

Chicken Noodle King

Ingredients

5-6 chicken tenderloins, frozen or thawed
1 pkg. Italian salad dressing mix
1 pkg. reduced fat cream cheese
1 can healthy request cream of mushroom soup
1 can healthy request cream of chicken soup

Directions: Put ingredients into a crock-pot in the order shown above. Do not stir. Cook 4-6 hours and serve with whole wheat noodles or brown rice.

Bacon Lettuce and Tomato Bucatini

Ingredients for the garlic bread crumbs

1 clove garlic
1 cup French bread cubes
1 tsp. olive oil

Ingredients for pasta

2 strips thick sliced bacon, diced
1 cup grape tomatoes, halved
½ tsp. sugar
½ cup leeks, thinly sliced
½ cup dry white wine
½ cup chicken broth
1 tsp. red wine vinegar
¼ tsp. pepper flakes
4 ounces dried bucatini or spaghetti
1 cup fresh spinach leaves
¼ tsp. minced fresh thyme

Directions: Bring a pot of water to boil for the noodles.

Mince garlic for the bread crumbs in a food processor. Add cubed bread, and process until coarse. Heat oil in a nonstick skillet over medium heat; add crumbs and toast until golden (3-4 minutes) stirring often. Season with salt and set aside.

Sauté bacon for the pasta in a large nonstick skillet over medium heat. Cook until crisp, then drain pieces on a paper lined plate. Pour off all but 1 tablespoon of the drippings. Caramelize tomatoes and sugar in the drippings over medium heat. Cook until tomatoes begin to brown, about 5 minutes. Add leeks, sauté until wilted, about 5 minutes.

Deglaze skillet with wine; simmer until liquid is nearly evaporated. Add broth, vinegar, and pepper flakes. Simmer until liquid is reduced by a third, about 5 minutes.

Cook pasta in boiling water according to package directions. Add spinach, thyme, and bacon to sauce. Transfer pasta from cooking water to the skillet using tongs, Toss to coat with sauce. Season with salt, and then divide between plates. Sprinkle pasta with reserved bacon pieces and bread crumbs before serving.

Banana Bread

1/2 cup (4 ounces) unsalted butter, at cool room temperature
2/3 cup (5 ounces) brown sugar, light or dark, firmly packed
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups (12 ounces) mashed ripe bananas (about 3 medium or 2 large bananas; about 1 pound, unpeeled)
3 tablespoons (2 1/4 ounces) apricot jam or orange marmalade, optional but tasty
1/4 cup (3 ounces) honey
2 large eggs
2 1/4 cups (9 1/2 ounces) King Arthur Unbleached All-Purpose Flour
1/2 cup (2 ounces) chopped walnuts, optional

Preheat the oven to 325°F. Lightly grease a 9" x 5" loaf pan.

- 1) In a large bowl, combine the butter, sugar, vanilla, cinnamon, nutmeg, baking soda, baking powder, and salt, beating till smooth.
- 2) Add the mashed bananas, jam, honey, and eggs, again beating until smooth.
- 3) Add the flour, then the walnuts, stirring just until smooth.
- 4) Spoon the batter into the prepared loaf pan, smoothing the top. Let it rest at room temperature for 10 minutes.
- 5) Bake the bread for 45 minutes, then gently lay a piece of aluminum foil across the top, to prevent over-browning.

6) Bake for an additional 25 minutes. Remove the bread from the oven; a long toothpick or cake tester inserted into the center should come out clean, with at most a few wet crumbs clinging to it. The tester shouldn't show any sign of uncooked batter. If it does, bake the bread an additional 5 minutes, or until it tests done.

7) Allow the bread to cool for 10 minutes in the pan. Remove it from the pan, and cool it completely on a rack.

Yield: One loaf.

Caramelized Butternut Squash (from the Barefoot Contessa)

Ingredients

- 2 medium butternut squash (4 to 5 pounds total)
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 1/4 cup light brown sugar, packed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons kosher salt
- 1/2 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Cut off and discard the ends of each butternut squash. Peel the squash, cut them in half lengthwise, and remove the seeds. Cut the squash into 1 1/4 to 1 1/2-inch cubes and place them on a baking sheet. Add the melted butter, brown sugar, salt, and pepper. With clean hands, toss all the ingredients together and spread in a single layer on the baking sheet. Roast for 45 to 55 minutes, until the squash is tender and the glaze begins to caramelize. While roasting, turn the squash a few times with a spatula, to be sure it browns evenly. Taste for seasonings and serve hot.

Pulled Pork

(from [The Way The Cookie Crumbles](#) - originally from Cooks Illustrated - serves 6)

Spice Rub:

- 1 tablespoon ground black pepper
- 1-2 teaspoons cayenne pepper
- 2 tablespoons chili powder
- 2 tablespoons ground cumin
- 2 tablespoons dark brown sugar

1 tablespoon dried oregano
4 tablespoons paprika
2 tablespoons table salt
1 tablespoon granulated sugar
1 tablespoon ground white pepper - *I used black pepper*

1 (6-8 pound) bone-in pork shoulder
½ teaspoon liquid smoke (optional) - *I omitted*
2 cups barbecue sauce
Mix all spice rub ingredients in small bowl.

Massage spice rub into meat (*I recommend doing this on a jelly roll pan or large cookie sheet with sides*). Wrap tightly in double layer of plastic wrap; refrigerate for at least 3 hours. For stronger flavor, the roast can be refrigerated for up to 3 days. (*I refrigerated ours for 2 days*).

Unwrap roast and place it in slow cooker liner. Add liquid smoke, if using, and 1/4 cup water. Turn slow cooker to low and cook for 8-10 hours, until meat is fork-tender.

Transfer roast to cutting board (*again, I used a large cookie sheet with sides. This helped to contain the mess*); discard liquid in liner. Pull by tearing meat into thin shreds with two forks or your fingers. Discard fat.

Place shredded meat back in slow cooker liner; toss with 1 cup barbecue sauce, and heat on low for 30-60 minutes, until hot. Serve with additional barbecue sauce.