

Kickin' It Old School

Written by Debbi Covington
Tuesday, 26 May 2009 07:30

A couple of months ago I found a surprise from Bruce Reynolds on my front porch. He had left me two big boxes of recipe cards from the 1970's and 1980's.



What a blast from the past! I had a great time going through all of the classic receipts! Some of the recipes were ultra-gourmet, some had really bizarre ingredients, some were over-loaded with fat and calories, but almost all of them brought back very happy memories! I've chosen a few recipes from the "Appealing Appetizers," "Salads and Dressings with Zing," "Brunch and Lunch with Style," "Great Poultry Dishes," "Beverages that Rate" and "Cakes and Pastries" categories to share with you. (I love those titles!!!) I hope that you'll reintroduce some of these "old school" recipes back into your kitchen and that you'll have as much fun with them as I've had. They may be old, but they're still quite tasty! Enjoy!

Crab Puffs

These marvelous appetizers begin with a puffy dough to which crab, cheese, onions, mustard and Worcestershire sauce for seasoning are added.

3/4 cup shredded crab meat
1/4 cup shredded cheddar cheese
1 minced green onion
1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
1/2 teaspoon Worcestershire sauce
1/8 teaspoon salt
1/8 teaspoon pepper
For the batter:
1/4 cup butter
1/2 cup water
1/2 cup all-purpose flour
2 eggs

In a bowl, mix together crab meat, cheese, onion, mustard, Worcestershire sauce, salt and pepper. Set aside. In a saucepan, bring butter and water to a boil. Remove from heat. Add flour and beat until mixture does not stick to sides of pan and forms into a ball. Add eggs, one at a time, beating until each is fully incorporated. Carefully fold in crab-cheese mixture. Drop mixture by rounded teaspoonfuls onto a greased baking sheet, about 1 inch apart. Bake in a preheated 400 degree oven for 20-25 minutes or until golden. Serve hot. (These puffs can be frozen after they are baked. Reheat at 325 degrees for about 10 minutes.) Yields: 30 puffs.

Santa Fe Cole Slaw

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Sesame oil adds an interesting nutty flavor to this colorful and tasty coleslaw. To make a juicier slaw, finely chop shredded cabbage.

- 2 cups shredded cabbage
- 1 medium green pepper, seeded and diced
- 1 medium red bell pepper, seeded and diced
- 3 tablespoons fresh minced parsley
- 1/4 pound fresh pea pods, trimmed

For the dressing:

- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon sesame oil
- 1/4 cup cider vinegar
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon dry mustard
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1 teaspoon salt
- 1 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

In a large bowl, combine cabbage, green and red pepper, parsley and pea pods. To prepare dressing, whisk together oils, vinegar, sugar, mustard, garlic, salt and pepper in a medium bowl. Pour dressing over cabbage mixture. Mix thoroughly. Cover. Refrigerate several hours or overnight. Serves 4.

Parmesan Onion Tart

This tart has the two musts for party food – great taste and easy preparation.

- 1 sheet frozen puff pastry
- 1/4 pound bacon, diced
- 3 cups thinly sliced onion
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Thaw pastry. (To thaw pastry, let stand at room temperature while still folded. Cover with a cloth. After 20-25 minutes pastry should be pliable enough to unfold but still cold to the touch.) Unfold pastry and place on lightly floured board. Roll to 14-by-11-inch rectangle. Place on cookie sheet. Tuck ends under, about 1/2-inch all around. Partially bake pastry at 325 degrees for 5 minutes or until slightly puffed but not browned. Saute bacon and onions in skillet until bacon begins to brown. Drain on layers of paper towels. Remove partially baked pastry from oven. Carefully spread with sour cream. Spoon on onion and bacon. Sprinkle with Parmesan cheese. Bake at 325 degrees for 15 to 20 minutes. Serve warm, cut into squares. Yields: 20 appetizers.

Chicken Breasts with Sherried Tomato Cream

This eye-catching dish is as easy to make as it is delicious. If you bone the chicken yourself, save bones and skin to make homemade broth.

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2 chicken breasts (about 1 pound each), halved, boned and skinned

Salt

White pepper

Ground nutmeg

1-1/2 tablespoon butter

1/4 cup finely chopped onion

1/3 pound mushrooms, sliced

1/4 cup chopped parsley

1/4 teaspoon dried basil leaves

1/3 cup dry sherry

1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

1 medium tomato, peeled, seeded and chopped

1/2 cup heavy whipping cream

Lightly sprinkle chicken with salt, pepper and nutmeg on all sides. In a large frying pan, heat butter. Add chicken. Brown lightly on one side. Turn. Add onions and mushrooms. Cook until chicken is browned. Evenly sprinkle parsley and basil over chicken in skillet. Pour in sherry. Bring to a boil. Cover and reduce heat. Simmer just until thickest part of chicken is white when tested with a knife, about 20 minutes. Transfer chicken to a warm serving dish. Smoothly stir mustard into liquid in pan. Add tomato and cream. Bring to a boil. Cook, stirring occasionally, until liquid is shiny, reduced and slightly thickened. Pour sauce over chicken. Serve immediately. Serves 4.

Pineapple Wine Punch

This tangy version of an old wine classic is dressed for any special occasion with kiwis and strawberries. It will be a hit at any festive gathering.

1 bottle Chablis

1 (16 ounce) can pineapple juice

2 kiwis

1 pound fresh strawberries

2 tablespoons brandy

1 tray ice cubes

In a punch bowl, combine Chablis and pineapple juice. Peel and thinly slice kiwis. Slice fresh strawberries. (Frozen, sliced strawberries may be substituted.) Add kiwis and strawberries to punch. Add brandy. Add ice cubes. Serve immediately. Serves 8 to 10.

Walt's Chocolate Beer Cake

Moist, rich, tender, this is a chocolate lover's delight! The creamy chocolate boiled frosting fills and tops the cake.

For the cake:

2/3 cup butter, at room temperature
2 cups sugar
2 eggs, beaten
2 squares (2 ounce) unsweetened chocolate, melted
2-1/2 cups all-purpose flour
1-1/2 teaspoon baking soda
1/2 teaspoon salt
3/4 cup buttermilk
1/2 cup beer

For the filling and frosting:

1/2 cup whipping cream
1 cup sugar
2 squares (2 ounce) unsweetened chocolate, melted
2 tablespoons butter

Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and beat until light. Blend in the chocolate. Sift flour, soda and salt together. Add to creamed mixture along with buttermilk. Blend until smooth. Stir in the beer and beat until light. Butter and flour 2 9-inch round cake pans. Turn batter into pans. Smooth top. Bake in preheated 350 degree oven for 35-40 minutes or until cakes test done. Remove from pans. Cool on wire racks. While cakes bake, prepare filling and frosting. Bring 1/2 cup of the cream and the sugar to a boil in a heavy saucepan. Boil 2 minutes. Add the chocolate and simmer for 5 minutes. Beat in the butter. Spread half the filling mixture on each of the cake rounds as you stack them. Sides of the cake may be left unfrosted, if desired. Cut into wedges to serve. Serves 12.

The writer owns Catering by Debbi Covington and is the author of the cookbook, Dining Under the Carolina Moon. Debbi's website address is www.cateringbydebbicovington.com . She may be reached at 525-0350 or by email at debbic@cateringbydebbicovington.com.