

Football play-off season is here. Planning a game-day gathering? Need to try out some new snacks? Over the next few weeks, we will have some ideas for you.

If you have a recipe to share, please submit to ads@thedrummer.com.

Pomegranate Beer Punch

Level: Easy

Total: 5 min

Prep: 5 min

2 (12 oz.) bottles American lager beer,
2 c. pomegranate juice
1 c. ginger ale
Ice, for serving
Lemon or lime slices, for garnish

Combine the pomegranate juice, ginger ale and beer in a large pitcher. Serve over ice and garnish with lemon or lime slices.

Southwestern Egg Rolls

Level: Intermediate

Total: 1 hr

Active: 1 hr

Yield: 8 egg rolls

Avocado Dipping Sauce:

1/3 c. mayonnaise
1/3 c. sour cream
3 T. white distilled vinegar
1/4 tsp. granulated garlic
1/4 tsp. onion powder
1 lg. avocado, halved
Kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper
1/4 tsp. dried dill
1/4 tsp. dried parsley

Egg Rolls:

2 boneless, skinless chicken breasts (about 1 lb.)
2 T. canola oil
Kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper
Half red bell pepper, finely chopped (about 1 c.)
1/2 c. canned black beans, drained & rinsed
1/2 c. frozen corn, thawed
1/4 c. packed chopped frozen spinach, thawed & squeezed dry
1 tsp. ground cumin
1/2 tsp. chipotle powder
1/4 tsp. cayenne
6 oz. shredded Monterey Jack cheese
1/4 c. drained pickled jalapenos, finely chopped
2 T. fresh flat-leaf parsley leaves, chopped
2 scallions, thinly sliced
Canola oil, for frying
8 (8") flour tortillas

Special equipment: a deep-fat fry thermometer, 24 standard wooden toothpicks

For the sauce: Combine the mayonnaise, sour cream, vinegar, granulated garlic, onion powder, avocado, 2 tablespoons water, a large pinch of salt and a few grinds of pepper in a blender. Blend until completely smooth. Transfer to a medium bowl and stir in the dill and parsley. Season with additional salt and pepper if needed. The texture should be similar to ranch salad dressing. (If the sauce is very thick, thin it out with 1 to 2 tablespoons of additional water.) Cover with plastic wrap and refrigerate until ready to serve.

For the egg rolls: Preheat a grill pan over medium-high heat for 5 minutes. Rub the chicken breasts with 1 tablespoon oil and sprinkle generously with salt and pepper. Cook the chicken until deep grill marks appear, about 8 minutes. Flip and continue cooking until deep grill marks appear and the internal temperature on an instant-read thermometer in the thickest part of the breast registers 165 degrees F, about 8 minutes more. Remove to a cutting board, allow to cool slightly and cut into small pieces.

Heat the remaining tablespoon oil in a medium skillet over medium-high heat. Add the bell pepper, a pinch of salt and a few grinds of pepper and cook, stirring, until crisp-tender, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the beans, corn, spinach, cumin, chipotle powder, cayenne, 3/4 teaspoon salt and 1/4 teaspoon pepper. Cook, stirring, until the vegetables and beans are coated in the spices and warmed through, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl and fold in the chicken, pickled jalapenos, parsley and scallions. Taste and season with additional salt and pepper if needed. Allow the mixture to cool completely.

Stack the tortillas on a large microwave-safe plate and cover with a damp paper towel. Microwave until just warmed through. (This will make the tortillas easier to roll.) Put a warm tortilla on a clean, flat surface (keep the remaining tortillas covered with the damp paper towels) and put 1/2 cup of the filling in the center. Spread the filling out into a 4 1/2-inch long log. Tightly fold the bottom of the tortilla (the part that is closest to you) over the filling, fold both ends over then roll the

tortilla so that the filling is completely enclosed. Seal the seam of the tortilla with 3 toothpicks. Transfer to a baking sheet. Repeat with the remaining tortillas, filling and toothpicks.

Meanwhile, attach a deep-fat fry thermometer to the side of a large Dutch oven or pot, fill halfway with oil and heat over medium-high heat to 350 degrees F.

Fry the egg rolls in 2 batches until golden brown all over, about 5 minutes per batch. Remove the toothpicks from the egg rolls, cut on an extreme bias and transfer to a large platter. Serve with the avocado dipping sauce.

Caribbean Chicken Wings

Level: Easy

Total: 4 hr 55 min

Prep: 15 min

Inactive: 4 hr

Cook: 40 min

Yield: 4 to 6 servings

1 habanero, seeded & chopped
1/4 c. soy sauce
1/4 c. honey
1/4 c. brown sugar
2 T. sugar
2 tsp. fennel seed
2 tsp. cayenne pepper
2 tsp. allspice
2 tsp. dried thyme
1 tsp. ground ginger
4 garlic cloves, chopped
4 green onions, chopped
1/4 c. apple cider vinegar
1/4 c. lime juice
1/4 c. orange juice
7 lbs. chicken wings

In a food processor, blend together all the ingredients but the chicken until smooth. Reserve 1 cup of marinade. Place chicken wings into a large resealable plastic bag and pour remaining marinade over them. Seal and marinate in the refrigerator 4 to 6 hours.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Line 2 sheet trays with parchment. Remove chicken from bag and place on the baking sheets. Bake 20 minutes. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan bring reserved marinade to a boil. Reduce by 1/3 until it thickens slightly, about 10 minutes. After 20 minutes, remove chicken from oven. Brush chicken with the glaze. Raise the heat to 400 degrees F and cook chicken until cooked through, another 20 minutes.

Easy Beefy Cheesy Enchilada Casserole

Level: Easy

Total: 1 hr 25 min

Prep: 25 min

Cook: 1 hr

Yield: 8 to 10 servings

Sauce:

1 T. olive oil
1/2 c. minced onion
Kosher salt
2 T. tomato paste
1 clove garlic, minced
1 tsp. ground cumin
1/2 tsp. chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 (28 oz.) can crushed tomatoes
3/4 c. beef broth

Beef:

2 T. olive oil
1/2 c. chopped onion
1/2 c. finely chopped green bell pepper
1/2 c. finely chopped yellow bell pepper
2 cloves garlic, minced
1-1/2 lbs. ground beef
1 tsp. onion powder
1 tsp. ground cumin
1 tsp. chopped fresh thyme leaves
1 packet Spanish seasoning blend
2 Roma tomatoes, seeded & chopped

1/4 c. beef broth
Kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper
1-1/2 c. shredded Cheddar cheese
1-1/2 c. shredded Monterey Jack cheese
18 (5") corn tortillas

Preheat the oven to 350degrees F.

For the sauce: In a saucepot over medium heat, add the oil, onions, and a pinch of salt. Saute until the onions are tender and translucent. Add the tomato paste at this point and turn the heat up a bit, if needed, to cook the paste. Stir and cook until it deepens in color, and then add the cumin, thyme, and garlic. Stir to blend and cook until fragrant. Then add the beef broth and crushed tomatoes. Raise the heat to bring the mixture to a boil, and then lower to a simmer and cover, simmering for 20 minutes more. (The sauce can be stored and frozen at this point.)

For the beef filling: Meanwhile, in a large pan with straight sides, add the olive oil over medium-high heat. When the oil begins to swirl, add the onions, and green and yellow bell peppers. Add the garlic and cook until tender, about 4 minutes more. Add the ground beef, broth, cumin, onion powder, thyme, tomatoes, and Spanish seasoning, allowing time between each addition to blend. Season with a pinch of salt and a grind or 2 of pepper (the Spanish seasoning adds salt content, so be careful to not over season). Stir and break down the beef into bits using a spoon or fork. Cook until the beef is cooked through, 8 to 10 minutes. (The beef can be stored and frozen at this point.)

To assemble the casserole: Toss the shredded cheeses together to blend and set aside. Add 1/2 cup of the red sauce to a 9 1/2-inch deep-dish baking dish and spread to coat the bottom evenly. Top with 6 tortillas, overlapping to cover the bottom of the casserole dish. Layer the dish by next adding half of the beef mixture and 1/2 cup of the shredded cheeses, spreading evenly in the casserole. Next, dunk 6 tortillas, one by one, in the warm red sauce and layer over the cheese and beef, overlapping where needed. Top with the remaining beef, another 1/2 cup of the shredded cheeses and another layer of tortillas dunked in the red sauce. Pour the rest of the sauce over the top, spread evenly and finish with the remaining shredded cheese. Place dish on a baking sheet and bake until the cheese is melted and the sauce bubbles, 25 to 30 minutes. If baking the dish from the freezer, add 15 to 20 minutes to the cook time, or until it's bubbly. Cover loosely with foil if it's browning too quickly. Serve hot.

Pigs in a Blanket with Spicy Hot Dip

Level: Easy

Total: 1 hr 30 min (includes chilling time)

Active: 30 min

Yield: 55 pieces

2 lbs. (about 55 pieces) mini hot dogs
2 lg. egg yolks
All-purpose flour, for rolling the pastry
1 (17-1/2 oz.) box frozen puff pastry, thawed
Spicy Hot Dip, recipe follows

Spicy Hot Dip:

4 T. dry mustard powder
4 T. Dijon mustard
2 T. honey
1 to 2 T. hot sauce

Use a paring knife to cut 2 to 3 diagonal slashes in each of the hot dogs.

Whisk the egg yolks with a splash of cold water in a small bowl for the egg wash.

Sprinkle some flour on a flat surface. Roll out the puff pastry sheets one at a time and cut strips that are about three-quarters of the thickness of the hot dogs. Roll each hot dog in a single layer of pastry and use some egg wash to seal them shut. Place each wrapped piece seam-side down on a baking sheet, leaving some distance between each for even browning. Refrigerate for at least 30 minutes.

Position 2 oven racks in the upper and lower thirds of the oven and preheat to 375 degrees F.

Bake, rotating and switching the positions of the baking sheets halfway through, until the pastry is golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Serve with Spicy Hot Dip on the side.

Spicy Hot Dip: Whisk the dry mustard with 1/2 cup warm water in a medium bowl until smooth. Whisk in the Dijon mustard, honey and hot sauce.

Lasagna Cupcakes

Level: Easy

Total: 1 hr 35 min

Prep: 30 min

Inactive: 25 min

Cook: 40 min

Yield: 12 cupcakes

Meat Sauce:

2 T. olive oil
4 whole cloves
1 (1") cinnamon stick
4 cloves garlic, minced
1 med. onion, finely diced (about 1 c.)
Kosher salt
1 lb. mild Italian chicken sausage, casing removed
1/4 c. tomato paste

1 (28 oz.) can crushed tomatoes
1/4 c. chopped fresh basil
Freshly ground pepper

Ricotta Filling:

3/4 c. shredded mozzarella, plus more for topping
3/4 c. freshly grated Parmesan, plus more for topping
3/4 c. part-skim ricotta
1/3 c. mango chutney
Kosher salt & freshly ground pepper
1 pkg. wonton wrappers (at least 48)
12 whole small fresh basil leaves

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F.

For the meat sauce: In a large skillet over medium-high heat, warm the olive oil until it shimmers. Add the whole cloves and cinnamon stick, and remove after a few minutes. Add the garlic and onions, sprinkle with a little salt and saute until softened but not browned.

Add the sausage, breaking up the clumps with your spoon. Cook until the sausage is no longer pink, 2 to 3 minutes. Stir in the tomato paste and cook 1 to 2 minutes. Add the crushed tomatoes, basil, as well as some salt and pepper. Stir to combine and simmer uncovered, for about 15 minutes, stirring every now and then. Allow the meat sauce to cool, about 15 minutes, before building lasagna cupcakes. As the meat sauce is cooking, prepare the ricotta filling.

For the ricotta filling: Stir together the mozzarella, Parmesan, ricotta, and mango chutney. Season with salt and lots of pepper, about a teaspoon, and set aside.

To assemble the cupcakes: Pull out your favorite cupcake pan. If your pan is not nonstick, spray the cups with cooking spray. Place a wonton wrapper in each cup. Don't worry if you're using square ones.

Drop about 1 teaspoon of meat sauce into the bottom of each cup. Then add 1 teaspoon of ricotta filling. Then cover with another wonton wrapper, rotating it about 90-degrees so that the corners of the first wrapper and the second wrapper aren't right on top of each other. Repeat this until you've built three layers total. Top each with a small basil leaf, then another wonton wrapper. Finish each cupcake with a spoonful of meat sauce, a little shredded mozzarella and pinch of grated Parmesan.

Pop them into the oven and bake for 20 minutes. When time's up, resist the temptation to eat them right away or else you'll burn your mouth! Let them rest on the counter for about 10 minutes, and they should slip out of the muffin tin easily. Top with more shredded basil if you like.

Lettuce Wraps

Level: Easy

Total: 45 min (includes resting time)

Active: 30 min

Yield: 15 wraps

3 T. lime juice (from about 4 limes)
1 T. fish sauce
1 T. plus 1 tsp. soy sauce
2 tsp. light brown sugar
1/3 c. fresh cilantro leaves, roughly chopped, plus more for serving
3 scallions, thinly sliced
1 sm. red jalapeno or Fresno chile, thinly sliced
1/2 c. low-sodium chicken broth
1 lb. ground pork or chicken
1 T. grated ginger
2 cloves garlic, minced
1 lg. head Bibb or romaine lettuce, separated into 15 large leaves
Chopped roasted salted peanuts, for serving
Shredded carrots, for serving

Whisk the lime juice, fish sauce, 1 tablespoon of the soy sauce and brown sugar in a large bowl until the sugar dissolves. Add the cilantro, scallions and chiles; set aside.

Heat the chicken stock in a large skillet over medium heat until steaming but just below a simmer. Add the pork and the remaining teaspoon soy sauce, and cook, breaking into pieces with a spoon (not too small), until the meat is just cooked through and no longer pink, about 6 minutes. Add the ginger and garlic, and remove from the heat. Combine the chicken mixture with the lime mixture until well coated. Let sit for at least 15 minutes while the flavors combine.

To assemble, put 1 to 2 tablespoons of the chicken filling in the center of each lettuce leaf. Top with chopped peanuts, shredded carrots and chopped cilantro. Strain the remaining liquid from the filling, and serve on the side.

Quote of the Week:

“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.”

~ Martin Luther King, Jr.