

Delicious and Classic Christmas Recipes

Baked Camembert with Caramelized Cranberries

Serves: 8-10 | Preparation time: 10 minutes | Cooking time: 60 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 tbsp butter
- 1 tbsp brandy
- 2 tbsp brown sugar
- ½ cup dried unsweetened cranberries
- 1 8 oz. round Camembert cheese
- 1 tbsp slivered almonds
- 1 French baguette bread or crackers

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F, and place the oven rack in the middle position.
2. In a small skillet over medium heat, let the butter melt. Add the brandy and brown sugar. Stir until the sugar is dissolved completely. Remove from heat. Add the cranberries, and stir to coat well.
3. Remove the Camembert cheese rind with a small paring knife, if desired. Place the Camembert in a small oven-proof baking dish. Spoon the cranberry mixture, and sprinkle the slivered almonds on top.
4. Place in the preheated oven. Bake the cheese until it becomes softer and is heated through, about 10 to 15 minutes. Remove from oven, and let stand for 5 minutes.
5. Serve with thin slices of French baguette or crackers.

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories: 289, Total fat: 16.4 g, Carbohydrates: 23.4 g, Dietary fibers: 0.5 g
Sugars: 12.3 g, Proteins: 12.6 g

Prosciutto Purse

Yields 20 pieces | Preparation time: 10 minutes

Ingredients

- 20 thin slices of prosciutto
- 20 cubes of blue cheese or any firm cheese you prefer
- 20 chive strings
- 5 fresh ripe figs like Black Mission

Preparation

1. Wash and cut the figs in quarters.
2. Place a slice of prosciutto flat on a working surface. Place a cheese cube and a piece of fig in the middle of the prosciutto. Assemble to form a little closed bag.
3. Secure by tying with a chive string.
4. Repeat until all the ingredients are gone. Place on a serving plate. Refrigerate. Bring to room temperature before serving, about fifteen minutes. These easy-to-make appetizers can be made up to 6 hours in advance.

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories: 61.3, Total fat: 3.2 g, Carbohydrates: 3.6 g, Dietary fibers: 0.5 g, Sugars: 2.6 g, Proteins: 4.5 g

Christmas Beer-Glazed Ham

Serves: 16-20 | Preparation time: 40 minutes | Cooking time: 3 hours 30 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 bone-in, fully cooked ham of 15-16 lbs
- 30 to 40 whole cloves
- 2 ½ cup dark beer
- 1 cup brown sugar
- 4 tbsp prepared mustard
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1 tsp ground cardamom

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 325°F.
2. Remove the ham's membrane, leaving it intact around the bone. There should be at least a ¼ inch of fat remaining. With a sharp knife, score the ham's fat on the two diagonals, to form a diamond pattern. Make sure not cut the meat, but only the fat.
3. Place the ham in a large roasting pan, fat side up. Insert a clove at the junction of each diamond. Not too deep, you should be able to see them on the surface of the ham.
4. Pour 1½ cups of beer over the ham. Place the ham uncovered in the oven, and cook for 3 hours. Brush the ham two or three times with some beer.
5. Remove the ham from the oven and crank up the oven temperature to 400°F.
6. While waiting, prepare the glaze. Mix the brown sugar, mustard, ginger, cardamom, and remaining beer in a small mixing bowl.
7. Brush the ham generously with brown sugar paste. Place back in the oven, and cook for another 30 to 35 minutes until the ham is well glazed.
8. Let the ham rest for 10 minutes before carving. While the ham is resting, remove the cloves.

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories: 134.7, Total fat: 4.1 g, Carbohydrates: 15.2 g, Dietary fibers: 0.2 g, Sugars: 13.0 g, Proteins: 9.2 g

Easy Braised Turkey Pie with Chestnuts and Caramelized Pearl Onions

Serves: 8-10 | Preparation time: 30 minutes | Cooking time: 75 minutes

Ingredients

- 3 lbs boneless and skinless turkey breast
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- 1 tsp salt
- ½ tsp black pepper
- ½ cup vegetable oil
- 2 carrots, peeled and diced
- 2 celery stalks, trimmed and diced
- 2 yellow onions, diced
- ½ cup peas, fresh or frozen
- 4 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 tsp fry thyme
- 4 cups chicken stock
- 4 cups of frozen pearl onions, thawed
- 2 cups cooked whole chestnuts (2 10-oz. cans)
- 5 cups button mushrooms, quartered (14 oz.)
- ½ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 1 1-lb package of frozen puff pastry thawed in the refrigerator
- Butter for greasing

Preparation

1. Cut the turkey breast into bite-sized cubes.
2. In a sealable bag, such as a zip lock, mix the flour with the salt and pepper. Add the turkey, and shake to coat the meat. Keep the remaining flour mix for later use.
3. Place a heavy, large skillet, such as a cast iron, over medium-high heat. Add 2 tbsp of the vegetable oil. Brown the turkey cubes in small batches on all sides. Add oil as needed. Set the browned turkey aside in a plate and reserve.
4. Add to the skillet, 1 tbsp of vegetable oil, the carrots, celery, onions, peas, minced garlic, and thyme. Sauté until tender, about 3 to 5 minutes on medium heat. Sprinkle the remaining flour over the vegetables. Stir to coat.
5. Add the turkey back into the skillet with the vegetables. Pour the stock. Increase the heat to medium-high, and bring to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover and cook for 20 to 30 minutes, or until the turkey is cooked through.
6. In the meantime, in another large skillet, add the vegetable oil that is left, and warm over medium-high heat. Fry the mushrooms, chestnuts, and pearls onions. Sauté until the onions are tender and well caramelized, all the liquid has evaporated, and the mushrooms are golden brown, about 20 to 25 minutes.
7. Add the mushroom mixture to the turkey. Add the parsley, and let simmer, on medium heat, for 5 more minutes. Remove from heat, and let cool.
8. Taste and season with salt and pepper, if needed.
9. Up to this point, you can refrigerate the completely cooled-down turkey mixture in an airtight container up to 2 days. It can also be frozen up to two weeks.
10. Grease with butter a 13 by 9" baking dish. Spoon the turkey mixture in the baking dish. Set aside.
11. Preheat the oven to 400°F, and place the oven rack in the middle position.
12. On a work surface dusted with flour, roll-out 1 sheet of the puff pastry until it covers all the surface of the baking dish and more.
13. With a small cookie cutter in the shape of a small star, a snowflake, or any other Holiday shape, make a series of 2 to 4 vent holes, in a line across the center of puff pastry.
14. Place the dough over the baking dish. Cut off the excess dough with a sharp knife.
15. Brush the dough with the egg yolk. At this point, you can refrigerate the turkey pie for up to 4 hours before baking. Just cover it with a plastic wrap.
16. Place the turkey pie on a baking sheet, and place in the oven. Bake for 45 minutes, or until the crust is well cooked and golden.
17. Remove from the oven, and let the pie rest for 10 minutes before serving.

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories: 568, Total fat: 26.4 g, Carbohydrates: 43.2 g, Dietary fibers: 4.8 g, Sugars: 21.2 g, Proteins: 38.2 g

Spiced Red Cabbage

Serves: 6

Preparation time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 90 minutes

Ingredients

- 1 medium-sized red cabbage, trimmed and quartered
- 1 large red onion, diced
- 1 Granny Smith apple, peeled, cored, and shredded
- 2 garlic cloves, minced
- 1/8 tsp ground clove
- 1/4 tsp ground nutmeg
- 2 tbsp brown sugar, packed
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsp butter
- Salt and freshly ground pepper

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 300°F, and place the oven rack in the middle position.
2. Remove the heart from each quarter of the cabbage. Shred the cabbage with a sharp knife or a mandolin.
3. Place the shredded cabbage on a baking dish. Toss in the diced onions and the shredded apple.
4. In a small mixing bowl, stir together the minced garlic, the clove, the nutmeg, the sugar, and the vinegar. Season with salt and pepper to taste.
5. Pour the mixture over the cabbage, onions, and apple mix. Stir to combine all the ingredients well.
6. Dice the butter into small pieces and sprinkle them over the cabbage mix. Cover the baking dish with a lid or aluminum foil.
7. Place in the oven, and bake for 90 minutes until the cabbage is fork tender. After 45 minutes, toss the cabbage mix a few times and continue cooking.
8. Remove from oven, taste, and adjust seasoning with salt and freshly ground pepper if needed. Serve warm.

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories: 122.7, Total fat: 4.1, Carbohydrates: 23.2, Dietary fibers: 4.2, Sugars: 14.8, Proteins: 2.7

Bûche de Noël

Serves: 12

Preparation time: 60 minutes

Cooking time: 12 minutes

Ingredients

Cake's ingredients

- 4 large eggs
- 1 cup white sugar
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp cacao
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt
- 2 tsp baking powder

Chestnut cream

- 1 lb unsalted butter
- 1 15.5 oz chestnut vanilla purée
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup icing sugar
- 1 tbsp dark rum or rum extract

Chocolate frosting

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup unsalted butter, at room temperature
- 2 cups icing sugar
- 1 tsp pure vanilla extract
- 3 tbsp strong coffee
- 3 semi-sweet chocolate squares, melted

Preparation

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F, and place the oven rack in the middle position.
2. Grease a jumbo-sized rimmed baking sheet (fifteen-inch by twenty-inch), and line it with parchment paper or waxed paper.
3. In a large mixing bowl, beat the eggs and sugar until light and fluffy, about two to three minutes. Add the flour, cocoa, salt, and baking powder. Beat until well combined.
4. Pour the cake batter on the prepared baking sheet. The batter should be spread out evenly. Bang the baking sheet two or three times on the counter to make sure no air bubble formed in the batter.
5. Place in the oven, and bake for twelve minutes.
6. While the cake is cooking, dampen a large, clean kitchen towel, and place it flat on a working surface. Dust the towel with some powdered sugar.
7. When ready, remove the cake from the oven, and place the damp towel flat on the cake, dusted side up. Reverse the cake immediately.
8. Roll the cake with the towel to give it the rolled shape and set aside.
9. To make the chestnut cream, start by beating the butter at high speed until creamy. Add the chestnut purée and rum. Mix until well combined. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of the icing sugar at a time and beat on high speed. Repeat until all the icing sugar has been used.
10. The cake should have had time to cool down enough while you prepared the chestnut cream. Unroll the cake, and with a spatula, smear the chestnut cream all over the cake. Roll it back, and place on a serving plate. You can prepare the bûche up to this point, and freeze it up to four weeks.
11. Prepare the chocolate frosting. In another mixing bowl, beat the butter until creamy. Add the melted chocolate, vanilla, and coffee to the butter. Add the icing sugar by increments of half a cup at a time. Beating on high speed until you get a fluffy frosting.
12. Cut off two to three inch of cake from one end and place it on the side to make a branch. Frost the log cake with a spatula. With a fork, in long stoke, make some long line to reproduce tree bark. Decorate with your favorite Christmassy small ornaments.
13. Refrigerate the bûche de Noël until ready to serve. Let it at room temperature before serving for at least thirty minutes.

Note: Chestnut vanilla cream can be found in grocery stores with the baking products. If you cannot find it, you can use the regular chestnut purée; just add two teaspoons of pure vanilla extract to the recipe.

Nutritional information per serving:

Calories: 393, Total fat: 16.3 g, Carbohydrates: 59.5 g, Dietary fibers: 2.0 g, Sugars: 46.9 g, Proteins: 4.8 g

***These recipes and more are found in Sarah Spencer's *Christmas Feast Cookbook: The Very Best Classic and New Recipes*. To get your copy, click on the cover below or click [here](#).

