

Recipes for the months of 2022

January:

Spinach, Dried Cherry and Goat Cheese Salad with Warm Bacon Dressing

8 ounces bacon, diced
½ cup finely chopped red onions
1 teaspoon minced garlic
¼ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
Pinch salt
1½ tablespoons Creole mustard
¼ cup red wine vinegar
2 tablespoons sugar
½ cup dried cherries
¼ cup vegetable oil
8 cups fresh spinach, tough stems removed
1 large orange, segmented
4 ounces goat cheese, crumbled

In a large skillet, cook the bacon over medium-high heat until crisp, about 5 minutes. Drain on paper towels and pour off all but ¼ cup of grease from the pan.

To the fat in the pan, add the onions and cook, stirring over medium-high heat until soft, about 3 minutes. Add the garlic, pepper, and salt and cook, stirring, for 30 seconds. Add the mustard and vinegar and cook, stirring to deglaze the pan. Add the sugar and stir to dissolve. Add the cherries and cook, stirring, until slightly plumped and warmed through, about 1 minute. Remove from the heat and whisk in the oil. Return the bacon to the pan and adjust the seasoning, to taste.

In a large bowl, toss the spinach with the warm dressing. Divide the salad among 4 salad plates, arrange the orange segments around the edges, crumble the goat cheese over the top and serve. Serves 4

February:

Veal Piccata

6 ounces egg noodles
1 tablespoon plus 1 teaspoon butter – divided
2 tablespoons chopped parsley, divided
1 tablespoon olive oil
2 boneless top round veal scaloppini (about 1/3 pound)

Salt and ground black pepper, to taste
2/3 cup low salt chicken broth
1 tablespoon capers, drained
2 lemon wedges

Cook noodles as per package directions, drain and toss with 1 teaspoon butter and 1 tablespoon parsley, divided between 2 plates and keep warm.

Heat oil in a large skillet over medium-high heat; season the veal with salt and pepper and cook, flipping once, until golden brown and just cooked through, 4 to 5 minutes total. Remove from pan, place atop noodles and keep warm.

Return skillet to heat, add broth and simmer until thickened, 4 to 5 minutes. Whisk in remaining 1 tablespoon each butter and parsley, capers, salt and pepper; pour sauce over veal and noodles and serve with lemon wedges. Serves 2

March:

Roasted Chicken Thighs w/Tomatoes, Olives and Feta

8 chicken thighs, with skin and bone
3 tablespoons olive oil
1 pint grape tomatoes
½ cup Spanish olives
6 medium shallots, halved and peeled
3 sprigs fresh Thyme
Kosher salt
Fresh Mint leaves
4 – 6 ounces Crumbled Feta cheese

Preheat the oven to 375-degrees. Combine chicken, oil, tomatoes, olives, shallots and thyme in a large bowl. Season with salt and pepper and toss to incorporate all the ingredients. Place everything on a rimmed baking sheet, chicken skin side up. Roast in the oven 35 to 40 minutes or until chicken reaches 165-degrees on an instant read thermometer. Remove pan from oven and transfer chicken to a platter and cover with foil; return veggies to oven until golden brown, about 10 minutes more. Transfer the cooked veggies to platter along with any juices – taste for seasoning, adding more salt or pepper as needed. Garnish with fresh mint and Feta. Serves 4

April:

Alaska Salmon Croquettes:

1 Can (14.75 oz.) traditional pack Alaska salmon or 2 cans or pouches (6 to 7.1 oz. each)
skinless, boneless salmon drained and chunked

1 egg

¼ cup small-curd cottage cheese

1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill or 1 teaspoon dried dill weed

1 teaspoon lemon pepper seasoning

¼ cup sliced green onions

3 tablespoons garlic and herb bread crumbs

Vegetable oil

Yogurt Dill sauce (recipes follows)

In a medium bowl whisk egg lightly then add cottage cheese, dill, lemon pepper and green onions and mix well. Mix in drained salmon, and then sprinkle in bread crumbs and mix well. Shape mixture into 4 patties ½ to ¾ inch thick and 3 inches in diameter.

Heat a non-stick skillet over medium-high heat and brush skillet with oil. Fry the salmon cakes for about 2 ½ to 3 minutes per side. Cakes should be crisp and golden on the outside and still moist on the inside. Serve with Yogurt Dill Sauce.

Yogurt Dill Sauce:

½ cup nonfat yogurt

1½ teaspoons finely minced fresh garlic

Salt and pepper

1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill for 1 teaspoon dried dill weed

¼ cup grated, and squeezed dry, cucumber

Mix yogurt and garlic, add salt and pepper to taste. Stir in dill and cucumber. Refrigerate, covered until ready to serve. Serves 4

Chef's Note: For a crunch coating, lightly dust salmon cakes with fine cornmeal before frying. For an appetizer, form cakes into 12 small portions and then top with a dollop of sauce just prior to serving.

May:

Everything Bagel Breakfast Bake

Cooking spray
6 large eggs
2 cups milk, regular, 2%, or low fat
½ teaspoon salt
¼ teaspoon black pepper
4 everything bagels, cut into 1-inch chunks
½ (8 oz.) block cream cheese, softened
1 cup shredded Colby and Monterey Jack cheese blend
2 green onions

Coat a 2½ qt. baking dish with cooking spray. In a large bowl, beat the eggs, milk, salt, and pepper. Add the bagels and toss until well coated. Transfer mixture to greased baking dish. Dot bits of cream cheese all over top of bagels. Sprinkle with the cheese blend. Cover with foil and refrigerate overnight.

Preheat oven to 375-degrees. Bake casserole, covered, 25 minutes. Uncover and bake another 15 – 20 minutes, until cheese has melted and casserole is golden brown around the edges. Let casserole stand 5 minutes before serving. Thinly slice the green onions and sprinkle over casserole prior to serving. Serves 6

Note: Day-old bagels and breads work best for casseroles like this. Their drier texture helps absorb the egg custard, making for a fluffier finished dish. This casserole can be assembled and refrigerated for up to two days before you bake it.

June:

SEASONS ORIGINAL APPLE CAKE

1½ cups vegetable oil
2 cups sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla
3 eggs, beaten
3 cups thinly- sliced apples
3 cups flour
1 teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
2 teaspoons Cinnamon
½ teaspoon nutmeg
1 cup walnuts, chopped

Pour oil into a large bowl. Stir in sugar, vanilla, eggs and apples. Set aside.

In a separate bowl, sift flour; add salt, baking powder and spices. Add this to the apple/oil mixture. Stir to incorporate. Now add the nuts and stir well. Pour into lightly greased 10" spring form pan. Bake at 350-degrees for 1 hour. Allow to cool then remove from pan. This cake serves 8

July:

ASIAN GLAZED CORNISH HENS

1½ tablespoons Soy sauce
1½ tablespoons teriyaki sauce
1 tablespoon honey
2 teaspoons lemon juice
1/8 teaspoon ground ginger
1/8 teaspoon pepper
1 garlic clove, minced
2 (1 ½ pound) Cornish hens*

Combine first 7 ingredients in a large heavy-duty zip-top plastic bag; add hens. Seal bag and chill 8 hours.

Remove hens from marinade, reserving marinade. Tie ends of legs together, if desired, and place on a lightly greased rack in roasting pan. Bring marinade to a boil in a small saucepan, remove from heat.

Bake hens at 400-degrees for 1 hour and 15 minutes or until done, basting occasionally with marinade. Cover hens loosely with aluminum foil after 1 hour to prevent browning, if necessary.

Remove from oven, cover with foil and let stand 5 minutes. Serves 2

*Note: 4 bone-in chicken breast halves may be substituted for Cornish hens. Marinate 2 hours and bake at 400-degrees for 40 minutes.

August:

GREEK PASTA SALAD

12 oz. (about 4 ½ cups) rotini pasta
2 tablespoons canola oil
2 tablespoons spicy brown mustard
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 (14.5 oz.) can diced tomatoes
2 cups unpeeled seeded cucumbers, diced
1 (2.25 oz.) can sliced ripe black olives, drained
1 (3.4 oz.) pkg. crumbled feta cheese
1 tablespoon chopped fresh oregano or 1 tsp. dried
Course ground black pepper to taste

Cook pasta according to package directions, omitting salt. Drain and rinse under cold water until cool, set aside.

Meanwhile mix together oil, mustard and garlic in large bowl. Stir in all remaining ingredients except pepper, until combined. Toss in cooled pasta. Sprinkle with pepper, to taste. Serves 6

September:

VERACRUZ STYLE FISH

4 (5-6 oz.) red snapper or other firm white fish fillets
16 oz. of either homemade or store bought salsa
¼ cup pitted green olives, with or without pimento, chopped
2 tablespoons drained and chopped capers
¼ cup loosely packed parsley
Non-stick cooking spray
Salt and pepper to taste

Pre-heat oven to 425-degrees

Season fish fillets with salt and pepper and place fillets in an oven-proof baking dish sprayed with non-stick cooking spray.

In a medium separate bowl, add salsa, chopped olives, and chopped capers. Mix well, then spoon over the fish fillets; Bake for 15 – 20 minutes or until fish is cooked and flakes easily. Remove from oven and sprinkle with parsley. Serves 2 to 4, depending on fish fillets thickness and size

October:

BOURSIN CHEESE & CHICKEN PUFF PASTRY PIES

2 puff pastry sheets, thawed
1 pound chicken breasts, cubed
5.2 oz. Boursin Garlic and Fine Herbs cheese
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 tablespoon fresh parsley
1 tablespoon fresh thyme
1 teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground black pepper
1 large egg plus 1 tbsp. water for egg wash

Preheat oven to 350-degrees and thaw pastry sheets per package instructions.

Chop chicken into small pieces and place in mixing bowl. Combine chicken with Boursin Cheese, garlic, parsley, thyme, salt and pepper.

Lightly roll out one sheet of puff pastry and cut into six equal rectangles. Add chicken and cheese mixture center of three puff pastry rectangles and top with remaining three pieces of puff pastry to create three pies. Cut off any excess pastry and reserve for later. Crimp each pie to seal using the tongues of a fork and cut five diagonal slits down each pie to vent. Repeat steps above with remaining puff pastry sheet.

Create an egg wash and brush on tops of each pie. Bake pies on parchment paper covered baking sheet for 25 – 30 minutes or until golden brown and done. Recipe makes six pies.

November:

BAKED HERB SWEET POTATO CHIPS

2 bunches fresh herbs (chives, rosemary, sage or thyme)
½ cup (4 oz.) unsalted butter, melted
3 sweet potatoes (use different varieties to vary the appearance of chips)
3 russets baking potatoes

Preheat oven to 350-degrees. Separate individual sprigs and leaves of the herbs. Set aside. Brush two clean rimmed baking sheets with melted butter.

Peel the sweet potatoes, and the russet potatoes. Trim to make each potato similar in shape. Using a mandolin or sharp hand held peeler, slice long oval slices as thin as possible from each potato. Place one russet potato slice on the baking sheet and brush with the melted butter.

Place an herb sprig or herb leaves on the potato slice. Top with a slice of sweet potato and brush with the butter. Repeat this with the remaining slices.

Bake for 12 to 15 minutes, turning the chips over after 6 minutes. Bake until the edges of the potatoes are browned and the center of each potato chip is translucent. Remove from the oven and let cool on a cooling rack. Chips will crisp up as they cool. The recipe makes approximately 6 servings

December:

SHRIMP & LINGUINE FRA DIAVOLO

3 tablespoons unsalted butter, divided

1/3 cup panko bread crumbs

8 tbsp. chopped fresh parsley leaves, divided (flat leaf parsley)

1½ teaspoons freshly ground black pepper, divided plus more to taste

1 ¼ pounds large shrimp (16 to 20 count), peeled and deveined

2 tablespoons olive oil

2 cups thinly sliced red onion (about 1 large onion)

3 tablespoons minced or grated garlic, about 6 cloves

½ teaspoon crushed red pepper flakes

2/3 cup dry white wine, such as Pinot Grigio

1 (24 ounce) jar arrabbiata (Spicy Italian) sauce or other spicy pasta sauce

Kosher salt

1 pound linguine

In a large, heavy-bottom pot, such as a Dutch oven, over medium heat, melt 1 tablespoon of butter; Add the panko and cook until lightly browned, about 2 minutes, stirring occasionally. Transfer to a small bowl and stir in 2 tablespoons of parsley and ½ teaspoon of the black pepper. Set aside.

On a large plate, spread out the shrimp, pat them dry and sprinkle with the remaining black pepper.

In the same large pot over medium heat, add the remaining butter and the olive oil. Add the onion and cook, stirring until it begins to soften about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and red pepper flakes and cook, stirring, until aromatic, about 1 minute. Add the shrimp in as close to a single layer as possible, and cook until they just start to turn pink but are not cooked through, about 1 minute on each side. Add the wine and simmer until the liquid reduces a bit, about 2 minutes.

Stir in the arrabbiata sauce and heat until it bubbles around the edges. Stir in the remaining 6 tablespoons of parsley. Taste and add more pepper as needed. Turn off the heat.

In a large pot of salted boiling water over medium-high heat, add the linguini and cook according to package instructions for al dente. Reserve 1½ cups of the pasta water and drain the pasta. Add ¼ cup of the pasta water to the shrimp mixture and stir to combine. If it seems too thick, add more pasta water, a tbsp. at a time. Then add the pasta and using big spoons or tongs, toss it with the shrimp. Let sit until the pasta absorbs some of the sauce, about 1 minute, adding more pasta water and re-tossing, if needed to coat the pasta strands. Transfer to a large, shallow serving bowl, sprinkle with the toasted panko and serve. This recipe will serve 6.

Recipe adapted from “Modern Comfort” by Ina Garten