

# Delicious Make-Ahead Holiday Recipes

## Stuffed Dates Wrapped in Bacon

This yummy appetizer can be made in advance and it's perfect for every occasion. Sweet dates, creamy cream cheese, and salty bacon make for a perfect flavor.

*Serves 4 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 10-15 minutes*

### **Ingredients**

- 16 dates
- 8 slices bacon, sliced in half
- 4 ounces cream cheese, softened

### On serving day

- 2 tablespoons balsamic glaze

### **Directions**

#### To prepare for the freezer

1. Cut each date halfway through and remove the pit.
2. Stuff the halved dates with cream cheese. Wrap each with the bacon strips, sealing with a toothpick.
3. Arrange the dates on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Freeze them for up to 1 month.

#### On serving day

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (204°C).
2. Bake the stuffed dates for about 10-15 minutes until the bacon is crispy.
3. Right before serving, drizzle the balsamic glaze on top of the dates.

### **Nutrition Facts**

Calories 401, fat 25 g, carbs 28 g, sugar 22 g,  
Protein 17 g, sodium 965 mg

# Butternut Squash Soup

One of my favorite soups is butternut squash soup. It's creamy and full of flavor and the best part is that it can be prepared ahead of time and frozen for later use.

Serves 4 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 25 minutes

## **Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 onion, diced finely
- 2 pounds butternut squash, peeled and diced into cubes
- 3½ cups vegetable stock
- 1 cup heavy cream
- 1 tablespoon turmeric powder
- salt and pepper to taste

## On serving day

- 4 tablespoons heavy cream
- Chopped parsley for garnish

## **Directions**

### To prepare for freezing

1. In a large pot warm the olive oil and cook the diced onion for about 2-3 minutes.
2. Stir in the diced butternut squash and cook for about 2-3 minutes more.
3. Pour in the vegetable stock and stir in the turmeric powder and season with salt and pepper to taste.
4. Cook for about 10-15 minutes until the butternut squash is fork-tender.
5. Using a blender stick or a blender, puree into a creamy soup. Make sure it becomes lump-free and smooth.
6. Stir in the heavy cream and mix until combined.
7. Let the whole soup cool completely and transfer it to a freezer-friendly container and freeze it for up to 1 month.

### On serving day

1. Thaw the soup completely before warming up.
2. Place the soup in a saucepan and warm over low heat for 15-20 minutes or until warm.
3. Adjust consistency with water or vegetable stock if needed.
4. To serve, ladle the soup into serving bowls, and drizzle heavy cream on top if desired.
5. Garnish with chopped parsley and enjoy with crusty bread if desired.

## **Nutrition Facts**

Calories 298, fat 18 g, carbs 33 g, sugar 8 g,  
Protein 4.3 g, sodium 147 mg

# Ground Turkey and Tater Tot Casserole

Ground turkey and tater tot casserole is a delicious lunch or dinner idea for the whole family or guests. You can prepare almost everything ahead of time.

*Serves 4 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 35-40 minutes*

## **Ingredients**

- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 pounds ground turkey
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1 (14-ounce) can crushed tomatoes
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh basil
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- 10 ounces tater tots

## On serving day

- 2 cups cheddar cheese, shredded

## **Directions**

### To prepare for freezing

1. In a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat, heat the olive oil.
2. Add the onion, garlic, ground turkey, and grated carrot. Season with salt and pepper. Cook until the turkey is no longer pink, about 5-6 minutes. Take care of breaking up the ground turkey into small pieces as it cooks with a spatula or wooden spoon.
3. Stir in the oregano, basil, and crushed tomatoes. Mix until well-combined.
4. Cook for about 2-3 minutes more and transfer the mixture to a well-greased 9x13-inch baking dish.
5. Top the whole casserole with tater tots.
6. Let the casserole cool completely. Cover the baking dish and freeze for up to 1 month.

### On serving day

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C).
2. Top the casserole with cheddar cheese.
3. Bake for about 30 minutes or until the cheese is golden-brown.
4. Serve warm.

## **Nutrition Facts**

Calories 886, fat 57 g, carbs 50 g, sugar 2 g,  
Protein 83 g, sodium 1408 mg

# Beef Stroganoff

A luxurious pasta and beef dish that will wow your guests!

Serves 4 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 15-20 minutes

## **Ingredients**

- 1 pound ground beef
- ½ cup onion, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- ¼ cup button mushrooms, diced
- 1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce
- 1 (10-ounce) can cream of mushroom soup
- ½ cup sour cream
- 1 tablespoon flat-leaf parsley, chopped
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

## On serving day

- 1 pound fusilli

## **Directions**

### To prepare for freezing

1. In a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat, warm the olive oil.
2. Cook the ground beef with the onion and garlic until the ground beef is well browned and no longer pink, about 6-7 minutes. Take care of breaking up the ground meat into small pieces as it cooks.
3. Stir in the mushrooms and Worcestershire sauce.
4. Stir in the cream of mushroom soup and sour cream. Cook for about 2-3 minutes.
5. Season with salt and pepper and stir in the chopped parsley.
6. Let everything cool slightly. Transfer into an airtight container or freezer bag and freeze for up to 1 month.

## On serving day

1. Cook the fusilli pasta in salted water for about 7 minutes or until al dente. In the meantime, warm the beef sauce in a pot.
2. Serve the warmed beef stroganoff over the cooked pasta.

## **Nutrition Facts**

Calories 746, fat 18 g, carbs 92 g, sugar 5 g,  
Protein 51 g, sodium 590 mg

# Porcini Mushroom and Vegetable Nut Roast

If you want to try a vegetarian roast this holiday season, this recipe has it all. You will love the satisfying flavor combination of vegetables and nuts.

*Serves 4 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 35-40 minutes*

## **Ingredients**

- ¼ cup porcini mushrooms, diced
- 1 cup breadcrumbs
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 carrot, peeled and grated
- 1 celery stick, finely diced
- 1 parsnip, peeled and grated
- ½ pound chestnut mushrooms, diced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 2 cups cooked quinoa
- ½ cup chopped walnuts
- 1 cup vacuum-packed cooked chestnuts, chopped
- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 3 tablespoons flat-leaf parsley, chopped

## **Directions**

### To prepare for freezing

1. In a large mixing bowl, combine the breadcrumbs, salt and pepper, onion, carrot, celery, parsnip, porcini and chestnut mushrooms, garlic, quinoa, walnuts, chestnuts, eggs, and parsley.
2. Transfer the whole mixture into a well-greased loaf pan lined with parchment paper.
3. Cover the pan and freeze until ready to bake, up to 1 month.

### On serving day

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C).
2. Bake the roast for about 35-40 minutes or until fully cooked.
3. Let it cool slightly before serving.

## **Nutrition Facts**

Calories 600, fat 18 g, carbs 86 g, sugar 5 g,  
Protein 23 g, sodium 262 mg

# Duchess Potatoes

Duchess potatoes are an easy yet impressive side dish.

Serves 4 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 45 minutes

## **Ingredients**

- 2½ pounds Yukon gold potatoes, diced into cubes
- 1 tablespoon kosher salt
- 6 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 tablespoons unsalted butter
- ¼ cup heavy cream
- Pinch of ground nutmeg
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste
- 3 large egg yolks

## On serving day

- Chopped flat-leaf parsley
- Grated parmesan cheese, for garnish

## **Directions**

### To prepare for freezing

1. Place the potatoes in a large pot filled with salted water. Bring to a boil and cook until fork tender, about 20-25 minutes.
2. Drain well. In a large bowl, mash the potatoes with a potato masher.
3. Stir in the garlic, butter, heavy cream, nutmeg, salt and pepper, and egg yolks.
4. Transfer the mixture to a piping bag. Pipe out into floret shapes on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
5. Cover and freeze for up to 1 month.

## On serving day

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C). Bake the duchess potatoes for about 20 minutes.
2. Garnish with parsley and parmesan cheese before serving.

## **Nutrition Facts**

Calories 467, fat 26 g, carbs 47 g, sugar 3 g,  
Protein 11 g, sodium 2024 mg

# Green Bean Casserole

Green bean casserole is a traditional side dish served around the holidays. Enjoy this convenient version that you can freeze before serving.

*Serves 4 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 35-40 minutes*

## **Ingredients**

- 1 pound green beans, trimmed
- 1 tablespoon unsalted butter
- 1 red onion, thinly sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 6 ounces cremini mushrooms, sliced
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 1 cup low-sodium chicken stock
- 1 cup whole milk
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste

## On serving day

- ½ cup breadcrumbs

## **Directions**

### To prepare for freezing

1. In a large nonstick frying pan over medium heat, melt the butter.
2. Cook the onion until soft, about 2-3 minutes.
3. Stir in the garlic and mushrooms. Cook for about 10 minutes and stir in the flour.
4. Stir in the green beans.
5. Pour in the chicken stock and whole milk. Season with salt and pepper.
6. Remove from heat and let the whole mixture cool completely.
7. Transfer into a well-greased 9x13-inch well-baking dish. Cover with a lid or plastic wrap.

### On serving day

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (177°C).
2. Top the green bean casserole with the breadcrumbs.
3. Bake for about 25 minutes until golden-brown and crispy.
4. Serve warm.

## **Nutrition Facts**

Calories 192, fat 6 g, carbs 28.6 g; sugar; 7 g,  
Protein 7 g, sodium 345 mg

# Christmas Cake

Christmas cakes are very popular over the holidays and this recipe is my favorite version. It's also gluten-free!

Serves 8 | Prep. time 20 minutes | Cooking time 2 hours

## Ingredients

- 2 large eggs, room temperature
- 6 ounces cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup almond meal
- 1 cup gluten-free flour
- 1/3 cup almonds, chopped
- 1/3 cup pecans, chopped
- 1/3 cup hazelnuts, chopped
- 1/4 cup walnuts, chopped
- 1 1/2 tablespoons brandy
- 1 cup sultanas
- 1 cup dried figs, very finely chopped
- 1/2 cup currants
- 1/2 cup dried prunes
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries
- 2 teaspoons orange zest
- 1/2 cup cherry wine
- 1 teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 1 cup brown sugar

## On serving day

- 3 tablespoons apricot preserve

## Directions

### To prepare for freezing

1. Preheat oven to 300°F (149°C).
2. In a large mixing bowl, combine the sultanas, dried figs, currants, prunes, cranberries, and orange zest. Drizzle with brandy and cherry wine.
3. Let the mixture soak for about 2 hours.
4. In another large mixing bowl, combine the cream cheese, eggs, almond meal, gluten-free flour, almonds, pecans, hazelnuts, and walnuts.
5. Stir in the cinnamon and brown sugar. Mix until fully combined.
6. Add the soaked dried fruits and mix until fully combined.
7. Transfer the cake mixture into a well-greased 8x8-inch brownie pan lined with parchment paper. Bake for about 2 hours.
8. Let the cake cool completely. Cover with plastic wrap and freeze for up to 2 weeks.

## On serving day

1. Thaw the cake at room temperature.
2. To serve, brush the surface of the cake with the apricot jam and cut it into slices.

## Nutrition Facts

Calories 493, fat 23 g, carbs 65 g, sugar 41 g,  
Protein 9 g, sodium 129 mg



**\*\*\*These recipes and more are found in Louise Davidson's *Make-Ahead Holiday Cookbook: Festive Recipes to Make in Advance from Appetizers to Desserts for Stress-Free Holidays*. To get your copy, click on the cover below or click [here](#).**

