

# The Twitter Cookbook

2008 - Version 1.0

compiled by Mike Tremoulet  
(@coffeemike)

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# Table of Contents

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<b>LICENSE</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Table of Contents</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>6</b>
@coffeemike	6
<b>Marinated Tomato and Feta Salad with Greek Dressing</b>	<b>7</b>
@lfarnsworth	7
<b>Apple Pie – The Drink</b>	<b>8</b>
@domesticat	8
<b>Cuban Burritos</b>	<b>9</b>
@threeheartphoto	9
<b>Pig Candy</b>	<b>10</b>
@AskDrDing	10
<b>Frito Pie</b>	<b>11</b>
@AskDrDing	11
<b>Tater Tot Casserole a la Ding</b>	<b>12</b>
@AskDrDing	12
<b>Momma’s Lemon Cake Mix Cookies</b>	<b>13</b>
@AskDrDing	13
<b>Meringue Kisses</b>	<b>14</b>
@briguyblock	14
<b>Healing Vegetable Soup</b>	<b>15</b>
@sydmarie	15
<b>El Coctel de Camarón</b>	<b>16</b>
@sydmarie	16
<b>Microwave Fudge</b>	<b>17</b>
@nicolegalleta	17
<b>Peppermint Bark</b>	<b>18</b>
@nicolegalleta	18
<b>Lemon Bars</b>	<b>19</b>
@nicolegalleta	19
<b>Chocolate Bourbon Pecan Pie</b>	<b>20</b>
@internjen	20
<b>Chicken Wings</b>	<b>21</b>
@davidredding	21
<b>Snickerdoodles</b>	<b>22</b>
@texaswriter	22
<b>Andes Mint Cookies</b>	<b>23</b>

<i>@melissabrown</i>	23
<b>Chicken Tortilla Soup</b>	<b>24</b>
<i>@jen_alias</i>	24
<b>Spanish Rice (a.k.a. Mom Rice)</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>@mzhummina</i>	25
<b>Bacon Cheddar Deviled Eggs</b>	<b>26</b>
<i>@ariklewis</i>	26
<b>Mississippi Mud Pie</b>	<b>27</b>
<i>@darmerk</i>	27
<b>Whole Wheat Pizza crust</b>	<b>28</b>
<i>@internjen</i>	28
<b>No Measuring Hummus</b>	<b>29</b>
<i>@internjen</i>	29
<b>Christmas Toffee</b>	<b>30</b>
<i>@mockbird</i>	30
<b>Mashed Potato Casserole</b>	<b>31</b>
<i>@mockbird</i>	31
<b>Green Bean Casserole</b>	<b>32</b>
<i>@mockbird</i>	32
<b>Easy Bolognese Sauce</b>	<b>33</b>
<i>@mockbird</i>	33
<b>Coffee Tips</b>	<b>34</b>
<i>@jeremey</i>	34
<b>Mango Pineapple Salsa</b>	<b>38</b>
<i>@jakesutton</i>	38
<b>Fruit Ceviche</b>	<b>39</b>
<i>@jakesutton</i>	39
<b>The Best Damned Enchilada Sauce Ever</b>	<b>41</b>
<i>@jakesutton</i>	41
<b>Hot Buttered Rum</b>	<b>42</b>
<i>@thefoodgeek</i>	42
<b>Beer Cheese Soup</b>	<b>43</b>
<i>@christinebpc</i>	43
<b>Breakfast Eggs</b>	<b>44</b>
<i>@christinebpc</i>	44
<b>Banana Bread</b>	<b>45</b>
<i>@christinebpc</i>	45
<b>Sweet Potato Casserole</b>	<b>46</b>
<i>@coffeemike</i>	46
<b>Bourbon Balls</b>	<b>47</b>

<i>@coffeemike</i>	47
<b>Mom's Chili</b>	<b>48</b>
<i>@coffeemike</i>	48
<b>Butter Pie Crust</b>	<b>49</b>
<i>@coffeemike</i>	49
<b>Crêpes</b>	<b>50</b>
<i>@coffeemike</i>	50
<b>Potato and Leek Soup</b>	<b>51</b>
<i>@coffeemike</i>	51
<b>Avgolemono</b>	<b>52</b>
<i>@coffeemike</i>	52
<b>Corn Bread</b>	<b>53</b>
<i>@jeremey</i>	53
<b>Belgian Waffles</b>	<b>54</b>
<i>@jeremey</i>	54
<b>Poisson en Papillote</b>	<b>55</b>
<i>@coffeemike</i>	55
<b>The Best Meat Sauce Ever</b>	<b>56</b>
<i>@mellowynk</i>	56
<b>Mama Rosanne's Gravy</b>	<b>57</b>
<i>@blurker</i>	57

# INTRODUCTION

@coffeemike

New Year's Eve, 2008. As I write this, coffee in hand, the idea of forming a cookbook based on the reach of social networks, and Twitter in particular, is 10 days old. (Okay, the idea may be much older, but it came to me in a flash 10 days ago.) This came from watching my friends talk about upcoming holiday feasts, and me wanting to see just what they were all about to eat.



And thus, the cookbook in your hands (or on your screen) was born.

I can't thank enough all the people who have contributed to this effort. Their names are alongside each of the recipes they have submitted. Thanks also to everybody who spread the word through retweets and messages.

I've always wanted to write a cookbook. However, it wouldn't have been nearly this interesting without your help.

Happy Eating!

P.S. – Given that this is ten days old and recipes are still coming in at the last minute – thanks! – very little has been done to sort, edit, or otherwise playtest these recipes. That'll come in version 2.0.

# Marinated Tomato and Feta Salad with Greek Dressing

@farnsworth

---

## SALAD INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 medium onion, sliced into 1-inch strips
- 1/4 tsp. kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp. black pepper
- 1/2 cup crumbled feta cheese (2 oz.)
- 1/4 tsp. oregano
- 1/2 cup chopped black olives
- 1 pint cherry tomatoes, halved
- 2 bag baby spinach (6 oz.)

## DRESSING INGREDIENTS

- 3 tbsp. red wine vinegar
- 1/2 tsp. coarse salt
- 1/4 tsp. sugar or Splenda
- 1/8 tsp. freshly ground pepper
- 3/4 tsp. dry mustard
- 3/4 tsp. dried oregano
- 1/4 tsp. minced garlic clove
- 1/4 tsp. fresh lemon juice
- 1/2 extra virgin olive oil

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Put all salad dressing ingredients EXCEPT the olive oil in a blender or food processor and blend. Let sit for fifteen minutes to steep the flavors. Then add the olive oil and mix until smooth.
- 2) In a plastic bowl, layer onions, salt and pepper, feta, oregano, olives, and tomatoes. Pour dressing over top.
- 3) Cover bowl and refrigerate for at least eight hours or overnight. Do not stir; the dressing will filter through to the salad ingredients.
- 4) To serve, divide the baby spinach among four plates. Toss the tomato mixture thoroughly and spoon onto the baby spinach.

# Apple Pie – The Drink

@domesticat

---

- cheesecloth
- 2 sticks cinnamon
- 20 cloves
- 20 allspice berries
- 2 Tbsp lemon juice (~1 lemon)
- 2 cups sugar
- 2 tsp vanilla extract
- 1½-2 cups Everclear
- 1 gallon apple juice, not from concentrate

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Put spices in cheesecloth. Bash until cracked a bit. Put cheesecloth hunk in pot.
- 2) Find out how far up in the pan 2 cups of juice rises. Mark something with that level (like a straw), and add 2 more cups juice. Simmer down to 2 cups, and take your time! The longer the spices steep in the juice, the more flavor you'll get.
- 3) Remove bag, add sugar, stir until all sugar is dissolved. Add lemon juice, extract. Stir.
- 4) Add back to juice in original container. Add alcohol. Shake or stir to combine. Taste—I sometimes add up to about 4T of sugar depending on my preference.
- 5) Drink like a tech staffer: early and often.

## NOTES:

Consider using cider, if you can afford it. It's more expensive, but the taste is right. Or, if you're making two gallons, make it with half cider and half juice.

Good spices make a difference. Don't believe me? I get mine from penzeys.com and I get asked how I got such a fabulous spice aroma into my pie. That's how. Spend the money. It's worth it.

More booze is not better. Be smart. Start with 1½ cups alcohol, and taste the finished mixture before you decide to make it more alcoholic. Experience has taught me that 2 cups seems to be the upper limit; any more than that, and the apple taste is blown away by the burn of the alcohol.

*[Editor's note – originally submitted as “Elixir of the Bytecode God”, a title that just tickled me, so I'm keeping it. - @coffeemike]*



- 1-2 lbs lean sirloin strip steak (depending on size of family)
- 1 serrano chile
- 1 bag baby carrots
- 3-4 large potatoes
- 1 package large flour tortillas
- 1 container sour cream
- 1 bag shredded lettuce
- 1 container Louisiana Hot Sauce
- 2 tablespoons stick butter
- greek seasoning
- ground pepper
- seasoning salt

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Cut sirloin strip steak into small pieces, smaller than stew meat. Fry in a pan with two tablespoons of butter.
- 2) Season to taste with greek seasoning, ground pepper, and seasoning salt. Mince serrano chile.
- 3) Turn heat down to a medium simmer and add chile to meat. Cover.
- 4) Chop baby carrots to suit your taste or size of family 1-2 cups should be fine.
- 5) Peel and slice potatoes into small chunks.
- 6) Add about a cup and 1/2 of water to meat. Then add carrots and potatoes. Cover.
- 7) Continue mixture on a medium simmer, stirring occasionally until carrots and potatoes cook through.
- 8) Cook until potatoes start to get very soft and slightly pasty.
- 9) Turn off heat.
- 10) Warm tortillas.
- 11) Fill tortillas with meat mixture, lettuce, sour cream, and hot sauce to taste.
- 12) Fold ends of tortillas around mixture and to the middle.
- 13) Enjoy!

- 1 package thick-cut bacon
- brown sugar
- cayenne pepper (optional)

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Line glass 9×13" pan with bacon. Cover liberally with brown sugar. You can add a couple dashes of cayenne.
- 2) Bake at 350 for about 30-40 minutes total. I like to turn mine over about 15 minutes in, add sugar, and cook for another 15-20 total minutes for that optimal sweet-salty balance.
- 3) Candy will harden as it cools, which it won't because you will have eaten it already. It's that good.

**MAIN INGREDIENTS:**

- Big bag of Fritos
- 1-2 cans of Hormel or Wolf brand chili – these are the standard
- Shredded cheddar cheese

**OPTIONAL GARNISHES:**

- Chopped Bermuda onion
- Cilantro
- Sour cream
- Salsa or pico
- Hot peppers or raw Jalapenos
- Texas Pete hot sauce

**INSTRUCTIONS**

- 1) Heat up the chili in a pan on the stove, it tastes better that way than nuking it. Gently and perhaps even lovingly open the top of the Frito bag evenly across, and pour the hot chili inside. Shake. Dance briefly in your excitement.
- 2) Refocus. Then pour in some cheese to taste, shake firmly to distribute the cheese. Immediately pour the whole mess into individual bowls, top with whatever garnishes you like. I prefer a little sour cream w/finely-chopped Bermuda onion. Extra Frito chips on top tastes so good it'll make you want to slap ya mamma.
- 3) [Formal Version: Toss the Fritos into a bowl, pour a little heated chili on top, and then the cheese and other toppings. This is for fancy white-tablecloth dinners and suchlike, due to the aesthetic appeal.]

# Tater Tot Casserole a la Ding

@AskDrDing

---

- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1 tsp. minced garlic
- 1 to 1.5 lbs ground beef
- 1 can cream of chicken soup
- 2 cans green beans, drained (can substitute corn)
- 1 bag Ore-Ida Tater Tots (can use generic)
- Optional: 2 c. shredded cheddar, American, or Velveeta cheese

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Sauté the onion, garlic and ground beef. Drain. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
- 2) Add soup in, stir.
- 3) Pour mixture into 13×9 in. pan, spread green beans evenly atop. With a flourish, dump Tots on top.
- 4) Bake uncovered for 45 minutes at 350, or until Tots start to turn a rich, golden brown. Stare lovingly at what you've wrought.
- 5) Add cheese and bake for another 10-15 minutes until cheese bubbles delectably. Remove from oven, allow to sit for 2-3 minutes before tearing into it like a wild, starving animal.

# Momma's Lemon Cake Mix Cookies

@AskDrDing

---

- 1 box lemon cake mix (the non-pudding kind)
- 1 egg, beaten
- 8 ounce container whipped topping (Cool Whip\*)
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- Powdered sugar

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly grease cookie sheet. Gently mix. Drop by teaspoon in powder sugar and roll into ball. Bake for about 10 minutes. Do not overbake. Cool and store in tightly covered tin or plastic container. Makes a chewy cookie.
- 2) Since many cookies must be tested immediately following the baking, it is impossible to say with any accuracy how many cookies this recipe makes.

## NOTES

\*Warning: Dr. Ding is morally opposed to Cool Whip, as it contains lots of hydrogenated oils which are notoriously bad for you, but if you're going to eat them anyway, make these cookies. A couple won't hurt. Probably. Or, they might give you some absurd form of presenile dementia that will slowly rot your brain from the inside out as you inexplicably pull your pants up to your armpits.

## Meringue Kisses

@briguyblock

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- 4 egg whites (room temperature)
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ tsp vanilla
- 6 oz chocolate chips
- ½ cup chopped pecans (optional)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Beat egg whites until very stiff/or they thicken.
- 2) Add sugar and vanilla.
- 3) Add and mix chocolate chips (and pecans if you are using them – I never do.)
- 4) Drop by teaspoonfuls on parchment paper (or waxed paper). Parchment works best.
- 5) When you lift up the spoon, it will make a peak.
- 6) Bake at 275 for 30 minutes – till light brown.

Makes 72 - 90.

# Healing Vegetable Soup

@sydmarie

---

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 1 onion, chopped
- 6 cloves garlic, chopped
- 8 cups water
- 4 cups chicken broth
- 1-1/2 teaspoons salt, or to taste
- 3/4 teaspoon black pepper, or to taste
- 1 head cabbage, cored and coarsely chopped
- Greens (Collard, Mustard, Spinach, Kale, whatever you want)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) In a large stockpot, heat olive oil over medium heat.
- 2) Stir in onion and garlic; cook until onion is transparent, about 5 minutes.
- 3) Stir in water, bouillon, salt, and pepper.
- 4) Bring to a boil, then stir in cabbage.
- 5) Simmer until cabbage wilts, about 10 minutes.
- 6) Return to a boil, then simmer 15 to 30 minutes, stirring often

## NOTES

This is one of my favorite Fall to Winter soups. It's great for when you aren't feeling great or when you just want an extra boost for the cold and flu season. I often vary the recipe with different vegetables and spices, or extra garlic because we are garlic freaks at my house.

# El Coctel de Camarón

@sydmarie

---

- 2 lbs. cooked shrimp, peeled and deveined (I buy it frozen and pre-cooked for simplicity)
- 1 tbsp. minced garlic
- 1/2 med. red onion, chopped
- 1/2 yellow bell pepper, chopped
- 1/2 orange bell pepper, chopped
- 1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
- 4 cups spicy V8
- 1/2 cup clam juice
- 1 can tomato paste
- 1/4 cup of lime juice
- 1/4 cup of horseradish
- 1 rip avocado, peeled, pitted and chopped
- salt and other spices (Old Bay Garlic Seasoning) to taste

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Place the shrimp in a large bowl.
- 2) Stir in all vegetables.
- 3) Mix in V8, clam juice, tomato paste, lime juice and horseradish (adjust V8 and Paste as desired for the consistency of your choice).
- 4) Gently stir in avocado.
- 5) Cover and refrigerate 2 - 3 hours.
- 6) Enjoy.

## NOTES

A summer-time favorite, I've made this for camping trips and parties. It is always a huge success and people seek me out for the recipe. For parties if you take a long little plastic cups and spoons, it's perfect for one handed eating. It's perfect for when it is too hot to cook.



## Microwave Fudge

@nicolegalleta

---

- 1 (16-ounce) package powdered sugar
- 2/3 cup unsweetened baking cocoa
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 cup milk
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon rum flavoring
- 1 stick (1/2 cup) butter
- 1/2 cup chopped pecans

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Line an 8 x 8 x 2-inch baking pan with aluminum foil.
- 2) In a large microwave-proof bowl, combine powdered sugar, cocoa and salt. Stir in milk, vanilla and rum flavoring; mix well. Place butter slices on top. Microwave on HIGH for 2 minutes.
- 3) Beat until smooth, then stir in nuts.
- 4) Spread in prepared pan; refrigerate until firm, about 1 hour, before cutting.

Makes 16 pieces.

# Peppermint Bark

@nicolegalleta

---

- Crushed candy canes, to yield 1 cup
- 2 pounds white chocolate
- Peppermint flavorings, optional

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Place candy canes in a plastic bag and hammer into 1/4-inch chunks or smaller.
- 2) Melt the chocolate in microwave (watch very closely – remove before melted completely – stir until smooth).
- 3) Combine candy cane chunks with chocolate (add peppermint flavoring at this point if desired.) Pour mixture onto a cookie sheet layered with parchment or waxed paper and place in the refrigerator for 45 minutes or until firm.
- 4) Remove from cookie sheet and break into pieces.

- 2 sticks (8 ounces) butter
- 2 cups flour
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 4 beaten eggs
- 2 cups sugar
- 4 tablespoons flour
- 1/4 cup lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon finely grated lemon peel
- sifted confectioners' sugar

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 5) Heat oven to 325°. Blend butter, 2 cups flour and 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar. Pat into ungreased 13x9x2-inch pan. Bake for 18 to 20 minutes.
- 6) For filling, blend together eggs, sugar, 4 tablespoons flour, lemon juice, and lemon peel. Pour over first layer. Return to oven and bake at 325° for 20 minutes.
- 7) Loosen around edges, cut into bars and sift confectioners' sugar over the top while warm.

# Chocolate Bourbon Pecan Pie

@internjen

---

- 1 9" or deeper pie crust
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1 cup light corn syrup
- 1/2 cup butter
- 4 eggs beaten
- 1/4 cup bourbon
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 6 oz semi sweet chocolate chips
- 1 cup chopped pecans

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Preheat oven to 325.
- 2) In a saucepan, combine sugar, corn syrup and butter. Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly until butter melts and the sugar dissolves. Cool slightly.
- 3) In a large bowl (or mixer), combine eggs, bourbon, vanilla and salt. Mix well. Slowly pour sugar mixture into egg mixture, whisking constantly. Stir in pecans and chocolate. Pour mixture into pie crust.
- 4) Bake for 50 to 55 minutes or until set and golden brown.

## NOTES

If using regular (not deep) pie crust, use 3/4 cups sugar, 3/4 cup corn syrup and 3/4 stick of butter. Everything else is the same.

I use 1/3 cup of bourbon.

ALWAYS bake this pie on a baking sheet totally covered in foil. This pie has a tendency to spill over and this will save you TONS of time in clean up.

ENJOY!

# Chicken Wings

@davidredding

---

- 1 C. Brown Sugar
- 1/2 C. Soya Sauce
- 1 tsp Ginger
- 2 tsp Vinegar
- 1 clove of Garlic
- 1/2 C. water
- 3 Tbsp Honey

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Combine all ingredients
- 2) Brown Chicken Wings in a pan with oil.
- 3) Stir mixture, pour over chicken and simmer 20 min

## NOTES

This is a buddy's ex-girlfriend's chicken wing recipe. He broke up with her but missed the wings, he knew she had sent the recipe to my wife and asked me to email it to him.

# Snickerdoodles

@texaswriter

---

- 2 3/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 1/2 cup shortening
- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened – not melted. Do not attempt to microwave.
- 1 1/2 cups sugar, plus 1/4 cup
- 2 eggs
- 3 tablespoons ground cinnamon

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F.
- 2) Stir the flour, baking soda, and salt into a bowl. If the baking soda has any clumps, sift the mixture.
- 3) Beat the shortening and butter. Add the 1 1/2 cups sugar and continue beating until light and fluffy, about 5 minutes – take the time, really. Add the eggs, 1 at a time, beating well after each addition. Add the flour mixture and blend until smooth.
- 4) Mix the 1/4 tablespoons of sugar with the cinnamon in a small bowl. Roll the dough, by hand, into 1 1/2-inch balls. Roll the balls in the cinnamon sugar. Flatten the balls into 1/2-inch thick disks, spacing them evenly on unlined cookie sheets. Bake until light brown, but still moist in the center, about 12 minutes. Seriously, take them out after 12 minutes. The only reason to leave them in is if they look soggy, which would mean your oven is off or not working. Leave them out on the cookie sheet for one or two minutes, then cool on a rack.

## NOTES

A couple of days ago, I wanted to bake cookies, and wasn't quite sure what kind. I twittered my indecision, and the word back from the Houston Twitter community was almost unanimous: Snickerdoodles! My Facebook friends were all about white chocolate macadamia and other cookies that would have required a trip to the grocery store. Or Hawaii. Although I'm not against that, I didn't really have time.

I wasn't sure if my cream of tartar was fresh, so I found how to replace it and still get the fluffiness. I tweaked a few other things, and the resulting cookie was the best snickerdoodle I've ever had. This is the recipe I came up with.

# Andes Mint Cookies

@melissabrown

---

- 3/4 c. butter (1 1/2 stick)
- 1 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 2 Tablespoons water
- 12 oz. (2 cups) chocolate chips (I do 1 cup bittersweet, 1 cup semi)
- 2 eggs
- 2 1/2 cups flour
- 1 1/2 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 teaspoon salt

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) In a large bowl melt together the butter, brown sugar, water and chocolate chips. (I microwave it for a minute at a time stirring after each until melted.)
- 2) Beat in eggs, add in sifted remaining dry ingredients until blended. Chill 1 hour or overnight. Shape into 1 inch balls and place on greased cookie sheet. Bake @ 325° F for 8-10 minutes. Place mint on top, you may want to place back in the oven for a second or two. Spread when melted. Let cool.

## NOTES

Here's where I got it from: <http://cafezupas.blogspot.com/2008/12/in-season-cookies.html>

# Chicken Tortilla Soup

@jen\_alias

---

- 1 lb chicken tenders
- Cumin
- Garlic powder
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Chicken stock \*
- 2 cans Rotel mild tomatoes and green chili peppers, drained
- 1 large can sweet corn, drained
- Juice of one lime
- Chopped cilantro
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Tortilla chips, crushed (I recommend Tostitos Gold - they hold up well in the soup)
- 1 ripe avocado, sliced
- Shredded mozzarella or Monterrey jack cheese

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Preheat oven to 375. Cover baking sheet with foil and spray lightly with cooking spray. Lay out tenders and season with salt, pepper, cumin and garlic powder. Bake for 20-25 minutes or until well done (if it's too juicy, it will cloud up your soup). Set aside.
- 2) While chicken bakes, pour stock, corn and rotel into pot. Cover and bring to a simmer. Once chicken is cool enough to handle, cube and add to pot. Check for seasoning if desired. Just before serving, add lime juice and cilantro. Stir and ladle into bowls. Garnish bowls liberally with chips, cheese and avocado slices.

Serves four, plus leftovers to fight over the next day.

## NOTES

Optional additions: fresh chopped onions, minced garlic, diced zucchini, carrots, scallions, sour cream as garnish. The possibilities are endless.

\*Note on stock: this recipe is almost infinitely stretchable, by adding additional stock, corn or rotel, so start with the amount of stock you want your finished soup to contain. I usually use 2 large boxes of chicken stock. Broth is an acceptable substitute but less delicious.



## Spanish Rice (a.k.a. Mom Rice)

@mzhummina

---

- 2 Tbsp. Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 1/4 c. Diced yellow onion
- 1 1/2 c. Uncooked enriched rice
- 2 c. Hot Chicken or vegetable broth
- 1 c. or 8 oz. Canned Tomato sauce
- 1 c. Frozen corn kernels
- 1/2 minced fresh jalapeño

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) In medium saucepan, heat 2 tbsp. EVOO over medium heat. Place 1/4 cup diced yellow onion in pan and sauté until golden yellow. Introduce rice to pan and cook until some of rice has a slight brown color.
- 2) Stir in chicken broth, tomato sauce, corn and jalapeño and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to low simmer, cover and cook for 30 minutes. (do not stir)
- 3) Once done, fluff rice with fork and serve.

## Bacon Cheddar Deviled Eggs

@ariklewis

---

- 12 eggs
- 1/2 cup mayo
- 4 slices bacon
- 2 tablespoons shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 tablespoon mustard

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Boil the eggs, peel, then cut in half.
- 2) Cook the bacon until crispy, then crumble in a large bowl with yolk, mustard, cheese, and mayo.

Serves 12.

### NOTES

I use a bag to put the mixture in, then cut a corner in order to get it into the egg halves nice and neatly.

## CRUST

- 1 cup flour
- 1/2 cup margarine or butter
- 1/2 cup pecans

## CREAM CHEESE MIXTURE

- 1-8 oz package cream cheese
- 1/2 cup powdered sugar
- 1 cup Cool Whip

## FILLING

- 1 large package instant chocolate pudding
- 3 cups milk

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Blend butter into flour until mixture is coarse, then add nuts. Press mixture into bottom of 9 x 13 pan. Bake at 350 degrees for about 5-8 minutes or until crust is slightly brown. Remove from oven and let cool completely.
- 2) Blend cream cheese mixtures ingredients until smooth. Spread over cooled crust.
- 3) Blend filling ingredients in bowl until mixture thickens. Pour over cream cheese mixture.
- 4) Frost top with remaining Cool Whip and refrigerate until serving.

## NOTES

I found this recipe on an AOL message board in 1997 and it's a family favorite now.

Guaranteed no leftovers!

## Whole Wheat Pizza crust

@internjen

---

- 1 1/4 cups whole wheat flour
- 1 1/4 cups regular flour
- 2 tbsp soy flour
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tbsp active yeast (one packet)
- 1 cup warm water
- 1 tsp honey

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Add the warm water to the yeast, mix with fork and let sit for 5 minutes.
- 2) Mix together other dry ingredients (not honey) and add to yeast. Add honey. Knead for 10 minutes.
- 3) Let rise uncovered (not in the fridge) for 1 hour. This makes 2 12-inch crusts or one BIG or THICK crust. You can freeze or refrigerate at this point.
- 4) When using crust: bake it for 5-10 minutes alone before adding toppings.

## No Measuring Hummus

@internjen

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- 1 can chickpea/garbanzo beans
- couple cloves garlic
- couple spoonfulls of tahini
- at least 1/2 a lemon
- olive oil

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Put the chickpeas and garlic together in the food processor, chop well. Add olive oil (1/2 cup or so to start and add more as you like) and tahini (a spoon full or 2 to start then add to your liking) and chop again. I add lemon to bring out the flavors. It should look wet but not liquidy.
- 2) Serve with pita bread. (I use onion or wheat pitas!)

# Christmas Toffee

@mockbird

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- 1 cup sugar
- 1/2 lb. Butter (the real stuff please)
- 1 Tbsp. Water
- 1 tsp. Vanilla
- 1 1/2 - 2 cups ground pecans
- 1 large or 8 small Hershey chocolate bars

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 3) Combine sugar, butter and water.
- 4) Cook to 300 degrees on candy thermometer (essential)
- 5) Take off heat and add 3/4 cup nuts and vanilla – stir rapidly. Butter a large cookie sheet or jelly roll pan and pour toffee mixture. Spread to make as thin as possible.
- 6) Cool, melt chocolate in double boiler and spread on cooled toffee. Top with remaining nuts. Refrigerate. Break cooled toffee into bite size pieces, store in cool place.

# Mashed Potato Casserole

@mockbird

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- 8 – 10 potatoes
- 1 8 oz. Pkg. Cream cheese
- 1 cup sour cream
- garlic salt – to taste
- chives or green onions
- paprika
- butter

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) While potatoes are boiling, beat sour cream and cream cheese until fluffy. Add garlic salt and chives/onions to taste.
- 2) Whip cooked potatoes and add to cheese mixture. (if too stiff you can add milk). Bake in casserole. Top with paprika and butter pats.
- 3) Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until brown.

## NOTES

All the goodness of twice baked and mashed potatoes combined – easy to make ahead, reheats well

# Green Bean Casserole

@mockbird

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- 1 10 oz. Packages frozen French cut green beans or 2 16 oz. Cans
- 1/3 cup chopped onions
- 2 Tbsp. Butter
- 2 Tbsp. Flour
- 1 tsp. Salt
- 1/4 tsp. Pepper
- 1 cup sour cream
- 1 cup cheddar cheese, shredded.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Drain beans well. Saute onion in butter and add flour, salt, pepper, stirring till onions are coated. Add sour cream, stirring constantly.
- 2) Cook and stir until sauce is smooth and thickened. Fold in beans. Place in shallow baking dish. Sprinkle with cheddar cheese.
- 3) Bake at 350 degrees for approx 25-30 minutes.

## NOTES

This was my mom's alternative to the cream of mushroom soup/dried onion version. I think it's way better and I still have to have it over the holidays. Another one perfect to make ahead and throw in the oven.



# Easy Bolognese Sauce

@mockbird

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- Olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 lb. Ground beef
- 3/4 cup milk / half and half or cream
- 3/4 cup wine
- 1 to 2 jars of your favorite bottled sauce (depending on how meaty you want your sauce)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Sauté onion in olive oil. Add beef and brown till cooked and crumbly. Add sauce, cream and wine. Simmer till flavors blended.

## NOTES

This makes an excellent spaghetti sauce or I use it as the meat sauce in lasagna.

Brewed coffee is an incredibly complex chemical amalgam, consisting of hundreds or even thousands of distinct chemical compounds, making it either the most or second most complex food substance known to exist, depending on whom you ask (the other being red wine).

It is generally true in the culinary world that the fewer ingredients, the more those ingredients matter. Coffee is the ultimate expression of this truth, where the only two ingredients are ground coffee beans and water. Quality water is important, but readily available (hint: filtered or bottled water will probably be best), so really it boils down to one ingredient: the ground coffee.

### **BEANS**

Great coffee starts with great beans. There are many variables that factor into great beans, but for most people, this boils down to one question: who is your roaster?

The roaster, by his choices, determines many of the most important factors to great coffee beans:

- Are the beans sourced from good farms or cooperatives? Are the farms sustainable? Will purchasing the beans have a direct, positive economic impact on real people at the source? Are the farmers being paid fairly?
- What did the roaster do to arrive at the particular roast and roast profile for a bean? Did he choose it purposefully?
- Are the roasted beans fresh and available right away?
- Does the roaster have a personal investment in his product and a reason for roasting/selling the particular beans he chooses?
- Are the beans roasted "too far"? (i.e. surface oils present, etc.)

Coffee is one of a few commodities where consumer buying choices can directly and fairly quickly have significant impact on people in typically very poor nations. More and more, certain coffee farms and coffee growing cooperatives are producing very high quality product. If your roaster is committed to finding these sources and developing relationships with them, your purchase of coffee can help raise the standard of living significantly for people who have typically been very poor, and in addition, you will get a very high quality product. Roasters who are paying this kind of attention to source will also be paying attention to the roasted beans they deliver to their customers.

You will get the best coffee when you develop interest in and basic relationship with local coffee roasters, where you can then get a sense of how the roaster is thinking and what is going into the product you're buying from them. From that knowledge you can make an informed decision about which roaster to use, or whether to resort to ordering from the

many top-notch roasters on the Internet (have a look at Intelligentsia, 49th Parallel, Stumptown, Barefoot, Ritual, Cuvee, and Counter Culture for starters).

A note about the roast itself: coffee is useless without being roasted. The roast is an alchemic transformation of a green bean into a little package of potential flavor (think potential energy). The flavors in coffee come from the oils in the beans, developed in the roast. You shouldn't see an oily surface on the roasted beans; oils outside the bean are no longer inside, and thus flavor has been lost. Great beans demand good sources and a really good, purposeful roast that is mindful of coffee's nature.

## **FRESHNESS**

Coffee should be consumed within two weeks of the day it is roasted, in most cases. So buy from good local roasters, buy a little (e.g. 1 pound), and buy it often. Even more important - it should be ground immediately before use. Grinding should be the last step prior to combining the ground coffee with water. Coffee contains many volatile compounds which distribute flavor into brewing coffee, and one of the more important is CO<sub>2</sub> (carbon dioxide). Roasted coffee loses much of its CO<sub>2</sub> within the first two weeks post-roast, and once it is ground, it loses the vast majority of whatever CO<sub>2</sub> it had within 60 seconds. So prepare your brewing system, prepare your water, then grind and brew.

## **GRIND**

Coffee (the drink) is not made from whole beans, it's made with ground coffee. Coffee beans must be ground to the appropriate fineness for the type of brewing you are doing, and this will require some experimentation (generally, more coarse for French press, more fine for drip). Also, as mentioned above, you really want to grind as the last step before brewing. To grind with any consistency, you really need a burr grinder. Blade grinders just pulverize the same coffee particles over and over, so you get a very uneven grind.

Why does this matter? Because brewing coffee is really about extracting the flavors and oils from the ground beans. If you have an uneven grind, you will have "dust" bits along with some larger chunks... the larger chunks won't get completely extracted, and the dust bits will get massively overextracted. Overextraction means bitterness. This is why a lot of coffee is bitter (among many factors).

## **TEMPERATURE**

Water temperature significantly affects the extraction of flavor from ground coffee. Use good water at the right temperature (in brewing methods where you control this). Boiling is too hot! You want to be around 200 degrees. Find a reliable, consistent way to control your water temperature.

## **TIME AND QUANTITY**

You need to use the right amount of coffee for your brewing method, and unless you've spent some time working on your coffee, you're probably not using enough. Again, the problem is overextraction... if you stick a teaspoon of ground coffee in a 12-cup French press, you will overextract that coffee and end up with bitter (and probably "weak")

coffee. Real coffee geeks speak in grams, but if you develop a fair approximation by volume, that's fine (it's what I do). Start somewhere in the vicinity of two tablespoons of grounds per 6-8oz of water, and go from there. Experiment. Your grind will be a factor here too, because a finer grind will extract more quickly.

Brewing time (in methods where you control this, e.g. French press) is also a major factor. This will require some experimentation, but generally 3-4 minutes is the right ballpark, if the other variables are in line.

## **RECIPES: BREWED COFFEE**

It's difficult to pinpoint an exact recipe, because there are so many variables. However, here are a couple starting points spelled out in recipe format.

### *French Press:*

- 2 heaping tablespoons of unground coffee beans per 6 oz of water to be used
- filtered or bottled water (measured to match size of press or quantity of coffee)

Set your grinder to a medium-coarse setting. Too fine and you will overextract and produce lots of sludge... too coarse and your coffee will be weak. Getting this exactly right for your grinder will require some experimentation.

Heat your water in a kettle to boiling and turn off the heat. Immediately begin grinding your coffee. Dump the grounds into the press pot and pour the water over them, being sure to immerse all of the grounds in water (don't leave any dry on top). Set a timer for 3 minutes + 30 seconds. When the timer goes off, slowly plunge the filter all the way down. Pour and enjoy!

If you have a 32oz press pot, do not brew 32oz of coffee in it. Use 24oz of water, tops. The reason is that fresh coffee will produce quite a "bloom" or head on top of the water as a result of the escaping gases. Also, leaving yourself a little room means less chance of spill when you go to plunge the filter.

If you have an electric kettle with a temperature control and can find roughly 200 degrees on it, you can grind near the end of the heating of the water and then immediately combine the grounds and water (this is what I do but it takes practice to time things correctly).

### *Pour-Over Drip:*

Same as above, but with a medium-fine grind. Then when pouring the water over the coffee, pour just enough to wet all the grounds and wait a few seconds, then fill the pour-over brewer with water. Let the water drip half-way through and then re-fill, etc.

### *Electric Drip:*

In an electric drip brewer, you simply don't control all of the variables. You can still grind right before you turn the machine on, but the time it takes for the machine to fully brew the coffee will reduce the benefit of this, because very little brewing will have happened by the time most of the CO2 will have escaped.

As for the recipe, start with the same as the pour-over drip.

### **SOME WORDS ON ESPRESSO**

Espresso introduces a whole new set of variables, processes, and potential pitfalls. Espresso is produced by slamming 200-degree water through a tightly packed puck of extremely fine grounds at 125 PSI. What could possibly go wrong?

Minor (1 degree) variations in temperature significantly affect flavor. Tiny variations in grind produce different results. Every bean or blend handles a little differently.

Espresso and espresso drinks such as the cappuccino and the latte are fantastic when done properly, but controlling the whole process takes time, practice, passion, and unfortunately some money.

Very good espresso can be made with relatively inexpensive machines, usually starting around \$200 US. Gaggia makes a couple of machines in this range which have a 58mm (standard commercial size) filter and good (if basic) plumbing.

However, it is practically impossible to make really good espresso without a very good espresso grinder. These start around \$300 US (Rancilio Rocky) and really hit their stride at over \$500 US (MACAP M4 Stepless, Mazzer Mini). Good results can be had with a Hario manual grinder (ceramic conical burrs), if you're willing to do all that grinding by hand. A high-quality electric grinder is definitely worth the investment if you will brew espresso on a regular basis.

If you're getting into espresso, select a budget with at least 1/3 (if not 1/2 or more) allocated to the grinder, and then do a lot of research, ask for help, etc.

# Mango Pineapple Salsa

@jakesutton

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- 6 fresh (soft to the touch) mangoes, “cheeked” & diced
- Mango juice (squeezed from mango pits)
- 1 fresh (smell the base) pineapple (or one large can pineapple rings), diced
- 1 fresh papaya, diced (Optional, but adds some nice funkiness)
- 1 medium/large red onion. diced
- 2-4 cloves garlic, minced/crushed
- Peppers, minced (However many and whatever types you like. Try a couple jalapeños and a couple serranos to start.)
- 2 tsp salt
- Handful fresh cilantro, chopped fine

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Combine in glass bowl (glass is best considering the acid present).
- 2) Let sit to allow flavors to combine (Not required, but helps).

## NOTES

The only trick here is preparing the mangoes. Mangoes have a bizarre sort of fibrous pit. The best way around the pit is to lop off the bottom of the fruit. If the orientation of pit is not visible, you should be able to feel it with a finger pressed into the meat. once you know the orientation of the slim-in-one-direction, wide-in-the-other pit, stand the fruit up and carefully follow the wide, flat side of the pit with a knife. I call this “cheeking” the mango. Not sure if I made that up or heard Martha Stewart call it that or what. Once you have the cheeks, you can carefully score the meat with the tip of a knife in a grid pattern “ careful not to go through the skin. Push the skin inside out and just scrape off the nifty little mango cubes with a spoon or the tip of your thumb.

You may also want to try it with a few dashes of vinegar (red wine, rice wine) added for extra zing.

- 1.5 lb. of super fresh fish, cubed  
It needs to have some body to it, too. For instance, I used 1 lb. of scrod and 0.5 lb of swordfish and it turned out great. Other options include sea bass, scallops, tuna, conch, and so on.
- 3 largish limes, juice of
- 1 large lemon, juice of
- Maybe 1/2 cup orange juice or better yet: 1 medium orange, juice of
- 2 large cloves garlic, minced
- 1 medium habañero pepper, minced  
Please! Remember the habanero is one of the hottest peppers known to mankind. WASH YOUR HANDS WELL after you handle the pepper. Alcohol helps get the capsaicin off your hands, too.
- 1 Santa Fe Grande pepper, diced  
Any pepper with some sweetness and a bit of heat is good. I've rarely seen these labeled at the grocery. They usually look like red jalapeños.
- 1 onion, diced  
The type of onion is a personal preference. I used a plain yellow onion, but a red onion or a sweet Vidalia would have been great.
- 1 mango, cubed
- 1 avocado, cubed (similarly)
- 3 plum tomatoes, diced
- 1 can of pineapple slices, chunked or better yet: 1/2 of a fresh pineapple, chunked
- Salt to taste
- Dried pepper flakes to taste

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Place fish cubes in a large glass bowl (glass is definitely preferred, considering we're working with fish and acid), lightly salting and sprinkling with pepper flakes.
- 2) Add garlic and habanero, fold to distribute evenly.
- 3) Cover the fish with citrus juices. Stir the fish gently to make sure there aren't any dry spots / air bubbles.
- 4) Refrigerate and let stand for at least 4 hours. (I left mine for almost 20 hours as a matter of convenience.)
- 5) Strain fish in a colander. Let stand while preparing fruit, etc. to drain excess liquid.
- 6) Mix all other ingredients in a large bowl. Add the fish. Stir/fold gently. (The avocado will dissolve to varying degrees, depending on how ripe it is; Be gentle to keep this to a minimum.)

- 7) Put it back in the fridge until you're ready to serve. (Just long enough to make sure it's nice and cool is good)
- 8) Serve with tortilla chips (I baked my own.) and sangria.



# The Best Damned Enchilada Sauce Ever

@jakesutton

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- 10-12 Dried chiles (Anaheims are a safe start. I like to mix Anaheims and New Mexicos.)
- 3 cups water
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce or paste
- 1 clove garlic, minced/crushed
- 1/4 cup vegetable oil
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 tsp Mexican oregano (It's so worth finding the Mexican variety!)
- 1/4 tsp cumin

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Remove stems and seeds from chiles.
- 2) Simmer chiles in water 1/2 hour.
- 3) Place in blender with enough water to blend, whirl until smooth.
- 4) Add remaining water, tomato sauce and oil. Whirl until smooth then strain. (This is a pain, but absolutely essential. Use a fairly coarse strainer and a wooden spoon to mash the sauce through.)
- 5) Add remaining ingredients and simmer approximately 10 minutes.

## NOTES

Thanks to my Ma who passed this on to me. Also to the Mexican maid who taught the recipe to my grandmother back in Texas in the '50s.

## Hot Buttered Rum

@thefoodgeek

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I made my first Hot Buttered Rum this evening. How could I not try it out, especially after locating the recipe for the world's best hot buttered rum? It sounded like everything a winter drink should be: warm, booze-filled (sorry... infused with distilled spirits), sweet, and buttery. It sounded fantastic. You know what?

It is fantastic.

The making is terribly simple. Take a stick of softened butter, 3/4 cup brown sugar (I used dark), 1/4 cup agave nectar (a sweetener. You could probably use honey in a pinch, though that will throw off the flavor. Some sort of syrup, even a simple syrup, would work just as well), about half a tsp of cinnamon, 1/8 tsp each of nutmeg, allspice, and clove, a shot of rum, and a pinch of salt.

Stir to combine (I used a fork). Take a spoonful or two of the batter, put it in a coffee cup, add a shot or so of rum, and fill the rest with hot water. Drink. Enjoy. Mmmm.

I used Cruzan Light rum for my rum, as it was a good quality rum, and Lance J. Mayhew, who published the recipe that I found, suggests Bacardi 8. The important thing is to use a good rum. (Remember: cold reduces molecular motion, and that includes activating taste receptors. Hot increases molecular motion, so a bad rum will taste worse when heated.)

[Ed. Note – Attribution: <http://thefoodgeek.com/recipe/hot-buttered-rum>]

# Beer Cheese Soup

@christinebpc

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- 1/2 C margarine
- 4 C chicken broth
- 1/2 C half and half
- 1/4 C chives
- 1 can of beer
- 1/2 C flour
- 1/2 C chopped onion
- 1 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1 small jar Cheese Whiz

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Blend margarine with flour in a kettle or large pot. Make a paste. Add broth and onions. Simmer 15 minutes.
- 2) Add half and half, Worcestershire sauce, chives, and Cheese Whiz. Simmer 15 minutes.
- 3) Add 1 can of beer. Heat and serve.

## NOTES

Even better after sitting in the refrigerator overnight.

# Breakfast Eggs

@christinebpc

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- 5 slices (approx.) of bread
- 3/4 lb. sharp cheddar cheese, grated
- 1/2 – 1 lb. sausage or ham chunks.
- 6 eggs
- 2 C milk
- 1/2 tsp Cayenne pepper
- 1/2 tsp dry mustard
- 2 drops Tabasco sauce

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Butter both sides of the bread, and line a 9x13 pan with the bread. Adjust bread as necessary.
- 2) Sprinkle over cheese and sausage.
- 3) Beat eggs, milk, pepper, mustard, and Tabasco until smooth. Pour over bread.
- 4) Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 5) Bake covered 1 hour at 350 degrees Fahrenheit. Remove cover during last 5-10 minutes to brown.

# Banana Bread

@christinebpc

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- 1/2 C margarine
- 2 eggs
- 2 C flour
- 1/2 tsp baking soda
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1/2 C nuts
- 3/4 C sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/4 tsp cloves
- 1 C bananas, mashed

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Cream margarine and sugar. Blend in eggs and vanilla. Add rest of dry ingredients. Fold in the bananas.
- 2) Bake at 350 degrees Fahrenheit for 55 to 60 minutes.

# Sweet Potato Casserole

@coffeemike

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- 4 C cooked mashed sweet potatoes
- 2.5 C sugar
- 1 C milk
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1.5 sticks margarine
- 1 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 to 1 C bourbon
- 4 eggs

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Peel potatoes, cut into chunks, boil until soft, drain, beat in electric mixer (or mash by hand). There will still be some little lumps.
- 2) Measure out 4 cups of potatoes.
- 3) Melt the margarine.
- 4) Mix everything together except the eggs. It can be refrigerated or frozen at this point.
- 5) When ready to cook, beat the eggs, and add them and mix it all up very well. If the mixture is hot when you add the eggs, be very careful or they will coagulate. It's safer if the mixture is cool, or at least room temperature.
- 6) Put in shallow casserole greased with margarine. The one I use is 9.75" x 9.75" x 2".
- 7) Bake uncovered at 350 degrees for about an hour. It's done when the center is jelled (when you jiggle the pan, the center doesn't slosh).

## NOTES

3 pounds of raw sweet potatoes yields 4 cups of cooked mashed sweet potatoes

Reduce heat to 325 degrees if the outside is cooking too fast.

If you warm it in the microwave before putting it in the oven, it takes less oven time.

This is a tradition for us with turkey dinners at Thanksgiving and Christmas. It is noted for being splattered on cabinets, ceilings, windows, et cetera, when mom turns the electric mixer speed just one notch too high.

[Ed. Note – while mom's recipe uses margarine, I generally use butter instead.]

## Bourbon Balls

@coffeemike

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- 1.5 C pecans, minced in food processor
- 1 C vanilla wafers, minced in food processor
- 3 squares unsweetened baking chocolate, minced in food processor
- 1 C powdered sugar
- 3 Tbsp. Karo syrup
- 1/4 to 1/2 C Bourbon
- granulated sugar for rolling

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Mix the first six ingredients (pecans through Bourbon) together. Scoop rounded teaspoons and form into ball. Roll in granulated sugar.

Makes 4 dozen.

### NOTES

This is my top request for holiday cookies. This was Dad's mother's recipe – it was a Christmas tradition in their house. And it was before food processors. She grated the chocolate with a hand grater! One year, Mom started to make them with Jack Daniels. I was HORRIFIED. Bourbon balls are made with BOURBON, not TENNESSEE SOUR MASH. So, we went with Old Forrester. Making them involved the four of my family in two assembly lines. My brother and I would each have a bowl of sugar. Dad and Mom would shape the balls and drop them in the bowls of sugar. Both of us found this boring, but we did participate.

- Olive oil (enough to cover the bottom of the pot)
- 3 bell peppers, chopped (can use a sack of frozen, but rinse them first)
- 6 cloves garlic, crushed
- 4 onions, chopped
- 6 Tbsp. chili powder (or more, 6 is minimal but add gradually – strength becomes a little more pronounced as cooked)
- 1 tsp cocoa (powder, unsweetened)
- 4 tsp salt
- 4 beef bouillon cubes
- 3 Tbsp. sugar
- 4 Tbsp. barbecue sauce
- 5 cans stewed tomatoes, preferably sliced (I run them through the food processor, but that's only because we all object to running into a chunk of tomatoes)
- 4 or 5 pounds ground beef, browned
- 3 C water (IF needed, I usually don't need it – depends on how thick you want the chili)
- 4 cans Mexican or hot chili beans (use liquid as well as beans)
- 4 cans dark red kidney beans, drained and rinsed

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Use olive oil to sauté bell peppers, garlic, and onions. Use broiler pan to bake/broil the ground beef (I bake it a while just because it's pretty thick even when it's spread out on the pan – you want to get it all browned – after it's gotten hot and started to brown, I turn on the broiler – stir it often, even when baking).
- 2) When the onions are very soft, add all the other ingredients and stir well.
- 3) Turn heat VERY low and bring to a simmer for however long (Half hour? Hour? All afternoon? Depends on whim). Stir it OFTEN so it won't stick.

## NOTES

Let it simmer a while before tasting and adjusting seasonings. This requires a big pot – like a stock pot (you can always cut the recipe in half if you don't want to be overwhelmed). It freezes well.

This is mom's chili recipe that we loved growing up. Unlike a lot of Texas chilis, there's not a lot of heat to it – the bell pepper adds a sweet note, and it's a fun chili to eat. Dead easy to make, and feeds an army.



## Butter Pie Crust

@coffeemike

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- 9 oz. all-purpose flour (just short of 2 C for me, but weigh it yourself to get a feel.)
- 1 stick butter, chunked
- 1 egg
- Generous pinch of salt
- Ice water as needed

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Add flour and salt to food processor bowl and pulse to combine.
- 2) Add egg and butter to bowl, and pulse just until it looks like coarse crumbs.
- 3) Turn the processor on, and slowly add ice-cold water (not the ice itself) until the mixture is just about to come together into a ball, but not quite there. A little too much or too little isn't going to ruin it here, but pay attention.
- 4) Turn the mixture out into a gallon-size plastic bag, shape roughly into a disk or cake, and refrigerate for at least an hour.
- 5) Roll out on well-floured work surface.

Makes enough for 2 9-in. crusts, or one double-crust pie.

- 1.5 C flour
- 5 large eggs
- 2 C milk
- 4 Tbsp melted butter
- salt

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Combine all ingredients in blender until smooth.
- 2) Let rest at least 15 minutes in the refrigerator. Pulse once when ready to cook to reincorporate.
- 3) Heat a crêpe pan or small skillet on medium-high heat until very hot. Brush with vegetable oil (or other high smoke point oil) and add a scant 1/4 C of crepe batter to the pan, twirling to coat evenly.
- 4) Cook for about 60 seconds on one side, and flip – either with a spatula or with a snap of the wrist and a LOT of confidence. Cook for another 30 seconds.
- 5) Keep on a rack in a low (200 degree) oven until all crêpes are cooked.
- 6) To serve, fill with a small amount of a filling – for sweet, I like Nutella or a mix of granulated sugar and orange zest; for savory, I like ham, basil, and grated swiss – and roll. For savory, top with caramelized onions and heat gently in an oven to melt the cheese.

## Potato and Leek Soup

@coffeemike

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- 4 slices bacon, cut into tiny strips (lardoons)
- 1 bundle of leeks (3-4), trimmed and sliced, white and light green parts only.
- 4 white potatoes, peeled and quartered
- 4 C chicken stock
- salt, pepper to taste
- 1 C heavy cream (optional)

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) In a large pot, cook the bacon over medium heat until all the fat is rendered and the bacon is crispy but not burnt.
- 2) Add the leeks and stir. Cook over medium heat for at least 15 minutes or until very soft, stirring occasionally.
- 3) Add the potatoes and cook for about 5 minutes. Add the stock, season, and bring to a boil; reduce heat to low and simmer 20-30 minutes, until the potatoes are fork tender.
- 4) With a stick blender, or working in batches in a normal blender, puree the mix until very smooth. (For added effect, pass through a fine mesh strainer to catch any tiny lumps.) Adjust seasoning, and stir in cream if desired.

- 2 C chicken stock
- 1/4 C white rice
- 1 egg, separated
- juice of 1 large lemon
- salt and pepper

## INGREDIENTS

- 1) Boil rice in stock, covered, until tender, about 20 minutes.
- 2) Beat egg white to medium peaks. Gently whisk in egg yolk and lemon juice. Temper with hot stock, then add egg mixture to the stock.
- 3) Gently heat until thickened, but DO NOT BOIL. Adjust seasonings and serve.

## NOTES

A candy thermometer is a huge help here. From Harold McGee's [On Food And Cooking](#), the soup should be held at 140 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 5 minutes or at 160 degrees Fahrenheit for at least 1 minute to kill the egg bacteria (McGee p. 83). The soup thickens somewhere around 160 degrees, but boils lower than expected, around 180 or 190 degrees.

- 1 1/2 (1.5) cups good corn meal
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 3/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1 1/3 (1.333) cups buttermilk
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup oil, preferably safflower, peanut is 2nd choice

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Preheat the oven to 475.
- 2) Thoroughly combine the corn meal, salt, and soda. Preheat the oil in your pan in the oven. Whisk/beat the 2 eggs into the buttermilk, and combine thoroughly with the dry stuff.
- 3) When the oil is roaring hot, pour all but a tiny bit into the batter and stir vigorously until it's combined. Pour the batter into the pan. Bake for 18 minutes at 475 degrees, or adjust as needed for your pan/oven/altitude/sunspots/etc.
- 4) EAT WITH BUTTER IMMEDIATELY.

## NOTES

Corn bread is the best food in history, IMO. Here's my recipe, which is really just my mom's, which may be her mom's, etc. It's very simple, and ridiculously good. This is the Southern "soda 'n' buttermilk" goodness, not that fluffy cakey stuff with baking powder and flour. :)

As with anything with only a few ingredients, ALL of them matter greatly. You MUST use good corn meal. Don't buy Gold Brick or whatever the cheap national-brand crap is. Get a good local corn meal... here in the Houston area, I buy Lamb's, it's the best I've had by far. Bob's Red Mill is another decent option, but you need to find at least medium and maybe even a fine grind... the coarse stuff makes for lousy corn bread.

You also need the right buttermilk, I try to buy Borden Country Style or whatever it is. It's Borden, it has the word country in it, and it has a green label. YMMV. As much as I love organics, I've found organic buttermilk to produce bizarre corn bread results. Avoid.

## Dry ingredients:

- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/2 tsp baking powder
- Heaping 1/4 tsp kosher salt

## Wet ingredients:

- 4 large eggs, separated
- 1/3 cup sugar
- 1 "heaping" tsp vanilla (let it pour over just a little)
- 1/2 cup (1 stick) melted unsalted butter
- 2 1/4 cups milk (I use 2% most of the time)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Combine dry ingredients with a whisk
- 2) In a large bowl, whisk (with a clean whisk) egg yolks and sugar until much lighter in color ("ribbon" stage... pulling the whisk out produces "ribbons" of the mixture falling off the whisk)
- 3) Vigorously whisk melted butter into yolk mixture, adding butter a little bit at a time
- 4) Whisk in vanilla and milk
- 5) Whisk dry mixture into wet mixture. Don't over-mix, just enough to be sure everything is combined
- 6) Beat egg whites with \*clean\* whisk or stand mixer whisk until soft peaks form
- 7) Gently fold egg whites into batter with a spatula
- 8) Allow to stand for 5 minutes before use (use this time to heat your waffle maker)
- 9) Cook waffles in waffle maker. Exactly how long to let them go will require some experimentation. I find that I let mine go past when the waffle maker thinks they're done.

## NOTES

This is my Belgian waffle recipe... it was originally based on one of Emeril Lagasse's, but has evolved a bunch since then. I don't know how this will work for standard waffles, it may be great or it may be bad (too airy, or something). IMO the goal of a Belgian waffle batter is to slam itself against the waffle griddles so as to get thoroughly brown and crispy, while leaving the inside light and yummy. Thus we want to produce lots of expanding air in the batter (when it is heated).

## Poisson en Papillote

@coffeemike

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- 1 filet of orange roughy, approx. 8 oz.
- 3 slices lemon
- 1 Tbsp. butter
- salt, pepper
- chopped parsley
- 2-3 Tbsp. white wine
- 1/2 leek, trimmed, white parts, shredded
- 1 carrot, grated
- parchment paper

### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Preheat oven to 400 degrees Fahrenheit.
- 2) Cut parchment paper in large heart shape (for hand rolled) or rectangle and fold in half, to form envelope.
- 3) Place leek and carrot on one side of the parchment paper. Lay the fish on top of the vegetables, and season with salt and pepper. Arrange lemon slices over fish, and sprinkle with white wine.
- 4) Crimp edges to form seal. For hand-rolled, start at pointed end of heart. I prefer something more mechanical – fold over the edges of the rectangle two or three times, and staple liberally.
- 5) Place pouch on a cookie sheet and bake in the oven for around 15 minutes – the pouch will turn light golden brown and puff up when the fish is done.
- 6) Cut open the pouch at the table as you serve.

# The Best Meat Sauce Ever

@mellowynk

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- 2 medium yellow onions, chopped
- 1 bell pepper (any color), chopped
- 1.5 lb. (about 680g) ground beef
- Chile powder
- Paprika
- 2 14-oz. cans Italian (I like Pomi) or peeled tomatoes (about 800g. I'm not sure what size canned tomatoes come in in various countries).
- 1 6-oz. can tomato paste (about 170g)
- 1 cup dry red wine (about 240ml. Just pour a generous glass and dump it in. Then pour another and drink it!)
- 1 palm ea. dried basil and oregano (or you can triple the amount and use fresh herbs. you can also add thyme and a little rosemary if you wish)
- 4 whole bay leaves
- Salt & pepper
- Dash of Worcestershire sauce
- 2 Tbsp ketchup (just a couple of good squirts or spoonfuls)
- 2-3 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/4-1/2 jalapeno, diced (or, 1 serrano pepper, diced)
- Sliced mushrooms

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) Sauté onions and bell pepper in olive oil in a large saucepan (I use a stock pot to avoid any spillage).
- 2) Add ground beef. Cover in salt and pepper, mix, and cover again in salt and pepper.
- 3) Cover surface in chili powder, mix and repeat. Cover surface in paprika, mix and repeat.
- 4) Add the rest of the ingredients. Mix well, and add a little water if necessary.
- 5) Simmer on medium-low heat for a least an hour (2 is better), stirring occasionally. Serve with the same wine you put in the sauce.

## NOTES

This recipe is the creation of my aunt Cindy, a brilliant cook in her own right.

There are a lot of ingredients to this recipe, but don't be daunted—the assemblage is easy.

This recipe is really great for making a bunch and freezing. It reheats perfectly and the longer you let it slow cook the more the flavors meld.



## SAUCE

- 2 cans Hunts tomato puree
- 3 cans Hunts tomato sauce
- 2 small cans Hunts tomato paste
- extra virgin olive oil
- garlic salt
- dried oregano

(we have added red wine to this list, but it's not an official ingredient) :)

## MEATBALLS

- 3 lbs ground chuck
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup Progresso Italian style bread crumbs
- garlic salt
- salt/pepper
- 1/2 cup grated parmesan or romano cheese

## BRACCIOLE

- sliced beef pounded very thin  
(Rosanne asks for "beef for bracciole" at her butcher. Yeah right. Just use your best judgement.)
- extra virgin olive oil
- Progresso Italian style bread crumbs
- grated parmesan or romano cheese
- Italian sausage (mild or spicy - your choice)  
(Or, if you don't like sausage, we have substituted butterfly cut pork chops; either way, Ang maintains it doesn't taste the same without some pork in the sauce.)

## INSTRUCTIONS

- 1) And now, you just cook it! ;) Ok, I'll give you some hints.

### Meatballs:

- 1) squish everything together with your hands
- 2) roll balls and throw from hand to hand to increase density
- 3) fry in hot oil

### Bracciole:

- 1) coat one side of each slice in olive oil
- 2) sprinkle with bread crumbs and grated cheese
- 3) roll up

4) tie or use toothpicks to hold together

5) fry in hot oil

Sausage or pork:

1) fry in hot oil

2) All the frying is just to brown the outsides and solidify the meat a bit. The meat will really cook in the sauce.

Sauce:

1) coat the bottom of a large dutch oven with olive oil and heat

2) add sauce, paste, and puree

3) add water equivalent to the amount of puree

4) heat to melt paste

5) add garlic salt, oregano and wine if desired

6) heat through

7) add meat

8) cook for a long time (at least 3 hours) adding liquid (wine or water) and spices as needed

9) don't season too strongly in the beginning, as the meat will season the sauce as it is cooking

## NOTES

I thought I would post the recipe for my MIL's red sauce here. That way when I'm out somewhere I can always access the recipe. (Oh, and you guys can have access too!)