

Taste of Home

Holiday

Bridal & Baby Showers

50+ Cherished Recipes for the Perfect Party



Taste of Home

Joyful Beginnings!

Whether the special occasion is an upcoming wedding, the arrival of a new baby or a recent engagement or elopement, you'll find the perfect foods to celebrate it in *Taste of Home Holiday: Bridal & Baby Showers!*

Here you'll discover more than 50 treasured recipes to make the party simply unforgettable. Celebration menus include:

- Traditional bridal shower with elegant appetizers, champagne punch and party-favor desserts
- Baby shower brimming with adorable bites—including an achievable crowd-size theme cake
- Backyard picnic for new family members to mix and mingle

We've even included more than 20 surefire spring buffet contributions, from irresistible main dishes to tempting sweets.

Whether you're hosting the joyous event or you just want to contribute the perfect appetizer, main dish or dessert, you're sure to find the ideal recipes in this inspiring collection!





A TASTE OF HOME/READER'S DIGEST BOOK

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PICTURED ON THE COVER:
Roast Beef Aioli Bundles



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Elegant *Bridal Shower*



Champagne Fruit Punch

Toast the happy couple at your next bridal shower with a fun and fruity drink! It's the perfect refreshment.

—KELLY TRAN SALEM, OR

START TO FINISH: 10 MIN.

MAKES: 16 SERVINGS (¾ CUP EACH)

- 2 cups fresh or frozen raspberries**
- 1 can (12 ounces) frozen orange juice concentrate, thawed**
- 1 can (12 ounces) frozen cherry pomegranate juice concentrate, thawed**
- 1 can (6 ounces) unsweetened pineapple juice, chilled**
- 1 medium lemon, thinly sliced**
- 1 bottle (1 liter) club soda, chilled**
- 1 bottle (750 milliliters) champagne or sparkling white grape juice, chilled**

In a punch bowl, combine the first five ingredients. Slowly stir in club soda and champagne. Serve immediately.



Rustic Antipasto Tart

Ready-made ingredients make this gorgeous tart an easy anytime treat.

—**CHERYL LAMA** ROYAL OAK, MI

PREP: 15 MIN. • **BAKE:** 25 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 1 sheet refrigerated pie pastry**
- 2 tablespoons prepared pesto**
- 1 cup shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided**
- 4 ounces sliced turkey pepperoni**
- 1 jar (7 ounces) roasted sweet red peppers, drained and thinly sliced**
- 1 jar (7½ ounces) marinated quartered artichoke hearts, drained**
- 1 tablespoon water**

- 1.** Unroll pastry onto a parchment paper-lined baking sheet. Spread pesto to within 2 in. of edges; sprinkle with ½ cup cheese. Layer with pepperoni and ¼ cup cheese. Top with red peppers and artichokes; sprinkle with remaining cheese.
- 2.** Fold up edges of pastry over filling, leaving center uncovered. Brush folded pastry with water. Bake at 425° for 25-30 minutes or until crust is golden and cheese is melted. Serve warm.



Bride and Groom Cupcakes

Who doesn't love a bitty bite of cake? For party-day ease, make the cupcakes 1 month before and freeze. Prep the accessories 2 days ahead and store them at room temperature in an airtight container. Then make the frosting and decorate the day of the event.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

PREP: 1½ HOURS • **BAKE:** 20 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 2 DOZEN

- 1 package strawberry or yellow cake mix (regular size)**

FROSTING

- 1 cup shortening**
- 1 cup butter, softened**
- 8 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 7 to 8 tablespoons 2% milk, divided**
- 2 teaspoons clear vanilla extract**
- ½ cup baking cocoa**
- 2 teaspoons grated lemon peel**
- ½ teaspoon lemon extract**

DECORATIONS

- 1 cup dark chocolate candy coating disks, melted**
- ½ cup vanilla candy coating disks, melted**
- 1 large marshmallow**
- ½ cup green candy coating disks, melted**
- White pearl dragées, flower sprinkles, white edible glitter and colored sugar**
- Small piece of tulle**

- 1.** Prepare and bake cake batter according to package directions for cupcakes. Cool completely.
- 2.** In a large bowl, beat shortening and butter until light and fluffy. Add the confectioners' sugar, 6 tablespoons milk and vanilla; beat until smooth.
- 3.** Transfer half of the frosting to another bowl. Add baking cocoa and 1-2 tablespoons remaining milk to achieve desired consistency. Add lemon peel and extract to remaining frosting.



- 4.** Using melted chocolate, pipe 12 bow ties onto waxed paper. For bride's crown, pipe a 1¼-in. ring with melted vanilla coating. Immediately arrange dragées onto ring.
- 5.** For groom's hat, spoon a ½-teaspoon round of melted chocolate onto waxed paper into a 1¾-inch circle. Cut a ¼-in. slice from the top of marshmallow. Dip marshmallow in chocolate coating and place in the center of chocolate round.
- 6.** Using melted green coating, pipe 12 bouquet stems onto waxed paper. Immediately attach flower sprinkles. Let decorations stand until set.
- 7.** Pipe lemon frosting onto half of the cupcakes and chocolate frosting onto remaining cupcakes. For bride, add crown to the top of a lemon-frosted cupcake and attach a piece of tulle for veil; add a bouquet and sprinkle with glitter.
- 8.** For groom, add top hat to the top of a chocolate-frosted cupcake. Attach a bow tie and pearl dragées for buttons.
- 9.** Decorate remaining cupcakes with bouquets, bow ties, dragees, glitter and colored sugar as desired.

MAKE THE TOP HAT



Form hat and brim by placing a chocolate-dipped marshmallow

in the circle's center. Let stand until the chocolate is set.

MAKE THE BOUQUET



Pipe the bouquet stems onto waxed paper. Immediately attach

sprinkles to the stems. Let the bouquets stand until set.

Spinach Pear Salad with Candied Pecans

A tasty combination of pears, blue cheese and spinach makes this salad a standout. Sugared pecans add a delightfully sweet crunch. If you like poppy seeds, feel free to add some to the vinaigrette.

—TAMARA STIMPSON ZEPHYR, ON

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 1** tablespoon butter
- 3** tablespoons brown sugar
- 1** cup pecan halves
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canola oil
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup lemon juice
- 3** tablespoons finely chopped red onion
- 1** teaspoon salt
- 2** packages (6 ounces each) fresh baby spinach
- 2** medium pears, peeled and cubed
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup crumbled blue cheese

- 1.** In a small heavy skillet, melt butter. Add brown sugar; cook and stir over medium heat until dissolved. Add pecans; cook for 3-5 minutes or until toasted, stirring frequently. Spread mixture onto foil to cool.
- 2.** In a small bowl, whisk the oil, sugar, lemon juice, onion and salt. In a large salad bowl, combine the spinach, pears, cheese and candied pecans. Drizzle with dressing and toss to coat. Serve immediately.



Chai Tea Mix

I received this recipe from my sister, who got it from a friend in Alaska.

This warming drink makes a great Christmas gift. For friends at work,

I bought some cute jars with lids, placed fabric on top and tied the jars up with ribbon.

—DONNA GISH BLUE SPRINGS, MO

START TO FINISH: 20 MIN.

MAKES: 32 SERVINGS (8 CUPS TEA MIX)

- 2 cups sugar
- 2 cups unsweetened instant tea
- 1½ cups powdered French vanilla nondairy creamer
- 1½ cups powdered nondairy creamer
- 1½ cups packed brown sugar
- ¾ cup nonfat dry milk powder
- 2½ teaspoons ground cinnamon
- 1½ teaspoons ground nutmeg
- 1½ teaspoons ground cardamom
- 1½ teaspoons ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon ground allspice
- ¾ teaspoon white pepper

EACH SERVING

- 1 cup hot 2% milk

In a large bowl, combine the first 12 ingredients. In a blender, cover and process tea mixture in batches until powdery. Store in an airtight container in a cool dry place for up to 6 months.

TO PREPARE CHAI TEA Place ¼ cup mix in a mug. Add hot milk; stir until combined.



Poppy Seed Cheese Bread

I won a blue ribbon with this bread at the Los Angeles County Fair. I make several batches at a time and freeze them for later use or to give as gifts.

—MARINA CASTLE CANYON COUNTRY, CA

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 45 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 1 LOAF (16 SLICES)

- ½ cup shortening**
- ½ cup sugar**
- 3 eggs**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 2½ teaspoons baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon ground mustard**
- ¾ teaspoon salt**
- 1 cup 2% milk**
- 1½ cups shredded cheddar-Monterey Jack cheese**
- ½ cup chopped sweet onion**
- 1 tablespoon poppy seeds**
- ½ teaspoon paprika**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 375°. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Combine flour, baking powder, mustard and salt; add to creamed mixture alternately with milk. Fold in cheese, onion and poppy seeds.
- 2.** Transfer to a greased 9x5-in. loaf pan; sprinkle with paprika. Bake 45-55 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in center comes out clean. Cool 10 minutes before removing from pan to a wire rack.

Tortellini & Shrimp Skewers with Sun-Dried Tomato Sauce

These fresh-tasting skewers with a creamy sauce will have guests nibbling all night!

—CACIE BIDDLE BRIDGEPORT, WV

PREP: 30 MIN. • **COOK:** 15 MIN.
MAKES: 32 APPETIZERS (2 CUPS SAUCE)

- 1 package (9 ounces) refrigerated spinach tortellini**
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- ½ cup sour cream**
- ¼ cup fresh basil leaves**
- ¼ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes**
- ¼ cup 2% milk**
- ¼ cup reduced-fat mayonnaise**
- 2 garlic cloves**
- ½ teaspoon Louisiana-style hot sauce**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil**
- 1 pound peeled and deveined cooked medium shrimp**
- 32 frilled toothpicks**

- 1.** Cook tortellini according to package directions.
- 2.** Meanwhile, in a food processor, combine the cream cheese, sour cream, basil, tomatoes, milk, mayonnaise, garlic, hot sauce, salt and pepper; cover and process until blended. Transfer to a small bowl. Chill until serving.
- 3.** Drain tortellini and transfer to a large bowl. Drizzle with oil; toss to coat. Thread tortellini and shrimp onto toothpicks. Serve with sauce.



Blue Cheese- Stuffed Strawberries

I was enjoying a salad with strawberries and blue cheese when the idea hit me to stuff the strawberries and serve them as an appetizer. It worked out great, and the flavors blend so nicely.

—DIANE NEMITZ LUDINGTON, MI

START TO FINISH: 25 MIN.

MAKES: 16 APPETIZERS

- ½ cup balsamic vinegar**
- 3 ounces fat-free cream cheese**
- ½ cup crumbled blue cheese**
- 16 large fresh strawberries**
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped pecans, toasted**

- 1.** Place vinegar in a small saucepan. Bring to a boil; cook until liquid is reduced by half. Cool to room temperature.
- 2.** Meanwhile, in a small bowl, beat cream cheese until smooth. Beat in the blue cheese. Remove stems and scoop out centers from strawberries; fill each with about 2 teaspoons cheese mixture. Sprinkle pecans over filling, pressing lightly. Chill until serving. Drizzle with balsamic vinegar.



Cherry Cordial Cake Balls

Brandy, coffee and candied cherries add scrumptious flavor to cake balls.

—SUSAN WESTERFIELD ALBUQUERQUE, NM

PREP: 1 HOUR • **BAKE:** 35 MIN. + STANDING
MAKES: 6 DOZEN

- 1 package fudge marble cake mix (regular size)**
- 1¼ cups plus 3 tablespoons strong brewed coffee, divided**
- ¼ cup canola oil**
- 3 eggs**
- 1 jar (10 ounces) maraschino cherries without stems, well drained**
- ½ cup brandy**
- ¼ cup cherry preserves**
- 1 cup canned chocolate frosting**
- 4 pounds milk chocolate candy coating, chopped**
- 2 tablespoons shortening**

1. In a large bowl, combine the cake mix, 1¼ cups coffee, oil and eggs; beat on low speed for 30 seconds. Beat on medium for 2 minutes.

2. Pour batter into a greased and floured 13x9-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool completely. Place cherries in a food processor; cover and process until coarsely chopped. Transfer to a small bowl; stir in the brandy, preserves and remaining coffee.

3. Crumble cake into a large bowl. Add frosting and cherry mixture; beat well. Shape into 1-in. balls.

4. In a microwave, melt candy coating and shortening; stir until smooth. Dip balls in chocolate mixture; allow excess to drip off. Place on waxed paper; let stand until set. Store in an airtight container overnight before serving.



Sweet-Tooth Popcorn

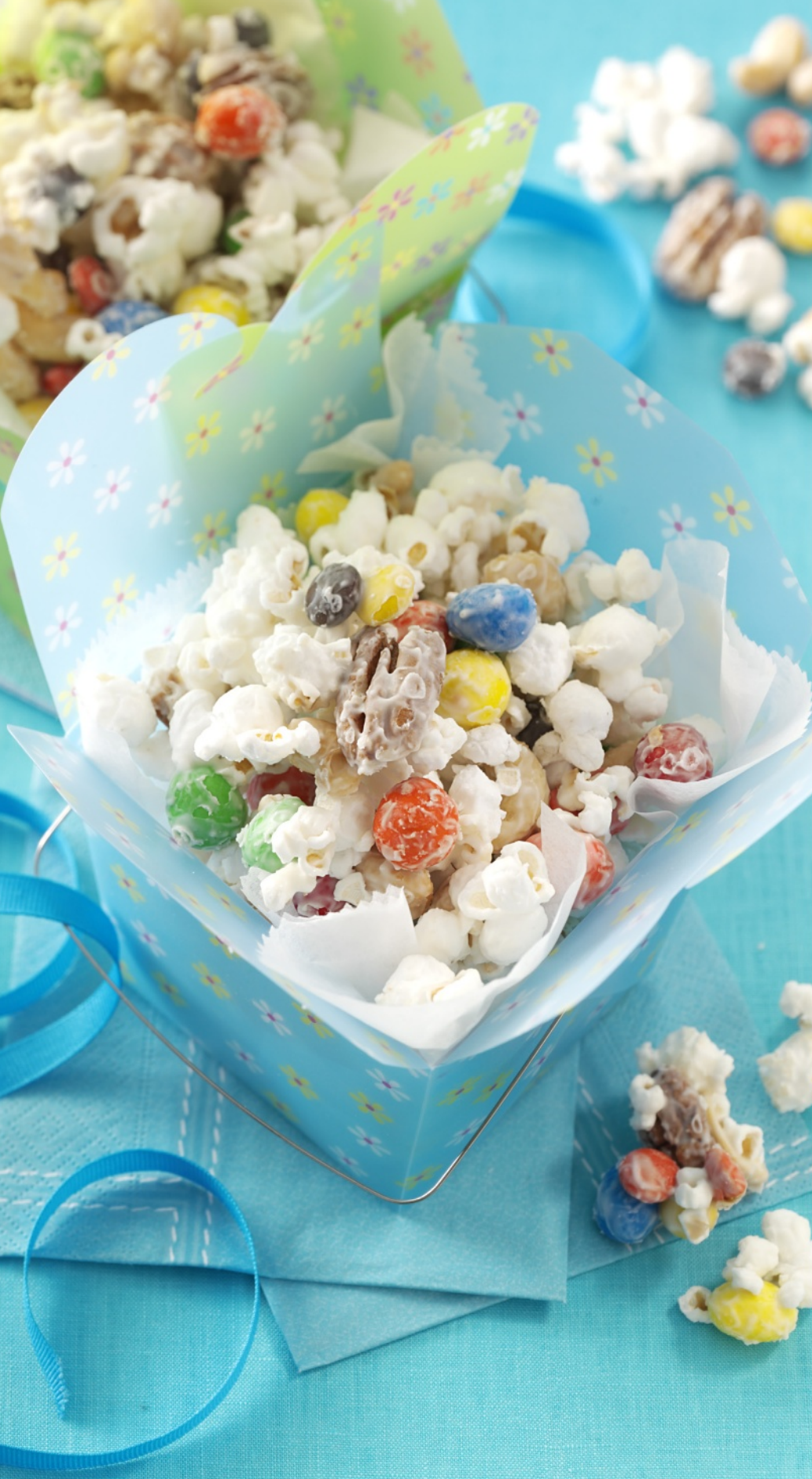
I like to be creative with this recipe and add different things to make it festive for different occasions. Everyone says the sweet and salty taste is addictive.

—DAYNNA PUCKETT BROKEN BOW, OK

PREP: 25 MIN. + STANDING
MAKES: 4 QUARTS

- 1 package (3.3 ounces) butter-flavored microwave popcorn**
- 1 pound white candy coating, chopped**
- 1 cup peanut M&M's**
- 1 cup Reese's Pieces**
- 1 cup salted cashews**
- 1 cup pecan halves**

- 1.** Microwave popcorn according to package directions. Place in a large bowl. In a microwave, melt candy coating; stir until smooth. Pour over popcorn and stir until coated. Combine the M&M's, Reese's Pieces, cashews and pecans; stir into popcorn mixture.
- 2.** Immediately spread onto waxed paper; let stand until set. Break into pieces. Store in an airtight container.



Butterscotch Fondue

You'll enjoy dipping fruit and cake into a pot filled with this yummy concoction.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.

MAKES: 4 CUPS

- ½ cup butter, cubed**
- 2 cups packed brown sugar**
- 1 can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk**
- 1 cup light corn syrup**
- 2 tablespoons water**
- ¼ cup brickle toffee bits**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- Angel food cake cubes and fresh fruit**

In a large saucepan, combine the butter, brown sugar, milk, corn syrup and water. Cook and stir over medium heat until smooth. Remove from the heat. Stir in toffee bits and vanilla. Keep warm. Serve with cake and fruit.



*A New
Baby!*



Sandwich Bear

I created this sandwich for a teddy bear-themed baby shower. When the mother-to-be mentioned her plans for a teddy theme in her nursery, I borrowed the idea for her shower. The cheerful, chubby bear is filled with deli meats, cheese and a seasoned spread.

—SUSAN SCHULLER BRAINERD, MN

START TO FINISH: 20 MIN.

MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 1 cup mayonnaise**
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped green onions**
- 1 round loaf (10-in. diameter) unsliced bread**
- 6 rolls (one 5 in. and five $3\frac{1}{2}$ in.)**
 - Leaf lettuce, optional**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ pound thinly sliced deli ham**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese, divided**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ pound thinly sliced deli turkey**
- 2 large pitted ripe olives**

1. In a small bowl, beat cream cheese until light and fluffy. Stir in the mayonnaise, mustard and onions. Slice bread and rolls one-third from the bottom of each. Carefully hollow out tops of bread and rolls, leaving a $\frac{1}{2}$ -in. shell.

2. Spread cream cheese mixture on cut sides; top with lettuce if desired. Fill loaf with ham and half of the cheddar cheese. Fill the rolls with turkey and remaining cheese. Replace all tops.

3. To assemble bear, place loaf on a large board. Place 5-in. roll on top for head and four small rolls for paws. Cut the remaining small roll in half for ears. Use one olive for nose. Cut remaining olive in half; secure with toothpicks for eyes. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 hours.



All-Occasion Punch

To keep the punch cold while adding extra color, I like to make an ice ring out of cherry soda pop. The flavor always brings folks back for more.

—CAROL VAN SICKLE VERSAILLES, KY

START TO FINISH: 15 MIN.
MAKES: 22 SERVINGS (1 CUP EACH)

- 8 cups cold water**
- 1 can (12 ounces) frozen lemonade concentrate, thawed, plus $\frac{3}{4}$ cup thawed lemonade concentrate**
- 2 liters ginger ale, chilled**
- 1 liter cherry lemon-lime soda, chilled**
Ice ring, optional

In a large punch bowl, combine water and lemonade concentrate. Stir in ginger ale and lemon-lime soda. Top with an ice ring if desired. Serve immediately.



Savory BLT Cheesecake

This savory cheesecake is excellent served on its own over lettuce or alongside crackers. It's a flexible recipe. Use other cheese in place of the Gruyère, and add olives, crabmeat, cooked mushrooms—whatever strikes your fancy.

—JONI HILTON ROCKLIN, CA

PREP: 35 MIN. • **BAKE:** 45 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 24 SERVINGS

- ¾ cup dry bread crumbs**
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 3 tablespoons butter, melted**

FILLING

- 4 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened**
- ½ cup heavy whipping cream**
- 1½ cups crumbled cooked bacon**
- 1 cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, patted dry and chopped**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Gruyère or Swiss cheese**
- 2 green onions, sliced**
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground pepper**
- 4 eggs, lightly beaten**

Optional toppings: shredded iceberg lettuce, chopped cherry tomatoes and additional crumbled cooked bacon

Assorted crackers, optional



1. Preheat oven to 325°. Place a greased 9-in. springform pan on a double thickness of heavy-duty foil (about 18 in. square). Securely wrap foil around pan.

2. In a small bowl, combine the bread crumbs, Parmesan cheese and butter. Press onto the bottom of prepared pan. Place pan on a baking sheet. Bake 12 minutes. Cool on a wire rack.

3. In a large bowl, beat cream cheese and cream until smooth. Beat in the bacon, tomatoes, Gruyère cheese, onions and pepper. Add eggs; beat on low speed just until combined. Pour over crust. Place springform pan in a large baking pan; add 1 in. of boiling water to larger pan.

4. Bake 45-55 minutes or until center is just set and top appears dull. Remove

springform pan from water bath; remove foil. Cool cheesecake on a wire rack for 10 minutes; loosen edges from pan with a knife. Cool 1 hour longer. Refrigerate overnight.

5. Remove sides of pan. Serve cheesecake with toppings and crackers if desired.

Crab-Salad Jumbo Shells

I got this recipe from a friend and adjusted the ingredients to suit my family's preferences. It's a fun and flavorful way to enjoy crab salad. Serve it over lettuce for a refreshing summer meal.

—JO ANNE ANDERSON KNOXVILLE, IA

PREP: 35 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 30 STUFFED SHELLS

30 uncooked jumbo pasta shells

- 1 cup finely chopped fresh broccoli florets
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 packages (8 ounces each) imitation crabmeat, chopped
- 1 cup (8 ounces) sour cream
- ½ cup mayonnaise
- ¼ cup finely shredded carrot
- ¼ cup diced seeded peeled cucumber
- 1 tablespoon chopped green onion
- 1 teaspoon dill weed

1. Cook pasta according to the package directions; rinse in cold water and drain well.
2. Meanwhile, in a small microwave-safe bowl, combine the broccoli and garlic. Cover and microwave on high for 1 minute or until crisp-tender.
3. Transfer to a large bowl; stir in the remaining ingredients. Stuff into pasta shells. Cover and refrigerate overnight.



Booties 'n' Rattles Cake

This cake is easy to make and feeds a bunch. Follow the simple instructions to create an adorably adorned baby shower dessert.

—MARY CICIO YOUNGWOOD, PA

PREP: 1 HOUR • **BAKE:** 25 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 20-24 SERVINGS

- 6 eggs, separated
- 1½ cups butter, softened
- 1½ cups sugar
- 3 tablespoons grated orange peel
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 6 cups buttercream frosting (see recipe)
Pink and blue food coloring

1. Let separated eggs stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy. Add egg yolks and orange peel; beat well. Combine flour, baking powder and salt; add to the creamed mixture and mix well (batter will be thick). In a small bowl and with clean beaters, beat the egg whites on high speed until stiff peaks form. Fold into batter. Pour into a greased and floured 13x9-in. baking pan. Bake at 375° for 25-30 minutes or until toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool on a wire rack for 10 minutes; invert onto a wire rack to cool completely. Transfer to a 15x12-in. covered board.
2. Place ¾ cup frosting in each of two small bowls; tint one pastel pink and one pastel blue. Set aside 2½ cups frosting for trim and border. Cover and set bowls aside. Frost cake with remaining frosting.
3. Using dental floss or a sharp knife, mark a straight line lengthwise down the center of the cake. Mark additional lengthwise straight lines, dividing the cake



into four equal sections. Mark five lines widthwise, dividing the cake into a total of 24 squares.

4. For booties, insert plain pastry tip #8 into a pastry bag or a plastic bag with small hole; add pink frosting. In alternating squares, pipe an elongated dot, raising up at one end to form the heel.
5. For rattles, use plain tip #8 and blue frosting. In each of the empty squares, pipe one large dot and one small dot, leaving ¾ in. between dots. Use plain tip #2 and blue frosting to pipe a line connecting the dots.
6. For trim, use plain tip #2 and reserved white frosting. Pipe a bow and trim on each bootie and a bow on each rattle.
7. Use star tip #20 to pipe rows of white shells on top of the straight lines. Pipe a row of shells around top and bottom edges of cake.

BUTTERCREAM FROSTING *In a very large bowl, beat 1 cup softened butter until creamy. Beat in 9 cups confectioners' sugar, 3 teaspoons vanilla and enough milk (⅔ to ¾ cup) to achieve desired consistency. Makes 6 cups.*

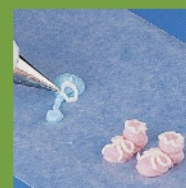
DECORATING THE BOOTIES 'N' RATTLES CAKE



1. For booties, use round tip #8 and pink frosting to pipe an elongated dot, raising up at one end to form the heel.



2. For rattles, use round tip #8 and blue frosting to pipe one large dot and one small dot, leaving ¾ in. of space between. Use round tip #2 to pipe a line to connect dots.



3. For trim, use round tip #2 and white frosting to pipe a bow and trim on each bootie and a bow on each rattle.

Roast Beef Aioli Bundles

Everyone will want to try these delicious, dainty bundles.

—TASTE OF HOME TEST KITCHEN

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.

MAKES: 16 APPETIZERS

- 16 fresh asparagus spears, trimmed**
- ½ cup mayonnaise**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard**
- 1 teaspoon lemon juice**
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin**
- 8 thin slices deli roast beef, cut in half lengthwise**
- 1 medium sweet yellow pepper, thinly sliced**
- 1 medium sweet orange pepper, thinly sliced**
- 1 medium sweet red pepper, thinly sliced**
- 16 whole chives**

- 1.** In a large skillet, bring 1 in. of water to a boil. Add asparagus; cover and cook for 3 minutes. Drain and immediately place in ice water. Drain and pat dry.
- 2.** In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, garlic, mustard, lemon juice and cumin. Place roast beef slices on a work surface; spread each slice with 1 teaspoon aioli. Top each with an asparagus spear and pepper strips. Roll up tightly; tie bundles with chives. Serve immediately.



Pretty Stuffed Spring Peas

These stuffed peas are the perfect way to welcome spring and sail right through summer. I serve them on a platter surrounded by juicy strawberries.

—PHYLLIS COOPER YARMOUTH PORT, MA

PREP: 30 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 3 DOZEN

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- 2 teaspoons minced chives**
- 1 teaspoon dried basil**
- 1 garlic clove, minced**
- ½ teaspoon caraway seeds**
- ½ teaspoon dill weed**
- ¼ teaspoon lemon-pepper seasoning**
- 36 fresh snow peas (about ¼ pound), trimmed**

- 1.** In a large bowl, combine the first seven ingredients. Cover and refrigerate overnight.
- 2.** Let filling stand at room temperature for 30 minutes. Meanwhile, in a large saucepan, bring 6 cups water to a boil. Add snow peas; cover and boil for 1-2 minutes. Drain and immediately place peas in ice water. Drain and pat dry.
- 3.** Gently split peas open; pipe about 1 teaspoonful of filling into each pod.



Chickaritos

I came up with this recipe, substituting chicken for beef and omitting the frying, when our son grew fond of a fast-food restaurant's burritos. These little bites have been a big hit with our family ever since!

—NANCY COATES ORO VALLEY, AZ

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN.
MAKES: 3 DOZEN

- 3 cups finely chopped cooked chicken**
- 1½ cups (6 ounces) shredded sharp cheddar cheese**
- 1 can (4 ounces) chopped green chilies**
- 4 green onions, finely chopped**
- 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce**
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt**
- ¼ teaspoon paprika**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cumin**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- 2 packages (17.3 ounces each) frozen puff pastry, thawed**
- 1 egg, beaten**
- Salsa and guacamole**

- 1.** Preheat oven to 425°. In a large bowl, combine chicken, cheese, chilies, onions, pepper sauce and seasonings.
- 2.** Unfold one sheet of puff pastry onto a lightly floured surface. Roll into a 12x9-in. rectangle. Cut into nine rectangles.
- 3.** Place 2 tablespoons filling across the center of each rectangle. Brush edges of pastry with water and roll pastry around filling. Press edges with a fork to seal. Repeat with remaining pastry and filling. Refrigerate, covered, until ready to bake.
- 4.** Place pastries on a lightly greased baking sheet, seam side down. Brush tops with egg. Bake 20-25 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm with salsa and guacamole.

Pineapple Salsa

This mouthwatering salsa features fresh pineapple and cilantro. Serve it with chips, or try spooning it over some grilled chicken or fish for a jazzed-up meal.

—SUZI LAPAR WAHIAWA, HI

START TO FINISH: 20 MIN.

MAKES: 3½ CUPS

- 2 cups diced fresh pineapple
- 2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped
- ¾ cup chopped sweet onion
- ¾ cup minced fresh cilantro
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and chopped
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 teaspoon ground coriander
- ¾ teaspoon ground cumin
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon minced garlic
- Tortilla chips

In a large bowl, combine the first 10 ingredients. Cover and refrigerate until serving. Serve with tortilla chips.

NOTE Wear disposable gloves when cutting hot peppers; the oils can burn skin. Avoid touching your face.



Cucumber Tea Sandwiches

My children wanted to plant a garden, and we ended up with buckets of cucumbers. When I tired of making pickles, I came up with these pretty little sandwiches. We made 200 of them for a family gathering, and everyone wanted the recipe.

—KIMBERLY SMITH BRIGHTON, TN

PREP: 30 MIN. + CHILLING
MAKES: 4 DOZEN

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened**
- ¼ cup mayonnaise**
- 1 tablespoon snipped fresh dill**
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice**
- ½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon cayenne pepper**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**
- 2 large cucumbers, seeded and chopped**
- ½ cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- ¼ cup chopped onion**
- ¼ cup pimiento-stuffed olives, chopped**
- ¼ cup minced fresh parsley**
- 12 slices whole wheat bread**
- Cucumber slices and fresh dill sprigs, optional**

1. In a small bowl, beat the first eight ingredients until blended. Stir in the cucumbers, red pepper, onion, olives and parsley. Chill for up to 2 hours. Remove crusts from bread; cut each slice into four triangles. Spread with cream cheese mixture. If desired, garnish with cucumber slices and dill sprigs.

Picnic with the Happy Couple



Mediterranean Nachos

Make a Mediterranean version of nachos using crisped pita wedges topped with ground lamb or beef, feta cheese and a creamy cucumber sauce.

—ZAZA FULLMAN-KASL VENTURA, CA

PREP: 30 MIN. + STANDING • **COOK:** 15 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 2 medium cucumbers, peeled, seeded and grated**
- 1½ teaspoons salt, divided**
- ½ teaspoon ground cumin**
- ½ teaspoon ground coriander**
- ½ teaspoon paprika**
- ¾ teaspoon pepper, divided**
- 6 whole pita breads**
- Cooking spray**
- 1 pound ground lamb or beef**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- 1 teaspoon cornstarch**
- ½ cup beef broth**
- 2 cups plain Greek yogurt**
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- ¼ teaspoon grated lemon peel**
- 2 cups torn romaine**
- 2 medium tomatoes, seeded and chopped**
- ½ cup pitted Greek olives, sliced**
- 4 green onions, thinly sliced**
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese**

1. In a colander set over a bowl, toss cucumbers with ½ teaspoon salt. Let stand 30 minutes. Squeeze and pat dry. Set aside. In a small bowl, combine the cumin, coriander, paprika, ½ teaspoon pepper and ½ teaspoon salt; set aside.

2. Cut each pita into eight wedges; arrange in a single layer on ungreased baking sheets. Spritz both sides of pitas with cooking spray; sprinkle with ¾ teaspoon seasoning mix. Broil 3-4 in. from the heat for 3-4 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Cool on wire racks.



3. In a large skillet, cook lamb and remaining seasoning mix over medium heat until lamb is no longer pink. Add garlic; cook 1 minute longer. Drain. Combine cornstarch and broth until smooth; gradually stir into the pan. Bring to a boil; cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened.

4. In a small bowl, combine the yogurt, lemon juice, lemon peel, cucumbers and remaining salt and pepper. Arrange pita wedges on a serving platter. Layer with lettuce, lamb mixture, tomatoes, olives, onions and cheese. Serve immediately with cucumber sauce.

Italian Party Appetizers

Quick, easy, colorful and delicious! This is one great recipe you can quickly prepare for unexpected guests. Serve with a refreshing white wine.

—HEATHER NYGREN CUMMING, GA

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.
MAKES: 4 DOZEN

- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened**
- 48 Triscuits or other crackers**
- ¼ cup prepared pesto**
- ¼ cup oil-packed sun-dried tomatoes, patted dry and thinly sliced**

Spread cream cheese on each cracker. Top with pesto and a tomato slice. Serve immediately.



Antipasto Picnic Salad

With a tempting blend of meats, veggies and pasta for your picnic, how can you go wrong? The recipe comes together in practically no time at all, serves a crowd and tastes as good at room temperature as it does cold. If you're not expecting two dozen people, simply adjust the recipe to accommodate a smaller number of guests.

—MICHELE LARSON BADEN, PA

PREP: 30 MIN. • **COOK:** 15 MIN.
MAKES: 25 SERVINGS (1 CUP EACH)

- 1 package (16 ounces) medium pasta shells**
- 2 jars (16 ounces each) giardiniera**
- 1 pound fresh broccoli florets**
- ½ pound cubed part-skim mozzarella cheese**
- ½ pound hard salami, cubed**
- ½ pound deli ham, cubed**
- 2 packages (3½ ounces each) sliced pepperoni, halved**
- 1 large green pepper, cut into chunks**
- 1 can (6 ounces) pitted ripe olives, drained**

DRESSING

- ½ cup olive oil**
- ¼ cup red wine vinegar**
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning**
- 1 teaspoon coarsely ground pepper**
- ½ teaspoon salt**

1. Cook pasta according to package directions. Meanwhile, drain giardiniera, reserving ¾ cup liquid. In a large bowl, combine the giardiniera, broccoli, mozzarella, salami, ham, pepperoni, green pepper and olives. Drain pasta and rinse in



cold water; stir into meat mixture.

2. For dressing, in a small bowl, whisk the oil, vinegar, lemon juice, Italian seasoning, pepper, salt and reserved giardiniera liquid. Pour over salad and toss to coat.

Refrigerate until serving.

NOTE *Giardiniera, a pickled vegetable mixture, is available in mild and hot varieties and can be found in the Italian or pickle section of your grocery store.*

Honey Garlic Ribs

Once you bake the homemade honey-garlic sauce over the ribs, you'll see why people exclaim over this finger-licking-good dish. It's almost too tasty to share!

—LILY-MICHELE ALEXIS LOUISVILLE, KY

PREP: 15 MIN. • **BAKE:** 2¼ HOURS
MAKES: 24 SERVINGS

- 6 pounds pork baby back ribs, cut into two-rib portions**
- 2 cups water, divided**
- ¾ cup packed brown sugar**
- 2 tablespoons cornstarch**
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder**
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger**
- ½ cup honey**
- ¼ cup reduced-sodium soy sauce**

- 1.** Place ribs bone side down in a large roasting pan; pour 1 cup water over ribs. Cover tightly and bake at 350° for 1½ hours.
- 2.** In a small bowl, combine the brown sugar, cornstarch, garlic powder and ginger. Stir in the honey, soy sauce and remaining water until smooth. Drain fat from roasting pan; pour sauce over ribs.
- 3.** Bake, uncovered, for 45 minutes or until meat is tender, basting occasionally. Cut into serving-size pieces.

Fresh Fruit Centerpiece

Let your creativity shine with this easy, appealing centerpiece. It's the perfect accent for casual outdoor entertaining.

—TASTE OF HOME COOKING SCHOOL

PREP: 1 HOUR
MAKES: 1 CENTERPIECE

- 1 fresh pineapple, trimmed and cored**
- Seedless watermelon slices**
- Cantaloupe balls**
- Honeydew balls**
- Large kiwifruit, peeled and sliced**
- Seedless red or green grapes**
- ½ large round melon**
- Lemon and mint leaves, optional**

- 1.** Cut pineapple into ¾-in. slices. Using small flower- or star-shaped cookie cutters, cut out shapes from pineapple and watermelon slices. Thread assorted fruits onto wooden skewers.
- 2.** Place melon on a serving tray or platter. Insert skewers into base. Garnish with lemon and mint if desired.



Grilled Feta Quesadillas

This is a great appetizer, especially when you have company over for a barbecue. I tasted something similar at a Memorial Day picnic and decided to re-create the flavor with reduced-fat ingredients.

—**JACQUELINE CORREA** LANDING, NJ

START TO FINISH: 20 MIN.

MAKES: 12 WEDGES

- 3 ounces fat-free cream cheese**
- ½ cup shredded reduced-fat Mexican cheese blend**
- ½ cup crumbled feta cheese**
- ½ teaspoon dried oregano**
- 4 flour tortillas (6 inches), warmed**
- ¼ cup chopped pitted ripe olives**
- 2 tablespoons diced pimientos**
- 1 green onion, chopped**

- 1.** In a small bowl, beat cheeses with oregano until blended. Spread 3 tablespoons of cheese mixture over half of each tortilla; top with olives, pimientos and onion. Fold tortillas over.
- 2.** Moisten a paper towel with cooking oil; using long-handled tongs, lightly coat the grill rack. Grill quesadillas, uncovered, over medium heat or broil 4 in. from the heat for 1-2 minutes on each side or until golden brown. Cut each quesadilla into three wedges. Serve warm.



Grilled Taco Wings

I like these wings hot, so I often add a little extra hot sauce. Ranch dressing cools them down nicely.

—**DEB KESLAR** UTICA, NE

START TO FINISH: 25 MIN.

MAKES: ABOUT 3 DOZEN

- 1 envelope taco seasoning**
- 3 tablespoons canola oil**
- 2 tablespoons red wine vinegar**
- 2 teaspoons hot pepper sauce, divided**
- 4 pounds fresh or frozen chicken wingettes, thawed**
- 1 cup ranch salad dressing**

- 1.** In a large resealable plastic bag, combine the taco seasoning, oil, vinegar and 1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce; add chicken. Seal bag and turn to coat.
- 2.** Grill chicken, covered, over medium heat for 15-20 minutes or until juices run clear, turning occasionally.
- 3.** In a small bowl, combine ranch dressing and remaining hot pepper sauce. Serve with chicken.



Slow Cooker Cheese Dip

I brought this slightly spicy cheese dip to a gathering with friends and it was a huge hit. The spicy pork sausage provides the zip!

—**MARION BARTONE** CONNEAUT, OH

PREP: 15 MIN. • **COOK:** 4 HOURS
MAKES: 2 QUARTS

- 1 pound ground beef**
- ½ pound bulk spicy pork sausage**
- 2 pounds process cheese (Velveeta), cubed**
- 2 cans (10 ounces each) diced tomatoes and green chilies**
- Tortilla chips**

- 1.** In a large skillet, cook beef and sausage over medium heat until no longer pink; drain. Transfer to a 3- or 4-qt. slow cooker. Stir in cheese and tomatoes.
- 2.** Cover and cook on low for 4-5 hours or until the cheese is melted, stirring occasionally. Serve with tortilla chips.



Sweet & Savory Slow- Cooked Beef

There's plenty of sweet and a little bit of heat in this family-friendly shredded beef. Serve it with additional barbecue sauce, pickles or your favorite sandwich toppings.

—**DAVID KLEIMAN** NEW BEDFORD, MA

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 8 HOURS
MAKES: 16 SERVINGS

- 1 beef top round roast (4 pounds)**
- 1 bottle (18 ounces) barbecue sauce**
- ½ cup water**
- ¼ cup packed brown sugar**
- 1 chipotle pepper in adobo sauce, chopped**
- 2 tablespoons Worcestershire sauce**
- 2 tablespoons steak sauce**
- 1½ teaspoons reduced-sodium soy sauce**
- 1 teaspoon celery salt**
- 1 teaspoon garlic salt**
- 1 teaspoon seasoned salt**
- 1 teaspoon pepper**
- 16 onion rolls, split**

1. Cut roast in half; place in a 6-qt. slow cooker. Combine the barbecue sauce, water, brown sugar, chipotle pepper, Worcestershire sauce, steak sauce, soy sauce and seasonings. Pour over meat.

2. Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours or until meat is tender. Remove roast and cool slightly. Skim fat from cooking juices. Shred meat with two forks and return to slow cooker; heat through. Serve on rolls.

NOTE Wear disposable gloves when cutting hot peppers; the oils can burn skin. Avoid touching your face.



Buffet Sandwich

The first time I brought this sandwich to a potluck, it disappeared so fast I was sorry I hadn't brought two. I often add sliced tomatoes to it.

—**MARGARET RHODES** COALDALE, AB

PREP: 50 MIN.
MAKES: 10 SERVINGS

- 1 loaf unsliced French bread (1 pound)**
- 3 to 4 tablespoons mayonnaise**
- 2 tablespoons butter, softened**
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard**
- 10 lettuce leaves**
- 5 thin slices deli ham, halved**
- 5 slices pimiento loaf, halved, optional**
- 10 slices salami**
- 5 slices Swiss cheese, halved**
- 5 slices part-skim mozzarella cheese, halved**
- 10 thinly sliced red or green bell pepper rings**

- 1.** Cut bread into 22 slices, leaving slices attached at the bottom. Cut off and discard the end pieces. In a small bowl, combine the mayonnaise, butter and mustard until blended. Spread over every other slice of bread.
- 2.** Between the slices spread with mayonnaise mixture, place a lettuce leaf, the meats, cheeses and one pepper ring. To serve, cut completely through the loaf, forming sandwiches.

Cocoa Marshmallow Cookies

It was always a treat when Mom let me help her make these cookies. Nowadays, I always double the recipe because they disappear so fast. The marshmallow is a nice surprise under the sweet frosting.

—LYNELL RENNER ZAP, ND

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN.
MAKES: 2 DOZEN

- 1 cup sugar**
- ½ cup shortening**
- 1 egg**
- ¼ cup 2% milk**
- 1¼ cups all-purpose flour**
- ½ cup baking cocoa**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- 12 large marshmallows, halved**

FROSTING

- 2 cups confectioners' sugar**
- 2 tablespoons baking cocoa**
- 1 tablespoon butter, softened**
- 3 to 4 tablespoons 2% milk**

- 1.** In a large bowl, cream sugar and shortening until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and milk. Combine the flour, cocoa, baking soda and salt; add to creamed mixture and mix well.
- 2.** Drop by teaspoonfuls onto ungreased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 8 minutes. Place half of a marshmallow on each cookie; bake 2 minutes longer.
- 3.** Remove from oven and press marshmallows down with a fork. Cool. Meanwhile, for frosting, in a large bowl, combine the confectioners' sugar, cocoa, butter and enough milk to reach desired consistency. Pipe onto cookies.



That Good Salad

When a friend shared this recipe, it had a fancy French name. Our children could never remember it, so they would say, "Mom, please make that good salad." Now our friends and neighbors request it for potluck dinners.

—**BETTY LAMB OREM, UT**

START TO FINISH: 20 MIN.
MAKES: 14 SERVINGS (1 CUP EACH)

- ¾ cup canola oil**
- ¼ cup lemon juice**
- 2 garlic cloves, minced**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**
- 2 bunches (1 pound each) romaine, torn**
- 2 cups chopped tomatoes**
- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Swiss cheese**
- ¾ cup slivered almonds, toasted, optional**
- ½ cup grated Parmesan cheese**
- 8 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- 1 cup Caesar salad croutons**

- 1.** In a jar with tight-fitting lid, combine the oil, lemon juice, garlic, salt and pepper; cover and shake well. Chill.
- 2.** In a large serving bowl, toss the romaine, tomatoes, Swiss cheese, almonds if desired, Parmesan cheese and bacon.
- 3.** Shake dressing; pour over salad and toss. Add croutons and serve immediately.



Spring Buffet Dishes



Broccoli Chicken Supreme

This bubbling casserole is classic comfort food. The Supreme Sauce is also heavenly over cooked meat or fish.

—VI NEIDING SOUTH MILWAUKEE, WI

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN.

MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 6 cups fresh broccoli florets**
- 3 cups sliced fresh mushrooms**
- 1 tablespoon butter**
- 6 cups cubed cooked chicken**
- 3 cans (8 ounces each) sliced water chestnuts, drained**

SAUCE

- 6 tablespoons butter, cubed**
- ½ cup plus 1 tablespoon all-purpose flour**
- 1½ teaspoons seasoned salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**
- 3 cups chicken broth**
- 1 cup heavy whipping cream**
- 6 egg yolks, lightly beaten**
- ¾ teaspoon lemon juice**
- ¼ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- ¾ cup slivered almonds, toasted**

- 1.** Place broccoli in a steamer basket; place in a large saucepan over 1 in. of water. Bring to a boil; cover and steam for 5-7 minutes or until crisp-tender. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, saute mushrooms in butter until tender.
- 2.** In a greased 13x9-in. baking dish, layer 4 cups chicken, two-thirds of the mushrooms, two cans of water chestnuts and 4 cups broccoli. In a greased 8-in.-square baking dish, layer the remaining chicken, mushrooms, water chestnuts and broccoli.
- 3.** In a large saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Stir in the flour, seasoned salt and pepper until smooth. Gradually add broth and cream. Bring to a boil; cook and



stir for 2 minutes or until thickened and bubbly. Remove from the heat.

- 4.** Stir a small amount of hot mixture into egg yolks. Return all to the pan; cook and stir until mixture reaches 160° and coats the back of a spoon. Remove from the heat; stir in lemon juice and nutmeg.

- 5.** Pour 3 cups sauce over the large casserole and remaining sauce over the small casserole; sprinkle with almonds. Bake, uncovered, at 375° for 20-25 minutes or until casseroles are bubbly and heated through.

Mom's Scalloped Potatoes and Ham

Mom's friend gave her this recipe years ago, and she shared it with me. When we have leftover ham to use up, it's the most-requested recipe at my house.

—KELLY GRAHAM ST. THOMAS, ON

PREP: 20 MIN. • **COOK:** 8 HOURS
MAKES: 9 SERVINGS

- 10 medium potatoes (about 3 pounds), peeled and thinly sliced**
- 3 cups cubed fully cooked ham**
- 2 large onions, thinly sliced**
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese**
- 1 can (10½ ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted**
- ½ teaspoon paprika**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**

- 1.** In a greased 6-qt. slow cooker, layer half of the potatoes, ham, onions and cheese. Repeat layers. Pour soup over top. Sprinkle with paprika and pepper.
- 2.** Cover and cook on low for 8-10 hours or until potatoes are tender.



Artichoke Mushroom Lasagna

White wine adds delightful flavor to this hearty vegetarian entree. No one will miss the meat!

—**BONNIE JOST** MANITOWOC, WI

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 1 HOUR + STANDING
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 1 pound sliced baby portobello mushrooms**
- 2 tablespoons butter**
- 3 garlic cloves, minced**
- 2 cans (14 ounces each) water-packed artichoke hearts, rinsed, drained and chopped**
- 1 cup chardonnay or other white wine**
- ¼ teaspoon salt**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**

SAUCE

- ¼ cup butter, cubed**
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour**
- 3½ cups 2% milk**
- 2½ cups shredded Parmesan cheese**
- 1 cup chardonnay or other white wine**

ASSEMBLY

- 9 no-cook lasagna noodles**
- 4 cups (16 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese, divided**

1. Preheat oven to 350°. In a large skillet, saute mushrooms in butter until tender. Add garlic; cook 1 minute. Add artichokes, wine, salt and pepper; cook over medium heat until liquid is evaporated.

2. For sauce, in a large saucepan over medium heat, melt butter. Stir in flour until smooth; gradually add milk. Bring to a boil; cook and stir 1 minute or until thickened. Stir in the Parmesan cheese and wine.



3. Spread 1 cup sauce into a greased 13x9-in. baking dish. Layer with three noodles, 1⅔ cups sauce, 1 cup mozzarella and 1⅓ cups artichoke mixture. Repeat layers twice.

4. Cover and bake 45 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining mozzarella cheese. Bake, uncovered, 15-20 minutes or until cheese is melted. Let stand 15 minutes before cutting.

Hoisin Pork Wraps

This flavorful pork with its tasty slaw is fun to serve at a buffet because guests can make their own wraps. Even my grandchildren like it.

—LINDA WOO DERBY, KS

PREP: 25 MIN. • **COOK:** 7 HOURS
MAKES: 15 SERVINGS

- 1 boneless pork loin roast (3 pounds)**
- 1 cup hoisin sauce, divided**
- 1 tablespoon minced fresh gingerroot**
- 6 cups shredded red cabbage**
- 1½ cups shredded carrots**
- ¼ cup thinly sliced green onions**
- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar**
- 4½ teaspoons sugar**
- 15 flour tortillas (8 inches), warmed**

- 1.** Cut roast in half. Combine ⅓ cup hoisin sauce and ginger; rub over pork. Transfer to a 3-qt. slow cooker. Cover and cook on low for 7-8 hours or until pork is tender.
- 2.** Meanwhile, in a large bowl, combine the cabbage, carrots, onions, vinegar and sugar. Chill until serving.
- 3.** Shred the meat with two forks and return to the slow cooker; heat through. Place 2 teaspoons remaining hoisin sauce down the center of each tortilla; top with ⅓ cup shredded pork and ⅓ cup coleslaw. Roll up.



Tortellini Spinach Casserole

This casserole's fresh taste will delight even those who say they don't like spinach. In fact, people are often surprised at just how good it is! Whenever I bring it to a gathering, it doesn't sit around long.

—BARBARA KELLEN ANTIOCH, IL

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 1 package (19 ounces) frozen cheese tortellini**
- 1 pound sliced fresh mushrooms**
- 1 teaspoon garlic powder**
- ¼ teaspoon onion powder**
- ¼ teaspoon pepper**
- ½ cup butter, divided**
- 1 can (12 ounces) evaporated milk**
- ½ pound brick cheese, cubed**
- 3 packages (10 ounces each) frozen chopped spinach, thawed and squeezed dry**
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese**

1. Cook tortellini according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, saute the mushrooms, garlic powder, onion powder and pepper in ¼ cup butter until mushrooms are tender. Remove and keep warm.

2. In the same skillet, combine milk and remaining butter. Bring to a gentle boil; stir in brick cheese until smooth. Drain tortellini; place in a large bowl. Stir in the mushroom mixture and spinach. Add cheese sauce and toss to coat.

3. Transfer to a greased 13 x 9-in. baking dish; sprinkle with mozzarella cheese. Cover and bake at 350° for 15 minutes. Uncover; bake 5-10 minutes longer or until heated through and the cheese is melted.



Easy Citrus Ham

I created this recipe many years ago with items I had on hand. The succulent ham has a mild citrus flavor. It was so popular at a church social that I knew I had a winner!

—SHEILA CHRISTENSEN SAN MARCOS, CA

PREP: 15 MIN. • **COOK:** 4 HOURS + STANDING
MAKES: 10-12 SERVINGS

- 1 boneless fully cooked ham (3 to 4 pounds)**
- ½ cup packed dark brown sugar**
- 1 can (12 ounces) lemon-lime soda, divided**
- 1 medium navel orange, thinly sliced**
- 1 medium lemon, thinly sliced**
- 1 medium lime, thinly sliced**
- 1 tablespoon chopped crystallized ginger**

- 1.** Cut ham in half; place in a 5-qt. slow cooker. In a small bowl, combine brown sugar and ¼ cup soda; rub over ham. Top with orange, lemon and lime slices. Add candied ginger and remaining soda to the slow cooker.
- 2.** Cover and cook on low for 4-5 hours or until a thermometer reads 140°, basting occasionally with cooking juices. Let stand for 10 minutes before slicing.



Baked Spaghetti

This cheesy, crowd-pleasing dish puts a different spin on spaghetti. The leftovers, if there are any, freeze well for a quick future meal.

—RUTH KOBERNA BRECKSVILLE, OH

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 30 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 1 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup chopped green pepper
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 1 can (28 ounces) diced tomatoes, undrained
- 1 can (4 ounces) mushroom stems and pieces, drained
- 1 can (2½ ounces) sliced ripe olives, drained
- 2 teaspoons dried oregano
- 1 pound ground beef, browned and drained, optional
- 12 ounces spaghetti, cooked and drained
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 can (10½ ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- ¼ cup water
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan cheese

1. In a large skillet, saute onion and green pepper in butter until tender. Add the tomatoes, mushrooms, olives, oregano and, if desired, ground beef. Simmer, uncovered, for 10 minutes.

Place half of the spaghetti in a greased 13x9-in. baking dish. Layer with half of the vegetable mixture and 1 cup cheddar cheese. Repeat layers.

2. In a small bowl, combine soup and water until smooth; pour over casserole. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 30-35 minutes or until heated through.



Simple Luncheon Salad

For a bridal shower or warm-weather buffet, this attractive chicken salad is the perfect choice.

—PAT STEVENS GRANBURY, TX

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 6 cups cubed cooked chicken**
- 2 celery ribs, finely chopped**
- 1 large green pepper, chopped**
- $\frac{2}{3}$ to 1 cup sweet pickle relish**
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup shredded carrot**
- 1 jar (4 ounces) sliced pimientos, drained**
- 1 cup mayonnaise**
- 2 tablespoons lemon juice**
- 2 teaspoons sugar**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt**
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon pepper**
- 4 cups each torn Bibb, leaf and iceberg lettuce**
- 2 cups (8 ounces) shredded Colby cheese**
- 2 cups green grapes, halved**
- 2 cans (11 ounces each) mandarin oranges, drained**
- 1 cup slivered almonds, toasted**

- 1.** In a large bowl, combine the chicken, celery, green pepper, pickle relish, carrot and pimientos. In another bowl, combine the mayonnaise, lemon juice, sugar, salt and pepper. Spoon over chicken mixture; toss to coat.
- 2.** Combine the lettuces; place on a serving platter or individual salad plates. Top with chicken salad, cheese, grapes, oranges and almonds. Serve immediately.



Mini Chicken Salad Croissants

My chicken salad is great for any get-together. It could also be served on lettuce or sliced melon. I substitute halved red seedless grapes for the peppers when I know there will be kids in the crowd.

—**PATRICIA TJUGUM** TOMAHAWK, WI

PREP: 20 MIN. + CHILLING

MAKES: 20 SANDWICHES

- ½ cup sour cream**
- ½ cup mayonnaise**
- 4 teaspoons lemon juice**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon pepper**
- 3 cups cubed cooked chicken**
- 4 celery ribs, thinly sliced**
- 1 cup chopped fresh mushrooms**
- ¼ cup chopped green pepper**
- ¼ cup chopped sweet red pepper**
- 4 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled**
- ½ cup chopped pecans, toasted**
- 20 lettuce leaves**
- 20 miniature croissants, split**

1. In a small bowl, combine the sour cream, mayonnaise, lemon juice, salt and pepper. In a large bowl, combine the chicken, celery, mushrooms and peppers; stir in sour cream mixture until combined. Cover and refrigerate for at least 4 hours.

2. Just before serving, stir in bacon and pecans. Spoon ¼ cup chicken salad onto each lettuce-lined croissant.



Crab Imperial Casserole

The recipe serves eight, but plan to double it if you're having folks over. Fresh mushrooms and succulent crab make it hard to turn down seconds of this rich casserole.

—BARBARA CARLUCCI ORANGE PARK, FL

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 25 MIN.
MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 3 cups uncooked spiral pasta**
- 1½ cups sliced fresh mushrooms**
- 5 tablespoons butter**
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- ¾ teaspoon pepper**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- 1½ cups 2% milk**
- 4 cans (6 ounces each) lump crabmeat, drained**
- 1 can (10½ ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted**
- ¼ cup crushed butter-flavored crackers**

- 1.** Cook pasta according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a large skillet, saute mushrooms in butter until tender. Stir in the flour, pepper and salt until blended; gradually add milk. Bring to a boil. Cook and stir for 2 minutes or until thickened. Stir in crab and soup until blended.
- 2.** Drain pasta. Add crab mixture; toss to coat. Transfer to a greased 13x 9-in. baking dish; sprinkle with cracker crumbs. Bake, uncovered, at 350° for 25-30 minutes or until bubbly.



Sweets Table



Makeover Strawberry Cake

My family just loves this wonderful and easy cake that's as pretty as it is tasty! It's perfect for parties with its gorgeous pink color.

—GAIL LONG PELHAM, AL

PREP: 20 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 16 SERVINGS

- 1 package white cake mix (regular size)
- 1 package (.3 ounce) sugar-free strawberry gelatin
- 4 egg whites
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup canola oil
- 1 cup frozen unsweetened strawberries, thawed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup water

ICING

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, softened
- $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups confectioners' sugar

1. Line two 9-in. round baking pans with waxed paper. Coat pans with cooking spray and sprinkle with flour; set aside. In a large bowl, combine cake mix and gelatin. Add egg whites and oil; beat until well blended.
2. In a small bowl, mash strawberries in their juice. Set aside 3 tablespoons for icing. Add water and remaining berries to the batter; mix well.
3. Pour into prepared pans. Bake at 350° for 20-25 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
4. For icing, in a small bowl, combine butter and reserved strawberries. Gradually beat in confectioners' sugar until light and fluffy. Place one cake layer on a serving platter; top with half of the icing. Repeat layers.



Turtle Pretzels

Who doesn't love the classic combination of chocolate, caramel and pecans? These sweet and salty treats will be devoured in no time!

—BARBARA LOUDENSLAGER O'FALLON, MO

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.
MAKES: ABOUT 2½ DOZEN

- 1 package (14 ounces) caramels**
- 1 tablespoon water**
- 1 package (10 ounces) pretzel rods**
- 8 ounces German sweet chocolate or semisweet chocolate, chopped**
- 2 teaspoons shortening**
- 1 cup finely chopped pecans**

- 1.** In a double boiler, melt caramels in water. Dip half of each pretzel into the hot caramel. Place on a greased sheet of foil to cool.
- 2.** In a microwave, melt chocolate and shortening; stir until smooth. Dip the caramel-coated end of each pretzel into the chocolate, allowing excess to drip off; sprinkle with nuts. Return to foil to cool.



Apricot Almond Torte

This pretty cake takes a bit of time, so I like to make the layers in advance and assemble it the day of serving, which makes it an easier option for entertaining.

—TRISHA KRUSE EAGLE, ID

PREP: 45 MIN. • **BAKE:** 25 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 12 SERVINGS

- 3 eggs
- 1½ cups sugar
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1½ cups all-purpose flour
- 1 cup ground almonds, toasted
- 2 teaspoons baking powder
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1½ cups heavy whipping cream, whipped

FROSTING

- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon almond extract
- 1½ cups heavy whipping cream, whipped
- 1 jar (10 to 12 ounces) apricot preserves
- ½ cup slivered almonds, toasted

1. In a large bowl, beat the eggs, sugar and vanilla on high speed until thick and lemon-colored. Combine the flour, almonds, baking powder and salt; gradually fold into egg mixture alternately with the whipped cream.

2. Transfer to two greased and floured 9-in. round baking pans. Bake at 350° for 22-28 minutes or until a toothpick inserted near the center comes out clean. Cool for 10 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

3. In a large bowl, beat the cream cheese, sugar and salt until smooth. Beat in extract. Fold in whipped cream.



4. Cut each cake horizontally into two layers. Place bottom layer on a serving plate; spread with 1 cup frosting. Top with another cake layer; spread with half of the

preserves. Repeat layers. Frost sides of cake; decorate the top edge with remaining frosting. Sprinkle with almonds.

Chocolate-Amaretto Mousse Pie

My mother made this silky pie when I was a child. It was my father's favorite. A thin chocolate shell holds the fluffy chocolate-almond filling.

It's so rich that you really only need a sliver.

—JAMIE BURKHART WINDSOR, MO

PREP: 15 MIN. + FREEZING

COOK: 20 MIN. + CHILLING

MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 1** teaspoon plus $\frac{1}{2}$ cup butter, divided
- 2** cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips, divided
- 1** can (14 ounces) sweetened condensed milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup amaretto
- 2** cups heavy whipping cream, whipped
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup slivered almonds, toasted

- 1.** Line a 9-in. pie plate with foil and grease the foil with 1 teaspoon butter; set aside. In a small saucepan over low heat, melt 1 cup chocolate chips with $\frac{1}{4}$ cup butter; quickly spread in an even layer over bottom and sides of prepared pan. Freeze for 30 minutes.
- 2.** In a small saucepan over low heat, heat the condensed milk, salt and remaining butter and chips until melted; stir until well blended. Gradually stir in the water; cook over medium heat for 5 minutes. Add amaretto; cook for 5 minutes or until thickened, stirring constantly. Cool to room temperature.
- 3.** Fold half the whipped cream into chocolate mixture. Using foil, lift chocolate shell out of pan; gently peel off foil. Return shell to the pie plate; spoon filling into shell. Garnish with remaining whipped cream; sprinkle with almonds. Chill for 3 hours or until set.

Fresh Berry & Almond Tarts

We had a *Taste of Home* party with friends who love to try new recipes. These little treats were such a hit, I knew I should share them!

—SHEILA WYUM RUTLAND, ND

PREP: 15 MIN. • **BAKE:** 10 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 16 TARTS

- 1 package (14.1 ounces) refrigerated pie pastry
- 1 package (8 ounces) cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup confectioners' sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon almond extract
- 2 cups fresh blueberries
- 2 cups fresh raspberries
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup sliced almonds, toasted
- Additional confectioners' sugar, optional

1. Preheat oven to 400°. On a lightly floured surface, unroll pastry sheets. Roll dough to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Cut each with a floured 3-in. cookie cutter to make eight circles or other shapes. Transfer to ungreased baking sheets; prick holes in pastries with a fork.
 2. Bake 8-10 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from pans to wire racks to cool completely.
 3. Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix cream cheese, confectioners' sugar and extract until blended. Spread over cooled pastries. Top with berries, pressing lightly to adhere. Sprinkle with almonds and, if desired, confectioners' sugar. Refrigerate the leftovers.
- NOTE** To toast nuts, spread in a 15x10x1-in. baking pan. Bake at 350° for 5-10 minutes or until lightly browned, stirring occasionally. Or spread in a dry nonstick skillet and heat over low heat until lightly browned, stirring occasionally.



Mom's Soft Raisin Cookies

With four sons in the service during World War II, my mother sent these favorite cookies as a taste from home to her boys in different parts of the world. These days, my grandchildren are enjoying them as we did, along with my stories of long ago.

—PEARL COCHENOUR WILLIAMSPORT, OH

PREP: 25 MIN. • **BAKE:** 15 MIN./BATCH
MAKES: 6 DOZEN

- 1 cup water**
- 2 cups raisins**
- 1 cup shortening**
- 1½ cups sugar**
- 2 eggs**
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract**
- 3½ cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- 1 teaspoon baking soda**
- 1 teaspoon salt**
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon**
- ½ teaspoon ground nutmeg**
- ½ cup chopped walnuts**

- 1.** Combine water and raisins in a small saucepan; bring to a boil. Cook for 3 minutes; remove from the heat and let cool (do not drain).
- 2.** Preheat oven to 350°. In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in eggs and vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and spices; gradually add to creamed mixture and mix well. Stir in nuts and raisins.
- 3.** Drop by teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake 12-14 minutes or until golden brown. Remove to wire racks to cool.



Frosted Walnut Brownie Cups

Enjoy a little taste of heaven with these cute brownie cups. They're always a hit and are simple to make.

—CRYSTAL STRICK BOYERTOWN, PA

PREP: 30 MIN. • **BAKE:** 20 MIN. + COOLING
MAKES: 32 BROWNIE CUPS

- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- 1 cup butter, cubed**
- 1½ cups sugar**
- 4 eggs**
- 2 teaspoons vanilla extract**
- 1 cup all-purpose flour**
- 1 cup chopped walnuts**

GANACHE

- 2 cups (12 ounces) semisweet chocolate chips**
- ¾ cup heavy whipping cream**

- 1.** In a microwave, melt chocolate chips and butter; whisk until smooth. Cool mixture slightly.
- 2.** In a large bowl, beat sugar and eggs. Stir in vanilla and chocolate mixture. Gradually add flour; stir in walnuts. Fill paper-lined miniature muffin cups almost full.
- 3.** Bake at 350° for 20-23 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Cool for 5 minutes before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely. Place chocolate chips in a small bowl. In a small saucepan, bring cream just to a boil. Pour over chocolate; whisk until smooth. Cool for 30 minutes or until ganache reaches spreading consistency, stirring occasionally. Spread over brownies.



Rhubarb Crepes

Nothing says spring like sweetened, citrus-kissed rhubarb tucked into tender crepes. Whether you make your own crepes or take advantage of the the ready-made kind, this treat is a brunch-time classic.

—BETSY KING DULUTH, MN

START TO FINISH: 30 MIN.

MAKES: 8 SERVINGS

- 5 cups finely chopped fresh or frozen rhubarb, thawed**
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar**
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour**
- 2 tablespoons orange juice**
- 1 tablespoon butter**
- 1 teaspoon grated orange peel**
- 16 prepared crepes (9 inches)**
- Confectioners' sugar and additional grated orange peel, optional**

1. In a large saucepan, combine the first five ingredients. Cook, stirring occasionally, over medium heat for 15-18 minutes or until tender. Remove from the heat; stir in orange peel.

2. Spread 2 tablespoons filling down the center of each crepe; roll up. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar and additional orange peel if desired.

NOTE *If using frozen rhubarb, measure while still frozen, then thaw completely. Drain in a colander, but don't press extra liquid out.*



Frosted Orange Cookies

I remember my dad making a big batch of these tender cookies when I was growing up. They have a wonderful old-fashioned taste.

—TAMMIE YOUNG MATTOON, IL

PREP: 30 MIN.

BAKE: 10 MIN./BATCH + COOLING

MAKES: ABOUT 4 DOZEN

- 2 medium navel oranges**
- ½ cup butter-flavored shortening**
- 1 cup sugar**
- ½ cup milk**
- 2 cups all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon baking powder**
- ½ teaspoon baking soda**
- ½ teaspoon salt**
- 2½ cups confectioners' sugar**
- 1 tablespoon butter, melted**

- 1.** With a sharp knife, score each orange into quarters; remove peel. Use knife to remove white pith from peel and fruit; discard. Quarter oranges and place in a blender. Add peel; cover and process until smooth (mixture should measure ¾ cup).
- 2.** In a large bowl, cream shortening and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in milk and 6 tablespoons orange mixture. Combine the flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt; gradually add to creamed mixture until blended.
- 3.** Drop by rounded teaspoonfuls 2 in. apart onto greased baking sheets. Bake at 350° for 10-13 minutes or until set and edges are lightly browned. Remove to wire racks to cool.
- 4.** For frosting, in a small bowl, combine confectioners' sugar, butter and enough of the remaining orange mixture to achieve spreading consistency. Frost cookies.



Taste of Home

Holiday

Bridal & Baby Showers

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