BEEF DINNER

Whipped Potatoes

SERVES 8 TO 10

If your steamer basket has short legs (under 1¾ inches), the potatoes will sit in water as they cook and get wet. To prevent this, use balls of aluminum foil as steamer basket stilts. A stand mixer fitted with a whisk attachment yields the smoothest potatoes, but a hand mixer may be used as well.

- 4 pounds russet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch pieces**
- 1½ cups whole milk**
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into pieces**
- 2 teaspoons salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**

1. COOK POTATOES: Place cut potatoes in colander. Rinse under cold water until water runs clear, about 1 minute. Drain potatoes. Fill Dutch oven with 1 inch water. Bring water to boil. Place steamer basket in Dutch oven and fill with potatoes. Reduce heat to medium and cook, covered, until potatoes are tender, 20 to 25 minutes.

2. WARM DAIRY: Heat milk, butter, salt, and pepper in small saucepan over medium-low heat, whisking until smooth, about 3 minutes; cover and keep warm.

3. WHIP POTATOES: Pour contents of Dutch oven into colander and return potatoes to dry pot. Stir over low heat until potatoes are thoroughly dried, about 1 minute. In bowl of stand mixer fitted with whisk attachment, break potatoes into small pieces on low speed, about 30 seconds. Add milk mixture in steady stream until incorporated. Increase speed to high and whip until potatoes are light and fluffy and no lumps remain, about 2 minutes. Serve.



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FROM EPISODE 402: ICEBOX DESSERTS

Lemon Icebox Cheesecake

SERVES 12 TO 16

Let the dissolved gelatin mixture cool down for a few minutes, or the gelatin will seize when combined with the filling. We tested our cheesecake with several store brands of lemon sandwich cookies; all worked well.

CRUST

- 10 lemon sandwich cookies, broken into pieces (about 1¼ cups)**
- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted**
- 1 teaspoon grated lemon zest**

CURD

- 1 large egg plus 1 egg yolk**
¼ cup sugar
Pinch salt
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter**
- 1 tablespoon heavy cream**

FILLING

- ¼ cup lemon juice from 2 lemons**
- 1 envelope (2¾ teaspoons) unflavored gelatin**
- 1½ pounds cream cheese, cut into 1-inch pieces and softened**
- ¾ cup sugar**
Pinch salt
- 1¼ cups heavy cream, room temperature**

1. MAKE CRUST: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Process cookies in food processor until finely ground. Add butter and zest and pulse until combined. Press mixture into bottom of 9-inch springform pan. Bake until lightly browned and set, about 10 minutes. Cool completely on wire rack, at least 30 minutes.

2. MAKE CURD: While crust is cooling, whisk egg, egg yolk, sugar, and salt together in small saucepan. Add lemon juice and cook over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until thick and puddinglike, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in butter and cream. Press through fine-mesh strainer into small bowl and refrigerate until needed.



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3. SOFTEN GELATIN: Combine lemon juice and gelatin in small bowl and let stand until gelatin softens, about 5 minutes. Microwave until mixture is bubbling around edges and gelatin dissolves, about 30 seconds. Set aside.

4. MAKE FILLING: With electric mixer on medium speed, beat cream cheese, sugar, and salt until smooth and creamy, scraping down sides of bowl, about 2 minutes. Slowly add cream and beat until light and fluffy, about 2 minutes. Add gelatin mixture and ¼ cup curd, increase speed to medium-high, and beat until smooth and airy, about 3 minutes.

5. CHILL CHEESECAKE: Pour filling into cooled crust and smooth top. Pour thin lines of remaining curd on top of cake and lightly drag paring knife or skewer through lines to create marbled appearance. Refrigerate until set, at least 6 hours. Remove sides of pan. Serve. (Cheesecake can be covered in plastic wrap and refrigerated for up to 3 days.)



FROM EPISODE 402: ICEBOX DESSERTS

French Silk Chocolate Pie

SERVES 8 TO 10

You will need a fully baked pie shell for this recipe. Use your favorite pie dough or go to CooksCountry.com for our No-Fear Pie Crust recipe. Serve with lightly sweetened whipped cream.

- 1 cup heavy cream, chilled**
- 3 large eggs**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar**
- 2 tablespoons water**
- 8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, melted and cooled**
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract**
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces and softened**
- 1 (9-inch) pie shell, baked and cooled (see note)**

1. WHIP CREAM: With electric mixer on medium-high speed, whip cream to stiff peaks, 2 to 3 minutes. Transfer whipped cream to small bowl and refrigerate.

2. BEAT EGGS: Combine eggs, sugar, and water in large heatproof bowl set over medium saucepan filled with $\frac{1}{2}$ inch barely simmering water (don't let bowl touch water). With electric mixer on medium speed, beat until egg mixture is thickened and registers 160 degrees, 7 to 10 minutes. Remove bowl from heat and continue to beat egg mixture until fluffy and cooled to room temperature, about 8 minutes.

3. BEAT, FOLD, COOL: Add chocolate and vanilla to cool egg mixture and beat until incorporated. Beat in butter, a few pieces at a time, until well combined. Using spatula, fold in whipped cream until no streaks of white remain. Scrape filling into pie shell and refrigerate until set, at least 3 hours and up to 24 hours. Serve.



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FROM EPISODE 403: FANCY CHICKEN

Chicken Cordon Bleu

SERVES 4 TO 6

To help prevent the filling from leaking, use large (8-ounce) chicken breasts and thoroughly chill the stuffed breasts before breading. We like Black Forest ham here.

- 25 Ritz crackers (about $\frac{3}{4}$ sleeve)**
- 4 slices hearty white sandwich bread, torn into pieces**
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted**
- 8 thin slices deli ham (about 8 ounces) (see note)**
- 2 cups shredded Swiss cheese**
- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 2 pounds total) (see note)**
- Salt and pepper**
- 3 large eggs**
- 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**

1. MAKE CRUMBS: Adjust oven racks to lowest and middle positions and heat oven to 450 degrees. Pulse crackers and bread in food processor until coarsely ground. Drizzle in butter; pulse to incorporate. Bake crumbs on rimmed baking sheet on middle rack, stirring occasionally, until light brown, 3 to 5 minutes. Transfer to shallow dish. Leave oven on.

2. STUFF CHICKEN: Following photos 1 to 3 below, top each ham slice with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup cheese and roll tightly; set aside. Pat chicken dry with paper towels. Cut pocket in thickest part of chicken and stuff each breast with



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2 ham-and-cheese rolls. Season both sides of chicken with salt and pepper. Transfer chicken to plate, cover with plastic wrap, and refrigerate at least 20 minutes.

3. COAT AND BAKE: Beat eggs and mustard in second shallow dish. Place flour in third shallow dish. One at a time, coat stuffed chicken lightly with flour, dip into egg mixture, and dredge in crumbs, pressing to adhere. (Breaded chicken can be refrigerated, covered, for 1 day.) Transfer chicken to clean baking sheet. Bake on lowest rack until bottom of chicken is golden brown, about 10 minutes, and then move baking sheet to middle rack and reduce oven temperature to 400 degrees. Bake until golden brown and chicken registers 160 degrees, 20 to 25 minutes. Transfer to cutting board, tent with foil, and let rest 5 minutes. Serve.

STEP BY STEP

Simpler Stuffing

After weeks of trying to make it work, we decided pounding and butterflying the breasts was for the birds. Our method is easier and makes a neater cordon bleu.



1. Top each slice of ham with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shredded cheese. Roll into tight cylinder.



2. Using paring knife, cut into thickest part of chicken breast to create deep pocket with opening of 3 to 4 inches.



3. Stuff each pocket with 2 ham-and-cheese rolls and seal. Refrigerate chicken for at least 20 minutes before breading.



FROM EPISODE 403: FANCY CHICKEN

Cider-Braised Chicken

SERVES 4

Either white or dark meat (or a combination) will work. To ensure even cooking, halve breasts crosswise and separate leg quarters into thighs and drumsticks before cooking. Plain brandy, cognac, or Calvados (a French apple brandy) can be used in place of the apple brandy.

- 3 pounds bone-in, skin-on chicken pieces**
(see note)
Salt and pepper
- 2 teaspoons vegetable oil**
- 1 onion, chopped fine**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 teaspoons minced fresh thyme**
- 2 teaspoons all-purpose flour**
- 1 large Golden Delicious, Cortland, or Jonagold apple, peeled, cored, and cut into ¾-inch chunks**
- 1 cup apple cider**
- ¼ cup apple brandy (see note)**
- 1 teaspoon cider vinegar**

1. BROWN CHICKEN: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 450 degrees. Pat chicken dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Heat oil in large ovenproof skillet over medium-high heat until just smoking. Cook chicken, skin side down, until well browned, about 10 minutes. Flip and brown on second side, about 5 minutes. Transfer to plate.

2. BUILD SAUCE: Pour off all but 1 tablespoon fat from skillet. Cook onion in chicken fat until softened, about 5 minutes. Stir in garlic, thyme, and flour and cook, stirring frequently, until fragrant and flour is absorbed, about 1 minute. Add apple, cider, and 3 tablespoons brandy and bring to boil.

3. ROAST CHICKEN: Nestle chicken, skin-side up, into sauce and roast until white meat registers 160 degrees (or dark meat registers 175 degrees), about 10 minutes. Transfer chicken to platter. Stir vinegar and remaining brandy into sauce. Season with salt and pepper. Serve, passing sauce at table.



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FROM EPISODE 404: TROPICAL BARBECUE

Huli Huli Chicken

SERVES 4 TO 6

Split chicken halves are whole chickens that have been split in two through the breastbone. Lee Kum Kee Tabletop Soy Sauce is our favorite supermarket brand.

CHICKEN

- 2 quarts water
- 2 cups soy sauce (see note)
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 1 tablespoon grated fresh ginger
- 4 split chicken halves (about 8 pounds total) (see note)

GLAZE

- 3 (6-ounce) cans pineapple juice
- ¼ cup packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup soy sauce (see note)
- ¼ cup ketchup
- ¼ cup rice vinegar
- 4 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger
- 2 teaspoons Asian chili-garlic sauce
- 2 cups wood chips, soaked for 15 minutes

1. BRINE CHICKEN: Combine water and soy sauce in large bowl. Heat oil in large saucepan over medium-high heat until shimmering. Add garlic and ginger and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Stir into soy sauce mixture. Add chicken and refrigerate, covered, for at least 1 hour or up to 8 hours.

2. MAKE GLAZE: Combine pineapple juice, sugar, soy sauce, ketchup, vinegar, garlic, ginger, and chili-garlic sauce in empty saucepan and bring to boil. Reduce heat to medium and simmer until thick and syrupy (you should have about 1 cup), 20 to 25 minutes.

3. PREP GRILL: Seal wood chips in foil packet and cut vent holes in top. Open bottom vents on grill. Light about 75 coals. When coals are covered with fine gray ash, spread evenly over bottom of grill. Arrange foil packet directly on coals. Set cooking grate in place and heat, covered with



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lid vent open halfway, until wood chips begin to smoke heavily, about 5 minutes. (For gas grill, place foil packet directly on primary burner. Heat all burners on high, covered, until wood chips begin to smoke heavily, about 15 minutes. Turn all burners to medium-low.) Scrape and oil cooking grate.

4. GRILL CHICKEN: Remove chicken from brine and pat dry with paper towels. Arrange chicken skin-side up on grill (do not place chicken directly above foil packet). Grill, covered, until chicken is well browned on bottom and meat registers 120 degrees, 25 to 30 minutes. Flip chicken skin-side down and continue to grill, covered, until skin is well browned and crisp and thigh meat registers 170 to 175 degrees, 20 to 25 minutes longer. Transfer chicken to platter, brush with half of glaze, and let rest 5 minutes. Serve, passing remaining glaze at table.

MAKE AHEAD: Both the brine and the glaze can be made ahead and refrigerated for up to 3 days. Do not brine the chicken for longer than 8 hours or it will become too salty.



FROM EPISODE 404: TROPICAL BARBECUE

Chinese BBQ Spareribs

SERVES 6

Full-size spareribs are fatty, plus they're too large to fit on the grill. If you can't find St. Louis-cut spareribs (which have been trimmed of the brisket bone and surrounding meat), substitute baby back ribs and begin to check for doneness after 1 hour on the grill. Cover the edges of the ribs loosely with foil if they begin to burn while grilling.

- 2 racks pork spareribs (2½ to 3 pounds each), preferably St. Louis-cut (see note)**
- 8 black tea bags**
- 1½ cups ketchup**
- 1 cup soy sauce**
- 1 cup hoisin sauce**
- 1 cup sugar**
- ½ cup dry sherry**
- 6 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 tablespoons grated fresh ginger**
- 2 teaspoons toasted sesame oil**
- 1½ teaspoons cayenne pepper**
- 1 cup red currant jelly**

1. PREP RIBS AND TEA: Remove membrane on underside of ribs. Cut rib racks in half. Cover tea bags with water in small bowl and soak for 5 minutes. Squeeze water from tea bags and tightly seal in foil packet. Cut vent holes in top of packet.

2. STEAM RIBS: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 300 degrees. Whisk 1 cup ketchup, soy sauce, hoisin, sugar, sherry, garlic, ginger, sesame oil, and cayenne in large bowl; reserve ½ cup of mixture for glaze. Arrange ribs, meaty side down, in large disposable roasting pan and pour remaining ketchup mixture over ribs. Cover pan tightly with foil and cook until fat has rendered and meat begins to pull away from bones, 2 to 2½ hours. Transfer ribs to large plate. Pour pan juices into fat separator. Let liquid settle and reserve 1 cup defatted pan juices.



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3. MAKE GLAZE: Simmer reserved pan juices over medium-high heat until reduced to ½ cup, about 5 minutes. Stir in jelly, reserved ketchup mixture, and remaining ketchup and simmer until reduced to 2 cups, 10 to 12 minutes. Reserve one-third of glaze for serving.

4. SMOKE RIBS: Open bottom vent on grill. Light about 100 coals; when covered with fine gray ash, carefully pile on 1 side of grill. Arrange foil packet directly on coals. Set cooking grate in place and heat, covered, with lid vent open halfway, until tea begins to smoke heavily, about 5 minutes. (For gas grill, place foil packet directly on primary burner. Heat all burners on high, covered, until tea begins to smoke heavily, about 5 minutes. Leave primary burner on high and shut other burner[s] off.) Scrape and oil cooking grate. Arrange ribs, meaty side down, on cool side of grill and cook, covered, until ribs are smoky and edges begin to char, about 30 minutes.

5. GLAZE RIBS: Brush ribs with glaze, flip, rotate, and brush again. Cover and barbecue, brushing with glaze every 30 minutes, until ribs are fully tender and glaze is browned and sticky, 1 to 1½ hours. Transfer to cutting board, tent with foil, and let rest 10 minutes. Serve with reserved glaze.



FROM EPISODE 405: SOUTHERN CLASSICS

Gumbo

SERVES 6 TO 8

This recipe is engineered for efficiency: Get the roux in the oven and then prep the remaining ingredients. A heavy, cast-iron Dutch oven yields the fastest oven roux. If a lightweight pot is all you've got, increase the oven time by 10 minutes. The chicken broth must be at room temperature to prevent lumps from forming. Fish sauce lends an essential savory quality. It's sold in most grocery stores in the section with the Asian seasonings. Since the salt content of fish sauce varies among brands, taste the finished gumbo before seasoning with salt.

- ¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour**
- ½ cup vegetable oil**
- 1 onion, chopped fine**
- 1 green bell pepper, seeded and chopped**
- 1 celery rib, chopped fine**
- 5 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme**
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained**
- 3¾ cups low-sodium chicken broth, room temperature (see note)**
- ¼ cup fish sauce (see note)**
- 4 bone-in chicken thighs (about 2 pounds), skin and excess fat removed**
Salt and pepper
- 8 ounces andouille sausage, halved lengthwise and sliced thin**
- 2 cups frozen okra, thawed (optional)**
- 2 pounds extra-large (21 to 25 per pound) shrimp, peeled and deveined**



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1. MAKE ROUX: Adjust oven rack to lowest position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Toast ¾ cup flour in Dutch oven on stovetop over medium heat, stirring constantly, until just beginning to brown, about 5 minutes. Off heat, whisk in oil until smooth. Cover, transfer pot to oven, and cook until mixture is deep brown and fragrant, about 45 minutes. (Roux can be refrigerated in airtight container for 1 week. To use, heat in Dutch oven over medium-high heat, whisking constantly, until just smoking, and continue with step 2.)

2. COOK AROMATICS: Transfer Dutch oven to stovetop and whisk cooked roux to combine. Add onion, bell pepper, and celery and cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until softened, about 10 minutes. Stir in remaining flour, garlic, thyme, and cayenne and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Add tomatoes and cook until dry, about 1 minute. Slowly whisk in broth and fish sauce until smooth. Season chicken with pepper. Add chicken and bring to boil.



3. SIMMER GUMBO: Reduce heat to medium-low and simmer, covered, until chicken is tender, about 30 minutes. Skim fat and transfer chicken to plate. When chicken is cool enough to handle, cut into bite-size pieces and return to pot; discard bones.

4. FINISH GUMBO: Stir in sausage and okra, if using, and simmer until heated through, about 5 minutes. Add shrimp and simmer until cooked through, about 5 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Serve. (Gumbo can be refrigerated in airtight container for 1 day.)

MAKE AHEAD: Gumbo can be made through step 3 and refrigerated in airtight container for 3 days. To serve, bring gumbo to simmer, covered, in Dutch oven. Remove lid and proceed with recipe as directed.



FROM EPISODE 405: SOUTHERN CLASSICS

Lane Cake

SERVES 10 TO 12

We like bourbon, but any whiskey will work. For the frosting, be sure to start with room-temperature egg whites to ensure that they'll heat to a safe temperature.

CAKE

- 1 cup whole milk, room temperature
- 6 large egg whites, room temperature
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 2¼ cups cake flour
- 1¾ cups sugar
- 4 teaspoons baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 12 tablespoons (1½ sticks) unsalted butter, cut into 12 pieces and softened

FILLING

- 5 tablespoons bourbon (see note)
- 1 tablespoon whole milk
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch
- Pinch salt
- ⅓ cup sweetened shredded coconut
- ¾ cup pecans
- ¾ cup golden raisins
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¾ cup sweetened condensed milk
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

FROSTING

- 2 large egg whites (see note)
- ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
- ¼ cup sugar
- ⅔ cup light corn syrup
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract



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1. MIX BATTER: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease and flour two 9-inch cake pans. Whisk milk, egg whites, and vanilla in large measuring cup. With electric mixer on low speed, mix flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt until combined. Add butter, 1 piece at a time, and beat until only pea-size pieces remain. Pour in half of milk mixture and increase speed to medium-high. Beat until light and fluffy, about 1 minute. Slowly add remaining milk mixture and beat until incorporated, about 30 seconds.

2. BAKE CAKES: Scrape equal amounts of batter into prepared pans and bake until toothpick inserted in center comes out clean, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool cakes in pans 10 minutes, then turn out onto wire rack. Cool completely, at least 1 hour. (Cooled cakes can be wrapped in plastic and stored at room temperature for 2 days.)



3. MAKE FILLING: Whisk bourbon, milk, cornstarch, and salt in small bowl until smooth. Process coconut in food processor until finely ground. Add pecans and raisins and pulse until coarsely ground. Melt butter in large skillet over medium-low heat. Add processed coconut mixture and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown and fragrant, about 5 minutes. Stir in bourbon mixture and bring to boil. Off heat, add condensed milk and vanilla. Transfer to medium bowl and cool to room temperature, about 30 minutes. (Filling can be refrigerated in airtight container for 2 days. Bring filling to room temperature before using.)

4. WHIP FROSTING: With electric mixer fitted with whisk attachment, whip egg whites and cream of tartar on medium-high speed until frothy, about 30 seconds. With mixer running, slowly add sugar and whip until soft peaks form, about 2 minutes; set aside. Bring corn syrup to boil in small saucepan over medium-high heat and cook until large bubbles appear around perimeter of pan, about 1 minute. With mixer running, slowly pour hot syrup into whites (avoid pouring syrup onto beaters, or it will splash). Add vanilla and beat until mixture has cooled and is very thick and glossy, 3 to 5 minutes.

5. ASSEMBLE CAKE: Place 1 cake round on serving platter. Spread filling over cake, then top with second cake round. Spread frosting evenly over top and sides of cake. Serve. (Cake can be refrigerated, covered, for 2 days. Bring to room temperature before serving.)



FROM EPISODE 406: RETRO DESSERTS

Banana Pudding

SERVES 12

If your food processor bowl holds less than 11 cups, puree half the pudding with the roasted bananas and lemon juice in step 3, transfer it to a large bowl, and whisk in the rest of the pudding.

PUDDING

- 7 slightly underripe large bananas
- 1½ cups sugar
- 8 large egg yolks
- 6 tablespoons cornstarch
- 6 cups half-and-half
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract
- 3 tablespoons lemon juice
- 1 (12-ounce) box vanilla wafers

WHIPPED TOPPING

- 1 cup heavy cream, chilled
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- ½ teaspoon vanilla extract

1. ROAST BANANAS: Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. Place 3 unpeeled bananas on baking sheet and bake until skins are completely black, about 20 minutes. Let cool 5 minutes.

2. MAKE PUDDING: Meanwhile, whisk ½ cup sugar, egg yolks, and cornstarch in medium bowl until smooth. Bring half-and-half, remaining sugar, and salt to simmer over medium heat in large saucepan. Whisk ½ cup simmering half-and-half mixture into egg yolk mixture. Slowly whisk tempered yolk mixture into saucepan. Cook, whisking constantly, until mixture is thick and large bubbles appear at surface, about 2 minutes. Remove from heat and stir in butter and vanilla.



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3. PROCESS PUDDING: Transfer pudding to food processor. Add warm peeled roasted bananas and 2 tablespoons lemon juice and process until smooth. Scrape into large bowl and place plastic wrap directly on surface of pudding. Refrigerate until slightly cool, about 45 minutes.

4. ASSEMBLE AND CHILL: Cut remaining bananas into ¼-inch slices and toss in bowl with remaining lemon juice. Spoon one-quarter of pudding into 3-quart trifle dish and top with layer of wafers, layer of sliced bananas, and another layer of wafers. Repeat twice, ending with pudding. Place plastic wrap directly on surface of pudding and refrigerate until wafers have softened, at least 8 hours or up to 2 days.

5. TOP AND SERVE: With electric mixer on medium speed, beat cream, sugar, and vanilla until stiff peaks form, about 2 minutes. (Whipped cream can be refrigerated for 4 hours.) Top banana pudding with whipped cream. Serve.



FROM EPISODE 406: RETRO DESSERTS

Chiffon Cake

SERVES 10 TO 12

Separate the eggs when they're cold; it's easier. You will need a tube pan with a removable bottom for this recipe. Our favorite, the Chicago Metallic Professional Nonstick Angel Food Cake Pan, has both a removable bottom and "feet" to support the pan while the cake cools. If your pan is footless, invert the cake onto the neck of a wine bottle to cool.

- 5 large eggs, separated (see note)**
- 1 teaspoon cream of tartar**
- 1½ cups sugar**
- 1⅓ cups cake flour**
- 2 teaspoons baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ¾ cup water**
- ½ cup vegetable oil**
- 1 tablespoon vanilla extract**

1. WHIP WHITES: Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position and heat oven to 325 degrees. With electric mixer fitted with whisk attachment, whip egg whites and cream of tartar on medium-high speed until soft peaks form, about 2 minutes. With mixer running, slowly add 2 tablespoons sugar and whip until just stiff and glossy, about 1 minute; set aside.

2. FINISH BATTER: Combine flour, remaining sugar, baking powder, and salt in large bowl. Whisk water, oil, egg yolks, and vanilla in medium bowl until smooth. Whisk wet mixture into flour mixture until smooth. Whisk one-third whipped egg whites into batter, then gently fold in remaining whites, 1 scoop at a time, until well combined. Scrape mixture into 16-cup ungreased tube pan.

3. BAKE CAKE: Bake until toothpick inserted into center comes out clean and cracks in cake appear dry, 55 to 65 minutes. Cool, inverted, to room temperature, about 3 hours. To unmold, follow photos at right. Serve.



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TEST KITCHEN TECHNIQUE **Let Me Outta Here!**

Chiffon Cake is baked in an ungreased pan. Why? The stiffly beaten egg whites need to cling to the pan to rise. If the pan were greased, they couldn't. Chiffon Cake is cooled in its pan upside down while suspended in the air. (If you "de-panned" the hot cake, it would collapse under its own weight.) Once the cake is cool, pry it out with care. Here's how:





FROM EPISODE 407: FAMILY FAVORITES

Swiss Steak

SERVES 6 TO 8

Top blade roast may also be labeled chuck roast first cut, top chuck roast, flat iron roast, or simply blade roast. Use low-sodium chicken broth or the gravy will be too salty.

- 1 (3½- to 4-pound) boneless top blade roast
(see note)
Salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 onion, halved and sliced thin
- 3 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ teaspoon dried thyme
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
- 1 (14.5-ounce) can diced tomatoes
- 1½ cups low-sodium chicken broth (see note)
- 1 tablespoon sun-dried tomatoes packed in oil,
rinsed, patted dry, and minced
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley

1. BUTCHER ROAST: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 300 degrees. Following photos 1 to 3, cut roast crosswise into quarters and remove line of gristle to yield 8 steaks.

2. BROWN STEAKS: Pat steaks dry with paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Heat 1 tablespoon oil in Dutch oven over medium-high heat just until smoking. Brown 4 steaks, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer to plate and repeat with remaining oil and steaks.



PHOTO: KELLER + KELLER

3. ADD AROMATICS: Add onion to empty pot and cook until softened, about 5 minutes. Add garlic, thyme, tomato paste, and flour and cook until fragrant, about 1 minute. Stir in diced tomatoes and broth and bring to boil.

4. BRAISE STEAKS: Return steaks and any accumulated juices to pan. Transfer to oven and braise, covered, until steaks are fork-tender, about 2 hours. Transfer steaks to platter, tent with foil, and let rest 5 minutes. Skim fat from sauce. Stir in sun-dried tomatoes and parsley. Season with salt and pepper. Pour sauce over steaks. Serve.

STEP BY STEP

Blade Butchery

Top blade roast, a shoulder cut with great flavor, has a pesky line of gristle that runs horizontally through its center. Follow these simple steps to remove it and cut perfect Swiss steaks.



1. Place roast on cutting board and cut crosswise into 4 even pieces.



2. Taking 1 piece at a time, turn meat on its side to expose line of gristle that runs through its center.



3. Remove by slicing through meat on either side of gristle to yield 2 "steaks." Repeat with remaining pieces of blade roast to yield a total of 8 steaks.



FROM EPISODE 407: FAMILY FAVORITES

Baked Potato Fans

SERVES 4

To ensure that the potatoes fan out evenly, look for uniformly shaped potatoes.

BREAD-CRUMB TOPPING

- 1 slice hearty white sandwich bread, torn into pieces
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- ½ cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 teaspoon paprika
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder
- Salt and pepper

POTATO FANS

- 4 russet potatoes, scrubbed
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- Salt and pepper

1. FOR THE BREAD-CRUMB TOPPING: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees. Pulse bread in food processor until coarsely ground. Bake bread crumbs on rimmed baking sheet until dry, about 20 minutes. Let cool 5 minutes, then combine crumbs, butter, cheeses, paprika, garlic powder, ¼ teaspoon salt, and ¼ teaspoon pepper in large bowl. (Bread-crumb topping can be refrigerated in zipper-lock bag for 2 days.)

2. FOR THE POTATO FANS: Heat oven to 450 degrees. Cut ¼ inch from bottom and ends of potatoes, then slice potatoes crosswise at ¼-inch intervals, leaving ¼ inch of potato intact. Gently rinse potatoes under running water, let drain, and transfer, sliced side down, to plate. Microwave until slightly soft to the touch, 6 to 12 minutes, flipping potatoes halfway through cooking.



PHOTO: KELLER + KELLER

3. Arrange potatoes, sliced side up, on foil-lined baking sheet. Brush potatoes all over with oil and season with salt and pepper. Bake until skin is crisp and potatoes are beginning to brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Remove potatoes from oven and heat broiler.

4. Carefully top potatoes with bread-crumb topping, pressing gently to adhere. Broil until bread crumbs are deep golden brown, about 3 minutes. Serve.



FROM EPISODE 408: NOT JUST FOR KIDS

Chicken Nuggets

SERVES 4 TO 6

Don't brine the chicken longer than 30 minutes or it will be too salty. To crush the panko, place it inside a zipper-lock bag and lightly beat it with a rolling pin. This recipe doubles easily and freezes well.

- 4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts**
(about 1½ pounds)
- 2 cups water**
- 1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon salt**
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup panko bread crumbs, crushed**
- 2 teaspoons onion powder**
- ¾ teaspoon pepper**
- ½ teaspoon garlic powder**
- ½ teaspoon baking soda**
- 3 large egg whites**
- 4 cups peanut or vegetable oil**

1. CUT AND BRINE: Cut each chicken breast diagonally into thirds, then cut each third diagonally into ½-inch-thick pieces. Whisk water, tablespoon salt, and Worcestershire in large bowl until salt dissolves. Add chicken pieces and refrigerate, covered, for 30 minutes.

2. COAT CHICKEN: Remove chicken from brine, discard brine, and pat chicken dry with paper towels. Combine flour, bread crumbs, onion powder, remaining salt, pepper, garlic powder, and baking soda in shallow dish. Whisk egg whites in second shallow dish until foamy. Coat half of chicken with egg whites and dredge in flour-crumbs mixture, pressing gently to adhere. Transfer to plate and repeat with remaining chicken (don't discard flour-crumbs mixture). Let sit 10 minutes.



PHOTO: KELLER + KELLER

3. FRY: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees. Heat oil in large Dutch oven over medium-high heat to 350 degrees. Return chicken to flour dish and turn to coat, pressing flour-crumbs mixture gently to adhere. Fry half of chicken until deep golden brown, about 3 minutes, turning halfway through cooking. Drain chicken on wire rack set inside rimmed baking sheet and place in oven. Return oil to 350 degrees and repeat with remaining chicken.



FROM EPISODE 408: NOT JUST FOR KIDS

Tomato Mac and Cheese

SERVES 8 TO 10

Let the finished dish rest for 10 to 15 minutes before you serve it; otherwise, it will be soupy. Barilla is our favorite brand of elbow macaroni.

Salt and pepper

- 1 pound elbow macaroni (see note)**
- 1 (28-ounce) can petite diced tomatoes**
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter**
- ½ cup all-purpose flour**
- ¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- 4 cups half-and-half**
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken broth**
- 4 cups shredded mild cheddar cheese**
- 2 cups shredded sharp cheddar cheese**

1. COOK MACARONI: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 400 degrees. Bring 4 quarts water to boil in large Dutch oven over high heat. Stir in 1 tablespoon salt and macaroni and cook until just al dente, about 6 minutes. Drain pasta and return to pot. Pour diced tomatoes with their juices over pasta and stir to coat. Cook over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until most of liquid is absorbed, about 5 minutes. Set aside.

2. MAKE SAUCE: Meanwhile, melt butter in medium saucepan over medium heat until foaming. Stir in flour and cayenne and cook until golden, about 1 minute. Slowly whisk in half-and-half and broth until smooth. Bring to boil, reduce heat to medium, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until mixture is slightly thickened, about 15 minutes. Off heat, whisk in cheeses, 1 teaspoon salt, and 1 teaspoon pepper until cheeses melt. Pour sauce over macaroni and stir to combine.

3. BAKE MACARONI AND CHEESE: Scrape mixture into 13 by 9-inch baking dish set in rimmed baking sheet and bake until top begins to brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Let sit for 10 to 15 minutes before serving.



PHOTO: KELLER + KELLER



FROM EPISODE 409: FRIED CHICKEN AND BISCUITS

Nashville Hot Chicken

SERVES 4 TO 6

Chicken quarters take longer to cook than smaller pieces. To ensure that the exterior doesn't burn before the inside cooks through, keep the oil temperature between 300 and 325 degrees while the chicken is frying.

BRINE

- 2 quarts water
- ½ cup hot sauce
- ½ cup salt
- ½ cup sugar
- 1 (3½- to 4-pound) whole chicken, quartered (see note)

COATING

- 3 quarts peanut or vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon cayenne pepper
- ½ teaspoon paprika
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ¼ teaspoon garlic powder
- ½ teaspoon sugar
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- ½ teaspoon pepper

1. BRINE CHICKEN: Whisk water, hot sauce, salt, and sugar in large bowl until salt and sugar dissolve. Add chicken and refrigerate, covered, for 30 minutes or up to 1 hour.

2. BLOOM SPICES: Heat 3 tablespoons oil in small saucepan over medium heat until shimmering. Add cayenne, paprika, ½ teaspoon salt, garlic powder, and sugar and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Transfer to small bowl.

3. DREDGE: Remove chicken from refrigerator and pour off brine. Combine flour, ½ teaspoon salt, and pepper in large bowl. Dredge chicken pieces 2 at a time in flour mixture. Shake excess flour from chicken and transfer to wire rack. (Do not discard seasoned flour.)



PHOTO: KELLER + KELLER

4. FRY AND BRUSH: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees. Heat remaining oil in large Dutch oven over medium-high heat to 350 degrees. Return chicken pieces to flour mixture and turn to coat. Fry half of chicken, adjusting burner as necessary to maintain oil temperature between 300 and 325 degrees, until deep golden brown and white meat registers 160 degrees (175 degrees for dark meat), 20 to 25 minutes. Drain chicken on clean wire rack set inside rimmed baking sheet and place in oven. Bring oil back to 350 degrees and repeat with remaining chicken. Stir spicy oil mixture to recombine and brush over both sides of chicken. Serve on white bread with pickles.



FROM EPISODE 409: FRIED CHICKEN AND BISCUITS

Cat Head Biscuits

MAKES 6

If you don't have buttermilk on hand, make clabbered milk by whisking 1 tablespoon lemon juice into $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups milk and letting it stand at room temperature until slightly thickened, about 10 minutes. The recipe will also work with 3 cups White Lily flour in place of both the all-purpose and cake flours.

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups all-purpose flour**
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups cake flour**
- 1 tablespoon baking powder**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- 8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces and softened**
- 4 tablespoons vegetable shortening, cut into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces**
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups buttermilk (see note)**

1. MIX DOUGH: Adjust oven rack to upper-middle position and heat oven to 425 degrees. Grease 9-inch cake pan. Combine flours, baking powder, baking soda, and salt in large bowl. Rub butter and shortening into flour mixture until mixture resembles coarse meal. Stir in buttermilk until combined.

2. PORTION BISCUITS: Use greased $\frac{1}{2}$ -cup measure or large spring-loaded ice cream scoop to transfer 6 heaping portions of dough into prepared pan, placing 5 around pan's perimeter and 1 in center.

3. BAKE BISCUITS: Bake until puffed and golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool in pan for 10 minutes, then transfer to wire rack. Serve. (Biscuits can be stored in airtight container at room temperature for 2 days.)



PHOTO: KELLER + KELLER



FROM EPISODE 410: ROAD FOOD AT HOME

Slow-Cooker BBQ Brisket

SERVES 8 TO 10

Scoring the fat on the brisket at ½-inch intervals will allow the rub to penetrate the meat. Two disposable aluminum loaf pans stacked inside one another can substitute for the metal loaf pan.

SPICE RUB AND BRISKET

- ½ cup packed dark brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons minced canned chipotle chiles in adobo
- 1 tablespoon ground cumin
- 1 tablespoon paprika
- Salt and pepper
- 1 (4- to 5-pound) brisket roast, fat trimmed to ¼ inch thick and scored lightly

AROMATICS AND SAUCE

- 3 tablespoons vegetable oil
- 1 onion, chopped fine
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste
- 1 tablespoon chili powder
- 1 tablespoon minced canned chipotle chiles in adobo
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ½ cup water
- ¼ cup ketchup
- 1 tablespoon cider vinegar
- ¼ teaspoon liquid smoke



PHOTO: KELLER + KELLER

1. RUB: Combine sugar, chipotle, cumin, paprika, 1 teaspoon salt, and 2 teaspoons pepper in bowl. Rub sugar mixture all over brisket. Cover with plastic wrap and let sit at room temperature for 1 hour or refrigerate for up to 24 hours.

2. COOK: Heat oil in large skillet over medium-high heat until shimmering. Cook onion until softened, about 5 minutes. Add tomato paste and cook until beginning to brown, about 1 minute. Stir in chili powder, chipotle, and garlic and cook until fragrant, about 30 seconds. Mound onion mixture in center of slow cooker, arrange inverted metal loaf pan over onion mixture, and place brisket, fat side up, on top of loaf pan. Add water to slow cooker, cover, and cook on high until fork inserted into brisket can be removed with no resistance, 7 to 8 hours (or cook on low for 10 to 12 hours).

3. REST: Transfer brisket to 13- by 9-inch baking dish, cover with foil, and let rest 30 minutes. Carefully remove loaf pan from slow cooker. Pour onion mixture and accumulated juices into large bowl and skim fat. (You should have about 2 cups defatted juices; if you have less, supplement with water.)



4. SAUCE: Transfer brisket to cutting board, slice thinly across grain, and return to baking dish. Pour 1 cup reserved defatted juices over sliced brisket. Whisk ketchup, vinegar, and liquid smoke into remaining juices. Season with salt and pepper. Serve, passing sauce at table.

MAKE AHEAD: In step 3, wrap brisket tightly in foil and refrigerate for up to 3 days. (Refrigerate juices separately in airtight container.) To serve, transfer foil-wrapped brisket to baking dish and heat in 350-degree oven and cook until brisket is heated through, about 1 hour. Reheat juices in microwave or saucepan set over medium heat. Continue with recipe as directed.



FROM EPISODE 410: ROAD FOOD AT HOME

Beer-Battered Onion Rings

SERVES 4 TO 6

In step 1, do not soak the onion rounds longer than 2 hours or they will turn soft and become too saturated to crisp properly. Cider vinegar can be used in place of malt vinegar. Use a candy thermometer to make sure the oil gets to 350 degrees. Ordinary yellow onions will produce acceptable rings here.

- 2 sweet onions, peeled and sliced into
1/2-inch-thick rounds (see note)**
- 3 cups beer**
- 2 teaspoons malt vinegar (see note)**
- Salt and pepper**
- 2 quarts peanut or vegetable oil**
- 3/4 cup all-purpose flour**
- 3/4 cup cornstarch**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**

1. SOAK ONIONS: Place onion rounds, 2 cups beer, vinegar, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/2 teaspoon pepper in zipper-lock bag; refrigerate 30 minutes or up to 2 hours.

2. MAKE BATTER: Heat oil in large Dutch oven over medium-high heat to 350 degrees. While oil is heating, combine flour, cornstarch, baking powder, 1/2 teaspoon salt, and 1/4 teaspoon pepper in large bowl. Slowly whisk in 3/4 cup beer until just combined (some lumps will remain). Whisk in remaining beer as needed, 1 tablespoon at a time, until batter falls from whisk in steady stream and leaves faint trail across surface of batter.

3. FRY RINGS: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 200 degrees. Remove onions from refrigerator and pour off liquid. Pat onion rounds dry with paper towels and separate into rings. Transfer one-third portion of rings to batter. One at a time, carefully transfer battered rings to oil. Fry until rings are golden brown and crisp, about 5 minutes, flipping halfway through frying. Drain rings on paper towel-lined baking sheet, season with salt and pepper, and transfer to oven. Return oil to 350 degrees and repeat with remaining onion rings and batter. Serve.



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FROM EPISODE 411: AUTUMN DESSERTS

Apple Dumplings

SERVES 8

Use a melon baller or a metal teaspoon measure to core the apples. Other sweet, moderately firm apples, such as Braeburns or Galas, can be used in this recipe.

DOUGH

- 2½ cups all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¾ teaspoon salt
- 10 tablespoons (1¼ sticks) unsalted butter, cut into ½-inch pieces and chilled
- 5 tablespoons vegetable shortening, cut into ½-inch pieces and chilled
- ¾ cup cold buttermilk

APPLE DUMPLINGS

- 6 tablespoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 3 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
- 3 tablespoons golden raisins, chopped
- 4 Golden Delicious apples (see note)
- 2 egg whites, lightly beaten

1. MAKE DOUGH: Process flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt in food processor until combined. Scatter butter and shortening over flour mixture and pulse until mixture resembles wet sand. Transfer to bowl. Stir in buttermilk until dough forms. Turn out onto lightly floured surface and knead briefly until dough is cohesive. Press dough into 8- by 4-inch rectangle. Cut in half, wrap each half tightly in plastic, and refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour.

2. PREP APPLES: Adjust oven rack to middle position and heat oven to 425 degrees. Combine sugar and cinnamon in small bowl. In second bowl, combine butter, raisins, and 3 tablespoons cinnamon sugar mixture. Peel apples and halve through equator. Remove core and pack butter mixture into each apple half.



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3. ASSEMBLE DUMPLINGS: On lightly floured surface, roll each dough half into 12-inch square. Cut each 12-inch square into four 6-inch squares. Working 1 at a time, lightly brush edges of dough square with egg white and place apple, cut side up, in center of each square. Gather dough 1 corner at a time on top of apple, crimping edges to seal. Using paring knife, cut vent hole in top of each dumpling.

4. FINISH APPLES: Line rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. Arrange dumplings on prepared baking sheet, brush tops with egg white, and sprinkle with remaining cinnamon sugar. Bake until dough is golden brown and juices are bubbling, 20 to 25 minutes. Cool on baking sheet 10 minutes.



FROM EPISODE 411: AUTUMN DESSERTS

Old-Fashioned Pecan Pie

SERVES 8 TO 10

Regular or mild molasses tastes best in this pie. Use your favorite pie dough or go to CooksCountryTV.com for our Single-Crust Pie Dough recipe.

- 1 cup maple syrup**
- 1 cup packed light brown sugar**
- ½ cup heavy cream**
- 1 tablespoon molasses**
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter,**
cut into ½-inch pieces
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- 6 large egg yolks, lightly beaten**
- 1½ cups pecans, toasted and chopped**
- 1 (9-inch) unbaked pie shell (see note),**
chilled in pie plate for 30 minutes

1. MAKE FILLING: Adjust oven rack to lowest position and heat oven to 450 degrees. Heat syrup, sugar, cream, and molasses in saucepan over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar dissolves, about 3 minutes. Remove from heat and let cool 5 minutes. Whisk butter and salt into syrup mixture until combined. Whisk in egg yolks until incorporated.

2. BAKE PIE: Scatter pecans in pie shell. Carefully pour filling over. Place pie in hot oven and immediately reduce oven temperature to 325 degrees. Bake until filling is set and center jiggles slightly when pie is gently shaken, 45 to 60 minutes. Cool pie on rack for 1 hour, then refrigerate until set, about 3 hours or up to 1 day. Bring to room temperature before serving.



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FROM EPISODE 412: GRILLING

Grilled Thin-Cut Pork Chops

SERVES 4 TO 6

To prevent the chops from curling, cut 2 slits about 2 inches apart through the fat around the outside of each raw chop.

- 6 bone-in rib or center-cut pork chops (see note), about ½ inch thick**
- ¾ teaspoon salt**
- 4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened**
- 1 teaspoon brown sugar**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**
- 1 teaspoon finely chopped fresh chives**
- ½ teaspoon Dijon mustard**
- ½ teaspoon grated lemon zest**

1. FREEZE CHOPS: Pat chops dry with paper towels and rub with salt. Arrange on wire rack set inside rimmed baking sheet and freeze until chops are firm, at least 30 minutes but no more than 1 hour. Combine 2 tablespoons butter, brown sugar, and pepper in small bowl; set aside. Mix remaining butter, chives, mustard, and zest in another small bowl and refrigerate until firm, about 15 minutes. (Butter-chive mixture can be refrigerated, covered, for 1 day.)

2. GRILL CHOPS: Pat chops dry with paper towels. Spread softened butter-sugar mixture evenly over both sides of each chop. Grill, covered, over hot fire until well browned and meat registers 145 degrees, 3 to 4 minutes per side. Transfer chops to platter and top with chilled butter-chive mixture. Tent with foil and let rest 5 minutes. Serve.



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FROM EPISODE 412: GRILLING

Grilled Potato Hobo Packs

SERVES 4

To keep the packs from tearing, use heavy-duty aluminum foil or 2 layers of regular foil. Also, scrape the grill grate clean before grilling.

- 2 pounds Yukon Gold potatoes (about 3 large), scrubbed**
- 1 tablespoon olive oil**
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled and chopped**
- 1 teaspoon minced fresh thyme**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**

1. PREP POTATOES: Cut each potato in half crosswise, then cut each half into 8 wedges. Place potatoes in large bowl and wrap tightly with plastic wrap. Microwave until edges of potatoes are translucent, 4 to 7 minutes, shaking bowl (without removing plastic) to redistribute potatoes halfway through cooking. Carefully remove plastic and drain well. Gently toss potatoes with oil, garlic, thyme, salt, and pepper.

2. MAKE PACKS: Cut four 14 by 10-inch sheets of aluminum foil. Working 1 at a time, spread one-quarter of potato mixture over half of foil, fold foil over potatoes, and crimp edges tightly to seal.

3. FINISH OUTSIDE: Grill hobo packs over hot fire, covered, until potatoes are tender, about 10 minutes, flipping packs halfway through cooking. Cut open foil and serve.



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FROM EPISODE 412: GRILLING

Grilled Lemon Chicken

SERVES 8

You may not need to squeeze all the grilled lemons in step 5 to obtain $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of lemon juice. Cut any unsqueezed lemons into wedges for serving.

CHICKEN AND RUB

- 2** teaspoons grated lemon zest from 1 lemon
(halve and reserve lemon for vinaigrette)
- 2** teaspoons salt
- 1** teaspoon pepper
- 2** ($3\frac{1}{2}$ - to 4-pound) whole chickens
- Vegetable oil for grill grate

VINAIGRETTE

- 4** lemons, halved; plus halved,
zested lemon from rub
- 1** garlic clove, minced
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
- 2** teaspoons Dijon mustard
- 1** teaspoon sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper
- 2** tablespoons minced fresh parsley
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup extra-virgin olive oil

1. FOR THE CHICKEN AND RUB: Combine lemon zest, salt, and pepper in bowl. Rub zest mixture under chicken skin and tuck wings. Transfer chickens to rack set over rimmed baking sheet and refrigerate, uncovered, for 30 minutes. (Chickens may be prepared up to this point 24 hours in advance; allow chickens to sit at room temperature 30 minutes before grilling.)

2. Open bottom grill vents completely. Light large chimney starter filled with charcoal briquettes (about 100) and burn until charcoal is covered with fine gray ash. Place 13 by 9-inch disposable aluminum roasting pan on 1 side of grill and pour hot coals into pile on opposite side. Evenly scatter 20 unlit coals on top of hot coals and set cooking grate in place. Cover, with lid vents positioned over cooler side of grill and opened fully. Let grill heat up for 5 minutes. Scrape grate clean.



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3. Dip wad of paper towels in oil and oil grate, holding paper towels with long-handled tongs. Place lemon halves cut side down over hot side of grill. Place chickens skin side down over cooler side of grill, with legs positioned closest to the coals. Cover, with opened vents in lid over chicken.

4. Grill lemons until deep brown and caramelized, 5 to 8 minutes. Transfer to bowl. Grill chickens until skin is well browned and breast meat registers 160 degrees, 45 to 55 minutes. Move chickens to hot side of grill and sear, uncovered, until deep brown, 2 to 4 minutes longer.

5. FOR THE VINAIGRETTE: While chickens are grilling, squeeze $\frac{1}{3}$ cup juice from grilled lemons into bowl. Using flat side of knife, mash garlic and salt into paste and add to bowl with lemon juice. Stir in mustard, sugar, pepper, and parsley, then slowly whisk in olive oil until emulsified.

6. Transfer chickens to cutting board and let rest 10 to 15 minutes. Carve, transfer to serving platter, and pour $\frac{1}{3}$ cup vinaigrette over chicken. Serve, passing remaining vinaigrette at table.



VARIATION

Grilled Lemon Chicken on a Gas Grill

Prepare recipe for Grilled Lemon Chicken through step 1. Heat all burners on high, covered, for 15 minutes. Scrape cooking grate clean and oil cooking grate. Leave primary burner on high and turn all other burners to low. Place lemons over primary burner; place chickens skin side down over cooler part of grill, with legs positioned closest to heat; cover and proceed with recipe from step 4, adjusting primary burner as necessary to maintain temperature of 350 to 375 degrees. When chickens are cooked, transfer to hot part of grill and sear, uncovered, until deep brown, 2 to 4 minutes. Proceed with recipe from step 5.



FROM EPISODE 413: ST. LOUIS COOKING

St. Louis Pizza

MAKES TWO 12-INCH PIZZAS

We like to use a baking stone (also called a pizza stone), which heats evenly and helps crisp crusts, but if you don't have one, bake the pizzas on an inverted, preheated rimmed baking sheet.

SAUCE

- 1 (8-ounce) can tomato sauce
- 3 tablespoons tomato paste
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano

CHEESE

- 2 cups shredded white American cheese
- ½ cup shredded Monterey Jack cheese
- 3 drops liquid smoke

DOUGH

- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon salt
- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons water
- 2 tablespoons olive oil

1. MAKE SAUCE: Whisk together tomato sauce, tomato paste, basil, sugar, and oregano in small bowl; set aside. Toss cheeses with liquid smoke in medium bowl; set aside.

2. MIX DOUGH: Combine flour, cornstarch, sugar, baking powder, and salt in large bowl. Combine water and olive oil in liquid measuring cup. Stir water mixture into flour mixture until dough starts to come together. Turn dough onto lightly floured surface and knead 3 or 4 times, until cohesive.



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3. ROLL DOUGH: Adjust oven rack to lower-middle position, place pizza stone (or inverted baking sheet) on rack, and heat oven to 475 degrees. Divide dough into 2 equal pieces. Working with 1 piece of dough at a time, press into small circle and transfer to parchment paper dusted lightly with flour. Using rolling pin, roll and stretch dough to form 12-inch circle, rotating parchment as needed. Lift parchment and pizza dough off work surface and onto second inverted baking sheet.

4. ASSEMBLE PIZZA: Top each piece of dough with half of sauce and half of cheese. Carefully pull parchment paper and pizza off baking sheet onto hot baking stone. Bake until underside is golden brown and cheese is melted, 9 to 12 minutes. Remove pizza and parchment from oven. Transfer pizza to cooling rack and let cool for several minutes. Assemble and bake second pizza. Cut into 2-inch squares. Serve.



FROM EPISODE 413: ST. LOUIS COOKING

St. Louis BBQ Pork Steak

SERVES 6 TO 8

In step 3, check the sauce after it has been on the grill for about an hour. If it looks thick and dry, add water to adjust the consistency. You can use any light-bodied American-style beer.

- 1½ cups ketchup
- 2 cups beer (see note)
- ¼ cup A.1. sauce
- ¼ cup packed dark brown sugar
- 2 tablespoons cider vinegar
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1 teaspoon hot sauce
- 1 teaspoon liquid smoke
- 1 (5- to 6-pound) boneless pork shoulder roast, cut into steaks according to photos 1 to 3
- Pepper

1. MAKE SAUCE: Whisk ketchup, beer, A.1., sugar, vinegar, Worcestershire, garlic powder, hot sauce, and liquid smoke in large bowl. Transfer to large disposable aluminum pan.

2. HEAT GRILL: Heat all burners on high, covered, for 15 minutes. (For charcoal grill, light about 100 coals. When coals are covered with fine gray ash, spread evenly over bottom of grill. Set cooking grate in place and heat covered, with lid vent open halfway, for 5 minutes.) Scrape and oil cooking grate.



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3. SEAR AND SIMMER: Season pork steaks with pepper and grill until well-browned, 5 to 7 minutes per side. Transfer steaks to pan with sauce, cover with foil, and place pan on grill. Turn all burners to low and cook, covered, until steaks are tender and sauce is slightly thickened, about 90 minutes.

4. FINAL SEAR: Using potholders, remove pan from grill and turn all burners to high. (For charcoal grill, light about 50 coals. When coals are covered with fine gray ash, remove grill grate and scatter evenly over spent coals.) Remove steaks from pan and grill until lightly charred around edges, 2 to 4 minutes per side. Skim fat from sauce and serve with steaks.

STEP BY STEP

Butchering Boneless Pork Butt

Boneless Boston butt (a.k.a. shoulder) steaks can fall apart on the grill if you don't use our novel—and easy—technique to cut your own steaks from a 5- to 6-pound boneless roast.



1. Slice pork crosswise in half and remove any large pieces of fat.



2. Rotate and stand each half of pork butt on its cut end.



3. Cut each half into three or four 1-inch-thick steaks.



VARIATION

St. Louis BBQ Pork Steaks on a Gas Grill

Follow recipe for St. Louis BBQ Pork Steaks on a Charcoal Grill through step 1. Turn all burners to high and heat grill with lid down until very hot, about 15 minutes. Scrape grate clean with grill brush. Proceed with recipe from step 3, turning all burners to low once steaks have been seared and placed in sauce. In step 4, return burners to high.