

No focus this week. Just some tasty recipes, including a submitted recipe for Smoked Pork Belly, pictured above. Let us know if there is something you would like us to put in our column, or if you have a recipe to share, please submit to ads@thedrummer.com.

Sausage-Stuffed Mushrooms

Level: Easy
Total: 1 hr 30 min
Prep: 15 min
Cook: 1 hr 15 min
Yield: 6 to 8 servings

16 extra-lg. white mushrooms
5 T. good olive oil, div.
2-1/2 T. Marsala wine or medium sherry
3/4 lb. sweet Italian sausage, removed from the casings
6 scallions, white & green parts, minced
2 garlic cloves minced
2/3 c. panko crumbs
5 oz. mascarpone cheese
1/3 c. freshly grated Parmesan
2-1/2 T. minced fresh parsley leaves
Salt & freshly ground black pepper

Preheat the oven to 325 degrees F.

Remove the stems from the mushrooms and chop them finely. Set aside. Place the mushroom caps in a shallow bowl and toss with 3 tablespoons of the olive oil and Marsala. Set aside.

Heat the remaining 2 tablespoons olive oil in a medium skillet over medium heat. Add the sausage, crumbling it with the back of a wooden spoon. Cook the sausage for 8 to 10 minutes, stirring frequently, until it's completely browned. Add the chopped mushroom stems and cook for 3 more minutes. Stir in the scallions and garlic and cook for another 2 to 3 minutes, stirring occasionally. Add the panko crumbs, stirring to combine evenly with all the other ingredients. Finally, swirl in the mascarpone and continue cooking until the mascarpone has melted and made the sausage mixture creamy. Off the heat, stir in the Parmesan, parsley, and season with salt and pepper, to taste. Cool slightly.

Fill each mushroom generously with the sausage mixture. Arrange the mushrooms in a baking dish large enough to hold all the mushrooms in a snug single layer. Bake until the stuffing for 50 minutes, until the stuffing is browned and crusty.

Chicken Noodle Soup

Level: Intermediate
Total: 2 hr 20 min
Prep: 2 hr
Cook: 20 min
Yield: 4 servings

2 T. extra-virgin olive oil
1 med. onion, chopped
3 garlic cloves, minced
2 med. carrots, cut diagonally into 1/2" thick slices
2 celery ribs, halved lengthwise, & cut into 1/2" thick slices
4 fresh thyme sprigs
1 bay leaf
2 qts. chicken stock, recipe follows
8 oz. dried wide egg noodles
1-1/2 cups shredded cooked chicken
Kosher salt & freshly ground black pepper
1 handful fresh flat-leaf parsley, finely chopped

Chicken Stock:

1 whole free-range chicken (about 3-1/2 lbs.), rinsed, giblets discarded
2 carrots, cut in large chunks
3 celery stalks, cut in large chunks
2 lg. white onions, quartered
1 head of garlic, halved
1 turnip, halved
1/4 bunch fresh thyme

2 bay leaves
1 tsp. whole black peppercorns

Place a soup pot over medium heat and coat with the oil. Add the onion, garlic, carrots, celery, thyme, and bay leaf. Cook and stir for about 6 minutes, until the vegetables are softened but not browned. Pour in the chicken stock and bring the liquid to a boil. Add the noodles and simmer for 5 minutes until tender. Fold in the chicken, and continue to simmer for another couple of minutes to heat through; season with salt and pepper. Sprinkle with chopped parsley before serving.

Chicken Stock: Place the chicken and vegetables in a large stockpot over medium heat. Pour in only enough cold water to cover (about 3 quarts); too much will make the broth taste weak. Toss in the thyme, bay leaves, and peppercorns, and allow it to slowly come to a boil. Lower the heat to medium-low and gently simmer for 1 to 1-1/2 hours, partially covered, until the chicken is done. As it cooks, skim any impurities that rise to the surface; add a little more water if necessary to keep the chicken covered while simmering.

Carefully remove the chicken to a cutting board. When it's cool enough to handle, discard the skin and bones; hand-shred the meat into a storage container.

Carefully strain the stock through a fine sieve into another pot to remove the vegetable solids. Use the stock immediately or if you plan on storing it, place the pot in a sink full of ice water and stir to cool down the stock. Cover and refrigerate for up to one week or freeze. Yield: 2 quarts

Fast & Easy Pizza Pie

1 lb. ground beef
1/2 c. chopped green pepper
1 envelope Italian-style spaghetti sauce mix
1 can (6 oz.) tomato paste
3/4 c. water
1 tube (12 oz.) refrigerated buttermilk biscuits
1/4 c. plus 1 T. grated Parmesan cheese, div.
2 c. (8 oz.) shredded part-skim mozzarella cheese

In a large skillet, cook and stir beef and pepper over medium heat until meat is no longer pink, drain. Stir in the sauce mix, tomato paste and water; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer for 7-10 minutes or until thickened, stirring occasionally.

Separate biscuits; press onto the bottom and up the sides of a greased 9-in. deep-dish pie plate to form a crust. Sprinkle with 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese; fill with meat mixture.

Sprinkle mozzarella cheese and remaining Parmesan cheese over top. Bake at 400° for 15-18 minutes or until crust is golden brown and cheese is melted. 6 servings

Chicken Tortilla Dump Dinner

Level: Easy
Total: 55 min
Active: 20 min
Yield: 6 to 8 servings

1 T. canola oil
2 (10 oz.) cans diced tomatoes w/chiles
1 c. chicken broth
1 T. chili powder
1 tsp. ground cumin
1/2 tsp. kosher salt
1 (15.5 oz.) can black beans, drained & rinsed
1 (10 oz.) bag frozen corn
5 c. shredded cooked chicken (from about 1 sm. rotisserie chicken)
12 sm. corn tortillas, cut into quarters
1 (8 oz.) block Monterey Jack cheese, shredded (about 2 c.)
1/2 c. sour cream
1/3 c. diced red onion
1/3 c. loosely packed fresh cilantro, chopped

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees F. Brush a 9-by-13-inch casserole dish with the oil.

Stir together the diced tomatoes with chiles, chicken broth, chili powder, cumin and salt in a large bowl. Add the black beans, frozen corn, chicken, tortilla wedges and half the cheese and stir to evenly distribute and moisten all of the ingredients. Transfer to the prepared casserole dish and spread into an even layer. Loosely cover with aluminum foil and bake for 25 minutes.

Raise the oven temperature to 400 degrees F. Remove the foil and sprinkle the top with the remaining cheese. Continue to bake until the cheese is melted and just starting to brown, about 10 minutes. Top with dollops of sour cream and sprinkle with the red onion and cilantro. Serve hot.

Thai Green Curry Chicken Vermicelli Bowls

Prep Time: 10 min

Cook Time: 30 min

Total Time: 40 min

1/2 lb. vermicelli noodles
1/2 lb. chicken breasts, diced can use 1 c. cooked shredded chicken too
2 cloves garlic, minced
1" pc. of ginger, minced
3 T. homemade or store-bought green curry paste (opt. recipe follows for homemade)
2 T. peanut butter
1 (400mL) can coconut milk
4 c. chicken broth
1 T. lime juice
1/2 tsp. salt
1/2 c. matchstick carrots
1 red pepper, diced
1/2 c. red cabbage, thinly sliced
1 T. chopped peanuts
1/2 c. cilantro, finely chopped
1 red chili pepper, thinly sliced

Homemade Green Curry Paste:

1/3 c. fresh green chilies, sliced
1/4 c. cilantro
4 shallots, sliced
1/2 stalk lemongrass, sliced
5 garlic cloves, minced
1" pc. ginger, minced
2 T. olive oil or coconut oil
2 tsp. coriander
1 tsp. cumin

Cook vermicelli noodles according to package directions in a large pot of boiling water. Drain, remove vermicelli and set aside.

Meanwhile, add all ingredients under the homemade curry paste heading to a blender, food processor or Magic Bullet and combine until smooth.

In the same pot as you cooked the noodles, heat olive oil over med-high heat. Add chicken (whether raw & diced or leftover shredded) and sauté until browned and mostly cooked.

Add garlic, ginger, curry paste and peanut butter. Sauté another 1-2 minutes. Add coconut milk and chicken broth, bringing mixture to a boil and then simmering for 10 minutes.

Add lime juice, salt, carrots, and red pepper. Cook for 2 min. Add vermicelli noodles back in and mix well. Serve in large bowls, then top with shredded red cabbage, chopped peanuts, cilantro, and red chilies. Serve and enjoy!

This recipe can also be packed as leftovers in large mason jars - they'll be good up to 3 days in the fridge!

Brunch Ham Enchiladas

Prep Time: 15 min. + chilling

Bake Time: 40 min. + standing

Yield: 10 servings

2 c. cubed fully cooked ham
1/2 c. chopped green onions
10 flour tortillas (8")
2 c. shredded cheddar cheese, divided
1 T. all-purpose flour
2 c. half-and-half cream
6 lg. eggs, lightly beaten
1/4 tsp. salt, opt.

In a large bowl, combine ham and onions; place about 1/4 cup down the center of each tortilla. Top with 2 tablespoons cheese. Roll up and place seam side down in a greased 13x9-in. baking dish.

In another large bowl, combine the flour, cream, eggs and, if desired, salt until smooth. Pour over tortillas. Cover and refrigerate for 8 hours or overnight.

Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before baking. Cover and bake at 350° for 25 minutes. Uncover; bake for 10 minutes. Sprinkle with remaining cheese; bake 3 minutes longer or until the cheese is melted. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving.

Smoked Pork Belly

Prep Time: 20 min

Cook Time: 6 hrs

Additional Time: 1 day

Total Time: 1 day,

6 hr 20 min.

Yield: 12 servings

Submitted by Valerie Botzet

2.5 lb. pork belly

Dry Rub:

1-1/2 T. Kosher salt

1/3 c. brown sugar

1 tsp. sweet paprika

2 tsp. chili powder

1 tsp. fresh ground pepper

Mix all the rub ingredients together in a small bowl and set aside.

You will need to remove the skin if it is still attached. You can ask your butcher to do this for you.

Place your pork belly on a rimmed baking sheet, and using a sharp knife, score the fat side of your pork belly in a crosshatch pattern. Be sure to only cut into the fat. You don't want to cut into the meat of your pork belly.

Sprinkle the dry rub mixture over your pork belly, being sure to cover the whole piece of meat. Massage the rub into the crosshatch cuts.

Cover with plastic wrap and place in the refrigerator for at least 12 hours. You can keep it in the fridge for up to 24 hours.

Remove the pork belly from the refrigerator and allow it to come to room temperature for about an hour before smoking.

Preheat your smoker to 225 degrees F.

Place the pork belly fat side up in your smoker. Place a foil pan with an inch or so of water in under the pork belly to catch the dripping. You can replenish the water as needed throughout the smoking process.

Smoke the pork belly using applewood until it reaches an internal temperature of 165 degrees F. This may take up to 6 hours. If you do not have a constant read thermometer, you can start to check the internal temperature with an instant-read thermometer after about 3 hours.

Once it reaches 165 degrees F, remove the pork belly from the smoker and allow it to rest on a wire rack for 15-30 minutes before slicing.

You can slice it and eat it right away or pan fry it for a few minutes to crisp it up a little. It is great the next day also. I thinly sliced it, microwaved it until hot, and piled it on a crusty bun with BBQ sauce, the perfect pork belly sandwich!

Quote of the Week:

“There is a child in every one of us who is still a trick-or-treater looking for a brightly-lit front porch.”

~ Robert Brault,

American Author