

The season is in full swing, and a little snow is helping to get everyone into the holiday spirit!
With some quiet nights planned and a few holiday parties on the schedule, we are always looking for some new recipes to try!
We hope these help you plan your upcoming meals!

Chai Tea Mix

*Prep: 30 min.
Total: 30 min.
Servings: 36*

2-1/2 C. white sugar
1-1/2 C. unsweetened instant tea
1 C. nonfat dry milk powder
1 C. powdered non-dairy creamer
1 C. French vanilla flavored powdered non-dairy creamer
2 tsp. ground ginger
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1 tsp. ground cloves
1 tsp. ground cardamom

Combine sugar, instant tea, milk powder, nondairy creamer, and vanilla-flavored creamer in a large bowl. Stir in ginger, cinnamon, cloves, and cardamom. Blend 1 cup at a time in a food processor or blender until a fine powder. Stir 2 heaping tablespoons chai tea mix into a mug of hot water for 1 serving.

Holiday Mule Mocktail

*Prep Time: 10 min.
Cook Time: 20 min.
Additional Time: 15 min.
Total Time: 45 min.
Servings: 2*

Cranberry Shrub:

1 C. white vinegar
1 C. water
1 C. white sugar
1 C. fresh cranberries
2 pods cardamom, crushed
4 whole allspice berries, cracked
1/4 (1 inch) piece cinnamon stick
ice cubes
8 fluid ounces ginger beer
2 fluid ounces club soda

Combine vinegar, water, and sugar in a saucepan over medium-high heat. Add cranberries, cardamom pods, allspice berries, and cinnamon stick; bring to a boil. Stir and cover until cranberries begin to pop, 5 to 10 min. Stir again, being careful that cranberries do not burn you as they pop. Reduce heat and simmer until sugar has dissolved and cranberries have released their juice, about 10 min.

Remove from heat and allow to steep for 15 min. Strain into a container, seal, and refrigerate. Discard pulp.

Fill 2 highball glasses halfway with ice. Add 1 fluid ounce cranberry shrub, 4 fluid ounces ginger beer, and 1 fluid ounce club soda to each glass. Stir well.

Bacon Cheese Wreath

*Prep: 10 min.
Servings: 3 Cups*

2 pkgs. (8 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
1/2 C. mayonnaise
1/3 C. grated Parmesan cheese
1/4 C. sliced green onions, optional
10 bacon strips, cooked and crumbled
Optional: Italian parsley sprigs and diced pimientos
Assorted crackers

In a small bowl, beat the cream cheese, mayonnaise, Parmesan cheese and, if desired, onions. Stir in bacon. Cover and refrigerate for 1-2 hrs.

Invert a small bowl in the center of a serving platter. Drop cream cheese mixture by rounded tablespoonfuls around edge of bowl. Remove bowl. Smooth cream cheese mixture, forming a wreath. Garnish with parsley and pimientos if desired. Serve with crackers.

2-for-1 Chicken Tetrazzini

*Prep: 30 min.
Cook: 20 min.
Servings: 2 casseroles
(4 servings each)*

1 pkg. (12 oz.) spaghetti
1/3 C. butter, cubed

1/3 C. all-purpose flour
3/4 tsp. salt
1/4 tsp. white pepper
1 can (14-1/2 oz.) chicken broth
1-1/2 C. half-and-half cream
1 C. heavy whipping cream
4 C. cubed cooked chicken
3 cans (4 oz. each) mushroom stems and pieces, drained
1 jar (4 oz.) sliced pimientos, drained
1/2 C. grated Parmesan cheese

Cook spaghetti according to package directions. Meanwhile, in a Dutch oven, melt butter. Stir in the flour, salt and pepper until smooth. Gradually add the broth, half-and-half and whipping cream. Bring to a boil; cook and stir until thickened, about 2 min.

Remove from the heat. Stir in the chicken, mushrooms and pimientos. Drain spaghetti; add to the chicken mixture and toss to coat.

Transfer to 2 greased 11x7-in. baking dishes. Sprinkle with cheese. Cover and freeze 1 casserole for up to 2 months. Bake the second casserole, uncovered, at 350° until heated through, 20-25 min.

To use frozen casserole: Thaw in the refrigerator overnight. Cover and bake at 350° for 30 min. Uncover; bake until heated through, 15-20 min. more. Stir before serving.

Green Beans with Pomegranate Seeds

Prep: 15 min.

Cook: 15 min.

Servings: 8

2 lbs. fresh green beans, trimmed
2 T. olive oil
3/4 tsp. kosher salt
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/4 C. pomegranate seeds

Preheat oven to 425°F. Place beans in a greased 15x10x1-in. baking pan. Drizzle with oil; sprinkle with salt. Toss to coat. Roast 10 min., stirring once. Add garlic to pan. Roast until beans are crisp-tender, 5-7 min. longer. Sprinkle with pomegranate seeds.

Cranberry Pecan Salad

Prep Time: 15 min.

Cook Time: 10 min.

Total Time: 25 min.

Servings: 6

1 C. pecan halves
2 T. raspberry vinegar
1/2 tsp. Dijon mustard
1/2 tsp. white sugar
1/2 tsp. salt
1 pinch black pepper to taste
6 T. olive oil
6 C. mixed salad greens, rinsed and dried
3/4 C. dried cranberries
1/2 med. red onion, thinly sliced
crumbled feta cheese

Preheat the oven to 400°F.

Spread pecans evenly on a baking sheet. Toast in the preheated oven until lightly browned and fragrant, 8 to 10 min.

Whisk vinegar, Dijon mustard, sugar, salt, and pepper together in a small bowl until sugar and salt dissolve. Whisk in olive oil.

Toss salad greens, pecans, cranberries, onion, and feta together in a salad bowl. Drizzle with vinaigrette; toss gently to coat.

Easy Cinnamon Roll Apple Pie

Prep: 25 min.

Cook: 40 min.

Servings: 8

1 (7-1/2 oz.) sheet refrigerated pie crust
1/2 C. packed brown sugar
1/2 C. sugar
1/4 C. all-purpose flour
2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/4 tsp. ground nutmeg
1/4 tsp. salt
1/4 C. butter, melted
1 T. lemon juice
1-1/2 tsp. vanilla extract
6 C. chopped peeled apples (Granny Smith)

1 can (17-1/2 oz.) large refrigerated cinnamon rolls with icing

Preheat oven to 400°F. On a lightly floured surface, roll pie crust dough to a 1/8-in.-thick circle; transfer to a 9-in. deep dish pie plate. Trim crust to 1/2 in. beyond rim of plate; flute edge.

In a large bowl, stir together brown sugar, sugar, flour, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt. Stir in melted butter, lemon juice and vanilla extract until smooth. Stir in apples until thoroughly coated. Spoon into prepared crust.

Remove cinnamon rolls from can; set aside icing. Place cinnamon rolls on a cutting board; use a rolling pin to flatten cinnamon rolls into one 1/4-inch thick sheet. Place on top of apples; press edges of each flattened cinnamon rolls together to form a top crust. Press edges together with bottom pie crust to seal. Cover with foil, bake 30 min. Remove foil, bake until top is browned, 10-12 min. longer. Drizzle icing on top.

Chai Cupcakes

Prep: 25 min.

Cook: 25 min.

Servings: 12

1/2 tsp. each ground ginger, cinnamon, cardamom and cloves

1/8 tsp. pepper

1/2 C. butter, softened

1 C. sugar

1 lg. egg, room temperature

1/2 tsp. vanilla extract

1-1/2 C. cake flour

1-1/2 tsp. baking powder

1/4 tsp. salt

2/3 C. 2% milk

Frosting:

6 T. butter, softened

3 C. confectioners' sugar

3/4 tsp. vanilla extract

3 to 4 T. 2% milk

In a small bowl, combine ginger, cinnamon, cardamom, cloves and pepper; set aside.

In a large bowl, cream butter and sugar until light and fluffy, 5-7 min. Beat in egg and vanilla. Combine flour, baking powder, salt and 1-1/2 tsp. spice mixture. Gradually add to creamed mixture alternately with milk, beating well after each addition.

Fill 12 paper-lined muffin cups two-thirds full. Bake at 350°F. until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean, 24-28 min. Cool for 10 min. before removing from pans to wire racks to cool completely.

Frosting: in a large bowl, beat butter until fluffy; beat in the confectioners' sugar, vanilla and remaining spice mixture until smooth. Add enough milk to reach desired consistency. Pipe frosting over cupcakes.

Quote of the Week:

"I was going to sip on a diet soda, but a little voice convinced me I needed the extra calcium from a cup of hot chocolate."

~Cathy Guisewite, American cartoonist who created the comic strip "Cathy," which had a 34-year run.