

DRINKS

Happy Holiday Sangria

Dave Jagodowski

Technology Marketing Copywriter,
New Hampshire



Ingredients

2 parts Cabernet Sauvignon

1 part SKYY Blood Orange Vodka

1 part Fireball Cinnamon Whiskey

1 part cranberry juice

1 part orange juice

Add citrus fruits as desired

Directions

Combine. Serve at room temperature in cold weather or on the rocks.

If you have small children, double the recipe. (You'll need it.)

Teenagers? Triple it. Enjoy!



Carrot and Walnut Date Balls

Rod Griffith

Chief Client Officer, *Massachusetts*

Ingredients

1/2 cup raw walnuts

1/2 cup pitted dates (soak them in warm water for 10-15 minutes first)

1/2 cup finely grated carrots

1/2 tsp finely ground cinnamon

1/4 tsp salt

1/8 tsp dried ginger

1/8 tsp nutmeg

1/2 cup unsweetened coconut shreds

Directions

Pour coconut shreds into a small bowl and set aside. They will be used for the outer coating.

Chop walnuts into small pieces in a food processor.

Add the rest of the ingredients (except the coconut). Pulse the mixture until finely mixed.

Tear off a 1 in. clump and roll into a ball. (Slightly smaller than a golf ball is a good size, but adjust to your preference.)

Roll each ball in the coconut shreds until well-coated.

Place on a plate lined with waxed paper, and place into the refrigerator for 20–30 minutes—just long enough so they don't fall apart too easily.



SNACKS

Bourbon Party Nuts

Lucas Leverett

Marketing Manager, *Michigan*

Ingredients

1/2 cup butter

**1/4 cup Jack Daniel's or Kentucky
bourbon, as your tastes dictate**

**2 Tbsp Tabasco, Sriracha, or other
hot sauce***

1/2 tsp garlic powder

1/2 tsp salt

4 cups pecans

*Use more if you like, to your preferred heat level. Go "Nashville Hot" by adding this blend of spices:

4 Tbsp or more cayenne

1 Tbsp black pepper

1 tsp brown sugar

1 tsp more salt

1 tsp chili powder

Directions

Heat oven to 300°F.

Melt the butter in a large saucepan or Dutch oven on the stovetop.

Add booze and spices to melted butter and bring to a boil.
Boil for 3 minutes.

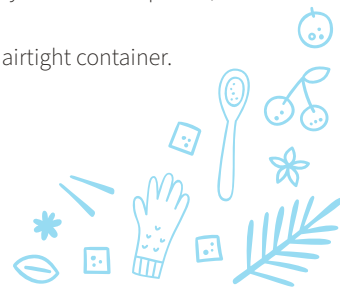
Remove from heat and add pecans. Stir to cover with sauce.

Spread nuts in a single layer on a jelly roll pan or baking dish.

Bake for 30 minutes. Pull out and stir every 7–10 minutes.

Watch them closely at the end because if your oven temp is off, they will burn very quickly.

Eat right away or let cool and store in an airtight container.



SALAD

Vegetarian(ish)

Taco Salad

Cheryl Chapman

Senior Account Manager, *Texas*



Salad

1 romaine head, sliced thin

2 Roma tomatoes, diced

1 jalapeno, diced

1 small white bell pepper, diced

1 small green bell pepper, diced

1/2 small red bell pepper, diced

2 green onions, chopped

**1 can charro pinto beans,
drained but not rinsed**

**1/2 –3/4 cup grated sharp
white cheddar**

12–15 black olives, chopped

**1/2 ripe, but still firm, avocado,
small chunks**

Combine all together (top with
avocado chunks).

Dressing

1/4 cup sour cream

1/2 lime juiced

2 T chipotle salsa

1/8 tsp salt

Mix, toss with salad, double if your lettuce was large.

Tortilla strips to top

3–4 flour tortillas, cut into strips (bite size)

Sauté in bacon fat and olive oil (eyeball it)

Once crisp to your liking, add salt/pepper to taste with
Montana Mex jalapeno pepper rub (montanamex.com).





SOUP

Spanish Lentil Soup with Chorizo

Victoria Espinoza

Senior Graphic Designer, *Florida*

Ingredients

1 cup dried green or brown lentils, rinsed and drained
8 oz (about 2 links) Spanish chorizo sausage, sliced
1 medium onion, chopped
2 cloves garlic, minced
2 carrots, peeled and chopped
2 celery stalks, chopped
1 red bell pepper, chopped
1 can (14 oz) diced tomatoes
6 cups chicken or vegetable broth
1 tsp smoked paprika (pimentón)
1/2 tsp ground cumin
Salt and black pepper to taste
Olive oil for sautéing
Fresh parsley for garnish (optional)

Directions

Rinse lentils under cold water and remove any debris. Drain and set aside.

In large soup pot or Dutch oven, heat a drizzle of olive oil over medium-high heat. Add sliced chorizo and sauté for 3–4 minutes until it starts to release its flavorful oils and gets slightly crispy. Remove some chorizo slices for garnish, if desired. Leave the rest in the pot.

Add the chopped onion, garlic, carrots, celery, and red bell pepper to the pot. Sauté for 5–7 minutes until vegetables are softened and the onion becomes translucent. Stir in smoked paprika (pimentón) and ground cumin. Cook for an additional 1–2 minutes to toast the spices. Add drained lentils and diced tomatoes (with their juice) to the pot. Pour in chicken or vegetable broth. Stir everything together.

Bring the mixture to a boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover, and let simmer 25–30 minutes or until lentils are tender. Stir occasionally. Season with salt and black pepper to taste. Ladle into bowls with white rice.





ENTREE

Bierocks

Patty Cooke

Proofreader, *Kansas*

Ingredients

1 batch of rolls (see recipe at right)

1 lb lean ground beef

1/2 cup finely chopped onion

4 cups finely chopped cabbage

1-2 tsp Vege-Sal or other seasoning

1/4 tsp black pepper

1 cup water

Melted butter

Slightly brown beef in deep skillet. Add onion, cabbage, Vege-Sal/seasoning, pepper, and water and simmer until cabbage is tender. Drain and set aside to cool. Roll out or flatten each roll and place on greased cookie sheet.

Place a spoonful of meat mixture onto each roll. Pull sides up and pinch together. Turn upside down onto cookie sheet.

Bake at 375°F for 15 minutes. Remove from oven and brush immediately with melted butter.

Rolls

1 Tbsp fast-drying yeast

1/2 cup warm water

1 tsp + 1/4 cup sugar

1 cup milk

1 tsp salt

1/4 cup lard/shortening

1/4 cup instant

mashed potato flakes

Boiling water

3-1/2-4 cups flour

1 egg, room temperature, beaten

Combine yeast with 1/2 cup warm water and 1 tsp sugar. Stir to dissolve and let stand until foamy. In saucepan, heat milk and lard/shortening to lukewarm.

In large mixing bowl, combine 1/4 cup sugar and 1 tsp salt. Pour warm milk mixture over sugar mix and stir until dissolved. Reconstitute instant potato flakes with a little boiling water and add to the milk mixture. Add 2 cups flour and beat until shiny and glossy. Beat in egg and dissolved yeast mixture. Add 1-1/2 cups flour and mix well. Dough should be soft; add more if needed to make it workable.

Preheat oven to 400°F. Cover dough and let rise for 1 hour. Stir down. Grease hands and form dough into small- to medium-sized balls. Place balls of dough on greased cookie sheets and let rise about 30 minutes.



ENTREE

Apple Bacon Brussels Sprouts

Leah Beck

Senior Graphic Designer,
New Hampshire



Ingredients

8 oz thick-cut bacon

3 Tbsp bacon grease

1 large yellow onion, sliced

**1 lb Brussels sprouts, rinsed
and cut in half lengthwise**

**1 large Honeycrisp apple
peeled, diced**

2 Tbsp brown sugar

1 Tbsp butter

Salt and pepper to taste

Directions

In a large saucepan over medium heat, cook the bacon until browned and crisp.

Reserve 3 Tbsp bacon grease in the pan, and discard the remainder.

Set aside bacon to drain on paper towels. Crumble into pieces.

Add onion and Brussels sprouts to the pan. Cover and cook, stirring occasionally, until golden brown and soft, 12–15 minutes.

Add the apple, brown sugar, and butter. Cook, stirring occasionally, for 2–3 minutes, or until apple is golden and soft.

Add salt and pepper. Serve!



ENTREE

The Only Mac and Cheese You'll Ever Need

Erica Ruggles

Senior Graphic Designer, *Illinois*



Ingredients

2 Tbsp butter

1 cup cottage cheese (not low-fat)

2 cups milk (not skim)

1 tsp dry mustard

Pinch cayenne

Pinch freshly grated nutmeg

1/2 tsp salt

1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper

1 lb sharp or extra-sharp cheddar cheese, grated

1/2 lb elbow pasta, uncooked

Directions

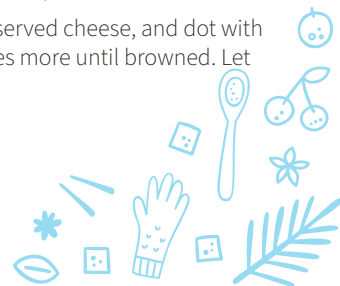
Heat oven to 375°F and position an oven rack in upper third of oven. Use 1 Tbsp butter to butter a 9-inch round or square baking pan.

In a blender, purée cottage cheese, milk, mustard, cayenne, nutmeg, salt, and pepper together. Reserve 1/4 cup grated cheese for topping.

In a large bowl, combine remaining grated cheese, milk mixture, and uncooked pasta.

Pour into prepared pan, cover tightly with foil, and bake 30 minutes.

Uncover pan, stir gently, sprinkle with reserved cheese, and dot with 1 Tbsp butter. Bake uncovered 30 minutes more until browned. Let cool at least 15 minutes before serving. Serves 6–8.



DESSERTS

Mocha Birthday Cake

Emily Walsh

Project Manager, *Massachusetts*



Frosting

16 oz. confectioners' sugar

1/2 cup butter (soft)

1/4 cup cocoa powder

1/4 cup warm water

1 tsp instant coffee (melted in the water)

1 tsp vanilla

Pinch of salt

Directions

Add all ingredients together in a small mixing bowl.

Beat till blended on high speed, about 3 minutes, till fluffy.

When cake is completely cooled, frost middle, sides, then top. (This makes a lot of frosting so put a good amount in between and then sides and top.)

Cake

2 cups flour

1-2/3 cups sugar

1-1/3 cups water

2/3 cup butter (softened)

3 eggs

2 tsp instant coffee

1tsp baking soda

1 tsp vanilla

1/2 tsp double acting
baking powder

1/2 tsp salt

2/3 cup Hershey's powder

Directions

Grease 2 9 in. pans. Dust with cocoa.

In large bowl, add cocoa, flour, sugar, baking soda, baking powder, salt, water, eggs, and butter.

Beat on low speed till mixed then on high for 4 minutes.

Pour into prepared pans and bake 30 minutes.

Remove from oven and cool in pans for 10 minutes.

Remove from pans to rack and cool completely.



DESSERT

Holiday Peanut Butter Balls

Beth Pike

Motion Graphics Designer,
Massachusetts



Ingredients

1 cup milk chocolate chips

2 Tbsp water

1 cup peanut butter

1/2 cup powdered sugar

1/2 cup light corn syrup

2 cups Cheerios

Directions

Place the peanut butter, powdered sugar, and corn syrup in a medium bowl. Stir well.

Add in Cheerios and stir until even.

Line a cookie sheet with waxed paper. Spray your hands with cooking spray and roll the mixture into 1-1/2 in. balls and place on the sheet.

Place chocolate chips and water in a saucepan and melt over medium heat.

Drizzle the melted chocolate over the candies.

Place in the refrigerator for at least 30 minutes.





DESSERT

Raspberry Pretzel Salad

Kelley Maher

Senior Account Manager, *Arizona*

Crust

2 cups crushed pretzels

3 Tbsp sugar

3/4 cup butter

Mix ingredients and press into 9x13 pan.
Bake at 400°F for 4 mins. Cool completely.

2nd layer

8 oz cream cheese

1 cup sugar

4 Tbsp drained crushed pineapple

8 oz Cool Whip

Mix first 3 ingredients with beater. Fold in cool whip. Spread over cooled pretzel crust. Refrigerate.

3rd layer

1 6 oz box raspberry Jell-O

2 cups boiling water

2 10 oz packages frozen raspberries

1/3 cup sugar

Directions

Dissolve Jell-O in boiling water. Mix and cool. In the meantime, add sugar to raspberries to taste (some frozen raspberries can be very tart). Fold into cooled Jell-O liquid. Spoon over 2nd layer. Refrigerate overnight. Cut like you would bars/brownies, serve with a spatula, and enjoy!

