



ROCCO'S 5 MINUTE FLAVOR

Rocco DiSpirito
with Kris Kurek

Photographs by Henry Leutwyler
Design by Ruba Abu-Nimah

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This book is dedicated to those of you who grab the Good Life and spread it around. The Good Life is something I talk about a lot. it's not a specific food, wine, or place. it's the space between people, it's an attitude, a state of mind where anything is possible when sharing a pure moment with friends, family, or loved ones. And of course it's up to you, the students of the good life, the aficionados of flavor, the gourmands of everyday good things, to make this a movement. From caviar to boxed brownie mix, French cheese to Cheetos, it's always good when shared.

To the ones who watch me on TV, like Haru from South Africa, and send me emails; like Janine from Shaker Heights, Ohio, who listens to my daily radio show, Food Talk, on WOR; like Cynthia from New Jersey and Joe from the boogie-down Bronx, who both send letters and gifts; like Rosemary from Allentown, Pennsylvania-all wanting help to gain access to those unforgettable moments that occur in the space between people, where the people don't eat foie gras every day but want to feel like they do anyway and who never drank a bottle of Lafitte 45 but share the joy of the glass and the table as if they did. With your help and my recipes, you will become an entertaining Good Life guru and, most important, entertain yourselves along the way.

My sincerest thanks and appreciation, and a free dinner anytime and anywhere you want from me to you:

Special thanks to my partner, **Linda Lisco**, for putting up with me and putting out for me. Her skills, intelligence, persistence, and life force have filled the sails of this ship for a long time, and with her help it will be a long journey.

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My radio audience-YOU HAVE CHANGED MY LIFE-and continue to breathe life into me every day at 11 a.m.

My RoccoDiSpirito.com customers, fans, email buddies—for support, great ideas, and best wishes.

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Last but not at all least, my family: My mama, **Nicolina**, for her support and love. My dad, **Rafaelle**, for his enthusiasm and constructive criticism. My brother, **Mike**, for embracing his brother. My sister, **Maria**, for loving me infinitely. My brother-in-law, **Jack**, for all his generosity since forever. My sister-in-law, **Patty**, for putting up with my brother. My nieces and nephews, **Mike, Andrew, Brooke**, and **Mikey Jr.**, for laughing at me.

ROCCO'S
5
MINUTE FLAVOR

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Introduction

My hometown, or “hood,” Jamaica, Queens, was a tough place to grow up in. It is the heart of the largest ethnic community in the country, and shots were fired almost daily. However, I was also blessed. In spite of the drugs and violence around me, in my house we lived the good life every day. My mom worked a full-time job as a public school lunch lady, but she made it home every night in time to prepare a fresh meal for us, and she still managed to do all the rest of the things moms do. My family cherished each other and the good times we had around the dinner table. My grandmother ran a farm and spoiled us rotten with the best eggs, tomatoes, and wine and abundant laughs. With my family, everyone was welcome, and there was always food for one more at our table. My neighbors were from all over the world, and they shared the flavors of their homelands with me. I got to try almost every flavor imaginable by the time I was fourteen. I didn't realize it then, but the legacy my family and my neighborhood gave me was an appreciation for people, a love of great flavors, and an education on how to share the good life with everyone, every day.

It was no coincidence that I ran headfirst into the world of cooking professionally at the age of fourteen. I was a prep cook at the New Hyde Park Inn in New York State when I decided to cook for a living. I remember the day I gave up high school wrestling to be a chef as clearly as I remember my first date.

The '60s and '70s were a time of tremendous social and cultural change in this country. The collective American palate began to change too; it was maturing, growing in sophistication by leaps and bounds.

At first, French chefs still dominated fine dining, but American chefs learned from their French masters and began to rock their own kitchens. They soon turned out highly personal and memorable meals as regularly as the French guys did.

This is where I came in. While working at the New Hyde Park Inn, I applied to the Culinary Institute of America. I was accepted and began there at the age of seventeen. After graduating, I went straight to Paris to find my way through the kitchens of France. I returned to New York City in 1988 and continued my training there, and I began a degree in business at Boston University in 1989. After graduation, New York City called again and I went to work with Gray Kunz in his four-star restaurant, Lespinasse. There my training and experiences really came together—and added up to more than the sum of their parts. By the time I was twenty-six, I'd graduated with honors from the Culinary Institute of America, earned a bachelor's degree from Boston University, and lived, worked, and eaten in Paris, Israel, Boston, and New York City. This evolution eventually landed me in my own very fancy New York City three-star kitchen and on the cover of *Gourmet* magazine. I was referred to as the “Flavor Guy,” the chef who could bring flavors together as no one else could.

My first book, *Flavor*, won a James Beard Foundation Award, and I am very proud of it. Here, using the same principles as in *Flavor*, I want to bring intense, beautiful, and memorable flavors to people who simply don't have much time to cook. My goal now is to empower everyday cooks to grab their share of the good life by boiling down to its essence all my training, experience, and passion into a cookbook that can deliver fast, delicious food at home.

After a long career and many hours behind the stove, I have chosen to take a break from the day-to-day life of running a restaurant. In my new life, I've often found myself wondering, “Can a chef find happiness in New York City without a restaurant?” The answer is an emphatic “Yes!” Now I am *living* the good life every day instead of providing it for others. I have time to explore all those things I could never do before but worshipped from afar. I race motorcycles—fast ones—around a track with my knee to the ground, ski, and scuba dive; I even play guitar a few times a week. However, the most fun I have is when I cook for the people I love. I cook for myself almost every night now, instead of chomping down leftovers at 2 a.m. And I give dinner parties of my own. For me, the good life all started back in the days of my mother's home kitchen, and the home kitchen is where it will live forever.

In the 1980s, Pierre Franey's *60-Minute Gourmet* was a milestone in publishing for the home cook. More recently, *30 Minute Meals* by Rachel Ray made a huge splash. Now, I want to take America to the next level. I want 5 minutes to be the new 30 minutes. At first, I thought it could not be done; recipes made with 5 ingredients, cooked in 5 minutes, at no more than 5 dollars a serving? Insanity, right?

Wrong! It can be done, and in *Rocco's 5 Minute Flavor* you'll learn how.

What Have I Been Up To?

Over the past year or two, I have accomplished many things and made major changes in my life. I starred in NBC's *The Restaurant*; I opened and closed Rocco's 22nd Street. I published my second book, *Rocco's Italian American*; I sold Union Pacific, my three-star New York City restaurant; I became the host of *Food Talk with Rocco* on WOR radio; I wrote this book and began working on a new TV show; I created a line of cookware and a line of prepared foods; I cooked at the Oscars, the Grammys, and the Sundance Film Festival, and helped raise money for many charities, including Volunteers of America, Seeds of Peace, and the March of Dimes. I helped my mother through a near-fatal heart attack; happily, she survived and is doing great.

But as a chef, what was really new and special was that for the first time in my life, I was cooking like an everyday home cook. And I love it! Why do you think there is a Food Network, why are there so many markets and gourmet shops all over the place? It's all because we have finally learned that sharing food with your family and friends is totally what's up. The good life is right there in front of you; you just gotta grab it.

After cooking in restaurants every night for nearly twenty-five years, I've spent the last year cooking at home every night, and boy, have I learned a lot! I had always assumed that because I knew how to cook in a restaurant kitchen I knew how to cook in a home kitchen. But I didn't. The very first thing I learned was that I had a lot to learn. Then I learned that there wasn't enough time in a day to cook completely from scratch every night, that shopping for, searching out, selecting, purchasing, prepping, and cooking any more than 5 ingredients made my eyes glaze over. Sure, when I had suppliers deliver the finest ingredients to my kitchen and armies of prep cooks and chefs at my fingertips, many of my dishes had 10 or 20 ingredients in them. Well, that has all changed. Thrift is also now very important. Supermarket prices are manageable, but they require attention. Of course, I always knew that flavor is the thing. No dish, no matter how fast, how convenient, or how inexpensive, is worth its weight in dirt if it doesn't taste good.

My first book, *Flavor*, was all about creating dishes that boast great flavor combinations. My intention was to empower home cooks to discover the secrets of flavor. The aim of this book is no different. I did not compromise on flavor when I decided to cook each dish in 5 minutes with 5 ingredients for 5 dollars or less a person. Fast food is now fresh and flavorful food. No one has ever put speed, convenience, and thrift together with flavor the way you will be able to with *Rocco's 5 Minute Flavor*.

HERE'S WHY 5 MINUTES IS THE NEW 30 MINUTES

America's collective palate has grown in leaps and bounds, and the purveyors of food for America's restaurants—and grocery stores—have responded with enthusiasm to their customers' evolving tastes. But it dawned on me that most Americans have been severely underusing these new resources. If you walk into any grocery store today, and do so with open eyes, you will find a treasure trove of prepared fresh foods, including precut vegetables and fruits; good canned soups and broths; roasted meats; condiments from around the world; and ready-to-go sauces and seasonings that, when used properly, can cut your cooking time down to, well, about 5 minutes. And if you use your newly found superpowers for good and take advantage of these shortcut foods, you can be a 5 *Minute Flavor* hero, too.

There are aisles and aisles of things like cooked jarred beets; canned chicken stock; prepared artichokes; canned pears; Vietnamese chili sauce; sliced fresh portabella mushrooms; instant polenta; rice and couscous; diced red and green peppers and onions; cut and washed kale; canned peeled tomatoes; organic corn chowder; brownies; roasted chickens; freshly cooked roast beef—the list goes on and on. Unlike those in my two previous books, and most cookbooks in the marketplace, the dishes included here were inspired by the hundreds of high-quality prepared foods on supermarket shelves.

I chose these ingredients myself by painstakingly going through aisle after aisle and identifying, testing, tasting, and working them into recipes for this book. Only the ones I loved made it in. These foods can be found in the international section, the produce aisle, the frozen food case, the canned exotics section, the deli counter, even sometimes hanging on the shelf right next to the magazines at the checkout counter.

The ingredients for these recipes are broken down into two categories: 1) *pantry ingredients*: basics such as salt, pepper, sugar, vinegar, oil, butter, and flour that enable you to cook and season the dishes in this book; and 2) *main ingredients*, the five that make up each dish.

As pantry ingredients, water and these other basics are italicized in the ingredients list and are not counted as one of the five main ingredients in my recipes:

1. SALT & PEPPER

sea salt and table salt, black and white pepper

2. SUGAR

granulated sugar, brown sugar, confectioners' sugar

3. VINEGAR

red wine, white wine, rice wine, sherry wine, white vinegar, and cider vinegar

4. FAT

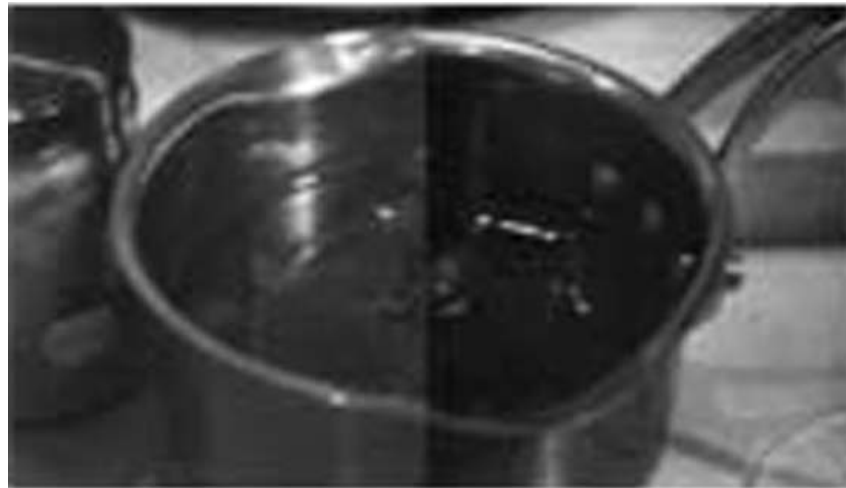
butter, olive oil, canola oil, soybean oil, grapeseed oil, lard, chili oil, and garlic oil

5. FLOUR

all-purpose flour, corn flour, masa harina, and cornstarch

Five minutes means *5 minutes*. Believe me when I tell you that we have tested all of these recipes over and over. We had friends and family, even strangers, test them. Let me tell you they are all, every one of them, designed to cook in 5 minutes. For real. If you take my upcoming sermon about high heat to heart, you will be a black belt in *5 minute flavor* on your first try. And if you don't, 7½ minutes isn't so bad, is it?

Prep time is not included in the 5 minutes, but I was careful to choose ingredients that require virtually no preparation since I wanted to stack the deck in your favor and empower you to be a successful *5 minute flavor* cook.



In addition to the many fresh ingredients called for in this book, here is a list of about a hundred shortcut foods I found to be inspiring, delicious, and good enough to use in these recipes:

Cheese & Dairy Products

Boursin Cheese

Dannon's Crème de la Crème Vanilla Yogurt

Litehouse Avocado Dip

Parker's Farm Horseradish Cold Pack Cheese Food

Fruits, Juices & Preserves

Musselman's Dutch Baked Apples

Pom Blueberry-Pomegranate Juice

Raspberry Polaner Pourable Fruit

Beef, Chicken & Pork Products

- Black Bear Beef Brisket
- Black Bear Mini Beef Cocktail Franks
- Black Bear Roast Beef
- D’Artagnan Andouille Sausage
- Hebrew National Hot Dogs
- Nature’s Reserve Boneless Ribeye Steak
- Perdue Chicken

Potatoes

- Diner’s Choice Country Style Mashed Potatoes
- Diner’s Choice Garlic Mashed Potatoes
- Fresh From the Start Scallop Cut Potatoes
- Fresh From the Start Cubed Bliss Potatoes
- Fresh From the Start Cubed Golden Potatoes
- Old Fashioned Kitchen Potato Pancake

Produce

- Black Bear Slow-Cooked Sweet Vidalia Onions
- Cut ‘N’ Clean Collard Greens
- Dole Classic Coleslaw Mix
- Dole Classic Romaine Mix
- Greenwood Harvard Beets
- Greenwood Sweet and Sour Red Cabbage
- Mann’s Sunny Shores Broccoli Coleslaw
- Ready Pac Sliced Peppers and Onions
- Ready Pac Tri-Color Pepper Dice
- Victoria Hot Dog Onions Victoria Roasted Red Peppers

Soups & Broths

- Campbell’s Cheddar Soup
- Imagine Organic Butternut Squash Soup
- Imagine Organic Creamy Sweet Corn Soup
- Imagine Organic Portabella Mushroom Soup
- Progresso Lentil Soup
- Swanson Beef Broth
- Swanson Chicken Broth

Condiments, Dressings & Sauces

- A-1 Steak Sauce
- Buitoni Alfredo Sauce
- Consorzio Garlic Oil
- Dellalo Olive Bruschetta Topping
- Gulden’s Spicy Brown Mustard
- Heinz Home-Style Savory Beef Gravy

Hellmann's Dijonnaise

Ken's Creamy Caesar Dressing

Steve and Ed's Buffalo Wing Sauce

Stubbs Original Barbecue Sauce

Victoria Fra Diavolo Sauce

Victoria Marinara Sauce

Asian Products

General Tso's Sauce

House of Tsang Bangkok Padang Peanut Sauce

House of Tsang Classic Stir-Fry Sauce

House of Tsang Hibachi Grill Sweet Ginger

Sesame Sauce

House of Tsang Mongolian Fire Oil

Kame Black Bean Sauce

Kame Coconut Curry Marinade

Maggi Seasoning

Mikee Garlic Rib Sauce

Mikee Garlic Stir-Fry and Rib Sauce

Mikee Sesame Teriyaki Sauce

S&M Wasabi Paste

Taste of Thai Peanut Satay Sauce

Thai Kitchen Coconut Ginger Soup

Thai Kitchen Lemongrass and Chile Soup Mix

Thai Kitchen Original Pad Thai Sauce

Indian Products

Patak's Hot Curry Paste

Patak's Medium Garlic Relish

Patak's Sweet Mango Chutney

Patak's Tangy Lemon and Cilantro Cooking Sauce

Mexican Products

Frontera's Salsa Verde

Goya Recaito

Goya Sofrito

Old El Paso Refried Beans

Santa Barbara Hot Salsa

Tostitos Salsa con Queso

Breadsticks, Crackers & Nuts

Cheez-It

Mauna Loa Macadamia Pieces

Stella D'Oro Sesame Breadsticks

Couscous, Stuffing, Pasta & Flour

Delverde Pasta

Near East Couscous Mix

Stovetop Turkey Stuffing Mix

Wondra Flour

Cookies & Doughnuts

Archway Dutch Cocoa Cookies

Entenmann’s Donuts Shoppe Powdered

Sugar Donuts

Krispy Kreme Doughnuts

Baking Products

Coco Lopez Cream of Coconut

Keebler Mini Graham Cracker Pie Crusts

La Rosa Cannoli Shells

Puddings, Frozen Desserts & Dessert Sauces

Ben and Jerry’s Butter Pecan Ice Cream

Ciao Bella Mango Sorbet

Flav-O-Ice

Häagen-Dazs Dulce de Leche Ice Cream

Häagen-Dazs Peaches and Cream Ice Cream

Häagen-Dazs Pineapple Coconut Ice Cream

Jell-O Gelatin Snacks

Kozy Shack Rice Pudding

Kozy Shack Tapioca Pudding

Silver Palate Very Fudge Sauce

Stonewall Espresso Mocha Sauce

Sharon’s Passion Fruit Sorbet

Miscellaneous Frozen Products

McKenzie’s Southland Butternut Squash Puree

Northern Chef Frozen Clams on the Half-Shell

Pepperidge Farms Puff Pastry

MOST OF US DON’T HAVE THE LUXURY OF OWNING A VIKING RANGE

I’ve had a few epiphanies lately. Among them was the discovery that at home, almost nobody has enough BTUs (British Thermal Units—it’s the way we measure heat) to cook quickly. You have seen the burning-hot woks in the kitchens of Chinese restaurants and the huge ranges and broilers in professional kitchens, and in the kitchens of the friends you envy for cooking on a Viking range. Such cooks possess a fire-breathing dragon, a home range with giant muscular burners, a blinding broiler, and a powerful convection oven. Well, I don’t own one and I am assuming you don’t either.

Think about this: An average home range draws 10,000 BTUs per burner. In my restaurants, I cooked on ranges that drew 100,000 BTUs—now that’s cooking with gas! When I left the restaurants, I didn’t run out and buy a Viking range for my home. Instead, I figured out how to compensate. High heat is the key! If I say it a thousand times, it won’t be too much. You need to cook these dishes with high heat. Now when I say high heat, here is what I mean: Put a pan on a hot burner and go watch *The Godfather*, then come back and start cooking. Give that pan time to really heat up! The best way to capture high heat on your home stoves is to do exactly that: capture it. While the home range doesn’t have the per-minute output of a professional kitchen, it does have the unlimited heat of a restaurant kitchen. Retaining that heat long enough to keep your water boiling, your deep-fat frying oil hot, and your pan sizzling till the end is easy. All you need is the right equipment and the courage to get your equipment hot enough for super-fast cooking. This means five pieces of cookware and appliances that I am sure all of you own and/or can afford to buy immediately.

1. Sauté pan

The first thing you need is a large sauté pan with high sides, like a 5-quart chicken fryer. Make sure it has at least a ½-inch-thick clad bottom, or choose a cast-iron pan, such as one from Lodge, with or without porcelain, or a 5-quart cast-iron pan with porcelain enamel from a maker such as Le Creuset. Circulon makes a heavy cast-aluminum pan that does the trick as well. These pans range from \$25 to \$125, and any one of them will work.

2. Stovetop grill pan

The next thing you'll need is a stovetop grill pan. Again, Lodge, Le Creuset and Circulon all make great ones. Again, a heavy and thick clad bottom for retaining heat is a must. And be sure it is large enough to hold four portions, because every recipe in this book is for four people.

3. A 6-to 8-quart stockpot/pasta pot

This is essential for boiling water and deep-fat frying.

4. Broiler

I have rediscovered the power of the oven broiler. Again, while not as hot as a professional kitchen broiler, it has unlimited output: Just turn it on and give it time to let the heat build.

5. Microwave oven

I have also discovered that the microwave oven can be a terrific partner in the quest for 5 minute flavor.

While we are talking, some of my fave appliances are:

Immersion blender

It makes blending so easy and cleanup silly.

Food processor

If you want speed in the kitchen, this is your best friend.

Fondue pot

I call for a fondue pot for my fondue recipes. Although any pot with high sides will do, a fondue set is a great investment, particularly for making Swiss fondue, which is a hot pot of oil placed in the center of the table, letting guests cook their own bite-size pieces of meat, poultry, or fish.

Here are a few of my favorite tips:

You can reduce a pan's heat if it's too hot before cooking by adding water to it. Once it's cooled a bit, you just throw the water in the sink, wipe the pan dry, and proceed.

Properly frying foods is a great way to save time and add flavor. As long as the heat is high enough, fried foods will not become fat sponges. Deep-frying is also a great way to allow your guests to participate. I love Swiss fondue—you provide the food and the forks or skewers, and your guests do the rest.

Grinding whole spices in a small electric coffee grinder is a great way to punch up flavor. It smells good too.

Who knew you didn't have to spend loads of money to make great food at home? In my career as a professional chef, I have spent twenty to fifty dollars, sometimes even hundreds of dollars, *per person* on ingredients, to make dishes such as White Truffle Risotto with Gulf Shrimp or Kobe Beef with Galangal-Glazed Ramps. Many of those ingredients are both rare and exciting to work with, for sure. But when you are shopping to cook at home, you can't afford to spend half your weekly salary on food. Yet it turns out the last restraint I put on myself for this book—dishes for under 5 dollars a portion—was easy. Fresh food is much less expensive than take-out or prepackaged meals, and by creating dishes that usually have two to four fresh ingredients and only one or two prepared ingredients, I was able to get the best of both worlds into these recipes. Most of the dishes are well under 5 dollars per person; even those that call for luxury ingredients such as crab and lobster never surpass the 5-dollar mark.

Menus

I broke the recipes down into the smallest, most specific categories I could think of, because I wanted to make it easy for you to develop 2-, 3-, even 4-course menus from them. Here are some of my favorite menus, organized by season or occasion.

Vegetarian

This is a meatless menu that isn't just grilled vegetables or an omelet.

- Warm Artichoke Parmigiano Dip
- Eggplant Parmigiano
- Butterscotch Chocolate Fondue with Graham Crackers and Banana

Holiday Feast

I had Christmas in mind when I created this menu, but it would be just as suitable for Thanksgiving, New Year's, or any other cold-weather family gathering.

- Salmon and Sesame Swiss Fondue
- Prosciutto, Parmigiano, Pimiento, and Arugula Salad
- Grilled Lamb with Sweet-and-Sour Cranberry Sauce
- Classic Cannoli

Super Bowl Sunday

This feast makes for great eating and always wins big at my Super Bowl parties. Serve as a buffet with plenty of beer.

- Pigs in a Blanket Swiss Fondue
- Mushroom Quesadillas
- Fresh Fast Guacamole
- Buffalo Chicken Tenders with Celery and
- Blue Cheese Salad
- Roast Beef Wrap with Garlic Relish

Pants Too Tight

We all know the feeling; these low-fat dishes won't make them any tighter.

- Grilled Asparagus and Oyster Mushrooms with Pecorino Cheese
- Salmon with Shiitake Mushrooms in Ginger-Soy Broth
- Guava Tapioca with Macadamia Nuts

Mother's Day

For a light, elegant spring brunch or dinner.

- Fennel-Seared Chicken Livers with
- Watercress and Oranges
- Turkey, Broccoli, and Cheese Casserole
- Baba au Rum

Dead-of-Winter Feast

From start to finish, this meal is a perfect excuse to go nowhere on an inhumanely cold February day.

- Clams Oreganata
- Grilled Stuffed Veal with Basil and Provolone
- Roast Beef Borscht
- Warm Rice Pudding with Rum Raisin Ice Cream

Valentine's Day

A very romantic, red-hued meal.

Firecracker Shrimp

Quick Steak, Pizza Man Style

Thai Bling-Bling Soup

Blowout Celebration

A long-awaited promotion, thirtieth birthday, or a windfall from a court ruling.... Whatever the event, this pull-out-all-the-stops menu is perfect for celebrating.

Duck Swiss Fondue

Veal Scallopini in Artichoke Broth

Instant Tiramisu with Raspberries

Meeting the In-Laws

The occasion is stressful enough as it is! Go with safe dishes that are easy to make and universally liked.

Fried Calamari and Artichokes with Hummus

Chicken and Chopped Salad

Broiled Flat-Iron Steaks with Pepper Jack

Scalloped Potatoes

Donuts and Hot Chocolate

New House

Where the heck is the food processor? Unpack the boxes later. You can make everything on this menu with a few pans, a bowl, and a baking sheet.

Shrimp Swiss Fondue with Arrabbiata Dipping Sauce

Tangy Turkey and Snow Pea Stir-fry

Warm Brownies with Salty Peanut Sauce

Too Hot to Cook

It's 97 degrees outside—next to the stove is the last place you want to be. Keep cool with this light menu of no-cook/quick-cook summer dishes.

Chilled Cucumber Soup with Smoked Salmon and Crème Fraîche

Peanut Chicken and Radicchio Salad

Blueberry Pomegranate Consommé with

Whipped Crème Fraîche

A Midsummer's Night Menu

Here are foods that are great in the summer, a fabulous picnic-under-the-stars menu.

Shrimp Salad with Red Onion, Mango, and Cilantro

Pierogi with Ham, Dandelion Greens, and Sour Cream

Mustard Sauce

Pretty Peach Melba

Beach House Blast

This spread features some of the foods you're likely to come by on the way to the shore: roadside produce-stand fare like corn, tomatoes, and apricots, plus fish and shellfish.

Tomato and Mozzarella Salad

Sautéed Scallops with Pickled Ginger Red Cabbage

Apricot and Dried Cherry Pound Cake

Make Ahead

Make these dishes ahead and reheat (if necessary) in a flash.

Mushroom Soup with Boursin Croutons

Avocado Salad with Red Onion and Feta

Andouille Sausage Jambalaya with Clams and Peas

Apple Pan Crumble

Cocktail Party Spread

Designed to feed four, these recipes can easily double or triple as your RSVPs roll in.

Tuna Tempura Swiss Fondue with Wasabi Soy

Duck Swiss Fondue

Garlicky Lemon Shrimp

Puffy Chicken with Green Curry Basil Sauce

Toasted Hot Dog Reuben

Smoked Salmon and Swiss Cheese Panini

Autumn Harvest

The September shift to cooler weather never fails to reinvigorate our desire to cook. Good thing, since autumn is an agriculturally rich season in all parts of the country.

Stracciatella

Miso-Walnut Chicken with Rainbow Swiss Chard

Dutch Apples on Challah with Maple-Walnut Sauce

Fungus Extravaganza

Indulge your love of mushrooms. Some of us just can't get enough of these earthy flavors.

Rich Mushroom Bouillon

Mushroom and Red Onion Burgers

S'mores Tartlets

For Cheese Lovers

Want to try several cheeses in one meal? As an alternative to the traditional cheese tray, consider serving courses of dishes with cheese.

Mushroom Quesadillas

Pear and Stilton Salad

Golden Chicken and Taleggio Cutlets

Chocolate Phyllo with Blood Oranges and

Dulce de Leche Ice Cream

Designed to Impress

The “Ooh! Ah! Ohhh!” quotient is high. Perfect for entertaining royalty or closing a deal.

See-Thru Scallops with Lemon Brown Butter and Celery Leaves

Beef Shabu-Shabu with Watercress

Savory Seafood Stew

Croissants with Prunes and Armagnac

Appetizers

FRESH FAST GUACAMOLE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$9.50*

½ jalapeño pepper, sliced

½ red onion, cut into large chunks

1 cup fresh tightly packed cilantro leaves

3 large ripe avocados, pitted and peeled

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Tortilla chips

- 1.** Combine the jalapeño pepper, red onion, and cilantro in the bowl of a food processor; pulse to chop fine. Or combine on a cutting board and finely chop with a sharp knife.
- 2.** In a medium bowl, mash the avocados. Add the chopped onion mixture and mix thoroughly. Season with salt and pepper.
- 3.** Serve immediately, with chips. Or allow to chill for 1 hour in the refrigerator before serving; cover the surface of the guacamole directly with plastic wrap to keep it from discoloring.

WARM ARTICHOKE PARMIGIANO DIP

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$7

1 (14-ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and finely chopped

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup reduced-fat mayonnaise

1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

2 large cloves garlic, finely chopped or put through a garlic press

2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil

1. In a medium bowl, combine all the ingredients and mix well. Spread the mixture evenly in a 7 × 7-inch baking dish.
2. Microwave for 4 to 5 minutes, stirring twice to make sure the dip is heating evenly. Serve hot, with pita chips or your favorite chips or crackers.

GRILLED ASPARAGUS AND OYSTER MUSHROOMS WITH PECORINO CHEESE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

2 lemons

2 bunches pencil-thin asparagus, tough ends trimmed 11 ounces oyster mushrooms, cut into small clusters

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup chopped fresh chives

An 8-ounce wedge pecorino cheese

1. Heat a large grill pan until very hot.
2. Meanwhile, grate the zest from both lemons. Squeeze the juice from 1½ lemons.
3. In a large shallow bowl, toss the asparagus and mushrooms with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of the oil to coat well. Season with salt and pepper. Grill the asparagus and mushrooms, turning often to ensure even coloring, until cooked through and slightly charred. Remove from the grill as the asparagus and mushrooms are done.
4. Meanwhile, combine the lemon zest, lemon juice, chives, and the remaining $\frac{1}{3}$ cup oil.

5. Divide the asparagus and mushrooms among four plates and drizzle the sauce liberally on top. With a vegetable peeler, slice curls of pecorino cheese on top. Serve.

MUSHROOM QUESADILLAS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$10.75

4 (12-inch) flour tortillas

2½ cups grated sharp cheddar cheese

¼ cup pickled sliced jalapeños, drained and chopped

2 cups sliced shiitake mushrooms

2 tablespoons corn oil

1 cup sour cream

1. Heat two medium nonstick sauté pans over medium heat.

2. Meanwhile, place 2 of the tortillas on a work surface. Sprinkle the cheese, jalapeños, and mushrooms evenly over them. Top each tortilla with another tortilla and press down gently.

3. Add 1 tablespoon of the oil to each sauté pan. Carefully place 1 of the quesadillas in each pan. Cook for about 2 minutes, or until golden brown on the bottom. Use tongs to carefully flip both quesadillas, and cook for another 2 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and they are golden brown on the second side. Adjust the heat if necessary to keep them from scorching. Transfer the quesadillas to a cutting board and let stand for about 1 minute.

4. Slice each quesadilla into 8 wedges. Serve with the sour cream.

NEW-STYLE TUNA SASHIMI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17.50

¾ to 1 pound sushi-quality tuna, very thinly sliced

1 tablespoon sesame seeds

Salt

½ cup radishes cut into thin strips

1 small bunch scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal

½ cup plus 1 tablespoon ponzu sauce

2 tablespoons hot chili oil

1. Divide the tuna into 4 portions and arrange it on four large plates (the “faces” of the plates should be about 7 to 8 inches in diameter), covering them completely and overlapping the tuna slices only slightly as necessary.

2. Sprinkle the sesame seeds over the tuna and lightly season with salt.

3. Toss together the radishes and scallions in a small bowl. Set aside.

4. Combine the ponzu sauce and chili oil in a small saucepan and bring to a boil.

5. Drizzle the chili oil mixture evenly over the tuna to “cook” it. Scatter the radishes and scallions over the tuna, and serve immediately.

CREAMY LEMON SHRIMP SALAD WITH CUCUMBERS AND WATERCRESS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.50

5 lemons

¾ cup mayonnaise

¼ pound cooked peeled shrimp, split in half

1⅔ cups diced cucumber

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 bunch (about 2½ cups) watercress, trimmed and cleaned

1. Grate the zest from 4 of the lemons. Put the zest in a medium bowl and squeeze the juice from one of the zested lemons into the bowl. Add the mayonnaise and mix well.

2. Add the shrimp and cucumbers to the lemon mayonnaise and toss well to coat. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Make a bed of watercress in the center of each of four plates. Pile the shrimp on top of the watercress. Grate the zest of the remaining lemon over the salads, and serve.

FRIED CALAMARI AND ARTICHOKEs WITH HUMMUS DIPPING SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.50

3 quarts canola oil

1½ cups prepared hummus

6 tablespoons olive paste

½ cup water

3 tablespoons chopped fresh rosemary

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1¼ pounds squid, cleaned and thinly sliced

1 (14-ounce) can quartered artichoke hearts, drained

1. Heat the oil in a large pot until hot but not smoking, about 375 degrees.
2. In a medium bowl, mix the hummus, olive paste, water, and rosemary.
3. Spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Dredge the calamari and artichoke quarters in the flour. Fry until crispy and golden, about 5 minutes. Drain well on paper towels. Season the calamari with salt and pepper.
4. Serve the calamari and artichokes with small bowls of the dipping sauce alongside.

CLAMS OREGANATA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$12.50*

9 tablespoons butter, melted

3 cloves garlic, chopped

3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1 (¾ ounce) package fresh oregano, leaves picked and finely chopped

2 cups dried bread crumbs

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1½ pounds frozen clams on the half-shell

1. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.
2. Combine the butter, garlic, lemon juice, oregano, and bread crumbs in a medium bowl. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Lay the clams on a baking sheet lined with foil. Pile some of the bread crumb mixture on each clam, covering the entire surface.
4. Bake for 3½ minutes; you should be able to hear the clams sizzling when you open the oven. Turn on the oven broiler and continue to cook until the bread crumbs have crisped and turned a deep golden brown. Serve immediately.

MUSSELS WITH HUMMUS BROTH AND CRUSTY ITALIAN BREAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$12*

4 large slices Italian sourdough bread

6 garlic cloves, 4 chopped, 2 peeled but left whole

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoon hot chili oil

½ cup prepared hummus

⅔ cup dry white wine

½ cup water

2 pounds mussels, scrubbed and debearded

1. Heat a grill pan until very hot.
2. Rub the bread on both sides with the 2 whole garlic cloves and brush both sides with the olive oil and season with salt and pepper. Grill, turning once, until lightly charred.

3. Meanwhile, heat a very large straight-sided sauté pan until very hot. Add the chili oil. Immediately add the chopped garlic and cook, stirring, until aromatic and golden brown. Add the hummus, then whisk in the wine and water; bring to a boil.

4. Add the mussels, cover, and steam for about 1½ minutes, until they open.

5. Ladle the mussels and broth into bowls, and serve the bread alongside for dipping.

FIRECRACKER SHRIMP

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19

3 quarts canola oil

1 (10-ounce) jar mayonnaise, chilled

3 tablespoons Vietnamese chili garlic sauce

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 eggs

1 cup bread crumbs

1½ pounds jumbo tiger shrimp, peeled and deveined

1. In a large pot, heat the oil to 400 degrees.

2. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, mix together the mayonnaise and chili sauce. Set aside.

3. Spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Lightly beat the eggs in a shallow bowl. Spread the bread crumbs on another plate. Dredge the shrimp in the flour, then coat in the eggs, and, finally, dredge thoroughly in the bread crumbs.

4. Submerge the shrimp in the oil and fry until golden brown and cooked through, about 2 minutes. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately, with the chili mayonnaise.

GARLICKY LEMON SHRIMP

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$16.50

1 pound medium shrimp (36 to 40 count), peeled and deveined

3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

3 cloves garlic, finely chopped

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

¾ cup bread crumbs

1. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

2. In a medium bowl, toss the shrimp with the lemon juice, olive oil, and garlic. Season well with salt and pepper. Add the cheese and bread crumbs and toss well to coat the shrimp evenly.

3. Spread the shrimp on a baking sheet in a single layer. Bake for 5 minutes, or until golden brown and cooked through. Serve immediately.

SEE-THRU SCALLOPS WITH LEMON BROWN BUTTER AND CELERY LEAVES

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$18.75*

8 ounces very fresh large sea scallops, tough side muscle removed,

at room temperature

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

½ cup pale green celery leaves (from the heart of the celery)

7 tablespoons unsalted butter

¼ cup fresh lemon juice, or to taste

1. With a very sharp knife, slice the scallops horizontally (about ⅛ inch thick). Arrange the scallops in a single layer on a medium serving plate, covering it completely. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Scatter the chives and celery leaves evenly over the scallops. Set aside.

2. In a small sauté pan, heat the butter over medium heat until it is brown and very fragrant. Turn off the heat and whisk in the lemon juice. (It should look somewhat creamy, not oily.) Season the sauce with salt and pepper, and taste—it should be very lemony; add more lemon juice if necessary.

3. Spoon the sauce liberally over the scallops, and serve immediately.

FENNEL-SEARED CHICKEN LIVERS WITH WATERCRESS AND ORANGES

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$9.50*

4 navel oranges

⅓ cup plus 1 tablespoon olive oil

⅓ cup flour

2 tablespoons fennel seeds, crushed

¼ pounds chicken livers, trimmed and patted dry

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 tablespoons sherry vinegar

1 teaspoon sugar

2 small bunches watercress, trimmed and washed

1. With a sharp knife, remove the skin and white pith from the oranges. Cut the oranges into thin slices, and set aside.
2. In a large sauté pan, heat ⅓ cup oil until very hot. Mix together the flour and fennel seeds on a plate. Season the chicken livers with salt and pepper and dredge in the flour-fennel mixture. Sauté, turning once, until deep golden brown on both sides, about 2 to 3 minutes; be careful not to overcook. Remove from the pan and set aside.
3. Off the heat, add the remaining 1 tablespoon oil, the sherry vinegar, and sugar to the pan, then add the oranges and toss to coat. Transfer to a large bowl, add the watercress and chicken livers, and toss gently. Season with salt and pepper if necessary.
4. Divide the salad among four plates, and serve immediately.

PUFFY CHICKEN WITH GREEN CURRY BASIL SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$19*

3 quarts canola oil

1 (8.8-ounce) package thin rice noodles

1½ pounds chicken tenders, cut lengthwise in half

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (8.45-ounce) bottle coconut curry marinade

1 tablespoon Thai green curry paste

¼ cup chopped fresh basil

1. In a large pot, heat the oil to 400 degrees.

2. Meanwhile, with kitchen shears or a sharp knife, cut the rice noodles into ½-inch pieces. Coat the chicken tenders with the noodles, pressing the noodles onto the chicken.

3. Fry the chicken, in batches if necessary, for about 1 minute, or until the noodles are puffy and crisp and the chicken is cooked through. Drain on paper towels, and season with salt and pepper.

4. While the tenders are cooking, heat the coconut curry marinade and green curry paste in a small saucepan. Add the basil.

5. Serve the chicken tenders with the dipping sauce alongside.

GRILLED STUFFED VEAL WITH BASIL AND PROVOLONE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17.25

4 very thin veal cutlets (about 4 ounces each)

8 thin slices sharp provolone

16 large fresh basil leaves

3 ounces sliced prosciutto

2 cloves garlic, chopped

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat a large grill pan until very hot.

2. Set the veal cutlets on a work surface. Place 1 slice of cheese on the bottom half of each cutlet. Top each one with one-quarter of the prosciutto, 4 basil leaves, and another slice of cheese, then fold the top half of the cutlet over to cover. Press down on each “package” firmly; if desired, thread a toothpick through each cutlet to keep it closed.

3. Combine the garlic and olive oil, and rub the stuffed veal packages generously with this mixture. Season the veal liberally with salt and pepper. Grill for about 2 minutes on each side, or until the veal is just cooked through and the cheese has melted. Serve immediately.

Fondues

SHARP CHEDDAR AND BEER FONDUE WITH WARM PRETZELS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$8.25

4 large frozen pretzels

½ cup strong dark beer

2 tablespoons finely chopped red onion

2 teaspoons cornstarch

½ pound extra-sharp cheddar cheese, shredded

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Cook the pretzels in an oven or toaster oven according to the package instructions. Keep warm.

2. Meanwhile, whisk together the beer, red onion, and cornstarch in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil, whisking constantly, and boil, whisking, until slightly thickened. Gradually whisk in the cheese, whisking until the cheese is completely melted and the fondue is smooth. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Serve the fondue with the warm pretzels for dipping.

MUSHROOM FONDUE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13

½ cup dry white wine

¼ cup water

½ pound Gruyère cheese, grated

2 teaspoons cornstarch

1 cup very thinly sliced shiitake mushrooms

2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 loaf Italian or French bread, cut into 1-inch cubes

1. In a fondue pot or saucepan, bring the wine and water to a simmer over medium heat.

2. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, toss the cheese with cornstarch to coat evenly.

3. Add one-third of the cheese mixture to the simmering wine mixture and stir with a whisk until completely melted. Add the remaining cheese in 2 batches, whisking until it is completely melted and the fondue is bubbling. Turn the heat to low and add the mushrooms and tarragon. Stir until heated through. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Check the fondue for consistency: if you prefer a thinner fondue, add a few tablespoons of water and stir vigorously until smooth; if you prefer it thicker, cook a bit longer.

4. Serve the fondue with the bread cubes and fondue forks. You could serve a small cup of Kirschwasser (cherry brandy) alongside for your guests to dip their bread into before dipping into the fondue.

SALMON AND SESAME SWISS FONDUE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$15.75

5 cups canola oil

½ cup sesame seeds

1 pound skinless salmon fillet, cut into 1-to 1½-inch cubes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

⅔ cup tamari soy sauce

3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

1 tablespoon sugar

2 teaspoons chili oil

1. In a 4-quart fondue pot or saucepan, heat the canola oil to 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, put the sesame seeds in a shallow bowl. Season the salmon with salt and pepper and coat with the sesame seeds. Arrange on a platter.
3. For the dipping sauce, mix together the tamari, lemon juice, sugar, and chili oil. Place in a small serving bowl and serve alongside the salmon with skewers or fondue forks.
4. Invite your guests to skewer the salmon and cook in the hot oil for about 1 minute for medium-rare; allow to cool briefly, then dip into the sauce before eating.

TUNA TEMPURA SWISS FONDUE WITH WASABI SOY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

5 cups canola oil

1¼ pounds tuna, cut into 1-to 1¼-inch cubes

1½ cups packaged tempura mix

1¼ cups ice-cold water

½ cup tamari soy sauce

1 tablespoon wasabi paste

1. In a 4-quart fondue pot or saucepan, heat the oil to 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, arrange the tuna on a serving platter.
3. To make the tempura batter, in a medium bowl, gradually add the tempura mix to the water, whisking constantly. Set the batter over a larger bowl of ice.
4. To make the dipping sauce, mix the soy sauce and wasabi together in a small serving bowl.
5. Using skewers or fondue forks, invite your guests to skewer the tuna and dip it into the tempura batter, then immediately into the hot oil; cook for 30 seconds for rare. Serve with the dipping sauce.

SHRIMP SWISS FONDUE WITH ARRABBIATA DIPPING SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$14.50

6 cups canola oil

1 pound shrimp (36 to 40 count), peeled and deveined

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 cups buttermilk

2 cups flour

2 cups prepared Fra Diavolo Sauce

¼ teaspoon red pepper flakes

1. In a 4-quart fondue pot or saucepan, heat the oil to 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, season the shrimp well with salt and pepper. Soak in the buttermilk for 2 minutes, then drain in a colander and immediately dredge in the flour. Shake off the excess flour and arrange the shrimp on a platter.
3. Combine the sauce and red pepper flakes and heat in a microwave or saucepan until very hot. Transfer to a serving bowl.
4. Using skewers or fondue forks, invite guests to skewer the shrimp and cook in the hot oil for about ½ minutes. Serve with the sauce for dipping.

CHICKEN SWISS FONDUE WITH DIJON SOUR CREAM AND HUMMUS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$14

6 cups canola oil

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons sour cream

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

1 cup prepared scallion hummus

3 tablespoons water

1¼ pounds chicken tenders, cut crosswise in half

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 cups corn flour or masa harina

1. In a 4-quart fondue pot or saucepan, heat the oil to 400 degrees.

2. Meanwhile, mix together the sour cream and mustard, and transfer to a small serving bowl. Mix together the hummus and water and transfer to another serving bowl. Set aside.

3. Season the chicken tenders with salt and pepper and dredge in the corn flour. Arrange the chicken on a platter.

4. Using skewers or fondue forks, invite your guests to skewer the chicken and dip in the hot oil for about 1 minute to cook through. Cool slightly before eating. Serve with the hummus and Dijon sour cream for dipping.

DUCK SWISS FONDUE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.75

5 cups canola oil

3 eggs

2½ cups bread crumbs

1 duck (about 6 pounds), skin removed, cut into 1-inch chunks

(ask your butcher to cut the duck apart for you)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup prepared duck sauce

¼ cup Chinese mustard

1. In a 4-quart fondue pot or saucepan, heat the oil to 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, beat the eggs in a shallow bowl. Spread the bread crumbs on a plate. Season the duck with salt and pepper. Dip in the egg, then coat in the bread crumbs. Arrange on a platter.
3. Mix the duck sauce and mustard, and transfer to a small serving bowl.
4. Invite your guests to skewer the duck and cook in the hot oil for 45 seconds to 1 minute; allow to cool slightly before dipping in the sauce.

BEEF SWISS FONDUE WITH THREE SAUCES

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$19.50*

6 cups canola oil

8 sesame bread sticks

1¼ pounds boneless beef shell steaks, cut into 1-inch chunks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup salsa con queso

1 cup prepared hot dog onions

1 cup chow-chow relish

1. In a 4-quart fondue pot or saucepan, heat the oil to 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, pulse the bread sticks in a food processor to crumbs, or crush them on a flat surface with a rolling pin. Spread on a plate.
3. Season the beef with salt and pepper, and dredge in the crumbs. Arrange on a platter.
4. Heat the salsa con queso in the microwave or a small saucepan, and transfer to a small serving bowl. Put the hot dog onions and chow-chow relish in separate small serving bowls.
5. Using skewers or fondue forks, invite your guests to skewer the beef and dip into the hot oil for about 45 seconds for rare. Serve with the dipping sauces.

PIGS IN A BLANKET SWISS FONDUE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$11*

5 cups canola oil

2 packages frozen (about 30) pigs in a blanket

⅓ cup spicy brown mustard

¼ cup ketchup

1. In a 4-quart fondue pot or saucepan, heat the oil to 400 degrees.
2. Holding each hot dog firmly in one hand, insert a skewer through the center lengthwise. Arrange on a platter.
3. In a small bowl, mix together the mustard and ketchup to make a dipping sauce.
4. Invite your guests to cook the hot dogs in the hot oil for 1 minute, or until the pastry is golden brown, crisp, and puffy. Serve with the dipping sauce.

Soups

CHILLED CUCUMBER SOUP WITH SMOKED SALMON AND CRÈME FRAÎCHE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$12

2½ large cucumbers, 1 unpeeled, the other 1½ peeled,

cut into large chunks and chilled

1 large shallot, finely chopped

6 tablespoons chopped fresh dill, plus 4 small sprigs

½ cup plus 1 tablespoon water

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

½ cup crème fraîche

4 ounces thinly sliced smoked salmon

1. Combine the cucumbers, half of the shallot, and 3 tablespoons of the chopped dill in the bowl of a food processor and process until relatively smooth, with some very small chunks of cucumber. Add the ½ cup water and process to blend. Season well with salt and pepper. The soup can be chilled until ready to serve, if desired.

2. In a small bowl, combine the remaining shallot, 1 tablespoon water, and 3 tablespoons chopped dill with the crème fraîche. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Ladle the soup into 4 bowls and top each with a generous swirl of the crème fraîche. Arrange a few slices of smoked salmon in the center of each bowl. Garnish each bowl with a dill sprig, and serve.

RICH MUSHROOM BOUILLON

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated cost:* \$20

8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, cut into 4 pieces

6 cups (1 pound) sliced wild mushrooms

⅓ cup finely chopped shallots

2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

⅔ cup dry sherry

2½ cups water

¼ cup chopped fresh chives

1. Heat a very large straight-sided sauté pan until very hot. Add the butter and follow immediately with the mushrooms. Sauté until the mushrooms are lightly browned. Add the shallots and thyme and sauté until fragrant. Season generously with salt and pepper.

2. Add the sherry and the water and bring to a boil. Turn off the heat. Let the broth steep for approximately 2 minutes, taste, and adjust the seasoning. Add the chives and serve.

MUSHROOM SOUP WITH BOURSIN CROUTONS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13.50

3 cups prepared creamy mushroom soup

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil, plus extra for drizzling

4 (½-inch-thick) diagonal slices baguette

1 (5.2-ounce) package Boursin cheese

¼ cup chopped fresh chives

4 large shiitake mushrooms, stems removed, thinly sliced

1. Heat a large sauté pan over medium heat.

2. In a medium saucepan, heat the soup until simmering. Season with salt and pepper, if necessary.

3. Pour the olive oil into the hot pan and heat until hot but not smoking. Place the bread slices in the pan. Cook for about 1½ minutes on each side, or until golden brown and crisp. Remove from the pan and season with salt and pepper. Spread each toast with one-quarter of the cheese.

4. Add 3 tablespoons of the chives to the soup and stir. Ladle soup into four soup bowls. Scatter the raw shiitakes and the remaining 1 tablespoon chives over the soup, drizzle with olive oil, and lay a toast on the rim of each bowl. Serve.

STRACCIATELLA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$6.50

4½ cups chicken broth

3 cups shredded escarole

3 eggs, beaten

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

¾ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

1. Bring the chicken broth to a simmer in a large pot. Add the escarole and return to a simmer. Simmer for 1 minute, then stir, add the eggs, and stir until they are just cooked, about 30 seconds. Turn off the heat. Season with salt and pepper.

2. To serve, divide the soup among four bowls. Sprinkle the Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese over the top.

CORN AND CRAB CHOWDER WITH TARRAGON

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17

2 (16-ounce) cans cream of corn soup

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

6 ounces fresh lump crabmeat, picked over for shells and cartilage

2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon

1 tablespoon extra virgin olive oil, plus extra, if desired, for drizzling

3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

1. Bring the soup to a simmer in a medium pot. Season with salt and pepper if necessary.

2. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, combine the crabmeat, tarragon, and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Divide the crabmeat among four soup bowls and ladle the hot soup over the crabmeat. Sprinkle the chives on top and drizzle with olive oil, if desired. Serve immediately.

HOT-AND-SOUR SHRIMP RICE NOODLE SOUP

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$6.25

6 cups water

2 teaspoons Thai hot curry paste, or to taste

1 tablespoon sugar

4 ounces rice noodles

6 tablespoons fish sauce

3 tablespoons white vinegar, or to taste

¾ pound shrimp (30 to 40 count), peeled and deveined

¾ cup fresh cilantro leaves

1. In a large saucepan, combine the water, curry paste, and sugar and bring to a boil over high heat. Add the rice noodles and cook for 1 minute, or until tender. Reduce the heat to a simmer and add the fish sauce, vinegar, and shrimp. Simmer until the shrimp are just cooked. Taste and adjust the seasoning to your liking: add more curry paste if you like it hotter; add more vinegar if you like a more sour flavor.

2. Stir the cilantro into the soup and divide among four bowls. Serve hot.

TURKEY, GREEN ONION, AND RICE NOODLE SOUP

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$11*

6 cups water

4 (1.6-ounce) packages Thai Kitchen Lemongrass and Chile Soup Mix

1 pound turkey cutlets, sliced into thin strips

2 tablespoons Maggi seasoning

1 bunch scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal

1 cup fresh bean sprouts, rinsed

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Bring the water to a boil in a medium pot. Add the oil packet and seasoning packet from the soup mix. Add the turkey and turn the heat to the lowest setting; the broth should not even simmer. After 1 minute, add the rice noodles from the soup packet and let soften, about 3 minutes.

2. Bring the soup to a low simmer. Add the Maggi seasoning, scallions, and bean sprouts and stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper if necessary, and serve.

BEEF SHABU-SHABU WITH WATERCRESS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$17.75*

6 cups chicken broth

¼ cup Dijon mustard

1 cup store-bought precooked scallop-cut potatoes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 pound very thinly sliced deli roast beef

2 bunches watercress, trimmed and washed

1. In a medium pot, bring the chicken broth to a boil. Whisk in the mustard.

2. Add the potatoes and simmer until they are hot and tender. Season with salt and pepper.

3. Arrange the roast beef slices in four bowls. Pour the broth and potatoes over the beef and scatter the watercress over the top. Serve immediately.

ROAST BEEF BORSCHT

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$14.25*

1 (16-ounce) jar borscht

1 (8-ounce) jar horseradish with beets

2 bunches scallions, cut diagonally into ½-inch slices

1 pound sliced deli roast beef, cut into ½-inch strips

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sour cream

1. In a large pot, combine the borscht and horseradish and bring to a boil over high heat. Add the scallions and roast beef and stir to combine. Season with salt and pepper.

2. Ladle the soup into bowls and top each portion with 3 tablespoons sour cream. Serve.

VIETNAMESE BEEF AND BASIL SOUP

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$12

3 (14-ounce) cans beef broth

3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ounces rice noodles

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fresh basil

$\frac{1}{2}$ pound thinly sliced deli roast beef

4 teaspoons chili oil

2 limes, cut into wedges

1. Bring the beef broth to a simmer in a large pot. Turn the heat to the lowest setting and add the rice noodles. Stir to separate the noodles, and allow to soften in the broth until tender, about 2 minutes.

2. Bring the soup back to a simmer. Turn off the heat and stir in the basil.

3. Divide the roast beef among four soup bowls. Ladle the soup into the bowls, distributing the noodles evenly. Drizzle 1 teaspoon chili oil over each bowl, and serve with the lime wedges.

Salads

AVOCADO SALAD WITH RED ONION AND FETA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$15.25

Grated zest of 4 lemons, plus ½ cup fresh lemon juice

6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 large red onion, cut into very thin slices (about 1½ cups)

4 ripe avocados, pitted, peeled, and sliced

8 ounces feta cheese, crumbled

⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. To make the dressing, combine the lemon zest, lemon juice, and olive oil in a bowl; season with salt and pepper. In another bowl, toss the red onions with half the dressing.
2. Lay out the slices of 1 avocado on each of four plates. Season with salt and pepper. Top with red onion and scatter the feta over the onions. Drizzle the remaining dressing evenly over the salads and sprinkle with the cilantro. Serve.

PICO DE GALLO SALAD WITH AVOCADO

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$14.75

¼ cup fresh lime juice

¼ cup olive oil

2 large heads Boston lettuce, shredded

⅔ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1 (10-ounce) container pico de gallo or other fresh salsa

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 large ripe avocados

1. In a small bowl, whisk together the lime juice and olive oil.
2. In a large bowl, combine the lettuce, cilantro, and pico de gallo. Season with salt and pepper, and toss with the lime juice dressing.
3. Cut the avocados in half and remove the pits. Squeeze each avocado half (as you would a lemon) so that the flesh comes out of the skin in chunks. Season with salt.
4. Add the avocado chunks to the salad and gently toss. Serve immediately.

GOAT CHEESE, RADISH, AND DRIED CRANBERRY SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$15.50

⅓ cup salted peanuts

½ cup dried cranberries

3 cups radishes cut into 6 wedges each (about a 1-pound bag)

½ cup celery leaves

8 ounces fresh goat cheese, crumbled

½ cup extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

In a large bowl, toss the peanuts, dried cranberries, radishes, celery leaves, and goat cheese with the olive oil; be careful not to mash the goat cheese into the salad. Season with salt and pepper, and serve.



Goat Cheese, Radish, and Dried Cranberry Salad

PEAR AND STILTON SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.75

1 cup pecan halves

2 tablespoons sherry vinegar

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

2 large heads frisée, trimmed and cut into bite-size pieces

3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

3 ripe Anjou pears, cored and thinly sliced

8 ounces Stilton cheese, crumbled or cut into small cubes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees.

2. Spread the pecan halves on a baking sheet and toast in the oven for 5 minutes, or until they turn darker brown and very aromatic. Allow to cool. Lightly crush the pecans, if desired.

3. Whisk together the vinegar and olive oil in a small bowl.

4. In a large bowl, combine the frisée, chives, pears, cheese, and toasted pecans. Toss with the vinaigrette. Season with salt and pepper, and serve.

TOMATO AND MOZZARELLA SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$16.75

3 to 4 large ripe tomatoes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 small shallots, chopped

¼ cup red wine vinegar

32 large fresh basil leaves

1½ pounds fresh mozzarella, cut into 16 slices

Extra virgin olive oil for drizzling

1. Slice the tomatoes into 16 even slices and lay them out on a work surface. Season liberally with salt and pepper.
2. Mix the shallots with the vinegar in a small bowl.
3. To assemble each salad, lay 1 tomato slice at the far left side of a large plate. Top it with a basil leaf. Slightly overlap the tomato with a slice of mozzarella and top it with another basil leaf. Repeat this process three times so that you have a line of tomatoes, basil, and mozzarella running from the left side of the plate to the right side. Season the salads with more salt and freshly ground pepper, if desired.
4. Spoon the shallot mixture evenly over the salads and drizzle liberally with extra virgin olive oil. Serve.

CHARRED MACKEREL WITH PEARS AND CAESAR DRESSING

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$16.75*

1¼ pounds mackerel fillet, cut into 4 portions

2 tablespoons corn oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 ripe Anjou pears, cored and sliced

1 (10-ounce) bag romaine mix

1 (8-ounce) bottle creamy Caesar dressing

1 lemon, halved

1. Heat a large skillet, preferably cast iron, until smoking.
2. Rub the skin side of the mackerel with the corn oil and season with salt and pepper. Place the mackerel skin side down in the pan and press down firmly on each fillet with a spatula. Cook for about 5 minutes, or until the skin is charred and fish is cooked to desired doneness. Turn the mackerel over, then immediately remove from the pan and transfer to a plate.
3. In a large bowl, toss the pears and romaine with the dressing. Divide the salad among four plates. Place a mackerel fillet on top of each romaine-pear bed. Squeeze fresh lemon juice over each salad, and serve.

SHRIMP SALAD WITH RED ONION, MANGO, AND CILANTRO

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$20*

1½ pounds shrimp (36 to 40 count), peeled and deveined

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons chili oil

2 mangoes, peeled, pitted, and diced

1 large red onion, finely diced

1 cup chopped fresh cilantro

½ cup fresh lime juice

1. Heat a large sauté pan until smoking.
2. Season the shrimp with salt and pepper. Add the chili oil to the hot pan, then add the shrimp to the pan and cook for about 2 minutes per side. Remove from the heat.
3. In a large bowl, combine the shrimp with the mangoes, onion, cilantro, and lime juice. Toss and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve immediately, or chill, if desired, and serve cold.

CHICKEN, GOAT CHEESE, AND BLOOD ORANGE SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

⅓ cup sunflower seeds

4 blood or navel oranges, peel and pith removed and cut

into ⅛-inch slices, 1 tablespoon juice reserved

2 tablespoons sherry vinegar

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

1 rotisserie chicken (about 2 pounds),

skin removed and meat cut into large pieces

8 ounces goat cheese, crumbled

7 ounces mesclun salad greens

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.
2. Spread the sunflower seeds on a baking sheet and toast in the oven for 5 minutes, or until lightly browned and aromatic. Set aside to cool.
3. Meanwhile, combine the 1 tablespoon orange juice with the sherry vinegar in a small bowl. Whisk in the olive oil.
4. In a large bowl, combine the oranges, chicken, goat cheese, and mesclun. Season with salt and pepper and toss gently with the dressing, being careful not to mash the goat cheese.
5. Divide the salad among four large plates, scatter the toasted seeds, and serve.

BUFFALO CHICKEN TENDERS WITH CELERY AND BLUE CHEESE SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

3 quarts canola oil

1½ pounds chicken tenders

Corn flour or masa harina for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

¾ cup bottled buffalo wing sauce

2 celery hearts, sliced diagonally

1¼ cups crumbled blue cheese

⅔ cup mayonnaise

1. In a large pot, heat the oil to 400 degrees.

2. Dredge the chicken tenders in corn flour. Add to the hot oil and cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, or until golden brown and cooked through. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper. In a large bowl, toss the tenders with the buffalo wing sauce.

3. Meanwhile, combine the celery, blue cheese, and mayonnaise in a large bowl. Stir to coat the celery, and season with salt and pepper. Set aside.

4. To serve, divide the celery salad among four plates and pile an equal amount of chicken tenders on top of each salad.

PEANUT CHICKEN AND RADICCHIO SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$14.25

2½ pounds roasted chicken breast, shredded

1¼ cups Thai peanut sauce

3 oranges, peeled and segmented

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (¾-pound) head radicchio, sliced crosswise into ½-inch-wide strips

½ cup salted peanuts

1. In a medium bowl, thoroughly combine the chicken and peanut sauce. Gently stir in the orange segments. Season with salt and pepper.

2. Form a bed of radicchio on each of four plates. Pile the chicken salad on top. Drizzle with any dressing remaining in the bowl. Sprinkle the peanuts over the salads, and serve.

CHICKEN AND CHOPPED SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$11.50

½ cup vegetable oil

4 thin-cut chicken breast cutlets

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

½ cup flour

2 eggs

6 cups sliced iceberg lettuce

6 tablespoons India relish

⅔ cup Dijonnaise

1. Heat the oil in a large nonstick sauté pan until very hot.

2. Meanwhile, season the chicken with salt and pepper and dredge in the flour. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl.

3. When the oil is hot, dip the chicken into the eggs to coat and place in the pan. Cook until golden on the first side. Turn and cook until the other side is golden, about 3 to 4 minutes total. Drain on paper towels.

4. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, toss the lettuce with the relish and Dijonnaise. Season with salt and pepper to taste.

5. Divide the salad among four plates. Place a chicken breast on top of each salad. Serve immediately.

WARM WALDORF CHICKEN SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$14.25

⅔ cup raisins

3 tablespoons sherry vinegar

2 tablespoons canola oil

2 Granny Smith apples, cored and sliced

1 cup celery hearts, sliced on the diagonal

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 rotisserie chickens (about 2 pounds each),

skin removed and meat shredded

1 cup mayonnaise

1. Place the raisins and sherry vinegar in a small bowl and microwave for about 2 minutes, or until the raisins have plumped in the vinegar. Or, steep the raisins overnight in the vinegar. Set aside.

2. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan until smoking. Add the apples and celery, season with salt and pepper, and sauté, stirring frequently, for about 2 minutes, or until the apples and celery are hot but still crunchy.

3. Turn off the heat and add the raisins, chicken, and mayonnaise to the pan. Toss well to combine. Season with salt and pepper. Serve immediately.

CHILLED PORK TENDERLOIN SALAD WITH CHOPPED OLIVE DRESSING

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

1 cup pitted mixed olives

2 (5-ounce) jars marinated artichoke hearts, drained,

6 tablespoons liquid reserved

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

8 ounces ricotta salata cheese, crumbled or cut into small cubes

1 pound leftover cooked pork tenderloin, thinly sliced

7 ounces baby arugula

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Roughly chop the olives. Combine with 4 tablespoons of the reserved artichoke liquid and the olive oil in a small bowl.

2. In a large bowl, toss together the artichoke hearts, ricotta salata, and pork with half the olive dressing.

3. In another large bowl, toss the arugula with the remaining 2 tablespoons artichoke liquid. Season with salt and pepper.

4. Divide the arugula among four plates. Arrange the pork salad on top of the arugula equally among the plates. Drizzle the remaining dressing over the salads. Serve.

PROSCIUTTO, PARMIGIANO, PIMIENTO, AND ARUGULA SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.50

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

2 tablespoons white vinegar

6 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

8 cups baby arugula

1½ cups sliced pimientos, drained

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

7 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto

An 8-ounce wedge Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

1. Whisk together the mustard and vinegar in a small bowl. To make the vinaigrette, whisk in olive oil.

2. In a large bowl, combine the arugula and pimientos. Toss gently with the vinaigrette. Season with salt and pepper, and gently fold in the

prosciutto.

3. Arrange the salad on four plates. With a vegetable peeler, shave curls off the chunk of Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese over each salad. Serve.

Sandwiches

HOT CHICKEN AND BRIE SANDWICH WITH TOASTED PECANS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17.50

7 tablespoons butter

4 large slices Italian sourdough bread (cut ¾ inch thick)

Salt

1 pound Brie cheese, cut into thin slices

1 rotisserie chicken (about 2 pounds), skin removed and meat torn into chunks

Freshly ground black pepper

1¼ cups pecan halves

1. Preheat a toaster oven to high or turn on the oven broiler and heat a large sauté pan until smoking.
2. Spread 1 tablespoon butter on both sides of each piece of bread; season with salt. Place in the toaster oven or under the broiler and toast for about a minute, or until golden brown and crunchy on the outside.
3. Remove the bread from the oven and lay half of the Brie on top of the bread. Divide the chicken into 4 portions and pile on top of the Brie. Top the chicken with the remaining Brie. Season the sandwiches with salt and pepper and return to the toaster oven or broiler. Toast until the cheese is melted completely, about 4 more minutes.
4. Meanwhile, melt the remaining 3 tablespoons butter in the hot pan. Add the pecan halves and cook, stirring and tossing often, until they turn darker brown and develop a rich toasted aroma. Season with salt and pepper, and drain on paper towels.
5. Top each sandwich with one-quarter of the pecans, and serve.

HOT TURKEY “COLESLAW” SANDWICH

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13

1 pound thinly sliced roasted turkey breast

4 slices cinnamon raisin swirl bread

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3⅓ cups prepared sweet-and-sour red cabbage, drained

¼ cup jalapeño vinegar (or liquid from pickled jalapeños)

3 tablespoons honey

1. Preheat a toaster oven to high or turn on the oven broiler.
2. Divide the turkey into 4 portions and pile evenly on the bread. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Toss the cabbage, jalapeño vinegar, and honey together and season with salt and pepper. Spread this “coleslaw” evenly over the turkey.
4. Place the sandwiches in the toaster oven or under the broiler and toast for 5 minutes, watching to make sure they don’t burn. Serve.



Hot-and-Sour Shrimp Rice Noodle Soup

MUSHROOM AND RED ONION BURGERS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$12

2 cups chopped mushrooms of your choice

¼ cup pickled jalapeños, chopped

1 pound ground beef

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

½ red onion, thinly sliced

4 hamburger buns, split

1. Preheat a grill pan until very hot.
2. In a medium bowl, mix the mushrooms, jalapeños, and ground beef and season thoroughly with salt and pepper. Divide the mixture into 4 equal portions, and form each into a ¾-to 1-inch-thick patty. Season again with salt and pepper if necessary.
3. Place the patties on the grill. Cook for about 2½ minutes, and turn. Top each burger with a few slices of onion, and cook for another 2½ minutes, or until the desired doneness.
4. Place the burgers on the buns, and serve with your favorite condiments.



Mushroom and Red Onion Burger

ROAST BEEF WRAP WITH GARLIC RELISH

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.50

4 large flatbreads, lavash, or large flour tortillas

1 cup plain yogurt, preferably Greek

¼ cup prepared garlic relish

1 pound thinly sliced roast beef

3 cups baby arugula

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat a grill pan until very hot.
2. Place the flatbreads on the grill and cook them, turning once, until they are hot and have grill marks on both sides, about 45 seconds per side.
3. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine the yogurt and garlic relish.
4. To assemble the wraps, lay the flatbreads on a work surface. Spread some of the yogurt mixture on each and then top each with a thin layer of roast beef. Continue with alternating layers of the remaining yogurt and roast beef, finishing with yogurt. Scatter the arugula on top and season well with salt and pepper. Roll each flatbread up tightly and secure with a toothpick or small skewer. Serve.

HAM ON RYE WITH ARTICHOKE AND DIJON

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$15

4 tablespoons butter, softened

6 tablespoons Dijon mustard

1 (14-ounce) can artichoke hearts, drained and chopped

½ Vidalia onion, very thinly sliced

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 pound sliced honey ham

4 slices rye bread

1. Preheat a toaster oven to high or turn on the oven broiler.
2. In a medium bowl, beat together the butter and mustard until well blended. Add the artichokes and onion and season with salt and pepper. Toss until evenly coated. Set aside.
3. Divide the ham equally among the slices of bread. Top with the artichoke mixture and spread evenly over the ham.
4. Place the sandwiches in the toaster oven or under the broiler and toast for 5 minutes, or until the tops are golden brown. Serve.



Ham on Rye with Artichokes and Dijon

TOASTED HOT DOG REUBEN

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17.75

6 hot dogs

8 slices rye bread

8 (1-ounce) slices Swiss cheese

1½ cups sauerkraut, drained well

½ cup Thousand Island dressing

1. Preheat a panini press or turn on the broiler.
2. Slice each hot dog crosswise in half, then cut lengthwise into ½-inch-thick slices.
3. Lay 4 slices of bread on a work surface. Cover each piece of bread with a slice of cheese and one-quarter of the hot dog slices. Pile the sauerkraut on top of the hot dog slices. Spoon 2 tablespoons of the dressing evenly over each mound of sauerkraut and top with the remaining cheese, then the remaining bread. Place in the panini press, or under the broiler, and cook until the cheese is melted and sandwich is hot throughout, about 5 minutes. Serve hot.

Panini

FETA AND KALAMATA PANINI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17.50

4 Portuguese or sandwich rolls, split

12 ounces feta cheese, cut into thin slices

1 cup jarred roasted red peppers, cut into thin strips

½ cup chopped Kalamata olives

2 small fennel bulbs, shaved or thinly sliced, green tops reserved

1½ tablespoons sherry vinegar

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat a panini press on the highest setting. Or heat a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat for several minutes.
2. Lay out the bottoms of the rolls on a work surface. Cover with half of the cheese slices. Top the cheese with the red peppers and the olives. Top with the remaining cheese and then with the top halves of the rolls.
3. Place the sandwiches in the panini press or in the frying pan. If using a frying pan, weight the sandwiches by placing a cake pan (smaller than the diameter of your frying pan) over them and placing a heavy can of similar weight in the cake pan; turn the sandwiches with a spatula midway through the cooking time, replacing the cake pan and weight. Cook for 5 minutes, or until the bread is crisp and the cheese is melted.
4. Meanwhile, toss the fennel with the sherry vinegar and the olive oil in a bowl. Chop the reserved fennel greens and add to the salad. Season with salt and pepper.
5. When the sandwiches are ready, slice in half and serve each with a mound of the fennel salad.

SMOKED SALMON AND SWISS CHEESE PANINI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18

½ cup piccalilli relish

8 slices pumpernickel bread

8 ounces sliced Swiss cheese

10 to 12 ounces thinly sliced smoked salmon

2 celery hearts, each trimmed to 4 inches and quartered

1. Preheat a panini press. Or heat a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat for several minutes.
2. Spread 1 tablespoon of the piccalilli evenly on each slice of bread. Layer the Swiss cheese and salmon on 4 of the slices, and top with the remaining 4 slices of bread.
3. Place the sandwiches in the panini press or frying pan. If using a frying pan, weight the sandwiches by placing a cake pan (smaller than the diameter of your frying pan) over them and placing a heavy can of similar weight in the cake pan; turn the sandwiches with a spatula midway through the cooking time, replacing the cake pan and weight. Cook for 4 minutes, or until the bread is crispy and the cheese is melted; be careful not to let the salmon cook. Remove the sandwiches from the press or pan, slice in half, and serve with the celery.

ROAST BEEF AND BOURSIN PANINI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

4 slices crusty Italian or semolina bread

1½ (5.2-ounce) packages Boursin cheese, softened

¼ cup chopped cocktail onions

1 pound sliced deli roast beef

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 cups radishes, washed and quartered

1. Preheat a panini press. Or heat a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat for several minutes.

2. Slice each piece of bread lengthwise in half. Spread each slice with Boursin cheese. Scatter the pickled onions over the 4 bottom halves of the bread slices. Top with the roast beef and season with salt and pepper. Cover with the remaining bread.

3. Place the sandwiches in the panini press or frying pan. If using a frying pan, weight the sandwiches by placing a cake pan (smaller than the diameter of your frying pan) over them and placing a heavy can of similar weight in the cake pan; turn the sandwiches with a spatula midway through the cooking time, replacing the cake pan and weight. Cook for 5 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and the bread is crisp. Cut the sandwiches in half and serve with the radishes.



Roast Beef and Boursin Panini

PROSCIUTTO, MOZZARELLA, AND TOMATO PANINI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$14.50

4 large slices crusty Italian bread, split in half

12 ounces fresh mozzarella, thinly sliced

6 ounces thinly sliced prosciutto

2 ripe tomatoes, thinly sliced

½ cup fresh basil leaves

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

1. Preheat a panini press. Or heat a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat for several minutes.

2. Lay the bread on a work surface and layer the mozzarella, prosciutto, tomatoes, and basil on each slice. Season well with salt and pepper and drizzle with the olive oil. Close the sandwiches.

3. Place the sandwiches in the panini press or frying pan. If using a frying pan, weight the sandwiches by placing a cake pan (smaller than the diameter of your frying pan) over them and placing a heavy can of similar weight in the cake pan; turn the sandwiches with a spatula midway through the cooking time, replacing the cake pan and weight. Cook until the cheese is melted, about 5 minutes total. Cut in half and serve.

HAM AND GORGONZOLA PANINI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19

6 ounces Gorgonzola cheese, thinly sliced

4 Portuguese or sandwich rolls, split

1 pound thinly sliced honey ham

½ cup prepared sweet Vidalia onion condiment

2 large fennel bulbs, trimmed and each cut into 8 wedges

1. Preheat a panini press. Or heat a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat for several minutes.

2. Lay half of the cheese on the bottom halves of the rolls. Layer on the ham and onions, then top with the remaining cheese. Cover each sandwich with the top half of the roll.

3. Place the sandwiches in the panini press or frying pan. If using a frying pan, weight the sandwiches by placing a cake pan (smaller than the diameter of your frying pan) over them and placing a heavy can of similar weight in the cake pan; turn the sandwiches with a spatula midway through the cooking time, replacing the cake pan and weight. Cook until the cheese is melted and the bread is crispy, about 5 minutes total. Slice the sandwiches in half, and serve with the fennel.

Sides

ALL-PURPOSE MUSHROOM MIX

Yield: About 2½ cups *Estimated Cost:* \$7 with cultivated mushrooms,

\$18 with a mix of wild mushrooms

8 tablespoons (1 stick) unsalted butter

6 cups sliced wild or cultivated mushrooms

¼ cup finely chopped shallots

2 teaspoons chopped fresh thyme

⅓ cup sweet white wine

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat a large sauté pan until smoking. Add the butter to the pan and follow immediately with the mushrooms. Sauté for about 1 minute, stirring as the mushrooms begin to take on color.
2. Push aside the mushrooms to clear a small space on one side of the pan. Add the shallots and cook, stirring occasionally, until fragrant. Mix the shallots and the thyme into the mushrooms.
3. Add the wine and simmer until evaporated. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve.

CANNELLINI WITH TRICOLOR PEPPERS, TOMATO, AND PARSLEY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$6.75

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 (7-ounce) package diced red, green, and yellow bell peppers

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 cloves garlic, chopped

⅓ cup tomato paste

2 (15-ounce) cans cannellini, 1 can drained

⅓ cup chopped flat-leaf parsley

1. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan. Add the peppers, season with salt and pepper, and sauté, stirring frequently, until almost tender. Push the peppers aside to clear a small space on one side of the pan and add the garlic. Cook, stirring, until the garlic is fragrant. Then mix the garlic into the peppers.
2. Add the tomato paste and beans to the pan, mixing thoroughly. Cook until the beans are heated through, adding a little water if necessary. Season with salt and pepper, and sprinkle the parsley over all. Serve.

GOOD OL' RICE AND BEANS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$4*

2¼ cups water

1½ teaspoons ground achiote

1¼ teaspoons salt

2½ cups instant rice

1 (15-ounce) can black beans

½ cup chopped fresh cilantro

2 limes, cut into wedges

1. In a medium saucepan, bring the water, achiote, and salt to a boil. Add the rice, stir, and cover. Turn off the heat and allow the rice to stand for 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, pour the beans into a medium bowl or a saucepan and heat in the microwave for 3 minutes, or heat on the stovetop until completely hot. Drain.
3. Stir the beans and cilantro into the rice. Season with additional salt if necessary. Serve with the lime wedges.

MAMMA'S VEGETABLE GIAMBOTTA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$14*

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

3 cups mixed wild mushrooms, sliced into bite-size pieces

1¼ cups (½-inch) cubanelle peppers, sliced

1 cup store-bought precooked cubed Bliss potatoes

1½ cups tomato puree

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

⅓ cup shredded fresh basil

1. In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat.

2. Add the mushrooms and cubanelle peppers and cook for 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the potatoes and cook for 1 minute. Stir in the tomato puree and cook until the mixture is heated through, about 2 minutes more. Season with salt and pepper, add the basil, and serve.

SCALLOPED POTATOES WITH GRUYÈRE CHEESE AND MUSHROOMS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$13*

1½ pounds store-bought precooked scallop-cut potatoes

1½ cups thinly sliced shiitake mushrooms

7 ounces gruyère cheese, grated

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

½ cup heavy cream

1. Preheat the broiler.

2. Spread the potatoes in a 13 × 17-inch baking dish. Scatter the mushrooms over the potatoes and sprinkle the cheese evenly over all. Season with salt and pepper and drizzle with the cream. Microwave on high for 4 minutes.

3. Place the dish under the broiler for 1 minute, or until the cheese is bubbling and beginning to turn golden brown. Serve.

SOFT POLENTA WITH WILD MUSHROOMS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$15.75*

4 cups water

6 cloves garlic, chopped

1 (¾ ounce) package fresh thyme, leaves picked and chopped

8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter

4 cups mixed wild mushrooms, torn or cut into 1-inch pieces

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

¾ cup instant polenta

1½ cups grated Pecorino-Romano cheese

1. Combine the water, two-thirds of the garlic, and half of the thyme in a medium saucepan. Bring to a simmer over high heat.

2. Meanwhile, heat a large sauté pan over high heat. When hot, add half the butter, then the mushrooms and remaining thyme. Sauté, stirring occasionally, for about 3 minutes.

3. Clear a small space on one side of the pan and add the remaining garlic. Cook, stirring, until the garlic is fragrant. Stir the garlic into the mushrooms. Season with salt and pepper. Keep warm over low heat.

4. Once the water simmers, gradually sprinkle in the polenta, whisking constantly, for about 3 minutes, or until the polenta absorbs all the liquid and is tender. Whisk in the cheese and remaining butter. Season with salt and pepper and pour into a large bowl.

5. Spoon the mushrooms over the polenta and serve.

Vegetarian Main Dishes

BASIL AND POTATO FRITTATA WITH FRISÉE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$8

6 tablespoons olive oil

2 cups store-bought precooked cubed golden potatoes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

12 eggs

⅓ cup chopped fresh basil

1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar

7 ounces frisée, cut into bite-size pieces

An 8-ounce wedge Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

1. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.
2. Heat ¼ cup of the olive oil in a large ovenproof sauté pan until smoking. Add the potatoes, season with salt and pepper, and cook for about 2 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, beat the eggs in a bowl. Season well with salt and pepper and mix in the basil. Add the eggs to the pan. Stir until the eggs begin to form large curds but are still wet.
4. Smooth the top of the mixture so that it is level. Place the pan in the oven and cook for about 2 minutes, or until set. Remove from the oven and loosen the sides of the frittata with a spatula. Invert onto a large plate or cutting board and slice into wedges.
5. Meanwhile, mix together the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil and the sherry vinegar. Toss the frisée with this vinaigrette and season with salt and pepper. With a vegetable peeler, shave curls from the chunk of Parmigiano-Reggiano onto the salad. Serve the salad alongside the wedges of frittata.

EGGPLANT PARMIGIANO

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.50

2 cups canola oil

2 cups prepared Fra Diavolo Sauce

2 large eggplants

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 eggs

3 cups dried bread crumbs

8 ounces sharp provolone cheese, thinly sliced

1. Heat 1 cup of the oil in each of two large sauté pans. Heat the fra diavolo sauce in a microwave for about 3 minutes, or heat on the stovetop over medium-high heat until very hot; stir once during heating. Keep warm.
2. Meanwhile, trim each eggplant to about 5 inches long and 4 inches wide. Slice lengthwise into ¾-inch-thick slices; you will need 8 slices total. Spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow dish. Spread the bread crumbs on another plate.
3. Lay 4 eggplant slices out on a work surface and cover each with one-quarter of the provolone. Top with the remaining 4 eggplant slices and press down firmly. Dredge the stacks in the flour, then in the eggs, then in the bread crumbs to coat. Season well with salt and pepper.
4. Place 2 eggplant stacks in each sauté pan and cook for 2½ minutes per side, or until they are golden brown and crispy and the cheese is melted. Place one stack on each plate, top with about ½ cup fra diavolo sauce, and serve.

RED ONION FRITTATA WITH BABY SPINACH

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$9.25

3 tablespoons canola oil

3 medium-large red onions, very thinly sliced

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

12 eggs

7 ounces baby spinach

2 tablespoons sherry vinegar

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

1. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

2. Heat the canola oil in a large ovenproof sauté pan until hot. Add the onions, season with salt and pepper, and cook until tender, about 3 minutes.

3. Meanwhile, beat the eggs in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper, and add to the pan. Stir until they begin to form large curds but are still wet.

4. Place the frittata in the oven for about 2 minutes, or until the eggs have just set. Remove from the oven and loosen the sides of the frittata with a rubber spatula. Invert the frittata onto a large plate or a cutting board and cut into wedges.

5. In a large bowl, toss the spinach with the vinegar and olive oil. Season with salt and pepper. Serve a small mound of salad alongside each wedge of frittata.

SOFT SCRAMBLED EGGS WITH ASPARAGUS ON TOASTED CROISSANTS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$13.25*

4 medium croissants, split

4 tablespoons butter

16 asparagus spears, tough ends trimmed and thinly sliced

3 large shallots, minced

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

12 eggs

2 tablespoons chopped fresh tarragon

1. Preheat the toaster oven to high or turn on the oven broiler. Place the croissants cut side up in the toaster oven or under the broiler and toast until golden brown and crisp, about 1 minute.

2. Meanwhile, heat a large sauté pan. Add the butter. When it melts and bubbles, add the asparagus and shallots, season with salt and pepper, and cook until tender, about 3 minutes.

3. Beat the eggs in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper and add to the pan. Stir gently to scramble the eggs. When the eggs start to set, turn off the heat; the “carry-over” heat will finish cooking the eggs. Be careful not to overcook them.

4. To serve, place 2 croissant halves on each plate and spoon one-quarter of the scrambled egg mixture on top. Sprinkle with the tarragon and serve.

TOFU AND RED PEPPER FLASH-FRY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$13.50*

2 quarts corn oil

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 eggs

1¼ pounds tofu, sliced 1 inch thick

2 red bell peppers, cored, seeded, and sliced

1¼ cups prepared garlic rib sauce

1 large bunch scallions, sliced thin

1. Heat the oil in a large pot until very hot but not smoking, about 400 degrees.

2. Meanwhile, spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow dish. Dredge the tofu and peppers in the flour, then dip in the beaten eggs to coat. Add to the hot oil and stir gently to make sure the ingredients do not stick together. Cook for about 5 minutes, until golden and crisp. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper.

3. Place the tofu and peppers in a large bowl and toss with the sauce and scallions. Serve immediately.

WHITE BEAN AND MUSHROOM CHILI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$1125*

⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil

1 small onion, diced

6 cups sliced portabella mushrooms

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (15-ounce) can cannellini beans, drained

2 cups prepared marinara sauce

1 tablespoon chili powder

1. In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil until hot but not smoking. Add the onion and cook for 1 minute, or until it starts to soften. Add the portabellas and cook for another 2 minutes. Season well with salt and pepper.

2. Add the beans, marinara sauce, and chili powder and bring to a simmer. Taste to check the seasoning, and serve hot.

Pasta and Noodle Main Dishes

RICE NOODLES WITH SPICY PEANUT SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$12

1 pound wide rice noodles

¾ cup canola oil

1 (10-ounce) package sliced peppers and onions

Salt

1 (11.5-ounce) jar peanut sauce

½ cup chopped fresh cilantro

½ cup salted peanuts

1. In a large bowl, cover the rice noodles with hot water and stir to separate the noodles. Allow to soak for 30 minutes; drain well.
2. Heat ¼ cup of the oil in each of two large sauté pans until hot but not smoking. Divide the peppers and onions between the two pans and stir-fry for about 2 minutes. Season with salt. Add half of the noodles to each pan and stir-fry for another 3 minutes, or until the noodles are cooked through.
3. Transfer the noodles to a large serving bowl, add the sauce and cilantro, and toss to coat. Season with salt if necessary, and sprinkle the peanuts on top. Serve hot.

GNOCCHI WITH TOASTED GARLIC, WALNUTS, AND BITTER GREENS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.50

2 (17.5-ounce) packages fresh potato gnocchi

¾ cup extra virgin olive oil

5 cloves garlic, chopped

1¼ cups walnut halves, slightly crushed

3 cups packaged mixed bitter greens (collard, mustard, and turnip greens)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup grated Pecorino-Romano cheese

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the gnocchi and cook according to the package instructions. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan until hot. Add the garlic and walnuts and cook until the garlic is a deep golden brown and nuts are aromatic, about 3 minutes. Add the greens and season with salt and pepper. Cook, stirring frequently, until the greens are wilted.
3. Add the gnocchi to the pan and toss to coat. Sprinkle with the Pecorino-Romano. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve immediately.



Gnocchi with Toasted Garlic, Walnuts, and Bitter Greens

CAPELLINI WITH LITTLENECK CLAMS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.25 *Salt*

1 pound capellini (angel hair pasta)

¾ cup extra virgin olive oil

4 large cloves garlic, chopped

1½ teaspoons red pepper flakes

1 cup bottled clam juice

3 dozen littleneck clams, scrubbed

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the capellini and cook according to the package instructions. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, in a large pot, heat the olive oil until hot but not smoking. Add the garlic and red pepper flakes and cook until the garlic is a deep golden brown. Add the clam juice and bring to a rolling boil.
3. Add the clams to the pot, cover, and cook just until the clams open, about 2½ minutes.
4. Toss the capellini with the clam mixture. Taste, and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve hot.



Capellini with Littleneck Clams

CAPELLINI ALLA PUTTANESCA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$15

Salt

1 pound capellini (angel hair pasta)

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

5 cloves garlic, thinly sliced

10 anchovy fillets, chopped

1 (24-ounce) jar fra diavolo sauce

3 tablespoons capers

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to the package instructions. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan until hot. Add the garlic and sauté for 1 minute, stirring constantly. Add the anchovies and cook for 1 minute, mashing the anchovies with the back of a spoon. Add the sauce and capers and bring to a simmer.
3. Toss the pasta with the sauce. Serve hot.

HANDKERCHIEF PASTA WITH LOBSTER, BOK CHOY, AND LEMON CREAM SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.50

10 ounces fresh pasta sheets

2 tablespoons corn oil

1½ large heads bok choy, sliced crosswise (about 9 cups)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (¼-pound) store-cooked lobster, meat removed from shell (ask your fishseller to do this, if you like) and cut into small chunks, or 2½ cups cooked lobster meat

8 ounces crème fraîche

Grated zest of 4 lemons

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Meanwhile, cut the pasta sheets in 3½-inch squares; you should have about 20 squares.
2. Heat the corn oil in a large sauté pan until very hot. Add the bok choy, season with salt and pepper, and stir-fry until tender, about 1½ minutes.
3. Add the lobster to the pan, then stir in the crème fraîche and lemon zest.
4. Meanwhile, add the pasta squares to the boiling water and cook, stirring frequently, for about 1 minute, until tender. Drain.
5. Gently toss the pasta “handkerchiefs” with the lobster-bok choy sauce. Taste and adjust the seasoning if necessary. Serve immediately.

WARM CHICKEN, FETA, AND MELON SEED PASTA SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19

1½ cups semi di melone pasta

1 rotisserie chicken (about 2 pounds)

10 ounces feta cheese, cubed or crumbled

½ cup thinly sliced drained hot cherry peppers

⅔ cup roughly torn fresh basil leaves

½ cup extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta and cook according to the package instructions. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, remove the chicken skin and shred the meat into bite-size pieces. Place the chicken in a large bowl, along with all of its juices.
3. Add the pasta to the bowl. Add the feta, hot cherry peppers, basil leaves, and olive oil and toss. Season with salt and pepper, and serve warm.



Warm Chicken, Feta, and Melon Seed Pasta Salad

PIEROGI WITH HAM, DANDELION GREENS, AND SOUR CREAM MUSTARD SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17

24 store-bought potato and mushroom pierogi

1 tablespoon canola oil

4 cups trimmed dandelion greens

1½ cups diced ham

⅓ cup Dijon mustard

1¼ cups sour cream

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pierogi and cook according to the package instructions. Drain.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large sauté pan until hot. Add the dandelion greens and cook, stirring constantly, until wilted, about 1½ minutes. Add the ham, mustard, and sour cream. Cook until heated through; do not boil.
3. Add the pierogi to the pan and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper if necessary, and serve.

LINGUINE ALLA CARBONARA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$14.50

1 tablespoon olive oil

8 ounces bacon, sliced crosswise into ⅓-inch-wide strips

1 medium-large onion, cut into small dice

14 ounces fresh linguine

6 egg yolks

1½ cups grated Parmigiano-Reggiano

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil.
2. Meanwhile, heat the olive oil in a very large sauté pan. Add the bacon and onion and cook, stirring frequently, for about 4 minutes, or until the onion is tender and the bacon is just beginning to color.
3. Add the linguine to the boiling water and cook according to package directions.
4. While the bacon and onion are cooking, gradually whisk 1 cup of the pasta cooking water into the egg yolks.

5. Drain the pasta and add it to the pan with the bacon and onion and stir well. Turn off the heat. Add the egg mixture and 1 cup of the Parmigiano to the pan. Toss to combine and coat the pasta thoroughly. The sauce will thicken as it rests. Season with salt and lots of freshly ground black pepper and transfer to a large serving bowl. Sprinkle the remaining Parmigiano on top of the pasta, and serve.

SAUSAGE LASAGNA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18

9 ounces fresh pasta sheets

1 (24-ounce) jar marinara sauce

8 cooked hot Italian sausages, cut into ½-inch slices

½ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (12-ounce) package shredded whole-milk mozzarella (preferably low-moisture)

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Add the pasta sheets and cook for 1 minute. Drain and rinse with cold water to cool.

2. Spread one-quarter of the pasta sauce evenly over the bottom of a 15 × 10 ½-inch glass baking dish. Lay one-third of the sheets of pasta over the sauce, overlapping them only slightly if necessary. Spoon another one-quarter of the sauce on top of the pasta. Scatter half of the sausage slices over the sauce. Sprinkle half the Parmigiano evenly over the sausage. Repeat this process one more time. Arrange the remaining pasta on top and top with the remaining sauce. Season lightly with salt and pepper. Sprinkle the mozzarella over the top of the lasagna, covering it evenly.

3. Cover the lasagna tightly with plastic wrap. Microwave on high power for 4 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and the lasagna is hot throughout. Allow to sit for a minute before removing the plastic wrap, then cut into 4 rectangles and serve.

Fish and Shellfish Main Dishes

SOLE WITH CHARRED RED ONIONS AND LEMON BUTTER

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18

4 small red onions, sliced into very thin rings

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3½ sticks butter, cut into tablespoon-size chunks

Grated zest of 3 lemons plus ½ cup fresh lemon juice

4 sole fillets (about 1½pounds total)

1 (⅔-ounce) package chives, chopped

1. Preheat the broiler. Preheat a large sauté pan over medium heat.

2. Spread the onions on a baking sheet. Season with salt and pepper and dot with 4 tablespoons of the butter. Broil for 5 minutes, or until slightly charred and tender.

3. Meanwhile, in a small pot, bring the lemon zest and juice to a boil. Add 2 sticks of the butter; bring to a boil. Add the remaining stick and blend with an immersion blender until creamy and emulsified (or use a regular blender).

4. Add the lemon butter to the preheated pan and heat to just below a simmer, never to a boil. Season the sole with salt and pepper and add to the lemon butter. Cover and allow to poach for 3 minutes, or until just cooked through. Add the chives to the pan.

5. Mound a pile of onions on each plate and top with the sole. Spoon a generous amount of lemon butter on top and serve.

PARMIGIANO FLOUNDER WITH WHITE BEANS AND OLIVE TAPENADE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.25

Olive oil

4 flounder fillets (about 1¼ pounds total)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

2½ (15-ounce) cans cannellini beans, drained

1¾ cups prepared marinara sauce

1 cup prepared tapenade

1. Preheat the broiler. Line the broiler pan with aluminum foil and lightly coat with olive oil. Arrange the flounder fillets on the foil and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle the top of the fillets generously with the Parmigiano, coating them thoroughly.
2. Place the fish under the broiler and broil for 3 to 5 minutes, depending on the thickness of the fillets; the cheese should bubble and turn golden brown.
3. Meanwhile, in a large sauté pan heat the beans, marinara sauce, and tapenade over high heat until hot. Season with salt and pepper if necessary.
4. To serve, divide the beans among four large bowls, and lay the flounder on top of the beans.

SEA BASS WITH LEEKS, CHESTNUTS, AND DATES

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

3 tablespoons butter

4 medium leeks, washed and sliced thinly on the diagonal

1 (15-ounce) can chestnuts in syrup, drained, liquid reserved, and chopped

½ cup chopped dates

2 tablespoons cider vinegar

1 cup water

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1¼ pounds sea bass filets, sliced diagonally into 12 thin medallions

1. Heat the butter in a large sauté pan until hot but not smoking. Add the leeks and cook for about 2 minutes, or until they are nearly tender.
2. Add the chestnuts, dates, vinegar, and water and bring to a boil. Season with salt and pepper and lower the heat to a simmer. Season the sea bass with salt and pepper and add to the pan. Cover and simmer for about 2 minutes, or until the fish is just cooked through.
3. Arrange the fish on four plates and spoon the sauce over. Serve hot.

COD FLASH-FRY WITH MINT

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$17.75*

2 quarts canola oil

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 eggs

1 pound cod fillet, cut into 1-inch chunks

2 large Vidalia onions, cut into ½-inch rings

1 cup prepared General Tso's sauce

⅓ cup chopped fresh mint

1. In a large pot, heat the oil until very hot but not smoking, about 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl. Separate the Vidalia rings, and dredge the cod and onions in the flour, then dip in the eggs to coat. Add the cod and onions to the oil, being careful that they do not clump together. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring frequently, until golden brown. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper.
3. In a large bowl, toss the cod and onions with the sauce and mint. Serve immediately.

COD PROVENÇAL

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$15.25*

1 (20-ounce) can whole plum tomatoes in puree

4 thin cod fillets (about 1½ pounds total), cut crosswise into 3-inch-wide pieces

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1½ cups bread crumbs

6 tablespoons olive oil

2 cloves garlic, chopped

2 tablespoons chopped fresh oregano

1. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

2. Meanwhile, remove the tomatoes from the puree and coarsely chop them. Mix back into the puree, then spread on a foil-lined baking pan. Season the cod with salt and pepper and arrange on top of the sauce.

3. In a small bowl, mix the bread crumbs with the olive oil, garlic, and oregano. Season with salt and pepper. Cover the cod evenly with this mixture and place in the oven.

4. Bake for 3½ minutes. Turn on the broiler and broil until the fish is just cooked through and the bread crumbs are golden brown. Serve hot.

RED, WHITE, AND GREEN COD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$20.25*

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

4 cloves garlic, crushed

1½ pounds cod fillet, cut into 1-inch chunks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (14½-ounce) large can lentil soup, about 2 cups

1 (7-ounce) jar pimientos, drained and cut into strips

¼ cup chopped flat-leaf fresh parsley

1. In a large sauté pan, heat the oil until hot but not smoking. Add the garlic and sauté until it begins to turn golden.

2. Season the cod with salt and pepper and add to the pan. When the cod chunks begin to brown on the first side, flip them and add the lentil soup and pimientos to the pan. Bring to a simmer and cook just until the fish is cooked through. Adjust the seasoning and serve, sprinkling the parsley on top.

TROUT WITH BUTTERNUT SQUASH AND BLOOD ORANGES

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

6 small blood or navel oranges

6 tablespoons butter

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (12-ounce) package frozen butternut squash puree

2 tablespoons canola oil

4 rainbow trout fillets (about 6 ounces each), skin on

1. With a sharp knife, remove the peel and white pith from 4 of the oranges. Working over a bowl to catch the juice, separate the oranges into segments. Set the segments aside, and reserve the juice. Squeeze the juice from the remaining 2 oranges and combine with the reserved juice.
2. Heat a very large straight-sided sauté pan over high heat. Add the orange juice and bring to a simmer. Simmer rapidly to reduce the juice until thick and syrupy, about 3 minutes.
3. Add the butter and swirl the pan to blend the butter with the juice. Add the orange segments and season lightly with salt. Lower the heat to keep the mixture warm.
4. Meanwhile, microwave the butternut puree for 5 minutes, or according to the package instructions; keep warm.
5. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan over high heat. Season the trout with salt and pepper. Place skin side down in the pan and cook for about 3½ minutes, or until the skin is crisp and golden. Turn and continue to cook for another 1½ minutes.
6. To serve, make a mound of one-quarter of the squash puree in the center of each plate. Top with the trout and spoon the orange sauce and segments over all.

CORNMEAL AND RED ONION-CRUSTED SKATE WITH LIME BUTTER

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17

⅔ cup corn oil

4 (5-to 6-ounce) pieces skinless skate fillet

2 egg whites, beaten

2 small red onions, thinly sliced

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup yellow cornmeal

8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter

6 tablespoons fresh lime juice

1. Heat ⅔ cup of the oil in each of two large sauté pans until very hot.
2. Meanwhile, lay the skate on a work surface. Brush the tops with egg white and layer the onion slices on top of the skate to cover it completely. Brush gently with egg white again and season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle liberally with the cornmeal to coat the top of the fish.
3. Gently shake the fillets to remove excess cornmeal and carefully place, onion side down, in the hot oil. Cook until the cornmeal begins to turn golden brown.
4. Holding the skate with a spatula, drain the oil from each pan. Add 4 tablespoons of the butter to each pan. Cook over medium heat until the butter turns brown. Turn the skate and cook for 30 seconds on the other side.
5. Turn off the heat. Transfer the fish to serving plates, and add 3 tablespoons of the lime juice to each pan. Stir well; season the lime butter with salt and pepper. Serve the skate with the lime butter spooned around and over it.

BLACK-AND-TAN SALMON WITH SCALLIONS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13.50

2 tablespoons corn oil

1½ pounds skinless salmon fillet, cut into 4 portions

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 large (14½-ounce) cans black bean soup, about 4 cups

Grated zest of 1 large lime, plus 1 tablespoon fresh lime juice

¼ cup prepared sweet mango chutney

1 bunch scallions, sliced

1. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan over high heat until very hot.

2. Season the salmon on both sides with salt and pepper and place it in the pan. Cook for about 3 minutes, or until it is a beautiful golden brown on the first side.

3. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine the soup, lime zest and juice, and chutney.

4. When the the salmon is browned, flip it over and add the soup mixture to the pan. Simmer for about 2 minutes for medium, or until the salmon is cooked to the desired doneness. Season with salt and pepper if necessary, sprinkle with the scallions, and serve.



Black-and-Tan Salmon with Scallions

HONEY-GLAZED SALMON WITH CINNAMON, CARROTS, AND CHICORY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$16.75

4 thin skinless salmon fillets (about 1½ pounds total)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

½ cup honey

3 tablespoons corn oil

4 carrots, peeled and thinly sliced

5 cups chicory or curly endive, thinly sliced

2 tablespoons white vinegar

1. Preheat the broiler. Season the salmon with salt and pepper and place on the broiling pan.

2. In a small bowl, mix the cinnamon and honey. Lightly coat the salmon with this mixture; reserve the remainder. Broil the salmon for 5 minutes, or until lightly charred. Keep warm.

3. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large sauté pan until hot but not smoking. Add the carrots to the hot oil and cook for about 2 minutes, stirring frequently. Add the chicory and season with salt and pepper. Cook until the chicory is wilted and tender.

4. Add the vinegar and the reserved honey mixture to the pan and toss to coat the carrots and chicory.

5. Arrange the bed of carrot-chicory mixture on each plate, and serve the salmon on top.

SALMON IN BUTTERNUT SQUASH BARBECUE SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18

3 small red onions, cut into 1/5-inch-thick rings

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 tablespoons butter, cut into small chunks

2 (16-ounce) cans butternut squash soup

1/3 cup barbecue sauce

1 1/2 pounds skinless salmon fillet, cut into 12 thin slices

1. Preheat the broiler. Spread the onions on the broiler pan, season with salt and pepper, and dot with the butter. Broil until charred and tender, about 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, bring the soup and the barbecue sauce to a boil in a large sauté pan. Season the salmon well with salt and pepper. Reduce the heat under the soup and gently place the salmon in the pan. Shake the pan to submerge the fish completely. Cover and cook, keeping the soup just under the simmering point, for about 5 minutes, until the salmon is just cooked through.
3. To serve, pile the onions in the bottom of four large bowls. Top each pile with 3 salmon slices and ladle the soup over the fish.

SALMON WITH SHIITAKE MUSHROOMS IN GINGER-SOY BROTH

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

1 (2-inch) piece ginger, pushed through a garlic press, smashed, or grated fine

1 small head Napa cabbage, quartered and sliced crosswise

7 ounces shiitake mushrooms, sliced

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1/3 cup tamari soy sauce

1 tablespoon sugar

1 tablespoon white vinegar

1 cup water

1 1/4 to 1 1/2 pounds skinless salmon fillet, cut on a diagonal into slices

about 3/4 inch thick

1. Heat a very large sauté pan until smoking. Add the ginger and stir-fry for about 30 seconds. Add the cabbage and shiitakes, season lightly with salt and pepper, and stir-fry until wilted. Add the soy sauce, sugar, vinegar, and water and bring to a simmer.
2. Season the salmon with salt and pepper. Add to the pan, submerging the salmon pieces in the broth as much as possible. Cover the pan, reduce the heat, and cook very gently, just below a simmer, for 2 minutes, or until the salmon is just cooked through. Adjust the seasoning.
3. Ladle the salmon and broth into bowls and serve.

SEARED SALMON WITH SUGAR SNAP PEAS AND HERRING

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$15.75

1 (16-ounce) jar herring in sour cream

3 tablespoons corn oil

4 skinless salmon fillets (about 1 1/2 pounds total)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

8 ounces sugar snap peas

1 bunch scallions, sliced diagonally

1. Microwave the herring for about 3 minutes, stirring gently midway. Keep warm.
2. Meanwhile, put 2 tablespoons of the oil in one large sauté pan, put the remaining 1 tablespoon oil in another large sauté pan, and heat until hot.

3. Season the salmon with salt and pepper and place in the pan containing 2 tablespoons oil. Cook until golden brown on one side, about 2½ minutes; turn and cook for 2½ minutes more, or until just cooked through. Remove from the pan and set aside.

4. Meanwhile, add the sugar snap peas to the other pan and sauté for 2 to 3 minutes, or until tender but slightly crunchy. Season with salt and pepper. Add the hot herring to the pan and toss gently to combine.

5. Arrange a bed of the herring mixture on each plate. Top with the salmon, sprinkle with the scallions, and serve hot.

MAHI-MAHI WITH ENDIVE AND ORANGE MARMALADE GLAZE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$19.25*

½ cup orange marmalade

3 tablespoons sherry vinegar

4 thin mahi-mahi fillets (about 1¼ pounds total)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 tablespoons olive oil

1 teaspoon chopped fresh tarragon

4 medium endive, sliced (about 5 cups)

1. Preheat the broiler. Mix together the orange marmalade and 2 tablespoons of the sherry vinegar. Season the mahi-mahi with salt and pepper, and arrange on the broiling rack. Coat liberally with the marmalade glaze.

2. Broil the fish for 5 minutes, or until it is cooked through and the glaze begins to char.

3. Meanwhile, mix together the remaining 1 tablespoon sherry vinegar, the olive oil, and the tarragon in a medium bowl. Add the endive and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper.

4. Make a bed of endive on each of four plates. Place the mahi-mahi on top of the endive and serve.

GRILLED SQUID WITH COCONUT BROTH, LEEKS, AND PAPAYA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$20*

1¾ pounds squid, cleaned and sliced

¼ cup corn oil

3 large leeks, washed and cut diagonally into thick slices

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 (14-ounce) cans coconut ginger soup

2 small or 1 large ripe papaya, peeled, cut in half, seeded, and

thinly sliced crosswise

⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Heat a grill pan under a hot broiler.

2. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, gently toss the squid with 2 tablespoons of the oil to coat. In another medium bowl, gently toss the leeks with the remaining 2 tablespoons oil to coat; be careful not to separate the leek rings. Season the squid and leeks with salt and pepper.

3. Place the squid and leeks in the grill pan and broil for 3 to 5 minutes, or until the squid is just cooked through and the leeks are tender and slightly charred. The squid may be done before the leeks, so remove it from the pan as you see it cook through.

4. Meanwhile, in a medium pot, heat the soup until boiling.

5. Place the leeks in the center of four bowls. Layer the papaya slices on top, followed by the squid. Ladle the soup into each bowl, sprinkle with the cilantro, and serve hot.

SAVORY SEAFOOD STEW

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.50

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

1¼ cups zucchini cut into ½-inch half-moons

1 to 1¼ pounds lemon sole, cut into 1-inch chunks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 cups store-bought precooked cubed golden potatoes

¼ cup chopped fresh savory, marjoram, or oregano

1 (24-ounce) jar Fra Diavolo Sauce

1. Heat the olive oil in a large sauté pan until hot but not smoking. Add the zucchini and cook for 45 seconds, stirring frequently.
2. Season the lemon sole with salt and pepper and add to the pan. Cook for about 1 minute. Add the potatoes, savory, and sauce, cover, and bring to a boil. Lower the heat to a simmer. Simmer for about 2½ minutes, or until the sole is cooked through and potatoes are hot.
3. Transfer the stew to shallow bowls. Serve hot.

CATFISH AND RICE SOFRITO

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$13.50*

¼ cup corn oil

4 thin catfish fillets (about 1¾ pounds total)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Wondra flour for dusting

2 tablespoons butter

2 cups water

2½ cups instant rice

1 medium red onion, thinly sliced

¼ cup red wine vinegar

1 cup Goya Sofrito

1. Heat the oil in a very large sauté pan until hot. Season the catfish fillets with salt and pepper and dust the tops with flour. Arrange floured side down in the pan and cook for about 2½ minutes, or until golden brown. Add the butter and cook for 1 minute. Turn the fillets and cook for 1½ minutes, or until just cooked through. Transfer to a plate.
2. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, bring the water to a boil. Season lightly with salt, stir in the rice, and cover tightly. Turn off heat and allow the rice to stand for 5 minutes.
3. In a medium bowl, combine the red onion and red wine vinegar. Season with salt and pepper and set aside to marinate. Drain before using.
4. Stir the sofrito into the rice. Taste, and season with salt and pepper if necessary.
5. To serve, place a pile of rice in the center of each plate, top with the drained onions, and place a catfish fillet on top of the onions.

CLAM BRODETTATTO WITH CHORIZO AND PEAS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$14.25*

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

4 ounces Spanish-style chorizo sausage, sliced

½ cup dry white wine

¼ cup water

1 large pinch saffron threads

2 pounds littleneck clams, scrubbed

1 cup frozen peas

1. In a large sauté pan, heat the olive oil until hot but not smoking. Add the chorizo and stir. Pour the wine and water into the pan, add the saffron, and bring to a rapid boil over high heat. Add the clams to the pan, immediately cover, and cook for about 1 minute.
2. Add the peas and continue to cook until the clams just open and the peas are hot; be careful not to overcook the clams, as they'll become rubbery. Discard any clams that did not open.

3. Spoon the clams and broth into four bowls and serve immediately. Or serve the clams over a bed of rice.

CURRIED MUSSEL FRICASSEE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$15.25*

2 large flatbreads or pitas

1 tablespoon canola oil

1 tablespoon prepared Thai hot curry paste

1 (14-ounce) can coconut milk

3 pounds mussels, scrubbed and debearded

12 ounces prepared pico de gallo or other fresh salsa

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat a grill pan until very hot.

2. Grill the flatbreads, turning once, until they have grill marks on both sides. Set aside.

3. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large pot. Add the curry paste and stir to break it up. Add the coconut milk and bring to a boil. Add the mussels to the pot and cover tightly. After about 1 minute, add the pico de gallo to the pot and stir to combine. Cover and cook for about 1 minute more, or until the mussels have opened. Discard any mussels that did not open, and season with salt and pepper.

4. Divide the mussels and broth among four large bowls, and serve with the grilled flatbread.

CRAB CAKES WITH AVOCADO DIP AND ARUGULA SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$20*

½ cup canola oil

1 pound jumbo lump crabmeat, picked through for shells and cartilage

Grated zest of 4 large lemons plus 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

¾ cup mayonnaise

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Flour for dredging

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

7 ounces baby arugula

1 cup prepared avocado dip

1. Heat the canola oil in a very large sauté pan over high heat.

2. Meanwhile, in a large bowl, thoroughly combine the crabmeat, lemon zest, 1 tablespoon of the lemon juice, and the mayonnaise. Season well with salt and pepper. Divide the mixture into 8 equal portions and form each one into a patty about ¾ inch thick.

3. Spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Gently dredge the patties in the flour and place them in the sauté pan. Cook for 2½ minutes per side, or until golden brown and hot throughout. Drain on paper towels.

4. Meanwhile, combine the remaining 2 tablespoons lemon juice with the olive oil. Toss the arugula gently with the lemon dressing, and season with salt and pepper.

5. To serve, divide the avocado dip among four small ramekins or cups. Place 2 crab cakes on each plate and place a pile of arugula salad next to them. Serve with the ramekins

SAUTÉED SCALLOPS WITH PICKLED GINGER RED CABBAGE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$20*

½ cup corn oil

4 prepared zucchini cakes

12 large sea scallops (about 1 pound)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 bunches scallions, cut diagonally into 2-inch pieces

¼ cup pickled ginger

1 (16-ounce) jar sweet-and-sour red cabbage

1. Heat 3 tablespoons of the oil in a large sauté pan until very hot. Heat the remaining

5 tablespoons oil in another large sauté pan until hot. Place the zucchini cakes in the second pan and sauté until crisp on both sides, about 1 minute per side. Drain on paper towels; keep warm.

2. Meanwhile, season the scallops well with salt and pepper. Place in the first pan and cook until golden brown on the first side. Turn and continue to cook for another minute, then remove to a plate.

3. Add the scallions to the pan and stir-fry until almost tender. Add the ginger and cabbage and bring to a simmer. Taste and season with salt and pepper.

4. To serve, make a bed of red cabbage on each plate. Top each with a zucchini cake and 3 scallops.

SHRIMP AND BROCCOLI FLASH-FRY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.50

2 quarts corn oil

Flour for dredging

4 eggs

1¼ pounds large shrimp (20 to 25 count), peeled and deveined

4 cups large broccoli florets

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1¼ cups prepared sweet ginger sesame sauce

⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Heat the oil in a large pot until very hot but not smoking, about 400 degrees.

2. Spread the flour on a plate. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl. Dredge the shrimp and broccoli in the flour, then in the eggs to coat, and add to the oil, being careful to separate any pieces that stick together. Fry for 5 minutes, or until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.

3. Season the shrimp and broccoli well with salt and pepper. In a large bowl, toss with the sauce and cilantro. Serve hot.

SHRIMP AND SCALLION FRITTATA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13

¼ cup corn oil

1½ pounds shrimp (31 to 40 count), peeled, split down the back, and deveined

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 bunches scallions, thinly sliced on the diagonal

9 eggs

3 tablespoons mirin (rice wine)

1. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

2. Heat the corn oil in a large sauté pan until hot. Season the shrimp with salt and pepper. Add the scallions and shrimp to the pan, stir, and cook until the shrimp are translucent pink and nearly cooked through.

3. Meanwhile, beat the eggs in a medium bowl. Stir in the mirin, season with salt and pepper, and add to the pan. Continue to stir until large curds form; the eggs should still be wet. Smooth the top of the frittata.

4. Place the pan in the oven and bake for 1 to 2 more minutes, until the eggs are set.

5. Remove from the oven and loosen the sides with a rubber spatula. Invert the frittata onto a plate or cutting board, cut into wedges, and serve.

SHRIMP FRA DIAVOLO WITH COUSCOUS AND BROCCOLI RABE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18

3 cups water

2 (6.1-ounce) packages tomato-lentil couscous or other flavored couscous

3 tablespoons olive oil

1½ pounds shrimp (36 to 40 count), peeled and deveined

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 bunch broccoli rabe, cut into 2-inch pieces (about 3 cups)

2 tablespoons chili paste

Grated zest and juice of 1 lemon

1. Bring the water to a boil in a medium pot. Add the couscous and flavor packet. Cook according to package instructions.
2. Meanwhile, in a large pot, heat 2 tablespoons of the olive oil until very hot. Season the shrimp with salt and pepper and add to the pot. After about 1 minute, add the broccoli rabe, cover, and cook, stirring occasionally, until the shrimp are fully cooked and the broccoli rabe is tender, about 3 minutes. Remove from the heat.
3. Fluff the couscous with a fork. Transfer to a large bowl, add the shrimp mixture, the remaining 1 tablespoon olive oil, the chili paste, and lemon zest and juice, and toss to mix. Season with salt and pepper, if necessary, and serve.

SHRIMP AND NOODLE SATÉ SAUTÉ

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.25

1(8-ounce) package thin rice noodles

¼ cup corn oil

3 slices bacon, cut crosswise into thin strips

1¼ pounds shrimp (36 to 40 count), peeled and deveined

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 cups tightly packed bite-size pieces kale

2 (7-ounce) jars Thai peanut sauce

½ cup water

1. Place the rice noodles in a large bowl and cover with warm water. Soak for 30 minutes. Drain.
2. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan until hot but not smoking. Add the bacon and cook, stirring frequently, until it begins to brown.
3. Season the shrimp with salt and pepper and add to the pan. After about 1 minute, stir the shrimp and add the kale. Stir, cover, and cook until the kale begins to wilt. Add the rice noodles, cover, and cook until tender.
4. Add the saté sauce and water and bring to a simmer. Season with salt and pepper if necessary, and toss to evenly coat all the noodles. Serve hot.



Shrimp and Noodle Saté Sauté



SHRIMP SCAMPI WITH GRILLED BREAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

6 cloves garlic, peeled, 2 cloves left whole, 4 cloves thinly sliced

$\frac{2}{3}$ ciabatta, cut into 4 rectangles

$\frac{2}{3}$ cup extra virgin olive oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 tablespoons butter

$1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds shrimp (16 to 20 count), peeled and deveined

Juice of 3 lemons

$\frac{1}{3}$ cup flat-leaf chopped parsley

1. Heat a grill pan until very hot.

2. Rub 2 of the garlic cloves onto both sides of the bread to flavor it. Brush the bread with 2 tablespoons of the olive oil and season with salt and

pepper. Grill, turning once, until slightly charred and crunchy on both sides. Set aside.

3. Meanwhile, in a large sauté pan, heat the butter and the remaining olive oil. Add the 4 sliced garlic cloves and cook for about 30 seconds; do not allow to brown. Season the shrimp with salt and pepper and add to the pan. Cook for about 1½ minutes, then stir the shrimp and add the lemon juice. Simmer until the shrimp are just cooked through, about 1½ more minutes. Add the parsley, and season the sauce if necessary.

4. To serve, place a slice of grilled bread on each of four plates. Divide the shrimp evenly among the bread, and generously spoon the sauce on top.

SKEWERED SHRIMP WITH BEANS AND SCALLIONS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

1½ pounds large shrimp (20 to 25 count), peeled and deveined

½ cup plus 3 tablespoons prepared garlic rib sauce

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 tablespoon corn oil

2 cloves garlic, chopped

2 (14-ounce) cans cannellini beans, drained

1 large bunch scallions, sliced

1. Put 8 bamboo skewers in water to soak for an hour.

2. Preheat a grill pan until very hot.

3. Skewer the shrimp, about 3 per skewer. Brush the shrimp with 3 tablespoons of the garlic rib sauce. Season with salt and pepper. Grill 1½ to 2 minutes per side, or until the shrimp are just done.

4. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large sauté pan until hot. Add the garlic and sauté until fragrant, about 45 seconds. Add the beans and the remaining ½ cup rib sauce. Simmer until heated through.

5. To serve, spoon one-quarter of the bean mixture onto each plate. Lay 2 skewers of shrimp across the top, scatter the scallions over the shrimp and beans, and serve.

Poultry Main Dishes

CHICKEN AND CAULIFLOWER FLASH-FRY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$19.75*

2 quarts corn or canola oil

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 eggs

1 large head cauliflower, cut into medium florets

1½ pounds boneless, skinless chicken breasts, cut into 1-inch chunks

1 (8-ounce) jar pad Thai sauce

½ cup torn fresh basil leaves

1. In a large pot, heat the oil until very hot but not smoking, about 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl.
3. Dredge the cauliflower and chicken in the flour, then dip in the eggs to coat. Carefully add the cauliflower and chicken to the hot oil, stirring to prevent sticking. Fry until golden brown and cooked through, about 5 minutes. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper.
4. Place the cauliflower and chicken in a large bowl. Add the pad Thai sauce and basil and toss well. Serve immediately.

CHICKEN AND WILD MUSHROOM STRUDEL

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$20*

8 sheets frozen phyllo, at room temperature

3 tablespoons fresh thyme leaves

12 tablespoons (1½ sticks) butter, 6 tablespoons melted

1 pound mixed wild mushrooms, sliced

1 rotisserie chicken (about 2 pounds), skin removed and meat shredded

1¼ cups sour cream

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees and heat a large sauté pan over high heat.

2. Lay 1 phyllo sheet on a work surface (cover the remaining sheets with a damp towel). Reserve 1 tablespoon of the thyme. Brush the sheet generously with the melted butter and sprinkle with thyme leaves. Repeat the layering until you have a stack of 4 sheets of phyllo; place on a parchment-lined baking sheet. Repeat so that you have another stack of 4 sheets of phyllo; place on another parchment-lined baking sheet.
3. Bake the phyllo stacks for 5 minutes, or until golden brown and crisp.
4. Meanwhile, add the remaining butter to the pan. Add the reserved thyme and the mushrooms. Cook until the mushrooms are tender and slightly brown. Add the chicken and cook until very hot. Mix in the sour cream and season well with salt and pepper.
5. To serve, break the phyllo stacks into 12 pieces. Make a stack on each plate, using 3 pieces of phyllo for each serving, alternating the chicken mixture with the phyllo.

CHICKEN WITH TOMATO, BASIL, AND CRISPY PARMIGIANO CRACKERS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13.50

¼ cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

⅓ cup plus 2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1½ pounds thin-cut chicken cutlets

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

7 large cloves garlic, chopped

1 (28-ounce) can San Marzano whole peeled tomatoes, drained, ½ cup liquid reserved

24 fresh basil leaves, torn into small pieces

1. Spray four ovenproof dinner plates with 7-inch “faces” with cooking spray. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of the grated Parmigiano evenly over each plate. Microwave each for 2 minutes; the cheese should be completely melted and beginning to turn a pale golden brown. Cool for about 45 seconds, loosen the edges of each cheese disk (fricco) with a thin spatula, then grab an edge and carefully peel the cracker from the plate. Set aside to cool and harden.
2. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a 14-inch sauté pan over medium-low heat. Season the chicken with salt and pepper and add to the pan; the oil should barely bubble. Cook slowly for 2½ minutes, then flip the chicken.
3. Meanwhile, heat remaining ⅓ cup olive oil in a large sauté pan over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and cook, stirring frequently, until lightly golden. Add the tomatoes and cook for about 3 minutes, stirring often. Add the reserved tomato liquid and bring to a simmer. Season with salt and pepper and stir in the basil leaves.
4. Pour the sauce over the chicken in the pan and shake to coat the chicken evenly. Turn up the heat and bring to a simmer. Divide the chicken

and sauce among four large wide bowls. Break each cracker in half, and lay across the chicken. Serve immediately.

CHICKEN WITH LEMON, CAPERS, AND RED ONIONS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$12.75*

12 tablespoons (1½ sticks) butter, at room temperature

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 eggs

4 thin chicken cutlets (about 5 ounces each)

½ cup lemon juice

2 ounces capers, chopped

½ cup diced red onion

1. Heat 4 tablespoons of the butter in a large sauté pan over medium-low heat until hot and lightly foaming but not brown.
2. Meanwhile, spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow dish. Dredge the chicken in the flour and then dip in the eggs to coat.
3. Add the chicken to the hot butter and cook, turning once, until light golden brown on both sides and cooked through, about 2 minutes per side. Transfer the chicken to a platter and season with salt and pepper.
4. While the chicken is cooking, bring the lemon juice to a boil in another large sauté pan. Whisk in the remaining 8 tablespoons butter and simmer until the sauce is slightly reduced. Add the capers and season the sauce with salt, if necessary, and pepper.
5. Pour the sauce over the chicken and sprinkle with the red onion. Serve immediately.

GOLDEN CHICKEN AND TALEGGIO CUTLETS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$17.75*

1 cup canola oil

Fine cornmeal for dredging

3 eggs

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 thin chicken cutlets (about 1¼ pounds total)

¾ pound Taleggio cheese, cut into thin slices

1 tablespoon plus 2 teaspoons sherry vinegar

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1 (7-ounce) package baby arugula

1. Heat ½ cup of the canola oil in each of two large sauté pans.

2. Meanwhile, spread the cornmeal on a plate. Beat the eggs in a shallow dish.

3. Season the chicken cutlets with salt and pepper. Press a cheese slice firmly on top of each cutlet, covering it. Dredge the cutlets in the cornmeal, then dip into the eggs to coat, and then dredge again in the cornmeal.

4. Once the oil is hot, place 2 cutlets cheese side down in each pan. Cook for about 2 minutes, turn, and cook for 3 minutes on the other side. The chicken should be golden brown, crispy, and cooked through and the cheese completely melted.

5. Combine the sherry vinegar with the olive oil. Toss with the arugula in a bowl. Season the salad with salt and pepper, and serve a small pile along with each chicken cutlet.

PARMIGIANO CHICKEN WITH MOLTEN PROVOLONE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$17.25*

¾ cup corn oil

⅓ cup garlic oil

1½ cups fine cornmeal

1 cup grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese

3 eggs

4 thin chicken breast cutlets (about 1¼ pounds total)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

8 ounces sliced provolone

1½ bunches broccoli rabe, washed and cut into 2-inch pieces

1. Put the corn oil in one large sauté pan, the garlic oil in another large sauté pan, and heat over medium heat.

2. Meanwhile, in a shallow bowl, mix ¾ cup of the cornmeal with the Parmigiano. Spread the remaining ¾ cup cornmeal on a plate. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl.

3. Season the chicken breasts with salt and pepper. Arrange one-quarter of the slices of provolone on each chicken breast, and press the cheese firmly onto the cutlets. Dredge the chicken in the plain cornmeal, dip in the egg to coat, and dredge thoroughly in the cheese and cornmeal mixture. Place cheese side down in the pan with the corn oil and cook until golden brown on the first side. Turn the chicken and cook for another 3 minutes, or until the outside is crisp and golden, the cheese is melted, and the chicken is cooked through.

4. While the chicken cooks, add the broccoli rabe to the other sauté pan and season with salt and pepper. Cover and cook over high heat, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 4 minutes. Arrange the broccoli rabe on four plates, place the chicken on top. Serve.

PRETZELIZED CHICKEN WITH CHEDDAR HORSERADISH SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$16.25*

⅔ cup canola oil

3 cups mini pretzels

3 eggs

4 thin-cut chicken cutlets (about 1¼ pounds total)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (8-ounce) tub horseradish cheddar cheese spread

¼ cup water

1 pound baby spinach

1. Reserve 1 tablespoon of the oil. Heat the remaining oil in a very large sauté pan.
2. In a food processor, pulse the pretzels to fine crumbs, or crush with a rolling pin. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl.
3. Season the chicken cutlets with salt and pepper. Dip into the eggs to coat, then dredge in the pretzel crumbs, pressing the crumbs onto the chicken. Add the chicken to the hot oil and cook for about 1½ minutes per side, or until golden brown, crispy, and cooked through.
4. Heat the cheese and water, covered with plastic wrap, in a microwave for about 3 minutes, stirring once until smooth, or in a small saucepan, stirring until smooth. Keep warm.
5. Remove the chicken from the pan and drain. Wipe the pan, set over high heat, and add the reserved oil. Add the spinach, season with salt and pepper, and stir. Cover and cook until wilted, about 1½ minutes, stirring occasionally. Serve the chicken on a bed of the spinach, spooning the cheese sauce over the top.

MISO-WALNUT CHICKEN WITH RAINBOW SWISS CHARD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$14

½ cup corn oil

½ cup miso paste

½ cup orange marmalade

½ cup chopped walnuts

4 thin chicken cutlets (about 1½ pounds total)

1 (16-ounce) package rainbow chard

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat ¼ cup of the oil in each of two large sauté pans until hot but not smoking.
2. Meanwhile, mix together the miso, marmalade, and walnuts. Lay the chicken on a work surface and spread the walnut mixture evenly over the top of each cutlet. Add 2 chicken cutlets to each pan, glaze side down, and cook until the glaze is charred. Turn and continue to cook until chicken is cooked through, approximately 3 more minutes.
3. Transfer the chicken to a plate and keep warm. Divide the chard between the hot pans. Season with salt and pepper, cover, and cook, stirring often, for 2 minutes, or until tender.
4. Arrange a bed of the chard on each plate and top with the chicken. Serve immediately.

TURKEY CHOPPED STEAK WITH PEAS AND PICKLED ONIONS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13

1¼ pounds ground turkey

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (15-ounce) jar Alfredo sauce

½ cup drained cocktail onions

1 cup frozen peas

1 (10-ounce) jar marinated whole mushrooms, drained and sliced in half

1. Preheat a grill pan until very hot.
2. Meanwhile, season the turkey well with salt and pepper and form into 4 oval-shaped patties about ¾ inch thick. Season the patties again with salt and pepper if necessary. Coat each patty lightly with cooking spray to prevent sticking.
3. Grill the turkey patties for 2½ minutes per side, or until just cooked through.
4. Meanwhile, heat the Alfredo sauce in a large sauté pan over medium heat. When the sauce begins to simmer, add the cocktail onions, peas, and mushrooms. Continue to simmer until all the vegetables are hot.
5. To serve, arrange the turkey patties on plates and spoon the sauce and vegetables over.

TANGY TURKEY AND SNOW PEA STIR-FRY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.75

2 cups water

2½ cups instant rice

3 tablespoons canola oil

1 pound turkey cutlets, cut into thin strips

1 (7-ounce) package raw sliced peppers and onions

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 ounces snow peas

1 (15-ounce) jar Patak's Tangy Lemon & Cilantro Cooking Sauce

(or other comparable sauce)

1. Bring the water to a boil in a medium pot; season lightly with salt. Stir in the rice, cover, and turn off the heat. Allow the rice to stand for 5 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, heat the canola oil in a heavy 14-inch skillet until smoking. Add the turkey cutlet strips and stir-fry for 1 minute. Add the peppers and onions, season with salt and pepper, and stir-fry for 2 minutes. Add the snow peas and cook until they are tender, about 1 minute. Add the sauce and stir thoroughly to combine. Season with salt and pepper if necessary.

3. Make a bed of rice in the center of each of four plates and spoon the turkey mixture over the rice. Serve hot.

TURKEY CUTLETS WITH RED KIDNEY BEANS, GARLIC RELISH, AND WATERCRESS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$12*

2 tablespoons canola oil

1½ pounds turkey breast cutlets, cut crosswise in half

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 (15-ounce) cans red kidney beans, drained, liquid reserved from 1½ cans

¼ cup prepared garlic relish

1 bunch watercress, trimmed and washed

1. Heat the canola oil in a large sauté pan. Season the turkey with salt and pepper, add to the pan, and sauté until golden brown and just cooked through, about 2 minutes per side.

2. Meanwhile, in a separate large sauté pan, combine the beans, their reserved liquid, and the garlic relish and bring to a simmer. Mash the beans with a potato masher until almost smooth, leaving some chunks for texture. Season with salt and pepper.

3. To serve, spoon one-quarter of the bean mixture into each of four large bowls. Top with the turkey cutlets and serve with a pile of watercress on top of each.

TURKEY, BROCCOLI, AND CHEESE CASSEROLE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.75

8 ounces frozen broccoli pieces

1 large commercially roasted turkey breast (about 2½ pounds),

skin removed and meat shredded (about 6 cups)

3 (10-ounce) cans cheddar cheese soup

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (6-ounce) package Stovetop Turkey Stuffing Mix (or similar stuffing mix)

2 tablespoons butter, melted

2 tablespoons water

1. Bring a large pot of salted water to a boil. Cook the broccoli in the boiling water for about 30 seconds. Drain.
2. Mix the broccoli, turkey, and cheddar soup thoroughly in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper. Spread the mixture evenly in a 13 × 9-inch casserole dish.
3. In a small bowl, mix together the stuffing mix, butter, and water. Cover the turkey mixture evenly with the stuffing mixture. Microwave for 3 to 3½ minutes, or until hot.
4. Meanwhile, preheat the broiler. Place the casserole under the broiler for 30 seconds to 1 minute, or until the stuffing turns golden brown. Serve hot.

DUCK AND EGGPLANT FLASH-FRY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.75

2 quarts corn oil

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 eggs

1 duck (about 6 pounds), skin removed, meat cut into 1-inch chunks

2 large eggplants, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks (about 4 cups)

1¼ cups Thai peanut sauce

⅓ cup chopped fresh basil

1. Heat the oil in a large pot until very hot but not smoking, about 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl.
3. Dredge the duck and eggplant in the flour, then dip in the eggs to coat. Add the duck and eggplant to the oil, being careful to separate any pieces that clump together. Fry for about 5 minutes. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper.
4. In a large bowl, toss the fried duck and eggplant with the peanut sauce and basil. Serve immediately.

Beef, Pork and Lamb Main Dishes

SIRLOIN TIPS WITH GORGONZOLA MASHED POTATOES

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$20

1¼ cups heavy cream

1½ pounds store-bought precooked cubed golden potatoes

2 tablespoons corn oil

4 (6-ounce) sirloin tip steaks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 cup frozen peas

1½ cups crumbled Gorgonzola cheese

1. Set two large sauté pans over high heat. Add the cream to one pan and bring to a boil. Add the potatoes to the cream and simmer until hot.
2. While the potatoes simmer, add the oil to the other pan and heat until hot. Season the steaks well with salt and pepper, add to the pan, and cook for about 2½ minutes per side (for rare), or to the desired doneness. Remove to a platter.
3. Microwave the peas, covered, for 2 to 3 minutes, or until hot; or cook on the stovetop according to the directions on the package. Set aside.
4. When the potatoes are hot, add the Gorgonzola and mash the mixture roughly with a potato masher or the back of a fork. Season with salt and pepper. Stir in the peas.
5. Mound the potatoes in the center of each plate. Lay the steaks against the potatoes.

BROILED FLAT-IRON STEAKS WITH PEPPER JACK SCALLOPED POTATOES

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.75

1½ pounds store-bought precooked scallop-cut potatoes

½ cup heavy cream

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

8 ounces pepper Jack cheese, grated

4 (6-to 7-ounce) pieces flat-iron or sirloin steak, approximately 1 inch thick

½ cup A-1 Steak Sauce

1. Preheat the broiler. Spread the potatoes in a 13 × 17-inch baking dish. Drizzle the cream over the potatoes and season well with salt and pepper. Scatter the cheese evenly on top. Microwave on high for 4 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, season the steaks well with salt and pepper. Place on the broiling rack and broil for 2½ minutes per side, or until the desired doneness. Remove to a platter and allow to rest for a few minutes.
3. Place the potato dish under the broiler for 1 minute, or until the cheese is golden brown and bubbling.
4. Serve the potatoes alongside the steaks with the A-1 sauce.

GRILLED FLANK STEAK WITH SHREDDED CARROTS AND PICKLED GINGER

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.50

**1¾ to 2 pounds sirloin steak, no more than ½ inch thick,
cut into 4 equal portions**

½ cup prepared garlic stir-fry and rib sauce

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

2 tablespoons canola oil

1 (8-ounce) package shredded carrots

⅓ cup drained pickled ginger, sliced

⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Heat a grill pan until very hot.

2. Brush the steaks with about 2 tablespoons of the rib sauce, or just enough to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Grill for 2½ minutes per side for medium, or until cooked to the desired doneness.

3. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large sauté pan until very hot. Add the carrots, stirring constantly for 2 to 3 minutes, or until they start to become tender. Add the pickled ginger and the remaining rib sauce and stir. Season with salt and pepper if necessary.

4. Slice the steaks in slices against the grain, if desired. Make a bed of the carrot-ginger mixture on each plate. Arrange the steaks on top, and sprinkle all with the cilantro.

BEEF AND BROCCOLI-COLESLAW STIR-FRY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$16

1¼ cups water

2 cups instant rice

¼ cup canola oil

1 (12-ounce) package broccoli coleslaw

1½ pounds boneless beef round, cut into ½-inch-wide strips

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1½ cups prepared stir-fry sauce

⅓ cup chopped fresh basil

1. In a medium saucepan, bring the water to a boil; season with salt. Add the rice, stir, cover tightly, and turn off the heat. Allow the rice to stand for 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a very large sauté pan until smoking. Add the broccoli coleslaw and stir-fry until the broccoli is somewhat tender, about 2 minutes. Remove the broccoli to a bowl; return the pan to the heat.
3. Season the beef lightly with salt and pepper. Add the beef to the hot pan and cook for about 1 minute, or until it has changed color; the meat will be rare. Add the stir-fry sauce and broccoli coleslaw and toss to coat the beef with sauce.
4. Fluff the cooked rice, and transfer to a platter or individual plates. Arrange the beef and broccoli mixture over the rice, and sprinkle the basil on top.

BEEF AND ONION FLASH-FRY

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$16.25*

2 quarts corn oil

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 eggs

3 large Vidalia onions, cut into ½-inch rings

1¼ to 1½ pounds boneless rib-eye steak, cut into 1-inch chunks

1¼ cups prepared sesame teriyaki sauce

⅓ cup chopped fresh cilantro

1. Heat the oil in a large pot until almost smoking, about 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl.
3. Separate the onion rings. Dredge the beef and onions in the flour and dip into the eggs to coat. Carefully place the beef and onions in the hot oil, being sure to separate any pieces that stick together. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 5 minutes, or until the beef is the desired doneness. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper.
4. Place the beef and onions in a large bowl and toss with the sauce and cilantro. Serve hot.

QUICK STEAK, PIZZA MAN STYLE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$20*

3 tablespoons corn oil

4 (7-ounce) beef round sandwich steaks

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (10.5-ounce) package diced green, red, and yellow bell peppers

⅔ cup dry red wine

⅔ cup beef broth

2½ cups prepared hot dog onions

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a very large sauté pan until smoking. Season the steaks with salt and pepper. Add to the pan and cook for about 2 minutes on each side for rare. Remove to a platter and let rest.
2. Meanwhile, heat the remaining tablespoon of oil in another large sauté pan. Add the peppers and cook, stirring frequently, for 1 minute. Add the red wine and simmer for about 1 minute, or until the liquid reduces and becomes syrupy.
3. Add the beef broth and onions and simmer for 1 minute more. Season with salt and pepper if necessary. Spoon on top of the steaks, and serve.

BEEF CURRY SAUTÉ

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$19*

1½ cups water

2 cups instant rice

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 cup diced green, red, and yellow bell peppers

2 tablespoons Patak's Hot Curry Paste (tomato and cumin)

1 (14-ounce) can coconut milk

1¼ pounds thickly sliced deli roast beef

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. In a medium pot, bring the water to a boil; salt lightly. Stir in the rice, cover tightly, and turn off the heat. Allow the rice to stand for 5 minutes.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large sauté pan until hot. Add the diced peppers and cook, stirring frequently, until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the curry paste and stir to mix. Stir in the coconut milk and bring the mixture to a simmer. Continue to simmer until the sauce begins to thicken.
3. Add the roast beef to the sauce. Season with salt and pepper and heat through. Remove from the heat.
4. Fluff the rice and divide it among four plates. Spoon the beef curry mixture over the rice, and serve.



Beef Curry Sauté

ROAST BEEF AND EGGPLANT ALFREDO

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.50

2 cups canola oil

2 cups prepared Alfredo sauce

2 large eggplants

1 pound sliced deli roast beef

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 eggs

3 cups bread crumbs

1. Heat 1 cup of the oil in each of two large sauté pans until very hot.

2. Microwave the Alfredo sauce in a bowl for 3 minutes, or until very hot, stirring once. Or, heat it in a small saucepan over medium-high heat. Keep warm.

3. Trim each eggplant to about 5 inches long and 3 inches wide. Slice lengthwise into $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch-thick slices. You will need 8 slices total. Spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl. Spread the bread crumbs on another plate.

4. Arrange 4 eggplant slices on a work surface and place one-quarter of the roast beef on top of each one. Top with the remaining 4 slices and press down firmly.

5. Dredge the stacks in the flour, dip into the eggs to coat, and then dredge in the bread crumbs to coat. Season well with salt and pepper. Place two stacks in each pan and sauté for 2½ minutes per side, or until golden brown and crispy. Drain on paper towels, then transfer to plates. Spoon about ½ cup hot Alfredo sauce on each eggplant stack, and serve.

CHEESY ROAST BEEF AND ZUCCHINI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$16

2 tablespoons canola oil

4 cups ($\frac{1}{4}$ inch) zucchini slices, cut into half-moons

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (15-ounce) jar salsa con queso

1 pound thinly sliced deli roast beef

1. Heat a large sauté pan until hot. Add the oil and zucchini. Season the zucchini with salt and pepper and sauté, stirring frequently, until tender, about 5 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, pour the cheese sauce in a bowl and microwave until very hot. Alternatively, heat in a small saucepan over medium-high heat until hot.

3. Divide the zucchini among four plates and pile the roast beef on top. Spoon the hot cheese sauce liberally over the zucchini and beef. Serve.

ROAST BEEF, CHESTNUTS, AND BRUSSELS SPROUTS IN CONSOMMÉ

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$17.75

1 tablespoon corn oil

1 (1 pint) small package Brussels sprouts, sliced thinly (about 4 cups)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 pound thinly sliced deli roast beef, cut into 1-inch-wide strips

1 (7-ounce) jar chestnuts, sliced

2¼ cups beef broth

Grated zest of 3 lemons plus 1 teaspoon fresh lemon juice

1. Heat the corn oil in a large sauté pan over high heat. Add the Brussels sprouts, season with salt and pepper, and stir-fry for about 2 minutes.

2. Meanwhile, arrange the beef on a plate and microwave until just hot, 2 to 3 minutes. Set aside.

3. Add the chestnuts and beef broth to the Brussels sprouts and bring to a simmer. Add the lemon zest and juice. Taste and season if necessary.

4. Divide the Brussels sprouts mixture among four bowls. Scatter the warm roast beef on top, and serve.

BEEFY SHEPHERD'S PIE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13.75

4 cups prepared garlic mashed potatoes

1 tablespoon corn oil

1½ pounds ground beef

1 cup frozen peas

1 (12-ounce) jar home-style beef gravy

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (8-ounce) package shredded sharp cheddar cheese

1. Preheat the broiler. Microwave the mashed potatoes until hot about 4 minutes; stir occasionally.
2. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large sauté pan until very hot. Add the ground beef and cook, stirring to break up the meat, for 3 minutes. Add the peas and gravy and bring to a simmer.
3. Spread the beef mixture in a 12 × 7½-inch baking dish. Spread the mashed potatoes evenly over the beef, covering it completely. Sprinkle the cheese over the potatoes. Place under the broiler until the cheese melts, about 1 minute. Serve hot.

GROUND BEEF WITH REFRIED BEANS, SALSA, AND GRILLED ZUCCHINI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$10.50

3 zucchini, cut lengthwise into ⅓-inch-thick strips

5 tablespoons corn oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1½ pounds ground beef, preferably 80% lean

1 (16-ounce) can refried beans

½ cup water

1 (14-ounce) container fresh salsa

4 large taco shells

1. Heat a grill pan and a large sauté pan until very hot.
2. Toss the zucchini with 3 tablespoons of the oil and season well with salt and pepper. Grill the zucchini, turning once, for 5 minutes, or until tender.
3. Meanwhile, add the remaining 2 tablespoons oil to the sauté pan. Add the beef, season with salt and pepper, and cook, stirring, until the beef is almost cooked through.
4. Combine the refried beans, water, and salsa in a bowl, stirring to combine. Add to the beef mixture and simmer until the beef is cooked through.
5. To serve, place the zucchini strips in the bottoms of the tortilla shells. Spoon the beef mixture on top of the zucchini, and serve immediately.

GROUND BEEF WITH SALSA VERDE, RADICCHIO, AND SOUR CREAM

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$12.75

1 tablespoon corn oil

1½ pounds ground beef

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (16-ounce) can refried beans

½ cup water

1 cup prepared green salsa (salsa verde)

3 cups shredded radicchio (about 1 medium head)

½ cup sour cream

1. Heat the oil in a very large sauté pan until very hot. Add the ground beef and stir to break up the meat. Season with salt and pepper.
2. Whisk together the refried beans and water in a medium bowl. Add the mixture to the beef, stir, and simmer until the beef is completely cooked

through. Stir in the salsa verde.

3. Divide half of the radicchio among four large bowls. Spoon the beef mixture on top. Top with the sour cream and the remaining radicchio. Serve.

CORNEB BEEF BRISKET WITH CABBAGE, POTATOES, AND HORSERADISH

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$16.50*

1 tablespoon canola oil

3 cups coleslaw mix

2 cups store-bought precooked scallop-cut potatoes

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1½ (14-ounce) cans beef broth

½ cup prepared horseradish

1 pound sliced corned beef brisket

1. Heat the oil in a very large sauté pan. Add the coleslaw mix and sauté for 1 minute. Add the potatoes and sauté for another minute. Season with salt and pepper.

2. Add the beef broth and bring to a boil. Stir in the horseradish. Lay the slices of beef brisket across the vegetables. Cover and cook at a very low simmer for about 2 minutes, or until the beef is heated through.

3. Ladle the beef mixture into hot bowls and serve.

VEAL SCALOPPINI IN ARTICHOKE BROTH

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$18.75*

2 tablespoons canola oil

¼ pounds veal scaloppini

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 cups prepared country-style mashed potatoes

3 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

3 large cloves garlic, chopped

1½ tablespoons fresh thyme leaves

1½ (14-ounce) cans quartered artichoke hearts, drained, 1¼ cups liquid reserved

1. Heat the canola oil in a large sauté pan over medium-low heat. Season the veal lightly with salt and pepper and sauté, turning once, just until cooked through.

2. Meanwhile, microwave the mashed potatoes for about 5 minutes, stirring twice.

3. While the veal is cooking, heat the olive oil in another large sauté pan until hot. Add the garlic and thyme and sauté until the garlic is fragrant but not brown. Add the reserved 1¼ cups artichoke liquid along with the artichoke hearts and bring to a boil. Simmer until the artichoke hearts are hot. Season with salt and pepper if necessary.

4. To serve, place a mound of the potatoes in the center of each plate. Spoon the broth and artichokes around the potatoes and top with the veal scaloppini. Serve hot.

12 EGGS IN A PAN

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$7.25

3 tablespoons olive oil

2 cups zucchini slices, cut into half-moons

3 cooked hot Italian sausages, sliced

3 cloves garlic, chopped

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

12 eggs, cracked into a bowl but yolks not broken

1 (8-ounce) package shredded mozzarella/provolone blend

1. Preheat the broiler. Heat the olive oil in a large cast-iron skillet until hot but not smoking. Add the zucchini and sausage to the pan and cook for 1½ minutes. Add the garlic and cook for another 30 seconds, stirring frequently. Season with salt and pepper.

2. Gently pour the eggs into the pan, being careful not to break the yolks. Place the pan under the broiler and cook for 1½ minutes. Sprinkle the cheese evenly over the top and broil for another minute, or until the cheese is melted and the whites of the eggs are set. Serve immediately.



12 Eggs in a Pan

ANDOUILLE SAUSAGE JAMBALAYA WITH CLAMS AND PEAS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$13.50*

1 tablespoon corn oil

12 ounces cooked andouille sausage, cut into 1-inch pieces 1½ cups frozen peas

3 (6.5-ounce) cans chopped clams, drained, liquid reserved

3 cups instant rice

1 (12-ounce) jar Goya Sofrito

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1. Heat the corn oil in a large sauté pan until hot but not smoking. Add the andouille and cook until the sausage begins to color and is hot throughout, about 4 minutes. Add the peas and clams and cook until just heated through.

2. While the sausage is cooking, add enough water to the clam liquid to total 2½ cups. Bring to a boil in a medium pot. Add the rice, stir, and turn off heat. Cover and allow the rice to stand for 5 minutes.

3. Add the sofrito to the sausage and peas and stir. Fluff the rice, add to the pan, and season with salt and pepper if necessary. Serve hot.

BARBECUE KIELBASA WITH CORN, BLACK BEANS, AND CORN MUFFINS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$12*

2 tablespoons corn oil

1¼ pounds kielbasa, halved lengthwise and cut into 1-inch half-moons

2 (14-ounce) cans black beans, drained

1 (10-ounce) package frozen succotash

1¾ cups barbecue sauce

½ cup water

4 corn muffin tops

1. Heat the oil in a Dutch oven or other large pot until hot. Add the kielbasa and cook, stirring, until browned. Add the beans, succotash, barbecue sauce, and water. Bring to a simmer and simmer until heated through.

2. Place 1 corn muffin top in each of four bowls. Ladle the stew into the bowls, and serve.

CHORIZO AND MANCHEGO FRITTATA WITH MESCLUN SALAD

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$20*

7 tablespoon canola oil

8 ounces Spanish-style chorizo, halved lengthwise and cut into ¼-inch slices

14 eggs

2 cups grated Manchego cheese

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (7-ounce) package mesclun salad mix

1 tablespoon sherry vinegar

2 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

1. Preheat the oven to 500 degrees.

2. Heat the canola oil in a 12-inch sauté pan. Add the chorizo and sauté for 45 seconds or until hot. Beat the eggs in a large bowl, add half the cheese, and season with salt and pepper. Add the eggs to the pan and stir until large curds form but the eggs are still wet.

3. Sprinkle the remaining cheese on top of the frittata and place in the oven. Bake for about 2 minutes, or until the cheese is melted and the eggs are just set. Remove from the oven and loosen the sides of the frittata with a spatula. Invert onto a cutting board.

4. Meanwhile, mix the sherry vinegar and olive oil. Toss the mesclun with this dressing and season with salt and pepper.

5. Cut the frittata into 8 wedges, placing 2 on each plate, and serve with a pile of salad.

HOT ITALIAN SAUSAGE WITH FRESH BEANS AND BEETS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$15*

4 tablespoons extra virgin olive oil

2 (14-ounce) jars Harvard beets, drained, liquid reserved

8 ounces green beans, trimmed and cut in half

8 ounces wax beans, trimmed and cut in half

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

8 cooked hot Italian sausages, cut into 1-inch slices

3 tablespoons chopped fresh chives

1. Heat 2 tablespoons of the oil in a large sauté pan.

2. Microwave the beets, covered, for 3 to 4 minutes, or until very hot.

3. Meanwhile, add the beans to the hot pan and cook, stirring often, for about 1 minute. Season with salt and pepper. Add the sausage and cook for another 2 minutes, or until the beans are tender and the sausage is hot throughout.

4. Mix the reserved beet liquid with the chives in a bowl. Float the remaining 2 tablespoons of oil on top.
5. Divide the beets among four plates. Top with the sausage-bean mixture. Spoon the beet sauce over the top, and serve.

CHORIZO, SMOKED MUSSEL, AND OKRA RICE PILAF

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$12.50*

1½ cups frozen sliced okra, thawed

3 tablespoons sherry vinegar

2½ cups water

3 cups instant rice

1 tablespoon canola oil

12 ounces Spanish-style chorizo, halved lengthwise and cut into 1-inch slices

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

1 (3.5-ounce) can smoked mussels

1 cup Goya Recaito

1. Combine the okra with the vinegar in a bowl. Set aside to marinate.
2. In a medium pot, bring the water to a boil; season with salt. Add the rice, stir, cover, and turn off the heat. Allow the rice to stand for 5 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, heat the oil in a large sauté pan. Add the chorizo and sauté for 1 minute. Add the okra and vinegar and cook for 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Season with salt and pepper.
4. Add the mussels and recaito seasoning and cook until hot. Fluff the rice and toss with the mussel mixture. Season with salt and pepper if necessary.
5. Transfer the pilaf to plates and serve hot.

KIELBASA AND SAUERKRAUT STEW

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$10.25*

2 tablespoons corn oil

1¾ pounds kielbasa, cut into ¾ inch slices

1½ pounds prepared sauerkraut

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

½ cup Dijon mustard

1. Heat the oil in a large sauté pan until hot. Add the kielbasa slices and cook until browned on the first side, about 2 minutes. Turn and add the sauerkraut. Cover and cook for another 3 minutes, or until heated through. Season with salt and pepper if necessary.
2. Serve the stew with the mustard on the side.

BONELESS PORK CHOPS WITH POTATO PANCAKES AND MUSTARD GREENS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$15*

1 (12-ounce) jar apple jelly

5 tablespoons Dijon mustard

¼ cup plus 3 tablespoons canola oil

1½ pounds thin-cut boneless pork chops

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 prepared potato pancakes

1½ bunches mustard greens, washed and cut into large pieces

1. Put the apple jelly in a large bowl and microwave for 5 minutes; it will reduce slightly. Whisk in the mustard and set aside.
2. Meanwhile, pour 3 tablespoons of the oil into one large sauté pan and the remaining ¼ cup oil into another large sauté pan. Heat until hot.

Season the chops with salt and pepper and add to the first pan. Cook, turning once, until golden brown on both sides and just cooked through, about 5 minutes.

3. While the pork is cooking, cook the pancakes over medium-high heat in the other pan, for about 1½ minutes per side, or until they are crispy and heated through. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper.

4. Add the mustard greens to the oil remaining in the potato pancake pan and sauté until wilted, about 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

5. Arrange a chop, a pancake, and a pile of mustard greens on each plate. Spoon apple jelly sauce over all. Serve.

PORK SCALOPPINI STUFFED WITH CHEDDAR

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13.25

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons canola oil

4 cups Cheez-It or other cheddar crackers

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 eggs

8 thin slices pork cutlet, sliced (1¼ pounds total)

8 ounces sharp cheddar, cut into 8 slices

1 (12-ounce) package broccoli coleslaw

1. Heat ½ cup of the oil in each of two large sauté pans until hot.
2. Meanwhile, in the bowl of a food processor, pulse half of the Cheez-It crackers to coarse crumbs; transfer to a shallow bowl. Repeat with the remaining Cheez-It crackers. Spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow dish.
3. Lay 4 cutlets on a work surface. Put 2 cheddar slices, side by side, on each cutlet so that it is almost completely covered. Top each with another cutlet and press with your hands so the meat sticks together.
4. Dredge each pork stack in the flour, dip in eggs to coat, and dredge in the Cheez-It crumbs, turning to coat evenly. Place 2 pork cutlet stacks in each pan and cook until golden brown on both sides, about 1½ minutes per side. Remove and drain on paper towels.
5. Wipe each pan and add 1 tablespoon of the remaining oil. Add half of the broccoli coleslaw to each pan and sauté, stirring often, for about 2 minutes, or until tender but not mushy. Season with salt and pepper and divide among 4 plates. Serve the scaloppini on top.

PORK AND ZUCCHINI FLASH-FRY WITH BLACK BEAN SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$12.75

2 quarts corn oil

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

4 eggs

1¼ pounds boneless pork loin, cut into 1-inch strips

2 medium zucchini, cut into 1-inch chunks

1¼ cups Chinese black bean sauce

¼ cup roughly chopped fresh mint

1. Heat the oil in a large pot until very hot but not smoking, about 400 degrees.
2. Meanwhile, spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl. Dredge the pork and zucchini in the flour, then toss with the eggs to coat.
3. Add the pork and zucchini to the pot, being careful to separate any pieces that have stuck together. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally. Drain on paper towels and season with salt and pepper.
4. Transfer the pork and zucchini to a large bowl and toss with the sauce and mint. Serve immediately.

SAUTÉED PORK WITH SNOW PEAS, WALNUTS, AND BEETS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$16

¼ cup olive oil

4 thin-cut boneless pork chops (about 1½ pounds total)

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

⅔ cup crushed walnuts

8 ounces fresh snow peas

2 cups sliced pickled beets, drained

⅓ cup hot dog relish

1. Heat 1 tablespoon of the oil in a large sauté pan over high heat. Season the pork with salt and pepper and place in the pan. Cook for about 1½ minutes per side, or until the desired doneness. Remove from the pan and set aside.
2. Add the remaining 3 tablespoons oil to the pan and heat until very hot. Add the walnuts and cook until fragrant, then add the snow peas and cook for about 30 seconds. Add the beets and relish and toss to coat the beets and snow peas. Continue to cook until the vegetable mixture is heated through. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Divide the vegetable mixture among four plates and place the pork alongside. Serve.



Sautéed Pork with Snow Peas, Walnuts, and Beets (page 240)

STUFFED PORK CHOPS WITH BOURSIN AND COLLARDS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$19.75

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons canola oil

Flour for dredging

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 eggs

1½ cups dried bread crumbs

1 (5.2-ounce) package Boursin cheese, slightly softened

8 thin center-cut boneless pork loin chops (just under 1¼ pounds total)

12 ounces trimmed collard greens

1. Pour ½ cup of the oil into one large sauté pan, pour the remaining 2 tablespoons into another large sauté pan, and heat until hot. (Turn down the heat under the second pan if the oil begins to smoke, then turn it up again before adding the greens.)

2. Meanwhile, spread the flour on a plate and season with salt and pepper. Beat the eggs in a shallow bowl. Spread the bread crumbs on another plate.

3. Spread one-quarter of the Boursin evenly on each of 4 of the pork chops. Top each with another pork chop and press down firmly. Dredge the chops in the flour, dip in the eggs, and then dredge in the bread crumbs. Place the chops in the pan with ½ cup oil. Cook until golden brown on the first side, about 2½ minutes. Flip the chops and cook for another 2½ minutes, or until cooked through.

4. Meanwhile, add the collard greens to the second pan and season with salt and pepper. Cook for 5 minutes, stirring constantly, until the greens are wilted and tender but not mushy. Remove the pork chops from the pan and drain. Serve each chop with a pile of collards alongside.

GRILLED BONELESS LEG OF LAMB WITH GREEK YOGURT SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$18.75

2 cups water

2½ cups instant rice

**4 thin-cut boneless leg of lamb steaks 1¼ to 1½ pounds total),
pounded ¾ inch thick if necessary**

1 tablespoon corn oil

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

**1 large seedless cucumber, halved lengthwise, then sliced crosswise
into very thin half-moons**

1 cup plain yogurt, preferably Greek

⅓ cup chopped fresh mint

1. Heat a grill pan until very hot.

2. Meanwhile, bring the water to a boil in a medium pot over high heat; season with salt. Add the rice, stir, cover, and turn off the heat. Let the rice stand for 5 minutes.

3. Coat the lamb with the oil and season liberally with salt and pepper. Grill for about 2 minutes on each side. Remove to a plate and allow to rest.

4. Meanwhile, combine the cucumber, yogurt, and mint in a bowl. Season with salt and pepper.

5. Slice the lamb. Fluff the rice with a fork and spoon a pile onto each plate. Top with the cucumber salad and then the lamb. Serve.

GRILLED LAMB WITH SWEET-AND-SOUR CRANBERRY SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$16

1 cup dried cranberries, chopped

½ cup water

¼ cup sugar

2 tablespoons white vinegar

2 tablespoons Dijon mustard

Salt and freshly ground black pepper

3 cloves garlic, chopped

¼ cup extra virgin olive oil

4 thin-cut boneless leg of lamb steaks (about 1½ pounds total),

pounded ¾ inch thick if necessary

5 small zucchini, cut lengthwise into quarters

1. Heat a grill pan until very hot.
2. Meanwhile, combine the cranberries, water, sugar, and vinegar in a small saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer slowly for 4 minutes, or until the cranberries are plump and the sauce is slightly thickened. Stir in the mustard and season with salt and pepper.
3. Combine the garlic and olive oil in a large bowl. Toss the lamb and zucchini in the mixture to coat. Season liberally with salt and pepper.
4. Grill the lamb, turning once, for 5 minutes, or until the desired doneness. Grill the zucchini alongside the lamb, turning often.
5. Serve the lamb and zucchini with the cranberry sauce.

Desserts

ANGEL FOOD AND CHERRY CAKE WITH GINGER CREAM

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$10.50

1 (8-inch) piece ginger, cut into 2-inch chunks

7 teaspoon sugar (if you don't have a juicer)

8 ounces cherry preserves

1 (15-ounce) can cherry pie filling, drained 1 cup very cold heavy cream

Pinch of salt

4 large slices angel food cake

1. Juice the ginger with a juicer. Or, if you don't have a juicer, place the ginger and sugar in the bowl of a food processor and pulse until the ginger is chopped fine. Then wrap the ginger in a thin cloth and wring out all the juice into a bowl. Set aside.
2. In a small bowl, heat the cherry preserves in a microwave until liquefied, about 1 minute. Stir in the cherry pie filling.
3. Combine 3 tablespoons of the ginger juice with the cream in a medium bowl and add the salt. Whip the ginger cream until soft peaks form.
4. Lay the angel food cake slices on four plates. Top each slice with one-quarter of the cherry mixture, allowing the liquid to soak into the cake. Top each with a large dollop of the ginger whipped cream. Serve immediately.

APRICOT AND DRIED CHERRY POUND CAKE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$10.50

1 (15-ounce) can apricot halves in light syrup, drained, liquid reserved

½ cup dried cherries

4 slices pound cake

1¼ cups peaches and cream ice cream

12 fresh basil leaves, slivered

1. In a small pot, bring the reserved apricot liquid and the cherries to a boil. Reduce the heat and simmer for 3 minutes.
2. Add the apricots to the pot, stir to combine, and heat through.
3. Lay a slice of pound cake on each of four plates. Top with the apricot-cherry mixture, letting the sauce soak into the cake. Place a large scoop of ice cream on top of each and scatter the basil over and around. Serve immediately.

BLUEBERRY POMEGRANATE CONSOMMÉ WITH WHIPPED CRÈME FRAÎCHE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$11.25

6 ounces crème fraîche

1 teaspoon sugar

Pinch of salt

36 blackberries

1½ cups mango sorbet

1 cup blueberry pomegranate juice

¼ cup crushed Froot Loops

1. Whip the crème fraîche with the sugar and salt just until soft to medium peaks form; do not overwhip.
2. Make 3 clusters of 3 blackberries each in the bottom of four shallow bowls, spacing the clusters so that they represent the points of a triangle. Place a large scoop of mango sorbet in the center of each bowl. Pour ¼ cup of the juice into the bottom of each bowl. Place a small dollop of crème fraîche on top of each cluster of blackberries.
3. Sprinkle the Froot Loops evenly over the desserts and serve immediately.

CARAMELIZED BANANA PANINI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$6.75*

⅓ cup sugar

4 slices challah bread

3 ripe bananas, peeled

Pinch of salt

8 to 12 tablespoons (1 to 1½ sticks) butter

¼ cup fresh lime juice

1 pint pineapple coconut ice cream

1. Heat a large nonstick sauté pan over medium heat. Meanwhile, pour the sugar onto a plate. Coat the challah slices on both sides with sugar. Slice each banana crosswise in half, then slice each half lengthwise into 3 slices, giving you 18 slices. Arrange 4 banana slices across the top of each piece of bread and press slightly so that bananas stick to the bread. Season the bananas lightly with salt.

2. Add 1 stick butter to the hot pan. When the butter is melted, place all 4 panini in the pan, banana side down. Cook until caramelized, then flip each one over. Add up to 4 more tablespoons butter if the pan is dry. Cook for about 2 more minutes.

3. Sprinkle 2 tablespoons of the remaining sugar on the plate around the panini and add the lime juice to the pan. Simmer until the sugar dissolves and forms a sauce, then use the sauce to baste the panini.

4. Place the panini on individual plates. Top each one with a large scoop of pineapple coconut ice cream and serve immediately.

CHOCOLATE PHYLLO WITH BLOOD ORANGES AND DULCE DE LECHE ICE CREAM

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$10.25

10 tablespoons (1¼ sticks) butter, melted

5 tablespoons unsweetened cocoa powder

8 sheets frozen phyllo, thawed

Sugar

1 pint dulce de leche or caramel ice cream

5 blood or navel oranges, peeled and separated into segments

1. Preheat the oven to 425 degrees.

2. In a bowl, mix the melted butter and cocoa powder. Lay a sheet of phyllo on a work surface (cover the remaining sheets with a damp towel). Brush with the butter mixture, then sprinkle liberally with sugar. Cover with another sheet of phyllo; repeat until you have a stack of 4 layers; transfer to a parchment-lined baking sheet. Make another stack with the remaining phyllo; place on another parchment-lined baking sheet.

3. Bake the stacks for 5 minutes or until crispy. Allow to cool, then break into 8 pieces.

4. Lay 1 piece of phyllo on each plate and top with a scoop of ice cream. Scatter the oranges over and around the ice cream. Prop another piece of phyllo up against each scoop of the ice cream, and serve.

COCOA COOKIES WITH BLACK RASPBERRY ICE CREAM AND CHOCOLATE FUDGE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$12.25

¾ cup fudge sauce

8 soft chocolate cookies

1 pint black raspberry ice cream

8 ounces fresh blackberries

1. Microwave the fudge sauce in a small bowl for about 1 minute, until hot; stir halfway through cooking.

2. Spread the cookies on a large plate and microwave them for 30 seconds.

3. Stack 2 cookies each in the center of four plates. Place a large scoop of the ice cream on top of each cookie pile. Pour fudge sauce on top of the ice cream and cookies and scatter the blackberries over and around. Serve immediately.

DOUGHNUTS AND HOT CHOCOLATE

Number of Servings: 4 Estimated Cost: \$12.25

4 cups half-and-half

2 tablespoons sugar

½ teaspoon salt

6 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped

4 powdered sugar doughnuts

1. In a medium pot, bring the half-and-half, sugar, and salt to a boil. Turn off the heat and add the chocolate. Allow to sit for 1 minute, then whisk until the chocolate is completely melted.
2. Pour the hot chocolate into four mugs and serve a doughnut with each mug.

GRILLED PINEAPPLE WITH COCOA FOAM

Number of Servings: 4 Estimated Cost: \$5.25

1 large pineapple, cored and peeled

Salt

1 cup nonfat milk

¼ cup chocolate syrup

3 tablespoons cocoa powder

1 tablespoon sugar

1. Preheat a grill pan until hot. Make sure the grill pan is very clean; brush the pan with oil.
2. Cut the pineapple crosswise into eight ½-inch-thick slices. Season very lightly with salt. Grill for 2½ minutes per side, or until they have grill marks on both sides and are hot throughout. Remove from the grill.
3. Meanwhile, heat the milk and chocolate syrup in a small pot until simmering. Whisk in the cocoa powder, sugar, and a large pinch of salt. Blend this mixture with a hand-held immersion blender until very frothy.
4. Place 2 pineapple rings on each plate. Using a large spoon, skim the foam from the top of the cocoa mixture and spoon the foam over the pineapples to cover them. You will need to refoth the foam after each skimming. Serve immediately.

INSTANT TIRAMISU WITH RASPBERRIES

Number of Servings: 4 Estimated Cost: \$14.25

¾ cup mocha sauce

20 soft ladyfingers

1 pint coffee ice cream

½ pint fresh raspberries

1. In a small bowl, heat the mocha sauce in the microwave for about 1 minute, or until hot; stir.
2. Lay 5 ladyfingers on each plate to form a pentagon. Place a large scoop of ice cream in the center of each pentagon and spoon some of the mocha sauce over and around it. Scatter raspberries on each plate, and serve immediately.

CRISPY WONTON WAFERS WITH LEMON CURD AND STRAWBERRIES

Number of Servings: 4 Estimated Cost: \$11.50

2 quarts canola oil

13 wonton skins

Sugar

1⅓ cups very cold heavy cream

1¼ cups plus 2 tablespoons prepared lemon curd

12 strawberries, hulled and thinly sliced

1 cup lemon sorbet

1. In a large pot, heat the oil to 325 degrees. Fry the wontons, 3 to 4 at a time, for about 1 minute, or until golden brown; use a mesh strainer to periodically flip them and keep them submerged to ensure even cooking. Drain on paper towels and sprinkle lightly with sugar. Set aside.

2. Whip the cream in a medium bowl until stiff peaks form.

3. To assemble, smear 1½ tablespoons of the curd onto the center of each of 12 wontons. Arrange the slices from 1 strawberry in the curd on each wonton. Place a large dollop of whipped cream on top of the strawberries. Place a small dollop of whipped cream on each plate. Place 1 wonton on top of the cream and shingle 2 more across the plate.

4. Crush the remaining wonton into small pieces and put a small pile next to each dessert. Place a small scoop of lemon sorbet on top of the crushed wonton and serve.

PEARS IN PHYLLO CUPS WITH BUTTER PECAN ICE CREAM AND CARAMEL SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$9.25

8 sheets frozen phyllo, at room temperature

⅔ stick (approximately 5 tablespoons) butter, melted

1 (15-ounce) can pear halves in juice, drained

Salt

⅔ cup caramel sauce

1¼ cups butter pecan ice cream

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees.

2. Lay a sheet of phyllo on a work surface (cover the remaining sheets with a damp towel) and brush with butter. Top with another sheet and brush with butter. Repeat the process until you have a stack of 4 sheets. Cut two 7-inch squares from this stack. Repeat with the remaining phyllo, so you have 4 phyllo squares.

3. Press each phyllo square into one of the cups of a Texas (jumbo) muffin pan, molding it into the shape of the cup; you will have some overhang. Bake for about 4½ minutes, or until golden and crispy. Remove the phyllo cups from the pan and set aside.

4. Meanwhile, thinly slice the pears and place on a plate. Season lightly with salt. Microwave for 1 minute, or until hot; set aside. Microwave the caramel sauce in a small bowl for 1½ minutes, or until hot.

5. Arrange the pear slices in the center of four plates. Place a phyllo cup on top of the pears and arrange the remaining pears inside the cups. Add a scoop of ice cream on top of each cup, and spoon warm caramel sauce over and around. Serve immediately.

PRETTY PEACH MELBA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13.50

8 sheets frozen phyllo dough, at room temperature

8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter, melted

½ cup sugar

1 teaspoon ground cinnamon

4 large scoops vanilla ice cream, about 1 pint

4 large canned peach halves

¾ cup prepared raspberry sauce

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees.

2. Lay a sheet of phyllo on a work surface (cover the remaining sheets with a damp towel) and brush with butter. Sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon. Cover with another sheet of phyllo, and repeat the process until you have a stack of 4 sheets. Lay on a parchmentlined baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining phyllo to make another 4-layer stack. Place on another parchment-lined baking sheet.

3. Bake the stacks for 5 minutes, or until golden brown and crispy. Allow to cool. Break off a very small piece of phyllo and crush it into crumbs. Place a small pile of the crumbs in the center of each of four bowls. Put a scoop of vanilla ice cream on top of the crumbs in each bowl. Top each scoop with a peach half (cut side down), and press it gently into the ice cream. Spoon the raspberry sauce over and around the peaches.

4. Break the remaining phyllo into large haphazard pieces; lay a piece across each peach, and serve.



Pretty Peach Melba

S'MORES TARTLETS

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$9.75

8 mini graham cracker piecrusts or tartlet shells

8 ounces bittersweet chocolate, finely chopped

8 large strawberries, hulled and sliced

1½ cups marshmallow creme

Salt

1. Preheat a toaster oven to high or turn on the oven broiler. Bake the tart shells until golden brown, 1½ minutes. Remove from the toaster oven or broiler, and turn the toaster oven setting to dark toast.
2. Meanwhile, melt the chocolate in a double boiler over low heat.
3. Spoon a little more than a tablespoon of chocolate into the bottom of each tart shell and arrange the slices from 1 strawberry in the chocolate. Spoon about 3 tablespoons of marshmallow creme into each shell and spread it out to the edges of the shell. Sprinkle a tiny amount of salt on top of each.
4. Place the tartlets in the toaster oven or under the broiler. Watch carefully until the marshmallow creme becomes toasty brown. Remove from the oven.
5. Place 2 tartlets on each plate and drizzle the chocolate over them and the plates. Serve immediately.

WARM RICE PUDDING WITH RUM RAISIN ICE CREAM

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$9.25

8 sheets frozen phyllo, thawed

⅔ stick (approximately 5 tablespoons) butter, melted

Sugar

1 (22-ounce) package prepared rice pudding

1½ cups rum raisin ice cream

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees.
2. Lay a sheet of phyllo on a work surface (cover the remaining sheets with a damp towel). Brush it liberally with melted butter and sprinkle with a little sugar. Top with a second sheet, brush with butter, and sprinkle with sugar. Gently scrunch the phyllo up, forming a rough circle about 7 inches in diameter. Place it on a parchment-lined sheet. Repeat the process with the remaining phyllo, making a total of 4 phyllo disks, using a second parchment-lined baking sheet.
3. Bake the phyllo disks for 5 minutes, or until golden brown and crispy.
4. Meanwhile, transfer the rice pudding to a medium bowl and cover with plastic wrap. Microwave for 3 minutes, stirring at 1-minute intervals. If the pudding seems too soupy, place in a sieve and drain off about ½ cup liquid.
5. Divide the pudding among four bowls. Place a scoop of ice cream in the center of each pudding, place a phyllo disk on top, and serve immediately.

APPLE PAN CRUMBLE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$9.75*

2 (15-ounce) jars baked apples

½ cup packed brown sugar

1 cup flour

1¼ teaspoons ground cinnamon

½ cup minute rolled oats

½ teaspoon salt

8 tablespoons (1 stick) cold butter, cut into small chunks

1. Pour the apples and their liquid into a medium bowl. Microwave for about 3 minutes, or until heated through.
2. Meanwhile, heat two large nonstick sauté pans over medium heat. In a medium bowl, combine the brown sugar, flour, cinnamon, oats, and salt. Add the butter and cut it into the dry ingredients with two forks until the mixture resembles coarse meal.
3. Divide the oat mixture between the two hot pans and cook very slowly for 5 minutes, stirring often to ensure even browning and crisping. Transfer to a large plate to cool and harden for a few minutes.
4. Spoon the apple mixture into four bowls. Sprinkle the oat crumble liberally on top. Serve immediately.

BABA AU RUM

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$5.50*

¼ cup sugar

2 tablespoons water

⅔ cup rum

4 original glazed Krispy Kreme doughnuts or other glazed doughnuts

⅔ cup very cold heavy cream

1. Combine the sugar and water in a small saucepan and bring to a boil over high heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar. Turn off the heat and stir in the rum.
2. With a serrated knife, carefully split each doughnut in half. With a pastry brush, heavily soak the cut side of each half with the rum syrup.
3. In a medium bowl, whip the cream until stiff peaks form.
4. Spoon one-quarter of the whipped cream onto the bottom half of each doughnut. Sandwich the 2 halves together to form a doughnut sandwich, and serve.

BUTTERSCOTCH CHOCOLATE FONDUE WITH GRAHAM CRACKERS AND BANANA

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$9.75*

1 (17.5-ounce) jar butterscotch sauce

2 ounces unsweetened chocolate, finely chopped

3 tablespoons scotch

20 graham crackers

2 ripe bananas, peeled and cut into 1-inch chunks

1. In a fondue pot, bring the butterscotch sauce to a boil. Turn down the heat and whisk in the chocolate until melted. Stir in the scotch.
2. Serve the fondue with the graham crackers and the bananas for dipping.

CHOCOLATE CAKES WITH RASPBERRIES AND NUTELLA MOUSSE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$15.50

2½ pints fresh raspberries

2 tablespoons sugar

1 teaspoon white vinegar

¼ cup Nutella

1 cup very cold heavy cream

Pinch of salt

4 mini chocolate cake shells (about 3½ inches in diameter)

1. In a medium bowl, combine two-thirds of the raspberries with the sugar and vinegar. Mash the raspberries with a fork until the juices are released and the mixture becomes a very coarse puree. Set aside.
2. Combine the Nutella, cream, and salt in a medium bowl and beat until medium-stiff peaks form; be careful not to overwhip the cream.
3. Fill the cake shells with the raspberry mixture. Mound the Nutella mousse on top. Scatter the remaining raspberries over the tops of the desserts. Serve immediately, or chill, if desired.

CLASSIC CANNOLI

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$12

1 (15-ounce) container whole-milk ricotta cheese

½ cup mascarpone cheese

⅓ cup orange marmalade

⅔ cup confectioners’ sugar

Pinch of salt

8 large cannoli shells (LaRosa makes good ones) Chocolate chips for sprinkling

1. In the bowl of an electric mixer (or another large bowl), combine the ricotta, mascarpone, and orange marmalade. Beat with the wire whip attachment (or regular beaters), until smooth, about 1 minute. Slowly add the sugar and salt and beat until combined.
2. Fill a pastry bag fitted with a large plain tip with the cheese mixture. Pipe the mixture, working from both ends, to fill each cannoli shell. Sprinkle the chocolate chips onto the cheese mixture peeking out of each end of the cannoli. Serve immediately, or refrigerate until serving time.

CRISPY GOLDEN CROISSANTS WITH PUMPKIN CREAM AND CANDIED GINGER

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$7

¾ cup sugar

1½ teaspoons ground cinnamon

4 medium croissants, split

1 cup very cold heavy cream

¾ cup canned pumpkin puree, chilled

4 pieces crystallized ginger, cut into thin strips

1. Preheat a toaster oven to high or turn on the oven broiler.
2. Combine the sugar and 1 teaspoon cinnamon and pour onto a plate. Dip each croissant into the cinnamon sugar, coating it well. Place the croissants in the toaster oven or under the broiler and toast until golden brown, about 3 minutes. Let cool.
3. Meanwhile, in a medium bowl, combine the cream, pumpkin puree, the remaining ½ teaspoon cinnamon, and ¼ cup of the remaining cinnamon

sugar and beat with an electric mixer until the mixture is slightly stiff and airy. (You can do this up to 3 hours ahead; chill.)

4. To assemble, place each croissant cut side up on a plate. Spoon the pumpkin cream onto the croissants. Sprinkle the crystallized ginger on top, and serve immediately.

DUTCH APPLES ON CHALLAH WITH MAPLE-WALNUT SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 Estimated Cost: \$11.50

4 tablespoons butter, softened

4 (¾-inch) slices challah bread

1¼ cups walnut halves, coarsely crushed

1 cup heavy cream

½ cup maple syrup

Salt

1 (15-ounce) jar baked apples

1. Preheat the oven to 450 degrees. Preheat a toaster oven to high or turn on the oven broiler.
2. Spread the butter on both sides of each slice of challah. Place in the toaster oven or under the broiler and toast until golden brown and crisp on the outside. Set aside.
3. Spread the walnuts on a baking sheet and bake in the oven for 5 minutes, or until fragrant and toasted. Set aside.
4. Meanwhile, heat a large sauté pan over high heat until hot. Add the cream; it will boil vigorously. Boil until reduced and extremely thick, then stir in the maple syrup. Add the nuts. Season with a little salt. Keep warm.
5. In a medium bowl, microwave the apples in their liquid until hot, about 2 minutes. To serve, place a piece of challah in the center of each plate. Top with apples, using their liquid to soak the bread. Spoon the maple-walnut mixture on top.

GUAVA TAPIOCA WITH MACADAMIA NUTS

Number of Servings: 4 Estimated Cost: \$7.75

½ cup instant tapioca

2 cups guava nectar, plus more as needed

Pinch of salt

½ cup macadamia pieces

2 small ripe starfruit, thinly sliced

1¼ cups passion fruit sorbet

1. Combine the tapioca and guava nectar in a medium saucepan, off the heat. Let sit for 5 minutes.
2. Cook the tapioca, stirring constantly, until tender, about 3 minutes. Add more guava nectar to thin if necessary, and season with the salt.
3. To serve, spoon the tapioca into four bowls and scatter the macadamia pieces on top. Arrange the starfruit slices on top of the tapioca and place a scoop of passion fruit sorbet in the center of each. Serve immediately.

FRESH ORANGES WITH JACK DANIEL’S AND YOGURT

Number of Servings: 4 Estimated Cost: \$7

4 tablespoons butter

⅓ cup sugar

6 oranges, peeled and separated into segments, juice reserved

¼ cup Jack Daniel’s Tennessee Whiskey

Pinch of salt

1⅓ cups vanilla yogurt

1. Heat a large sauté pan over high heat until smoking. Add the butter, sugar, and reserved orange juice. Bring to a boil and boil to reduce until slightly syrupy, about 1½ minutes.

2. Turn off the heat and stir in the whiskey. Add the orange segments to the pan, season with the salt, and toss gently to coat.
3. Divide the orange mixture among four bowls and top each bowl with $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of the yogurt. Serve.

PINEAPPLE FRENCH TOAST

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost:* \$13.75

8 thin slices challah bread

$\frac{1}{2}$ fresh pineapple (you can buy one already cored, peeled, and thinly sliced, but be sure to reserve the juice)

8 tablespoons (1 stick) butter

4 eggs

3 tablespoons sugar

2 tablespoons water

Pinch of salt

$1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons Chinese 5-spice powder

1 pint vanilla ice cream

1. Place 4 slices of challah on a work surface and lay the pineapple slices in a single layer on top of each piece. Top with the remaining bread and press down firmly.
2. Melt the butter in a very large nonstick sauté pan. Meanwhile, blend the eggs, sugar, water, salt, and 5-spice powder in a shallow dish. Dip the sandwiches in the mixture, turning to coat completely.
3. When the butter is foaming, place the sandwiches in the pan. Cook for about $2\frac{1}{2}$ minutes per side, or until golden brown. Remove from the pan and place on plates.
4. Add $\frac{1}{3}$ cup of the reserved pineapple juice to the pan, bring to a boil, and boil until reduced, thick, and syrupy.
5. Spoon some of the sauce over the French toast, top each with a scoop of vanilla ice cream, and serve.



Pineapple French Toast

CROISSANTS WITH PRUNES AND ARMAGNAC

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$11.75*

4 medium croissants, split

Sugar

20 pitted prunes (about 1 cup), roughly chopped

1 cup butterscotch sauce

¼ cup Armagnac

1 lemon, scrubbed

1. Preheat a toaster oven to high or turn on the oven broiler. Dip the cut side of the croissants in sugar. Place in the toaster oven or under the broiler and toast until golden brown and crispy, about 3 minutes; watch the croissants carefully so they don't burn.
2. Meanwhile, in a medium saucepan, combine the prunes and butterscotch and bring to a boil. Lower the heat and simmer for about 3 minutes, stirring frequently. Remove from the heat, add the Armagnac, and stir to blend.
3. To serve, place a croissant on each plate. Spoon the butterscotch prune sauce liberally over and around. Zest the lemon directly over each plate, being careful to disperse the zest evenly. Serve with vanilla ice cream, if desired.

THAI BLING-BLING SOUP

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$7.50*

2 cups prepared tapioca pudding

½ cup Coco Lopez cream of coconut

⅓ cup water

4 Jell-O Sugar Free Gelatin Snacks (2 peach, 2 watermelon) or other prepared gelatin

4 Flav-O-Ice pops (2 green, 2 blue) or other frozen fruit pops

1. Combine the tapioca pudding, cream of coconut, and water in a bowl and stir until blended. Divide among four bowls.
2. Cut the gelatin into large dice. Cut the pops into 1-inch pieces. Scatter the Jell-O cubes and Flav-O-Ice pieces over the tapioca in each bowl. Serve immediately.

WARM BROWNIES WITH A SALTY PEANUT SAUCE

Number of Servings: 4 *Estimated Cost: \$12.00*

⅓ cup peanut butter

¾ cup heavy cream

¼ cup water

Pinch of salt

4 (4-ounce) commercially prepared brownies

½ cup salted peanuts

2 cups vanilla ice cream

1. In a small saucepot, heat the first 4 ingredients, stirring constantly with a whisk. Bring to a simmer and turn off heat, thin with more water if necessary.
2. Microwave the brownies for 30 seconds, or until warm. Spoon sauce over brownies and sprinkle with peanuts. Top with vanilla ice cream and serve immediately.



Warm Brownies with a Salty Peanut Sauce

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